AFRICANISATION OF WORSHIP IN THE LANGA MORAVIAN CHURCH: LITURGY IN A NEW KEY.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores "inculturation as it has and has not taken place in the Moravian Church in general and specifically at Langa where the writer has been a probation minister from 1998- 1999 and an ordained minister from 1999 onwards. It explores the amelioration of the present undesirable situation. It is recognised that life is not static but dynamic, that worldviews change and human identity is reconstructed. So moves are indicated that will assist to transform the attitudes of the faithful. We need to aim for an atmosphere of discussion and shared decision making that is for active participation in leadership and genuine collegiality in a Church which no longer insists on its own monochrome culture but exists as a multicultural family of sisters and brothers in communion.

This study seeks to examine the socio-literary function of the theme of this thesis Africanisation within the Langa Moravian Congregation: Liturgy in a New Key and will adopt a socio-linguistic perspective. The use of this approach emanates from the fact that this study is concerned about the language and anti-language as practised in the Church and society. Social scientific methods are a departure from the positivist empiricism of the historical critical method

With the imposition of one religion over another and the unfounded assumption that one is universal, single, normative and a criterion according to which the world religions ought to be judged, the missionaries committed a social sin against the whole world; that

human beings, in general and Africans in particular were judged as either cultured or uncultured, civilised or uncivilised, human or savages, through the Christian religion; that all other religions ought to be judged as either being true, false, authentic and /or revealed through Christianity. The term 'imposition' refers to a method or process by which doctrines, religious customs, morals and ways of praying and acting are brought from the outside, from a foreign or alien culture and tradition and imposed or forced upon the new cultures. It shows no appreciation, no respect or regard for the values, customs and religious traditions of the group that is the object of mission.

The first missionaries who came to South Africa infiltrated all sectors of the social infrastructure and became saviour gods in their own right, while at the same time they did everything within their power to displace African culture and Westernise the Africans.

We are made to live in a network of interdependence with one another, with God and with the rest of God's creation. As we say in Xhosa *Umntu ngumntu ngabantu* – a person is a person through other persons. A solitary human being is a contradiction in terms. A totally self-sufficient human being is ultimately subhuman.

This is also true of the different nations: that one people has particular gifts, a distinct world view, a cultural ethos, which is not necessarily better or superior to those of other people. So we find that Africans have a strong sense of community, of belonging, whereas Occidentals have in contrast a strong sense of the individual person. These attributes, in isolation and pushed to extremes have weaknesses.

Within the wider perspective of sociolinguistics, the model that used here is that of Language and Anti-language. An antilanguage is a language that is generated by an antisociety, that is, a social collectivity which is embedded in another society but feels threatened or alienated by the dominant conventional norms of the wider society and therefore sees itself as a conscious alternative to it. The language generated by such a social collectivity serves to express its alternative view of social reality and becomes a mode of resistance to the prevailing social order.

I hope this study will re-emphasise my conviction that the Church remains the terrain as well as the weapon of struggle for the liberation of the poor, marginalised, oppressed and exploited.

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In my quest for the Africanised liturgy it is a great joy to acknowledge my indebtedness to all these wonderful people who so unselfishly contributed:

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All honour and glory to God who has given me the strength, power and courage to persevere even during the most trying times. I know more than ever before that God can indeed be trusted.

SOLI DEO GLORIA

Dedication

Humbly and in all sincerity I dedicate this thesis to:

The memory of my late father, Joel C. Kronenberg (Rev.) who first preached to me about a non-sexist, non-racist, non-classist Jesus and about the Church as the prophetic voice of the poor;

To my friend, colleague, soulmate and comrade, Sithembiso Ngqakayi and all others who share my belief that the Church is the prophetic voice of the poor, exploited and marginalised and that the Church no longer exists on its own in its monochrome culture but exists as a multicultural family of sisters and brothers in communion and so remains that refuge to which black people can escape from the brutalities of racism and capitalist exploitation.

CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim of the Study

The African world view rejects the popular dichotomies between the sacred and the secular, the material and the spiritual. All life is religious, all life is sacred, all life is of a piece. The spiritual is real and permeates all existence so that the ancestral spirits, the living-dead, are all around us, concerned to promote the well-being of those who are bound together with them in the bundle of life. In the African world-view the ancestors are regarded as the guardians of morality and spirituality which ensures that the essential harmony of the community remains intact. And so, before you partake of a drink you spill a little as a libation to acknowledge the presence of this ever present cloud of witness surrounding the living and the yet to be born.

The aim of this study is to problematise the current worship and liturgy in the Moravian Church, in general and more specifically Langa. It goes without saying that we encounter two trajectory phenomena viz African world-view on religion and European world-view. Although they coexist, the European world-view dominates. The two world-views are in fact portraying the dialectic of subject and object. The subject is the European religion and worship/spirituality and the object has never come out to challenge the religious world-view of the subject. The reason why worship and liturgy have not changed is the

fact that the objects have always adopted to the structure of domination in which they were emerged for the past two centuries. At this level of religion and worship, they have become one with the subject as they have even internalised the subject's religious consciousness and language.

What is the role of religion/spirituality in the so-called mainline churches? What we discern is a total supremacy of a European Religious world-view.

This study will further demonstrate that no form of worship/liturgy is more rational or acceptable than others. There is no good or bad worship. There may well be differences in the approaches used or the types of ritual practices or symbols utilised, but this in itself does not detract from the core focus of the act of worship itself. The labelling of worship as 'bad' can directly be related to the fact that religion and religious practices have been distorted by religious and racial prejudices. In this light missionary endeavours in Africa sought to displace local, native religious beliefs without any compromise and without any consideration given to African culture and worldview. The Church is still European in its liturgy which suggests that once the African way of being the Church is fully accepted in African communities, the Church will be renewed and enriched by this contribution.

In African culture, worship is done through music, rhythm and dance. However, in the Eurocentric way of worship, the afore-mentioned elements have been excluded. The congregants at the Moravian Church at langa are therefore using elements which are foreign to them and these elements diminish the African form of worship tremendously.

My thesis is about this type of worship which is a source of tension in most mainline churches in South Africa. While this type of worship is an attempt to bring within the Church an African way of celebration and an African way of being the Church, it is confronted by the legacy of Eurocentric Christendom. The confrontation is between the Euro-Christian world-view as that has come to manifest itself in Africa and the African world-view itself.

I will be examining the attempt within a particular Church to express and live the Christian faith in a way that is peculiar to and meaningful in a particular situation and context. In particular I will be examining the attempt to make the Moravian Church in the Xhosa communities truly African in liturgy and through the celebration of the Eucharist in an African manner.

It is necessary to remember that even in Europe, the language of liturgy was always a bone of contention. In the Roman Catholic Church in all the history of liturgy, there were only two great revolutions with regard to the language used in the liturgy. Rafael Avila mentions that between 360 AD and 380 AD, there was a transition from a liturgy in the Greek language to the liturgy in Latin. Therefore, until the Vatican Council II resolution, the Catholic Church in the West only used Latin in the liturgy. The use of Latin in the liturgy was an action that excluded the common and poor people from participating in meaningful worship. This was done deliberately in order to preserve worship as a privilege of the sacradotal hierarchy. The letter of Paris de Grassi(1981:63)

written on 22 March 1516 to Pope Leo X is a revelation of the disdain of the common people by the ruling class:

> "I respond above all to those who think that religious ceremonies should be made accessible to the majority of mortals. Your Holiness knows very well that the authority and prestige of the Holy See depend on the dispositions that princes and the powerful maintain with respect to it. In effect, they believe that the pontiffs are not mortal men, but a species of gods on the earth; they submit to them, obey them, venerate and almost adore them; they are captivated by an admiration without limits when they contemplate the ceremonies of canonization, of imperial coronation, of the anointing of kings, of the creation of cardinals, of the consecration of the patriarchs, archbishops and bishops, or whatever other ceremony appears to include some divine feature. But if the secrets of worship are revealed and the ceremonies are made accessible, there will result immediately a loss of prestige" .

The above comment by De Grassi is an eloquent expression of the disdainfully cynical way in which the patron class regarded the common people in the Church. Worship and liturgy had been converted into an esoteric and magical ceremony that displayed how the powerful hierarchy had used worship and liturgy to maintain their perceived spiritual superiority. It is this spiritual superiority which became the foundation of worship and liturgy in the South African colonial churches.

Inculturation is an attempt to bridge the gap between the universal Church and the local Church in matters of symbolism, worship, festivals, practices, rites, rituals and mythology. It is the attempt to recognise the fact that the Church is, by the nature of its mission, sent to all people of every time and place. It is the endeavour to create an

atmosphere where the Xhosa person may feel that Christ is truly Xhosa, that the African person may feel Christ is truly African.

The approach of the Church has never taken into account people's cultural background, their way of worship or celebration. It also never took into account their belief systems. As such it was Western oriented and it excluded and marginalised many of its members.

In this study I will focus on the role religion plays in the lives of people. I will focus specifically on the element of liturgy and worship and not the broader term of religion. In this chapter I wish to prove that today more than ever, Karl Marx's aphorism of "Religion being the Opiate of the Masses" is still relevant in our society and the music that is sung by people in all Eurocentred churches is not African, but European.

I need to show that a passive adoption of a liturgical tradition that is foreign still exists; it is the nemesis of docility in embracing a tradition without problematizing it. Even in this decade when a paradigm shift in South Africa has taken place, the same forms of Eurocentric worship, liturgy and spirituality are still being practised by the mainline churches.

1.2 The Use of Religion as Opiate of the People; The Use of Religion as Language of the Oppressor or Patron

The liturgical music that is sung by people in all Eurocentric churches is not African, but European. As the music that is sung Sunday after Sunday is the same music that is sung in Berlin, Amsterdam or London, therefore this music cannot possibly come from the hearts of the people as they cannot even begin to understand what they are singing.

One of the most striking features of Karl Marx's essay which appears in "Contribution to the critique of Hegel's philosophy of Law" is the opening tirade against religion. This criticism of religion is given a place which it will never again have in his writings. (Kee, 1990:32)

In the essay he wrote about political change Marx said:" ...the struggle against religion is...a fight against the world of which religion is the spiritual aroma". Religion in this view, performs the function of legitimation, convincing people that this world is as it ought to be. This leads directly to one of the best known passages of Marx's writings:

> "Religious suffering is at the same time an expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people". (Kee, 1990:32)

Understandably attention is focussed directly on the final assertion and one of the most famous aphorisms in European literature. It pursues the theme of the function of

reconciliation effected by religion. Marx recalled that religion can perform a very different function, that it can be autonomous and prophetic. However, he also tells us something about religion and the real world, not the unreal.

Marx lashes out at religion: The spiritual aroma which covers over the rottenness of the world. We are addressed in a very different tone. The subject is not so much religion as the suffering of the poor. It is Marx's vocation to speak in their defence, to come to their assistance. We should expect him to continue his attack on religion by blaming it for causing suffering, but that is not what he says. Religion actually gives expression to real suffering. But more than that, religion is a protest against the suffering. In this he comes close to a recognition of the prophetic form of religion in which he denounces the rich and their exploitation of the poor, which gives voice to the cry of the oppressed. Marx seldom admits that religion historically has also performed this function, perhaps because in his own time that prophetic voice was largely silent.

Marx not only rejected religion as an obstacle to human emancipation, but constantly used religion to illustrate the negative elements in other institutions. Marx's first criticism of religion is that it performs a reconciliation of what is and what ought to be, and that it uses its authority to persuade people that what is, is what ought to be. In an evil world this inevitably means that religion functions as a legitimation of oppression and injustice and aligns itself with the values and interests of the oppressor against the oppressed. This is not so much an attack on religion as an exposing of the abuse of

religion and an indictment of religious people when they consciously or unconsciously participate in such situations. It is a positive criticism in two important respects.

Who in South Africa cared for the plight of the poor in the worst days of the revolution? Not the former Nationalist Government. Not the rich and wealthy. And certainly not the philosophy of reconciliation. In the midst of real suffering there was religion, not the religion of the imperial cult but of one who suffered in all things as the poor did.

Marx contends that religion has played more than one part in society and that it has been the caring heart in social indifference. It has preserved the spiritual in dehumanising conditions (Kee, 1990:33).

In addition it has been the opium of the people. This aphorism is taken to be the final dismissive judgement on religion. Opium was widely used in the nineteenth century, Victorian values notwithstanding. At a time when medical science could diagnose without being able to cure, it provided the only means by which many people could continue to live out their lives in face of constant pain. Opium was there and many were grateful for it. And religion was there...

Marx tells us that religion makes the intolerable tolerable. In the short term this is a considerable contribution, but in the long term it is a grave disservice. It heals the wound too lightly; it weakens the necessity for finding a cure. On this view religion steals from

the mind the imagination that there must be another and better order of things: it drains from the heart the courage to fight for such a goal.

Marx however, having momentarily praised religion for descending into the real world of human suffering, adopts his stern approach again:

> "To abolish religion as the illusory happiness of the people is to demand their real happiness. The demand to give up illusions about the existing state of affairs is the demand to give up a state of affairs which needs illusions. The criticism of religion is therefore in embryo the criticism of the vale of tears, the halo of which is religion". (Kee, 1990:34)

Religion thus legitimates an unjust world order, but if philosophy sought to reconcile what is and what ought to be, religion in Marx's view performs this function on its own account and even with more powerful resources. Religion can reconcile people to the sufferings of this world by asserting that God's will is always done and by assuring them that the injustices of this world would be recompensed in the life to come.

Borrowing some further images from Bruno Bauer, Marx draws his final conclusion:

> "Criticism has torn the imaginery flowers from the chain not so that men (and women) shall wear the unadorned, bleak chain but so that he will shake off the chain and pluck the living flower (Kee, 1990:34)

According to Marx, therefore, religion is the aroma, the halo, the flowers, not the chains. Man need no longer be reconciled to his lot. Three years later Marx would make his proclamation ring out:

"The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workers of the world unite". (Kee, 1990:34)

We have looked at one of Marx's three critiques of religion. In the one referred to above, he concludes that religion reconciles man to an evil world, as if it were the world that God willed. It is clear that Marx is not rejecting religion so much as its abuse. Marx was aware of a prophetic form of religion which exposed and denounced the evils of society. He knew that a religion true to itself, must obey God rather than man. Hegelian philosophy advocated a system of reconciliation, but one which declined to call evil by its name. And although Christianity is fundamentally a religion of reconciliation, it also recognises evil and condemns it.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself". (2 Cor. 5:19)

It would be blasphemous if the Christian religion should allow itself to be used or misused to support the claim that God is reconciled to an evil and oppressive order. He has reconciled the world to himself; he is not reconciled to injustice.

Yet in the South African context, one found opposing groups of Christians using religion, on the one hand, to further entrench and to justify the policy of divide and rule and on the other hand to proclaim the liberating power of the gospel to free the hungry, to emancipate those subjugated to the bonds of slavery, the exploited, the dispossessed and the voiceless...

The gospel that first came to our shores with the Dutch and then British colonialism was a gospel that justified and legitimised colonialism, imperialism and European superiority. One kind of the original preachers of the gospel in South Africa, was the missionaries. They came to evangelise the indigenous and colonised people in this part of Africa, i.e. preaching a supposed gospel of liberation to people enslaved by the European colonial powers, injecting large doses of opium into people so that they could temporarily forget their enslavement, so that they could prepare themselves for salvation in the next life. Fortunately as time went by and thanks to the prophetic voices of many individuals and groups –both local and elsewhere- the preaching of the gospel in South Africa was faced with unprecedented challenges. The country was beginning to experience serious political crises which reached breaking point by the seventies and eighties of this century. How were those involved in preaching the gospel to continue doing so in view of the fact that the gospel was associated with a political system that was regarded worldwide as a crime against humanity? Even more confusing and challenging was the very way the gospel was used to avoid the issue by arguing that this crime against humanity had nothing to do with God and salvation in Jesus Christ because it was a matter of politics and not religion.

The apartheid architects and their supporters were also "believers" in the gospel and in fact, they used the scriptures to justify their crimes against humanity, against the children of God! Understandably this contradiction and distortion of the gospel led many South Africans to associate it with nothing more than attempts to modify or soften the

prevailing system. To many young people in the townships of South Africa, the gospel became irrelevant and they became impatient with the Churches and the confused and distorted interpretations of the gospel. To them the gospel in this form became an obstacle in the way of genuine liberation and peace.

It is out of the purifying effect of such challenges that a new understanding of the gospel started to emerge: an understanding that is true to Jesus Christ and what he stood for: more courageous and more honest, more rigorously debated and thought out than ever before. An attempt to preach a gospel that leaves everything to God is doomed to be unsuccessful because that does not challenge the believers to work out their own salvation.

It was the spiritualisation of religion that enabled the system of colonialism, exploitation and apartheid to be justified, enabled it to expand through the world and to cause the most barbaric excesses in the history of humankind. This kind of religion is what Marx referred to as the opium of the people. The good news of salvation is what can help to redress the economic and social imbalances in our society provided it brings us a message of total and effective salvation from suffering and all that causes people to suffer.

1.3 SUMMARY

In this chapter I have tried to show that African religion as practised in South Africa is not African, but Eurocentric. The liturgical music that is sung by people in all the mission churches is not African, but European. In African culture, worship is done through music, rhythm and dance. However, in the Eurocentric way of worship, the afore-mentioned elements have been excluded. The congregants at the Moravian Church at langa are therefore using elements which are foreign to them and these elements diminish the African form of worship tremendously.

My thesis is about this type of worship which is a source of tension in most mainline churches in South Africa. While this type of worship is an attempt to bring within the Church an African way of celebration and an African way of being the Church, it is confronted by the legacy of Eurocentric Christendom. The confrontation is between the Euro-Christian world-view as that has come to manifest itself in Africa and the African world-view itself.

I have also tried to show that Marx's theory of 'Religion being the Opiate of the Masses' is as relevant today as it was then. This theory is particularly obvious in that the missionaries came to evangelise the indigenous and colonised people in this part of the African continent. The missionaries preached a supposed gospel of liberation to people

enslaved by the European colonial powers. They did so by injecting them with enough opium to make them forget their misery and exploitation and only made them focus on the life hereafter.

Marx unequivocally stated that human beings need no longer be reconciled to their lot. No, on the contrary, they should be obedient to God, rather than to man.

All the changes in society the April 1994 which signalled and end to a reality of exclusion, of separate development, oppression and expolitation, the political transition marks an acceptance that all human beings are created in the image of God. Despite all these changes religion still gives people a false sense of consciousness. What is it that makes the most progressive and most critical comrades in the struggle for liberation so passive when it comes to the church? What is about religion that lulls the minds of a most conscious community? I admire those Independent churches who had the courage of their conviction to break away from the Eurocentric forms of worship and did not continue to protect European worship/liturgy in its self-congratulatory, triumphalist and alienated forms. We too must 'drink from our own wells' and in this Marx is one of the most important springs of the European critical tradition.

CHAPTER 2

2. Methodology

2.1 Sociolinguistics as Method

"Language is not simply a means of communication or expression, but a corpus of knowledge of a people. While most African authors speak one African language or another, none has used the African idiom in their writing. We have all used the African idiom and borrowed English as a means of writing. Our nuances, impressions and interpretations of the English language are rooted in our African languages, experiences and meaning. Can African people champion their renaissance through the medium of foreign languages? This is perhaps one of the greatest challenges to African people. Language is culture and in language we carry our identity and our culture. The majority of African people about whom the rebirth or re awakening is about, live in their indigenous languages throughout their lives". (Mbeki 1998:1)

This study will use the phenomenological approach of socio-linguistics from a conscious African perspective because it allows the researcher to come up with rich information. In this research we will try to show that religion is a social thing and that it can be a personal experience as well. Thus the researcher will try to carefully illustrate that language can also be used to discriminate, dominate, oppress and exclude.

In pursuit of the social function of language, Berger and Luckmann maintain that: "Language, which may be defined here as a system of vocal signs is the most important sign system of human society. Its foundation is of course in the intrinsic capacity of the

human organism for vocal expressivity, but we begin to speak of language only when the vocal expressions have become capable of detachment from the immediate "here and now" of subjective states." (1971:51)

Language, whether spoken or written, entails soundings or spellings, which in turn, realise wordings that express meanings. As such, language is a form of communication. For the communication process to be successful, both the speaker/writer and hearer/reader share the meanings encoded in the wordings. Such meanings, in turn, constitute and are realised from the social system. Language as a form of communication transmits shared assumptions and a collective set of interpretations of reality that make up the cultural environment of the speaker and the audience. This implies that language is part of social interaction and therefore cannot be divorced from the social context of which it is a product. (See Halliday, 1978:8-16; Halliday & Hasan, 1985:3-14; Malina, 1986:2; Malina & Negrey, 1988:XIV; Thompson, 1990:28-29).

Again society in its Sitz-im-Leben has its culture, norms and values that have to be maintained. Inevitably, there should be a form of interaction exercised by the society. Language certainly functions as a vehicle, as a means of communication in order that there is an interchange of culture and the value systems. Whatever experience, pre-understanding, context, these are to be communicatted and interpreted by the society through language. In other words the language to be spoken is determined by the society. For example, the argument might arise as to the legitimacy of a dialect as a

language seems to be immaterial, in the sense that people of the one and the same environment are able to identify and communicate with one another. There is a close connection between the society and language.

The other aspect here would be to look at language as a cultural medium. The moment we do that, we are confronted with a question: what is culture? And an immediate response would be that culture consists of the abstract values, beliefs and perceptions of the world that lie behind people's behaviour and that their behaviour reflects. These are shared by the members of a society and when acted upon, they produce behaviour considered acceptable within that society. Cultures are learned, largely through the medium of language, rather than inherited biologically.

We are faced with yet another question. How does language articulate culture? In response to this question, it needs to be stated that languages are spoken by people who are members of societies, each of which has its own distinctive culture. Concurring with this statement Haviland says, "Social variables, such as class, gender and status of the speaker, will influence people's use of language. Moreover, people communicate what is meaningful to them and what is or is not meaningful is defined by their particular culture. In fact, our use of language affects and is affected by our culture". (1990:93). This means an understanding of the language is of utmost importance in order to understand the reality of everyday life.

Other than the definition of language as a system of vocal signs, Berger and Luckmann see language as having its origins in the face to face situation, the latter from which it can be readily detached. However they warn: "this is not only because I can shout in the dark or across a distance, speak on the telephone or via the radio, or convey linguistic signification by means of writing (the latter constituting, as it were, a sign system of the second degree) (Berger and Luckman, 1971:52).

The functional aspect of the language rests on its detachment, which in turn lies much more basically in its capacity to communicate meanings that are not direct expressions of subjectivity 'here and now'. This capacity of communicating meanings is shared by language with other sign systems. However, because of its immense variety and complexity, it becomes much more readily detachable from face to face situations than any other, like, for example, a system of gesticulations. In other words, the non-verbal communication comes into play. The very body language itself becomes very dynamic. In this way, language is capable of becoming the objective repository of vast accumulations of meaning and experience, which it can then preserve in time and transmit to following generations. Language provides a person with a ready-made possibility for the ongoing objectification of his unfolding experience. (Berger and Luckman, 1971:52)

2.2.1 **Trudgill**

For Trudgill (1983) language is a social and cultural phenomenon shaped and informed by values and norms of society; it is used to construct social reality. The powerful or the upper classes decide on what the standard language should be. Trudgill points out that under-class dialects are used in theatre as a way of entertainment and ridiculing the under-classes.

Trudgill goes on engaging himself in a serious exercise in looking at what sociolinguistics means. Inter alia he says, "Language is not simply a means of communicating information about the weather or any other subject. It is also a very important means of establishing and maintaining relationships with other people".(1983:11)

Put simply, language is a hermeneutical tool that can help effect the fusion of the two aspects: that of understanding and agreement of two people. Pursuing the function of the language, Trudgill comes to a realisation that it opens the other avenues, that is, "both these aspects of linguistics behaviour are reflections of the fact that there is a close interrelationship between language and society"(1983:14). It would appear the hermeneutical tools, which are not only one language, but languages, are to be used in order to translate a foreign language understandably.

Our accent and our speech generally show what part of the country we come from and what sort of background we have. We may even give some indication of certain of our

ideas and attitudes and all of this information can be used by the people we are speaking with to help them formulate an opinion about us.

These two aspects of linguistic behaviour are very important from a social point of view: first the function of language in establishing social relationships and second the role played by language in conveying information about the speaker. It is clear that both these aspects of linguistic behaviour are reflections of the fact that there is a close inter-relationship between language and society.

2.2.2 **Wardaugh**

Whilst Wardaugh shares the same ideas of Trudgill vis-a-vis the realionship between language and society, he recalls an approach with Noam Chomsky- the most influential figure of the late twentieth century linguistic theorising. Using Chomsky, Wardhaugh completely breaks from the sociological approach and is freely objective and perceives things as they are. Chomsky has an analytical scientific approach:

> "Chomsky has argued on many occasions that, in order to make meaningful discoveries about language, linguists must try to distinguish between what is important and what is unimportant about language and linguistic behaviour. The important matters concern the learnability of all languages, the characteristics they share and the rules that speakers apparently follow in constructing and interpreting sentences." (Wardhaugh, 1986:2,3)

However, many linguists have found Chomsky's anti-society view of linguistic theorising impossible to accept as anything but a rather sterile type of activity, with its explicit rejection of any reason or any concern with the social uses of language. (Wardaugh,1986:10)

Even the distinction between what Chomsky has called competence and performance, is emphatic on the amount of knowledge about the language not what the latter does by way of communication. Further, Wardaugh embarks on the comparison of sociolinguistics and the sociology of language. He refers to investigators having found it appropriate to introduce a distinction between sociolinguistics and the sociology of language.

According to Wardhaugh a language is what the members of a particular society speak. However, speech in almost any society can take many very different forms and just what forms we should choose to discuss when we attempt to describe the language of a society may prove to be a contentious matter. Sometimes a society may be plurilingual; i.e. many speakers may use more than one language. We should also note that our definitions of language and society are not independent: the definition of language includes in it a reference to society.

It is interesting to note that the knowledge is both something that every individual who speaks the language possesses (since we must assume that each individual knows the grammar of his or her language by the simple reason that he or she readily uses that language) and also some kind of shared knowledge, that is knowledge possessed by all

those who speak the language. Communication among people is possible because such knowledge is shared with others, although how it is shared – or even how it is acquired – is not well understood. Certainly psychological and social factors are important and possibly genetic ones too. Language, is however, a communal possession although admittedly an abstract one. Individuals have access to it and constantly show that they do so by using it properly. (1986:2)

The important matters concern the learnability of all languages, the characteristics they share and the rules that speakers apparently follow in constructing and interpreting sentences; the less important matters have to do with how individual speakers use specific utterances in a variety of ways as they find themselves in this situation or another.

Wardaugh quotes Hymes' argument that in general no phenomenon can be defined in advance as never to be counted as constituting a message. The language we use in everyday living is remarkably varied. In fact, to many investigators it appears that it is that very variety which throws up serious obstacles to all attempts to demonstrate that each language is at its core, as it were, a homogeneous entity and that it is possible to write a complete grammar for a language which makes use of categorical rules, i.e. rules which specify exactly what is and therefore what is not possible in the language.

Everywhere we turn we seem to find at least a new wrinkle or a small inconstituency with regard to any rule one wishes to propose; on too many occasions it is not just a wrinkle or

inconsistency but actually a glaring counter-example. When we look closely at any language we will discover time and time again that there is considerable internal variation and that speakers make constant use of the many different possibilities offered to them. No one speaks the same way all the time and people constantly exploit the nuances of the languages they speak for a variety of purposes. The consequence is a kind of paradox.

Many linguists have argued that one should not study a language in use, or even how the language is learned, without first acquiring an adequate knowledge of what language itself is. An adequate theory of language must have something to say about the uses of language.

Wardaugh looks at a considerable variety of ways in which language and society are related. Indeed, if we look back at the history of linguistics it is rare to find investigations of either the history of that language or its regional and/or social distributions, or its relationship to objects, ideas, events and actual speakers and listeners in the real world (1986: 10).

He contends that there is a variety of possible relationships between language and society. One is that social structure may either influence or determine linguistic structure and/or behaviour. Certain evidence may be adduced to support this view: the age-grading phenomenon, whereby young children speak differently from older children and in turn children speak differently from mature adults. Studies show that the varieties of language

that speakers use reflect such matters as their regional, social or ethnic origin and possibly even their sex and other studies which show that particular ways of speaking, choices of words and even rules for conversing are determined by certain social requirements.

A second possible relationship is directly opposed to the first: linguistic structure and/or behaviour may either influence or determine social structure. This is the view that is behind the Whorfian hypothesis and those who argue that languages rather than speakers of those languages can be 'sexist'. A third possible relationship is that the influence is bi-directional: language and society may influence each other. A variant of this approach is that this influence is dialectical in nature, a Marxian view that argues that speech behaviour and social behaviour are in a state of constant interaction and that material living conditions are an important factor in the relationship.

A fourth possibility is to assume that there is no relationship at all between linguistic structure and social structure and that each is independent of the other. Gumperz has observed that socio-linguistics is an attempt to find correlations between social structure and linguistic structure and to observe any changes that occur. Social structure itself may be measured by reference to such factors as social class and educational background and verbal behaviour and performance may be related to these factors.

2.2.3 Rosenstock-Huessy

Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy contends that in language we have a physical medium of social intercourse to establish relations. The relations between people are established by physical and physiological processes. Although more remote from the physical organization of the partner, than sexual intercourse or shaking hands, the physical organization of people is involved and serves the establishment of relations. Without a system of social relations, our phonetics and our linguistic technique remains meaningless. (1970:120)

Social relations need a medium distance in space and time. Too great distances and too small distances, both are obstructive. But all these relations correspond to the great situations of decadence, war, chaos, revolution.

Language is a system of social relations. Grammar is the scientific process by which we become conscious of this system of social relations. Not all relations are based on speech. But all lasting relations are and have to be. Human language is not complete without the democracy of universal participation by which an undying speech, through the ages is ascertained. Language is obviously not restricted to building up temporal and passing relations. It tries to build up recurrent and remembered relations.

Rosenstock-Huessy urges that religious language has to be logically incidental in order to be appropriately utilised for such a strange situation as religious people claim to speak about. He speaks of a discernment, which is an insight in which theology is founded.

2.2.4 **Halliday**

Halliday highlights some aspects to which he refers as realities that lie above and beyond language, which the latter serves to express. Because of this, there are many directions in which we can move outside language in order to explain what language means.

"For some linguists the preferred mode of interpretation is the psychological one, in which language is to be explained in terms of the processes of the human mind or the human brain. For other linguists, perhaps, the direction might be a psychoanalytic one, or an aesthetic one, or any one of a number of possible perspectives" (Halliday, 1989:2).

Halliday maintains that language is understood in its relationship to social structure. He views the primary perspective to be adopted as a social one, however, not to the exclusion of the others; the former seeks to focus on our explanations for linguistic phenomena. We attempt to relate language primarily to one particular aspect of human experience, namely that of social structure" (1989:4). Halliday finds it essential to tease out this particular angle which grapples with especially educational questions. It is here that the social dimension seems particularly significant – and most unfortunately, it is the one that has been the most neglected in discussions of language in education.

After all, learning is a social process and the environment in which educational learning takes place is that of a social institution, be it "in concrete terms as the classroom and the school, with their clearly defined social structures, or in the more abstract sense of the schools system or even the educational process as it is conceived of in our society." (1989:5)

Knowledge is communicated in social contexts, through relationships like those of parent and child in primary socialisation, or teacher pupil, or classmates in secondary socialisation. These are defined in the value systems and ideology of the culture. Most significant is that the words that are exchanged in these contexts get their meaning from activities in which they are embedded, which again are social activities with social agencies and goals.

In pursuit of the social functions of language, Halliday poses a question as to what do we mean by text? In response, he offers a simple definition that it (text) is language that is functional. The latter meaning the language that is doing some job in some context, as opposed to isolated words or sentences that might be put on the blackboard (1989:10). In other words, any instance of living language that is playing some part in a context of situation, we shall call a text. There is a sense whereby what Halliday calls realities that lie above and beyond language is to be pursued in relation

2.2.6 **Music as Language**

Music is a form of language as it tries to convey a meaning. In Xhosa culture everything is encapsulated within music. Language is therefore not only restricted to the written word, but everything else, viz dancing, clapping, beating a drum, is a mode of expression. Ideology is a system of ideas and religious belief is based on faith. I therefore would like to include music as a means of expression and thus has to be included in worship. Within African context this is absolutely imperative. Instead of the spoken word, actions and music go far deeper and go a much longer way than anything else. Community and communal celebrations and to celebrate life are all of vital importance.

The origin of music is inseparable from the origin of language and whatever views are held with regard to one, will hold good of the other. Singing is little else than speaking beautifully. A very important characteristic of languages is rhythm. The more or less recurrence of intonations and of similar cadences constitutes the most agreeable form of music. The more rhythm is accentuated the more pleased people are. Very few people can escape the "tyranny" of rhythm. Rhythm seems to contain some general law, possessing power over almost all living things. One could say that rhythm is the dance of sound, as dancing is the rhythm of movement. It is certain that at one period of the development of humanity, rhythm constituted the only music known and that it was intertwined with language itself.

2.2.7 Summary

The methodology of this study is sociolinguistics. One of the perspectives of sociolinguistics is the model of anti-language. An anti-language is a subsidiary of anti-society as it is generated by it. Halliday (1978:164) posits that an anti-society is a group or society that is set up within the parameters of another society in order to be its conscious alternative. An anti-society therefore, is that society which frees itself from the dominant conventioal norms and values of society. As an alternative to the dominant group, the language of the anti-society is called anti-language. Its function is to create an alternative reality, but also to maintain it. An anti-society that speaks an anti-language derives its framework of an alternative social reality. This study therefore, proposes that the worship and liturgy that were introduced by the missionaries, were products of dominant groups/societies which practised domination through language.

Within this context, an "anti-language is constructed in order to function in alternation and serves as a vehicle of resocialisation towards a counter-reality set up in opposition to some established norm". (Nogwina 1993:10)

CHAPTER 3: The Naturalisation of European Colonial Liturgy/Worship in South Africa

> "For the liturgy is made up of unchangeable elements of divinely institutes and elements subject to change. The latter not only but ought to be changed..."
>
> Vatican II No 21

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on missionary colonial discourse in South Africa. Further, it will look at the religion of the missionaries as 'language' and their society as 'the society'. In this process the religion and language of the indigenous people were regarded as non-religion and sub-language, by the dominant missionary establishment. The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate that the religion and language of the indigenous people were threatened by the conventional religion of the missionaries. For this reason we can portray their language which expressed their religion as anti-language, becase it was an alternative social reality.

This chapter also deals with the arrival of the missionaries and their Eurocentric world views as opposed to the African world view. It deals with the first interaction of the missionaries with the indigenous people. In addition it will also reveal the interaction or types of interaction of Moravian missionaries with the Khoi as there were distinctive characteristics concerning the attitudes of the Moravian missionaries towards the Khoi.

To be explicit, the denial of traditional religion to the indigenous people was a strategy used by missionaries to conquer them. The missionary interpretations of the African way

of life was based on the attitude of western cultural superiority and as a result this blinded them from discovering that the indigenous people also worshipped God but simply in a different manner that the missionaries were accustomed to.

Again one of the objectives of this chapter is to investigate how language can be used as a tool of power. It is posited that in order to cement one's power, one has to establish a particular political, religious, cultural and economical ideology. One needs to have a common frame of reference. For the missionaries, this common framework was European Christianity with all its norms, values, symbols which are all relayed via language. Those who identify with this particular type of language and those who can use it and understand it are looked upon favourably. They are the ones with power. On the other hand those who do not embrace it, are automatically excluded. They become the out-group. Within this context those who constitute the in-group speak the language. Those who feel threatened and alienated by the dominant in-group see themselves as an alternative society and as the bearer of an alternative social reality. The language generated by the out-group to express its opposition to the Eurocentric dominant conventional religious language, becomes the anti-language, due to the fact that it is the language of the alternative society.

This chapter will draw from the works of Kgari, Chidester and Bredekamp in an effort to portray the role the missionaries played in naturalising their religion, language, worship and normative institutions in South Africa.

3.2 What is Liturgy/Worship?

The liturgical music that is sung by people in all Eurocentric churches is not African, but European therefore religion is the opiate of the masses. As the music that is sung Sunday after Sunday is the same music that is sung in Berlin, Amsterdam or London therefore this music cannot possibly come from the hearts of the people as they cannot even begin to understand what they are singing.

Liturgy ought to create relationships. When individuals meet to worship at services, they automatically form a community. Liturgy establishes that community. It is the language that is spoken by the congregation that binds them together, that forms that community. Liturgy should create relationships so that people feel that they have a common bond with each other.

Liturgy is understood as a medium of communication between the community, the faithful departed (ancestors) and ultimately God. It is a unique form of prayer. It is a means to an end and not an end in itself. It is a link between two world-views: the mystical and the experiential. It draws together the living, the living-dead and the Supreme Being in prayer. It is a ritual capable of bringing together these two worlds through symbolism and mythology, a human act which attempts to capture and realise the Biblical expression that:

> "The word became flesh and dwelt among us. And to all who receive Him, He gave power to become children of God" (John 1:1-14).

Liturgy should evoke the image of those moments when members of the community are invited to gather at the church and join together in fellowship. It is natural for Africans to sing, dance and clap their hands during their worship, whether the nature of that worship itself be of joy or sorrow or thanksgiving. On this issue Mbiti says:

> "When there is a communal act of worship in which prayers are offered,or sacrifices and offerings are made, this is often an occasion for singing and Africans enjoy celebrating life. Therefore when people meet together for worship they like to sing, dance, clap their hands and express their rejoicing" (Mbiti, 1969:61)

African worship, therefore essentially entails physical as well as emotional involvement. Preaching is normally regarded as the prerogative of the minister (*umfundisi*) and preachers (*abashumayeli*). Everybody is actively participating, mostly in singing, clapping of hands and in dancing. As a result the whole community is emotionally and physically participating.

Liturgy until some years before the Second Vatican Council, had been conducted in Latin worldwide. The purpose was uniformity which was aimed at discouraging future dissension and division within the Church. Christian doctrine was clearly defined and

anathemas attached to the dogmas. The word liturgy according to Pope Paul 11 is defined as:

> "Originally meaning a public work or a service in the Name of or on behalf of people. In Christian tradition it means the participation of the people of God in the work of God" (Pope Paul 11, 1994:244).

This participation is envisaged through signs, gestures, rites, rituals, symbols and myths. It embodies prayer in all its forms: devotion, thanksgiving, petition, glorification and adoration. Prayer normally employs language. God manifests Him/Herself symbolically through nature where God's creative power and presence is realised. From this follows man's obligation to thank God through worship. On the same issue Pope Paul 11 says:

> "In human life signs and symbols occupy an important place. As a being, at one's body and spirit, humans express and perceive spiritual realities through physical signs and symbols. A a social being humans need signs and symbols to communicate with others, through language gestures and actions (Pope Paul, 11:1994)

Liturgy manifests itself through images and symbols within a particular community and tries to unite the essential differences between communities. To be part of a particular community entails sharing in a unique and complete belief system, unique symbols which may be essentially different from those of the Bible and Christianity. Hence if they are to be employed for the purposes of inculturation, for understanding Christ, it would necessarily imply a different perception of these old symbols, rites and rituals, as well as the inevitable filling of new symbols with old meanings. African culture with its emphasis on the ancestors, the living dead, as mediators inevitably shifts some of the

focus from Christ and Christ will be understood as dealing with the ancestors and shifting some of the focus from them.

It is worth noting that the Church made rules and regulations with regard to how liturgy should be performed, proper places where to perform it, vestments and vessels to be used and who should partake. It has also been made clear as to who should promulgate these regulations. These rules and regulations are based on the concept that liturgy is essentially viewed as composed of unchangeable elements which are divinely instituted and of elements which are subject to change.

Ultimately, however, liturgy is about a celebration in which the community lives together and celebrate that togetherness on a daily basis. It is about a shared life where the community shares its life, happiness, problems, concerns, hopes, sadness, fears, aspirations with the faithful departed and with God through worship. It is the focus of belonging where the "felt sense of reality" is realised and actualised. On this aspect of a communal togetherness and sharing Nangoli says of African society:

> "Sharing was an aspect of African culture that was stressed at every level of society. No one ate unless all could eat. The needs of the individual were the needs of the society as a whole. Offense by an individual against an individual was considered as offense against the entire society. Each parent in society was a parent to all the children in that society and hence was charged with the responsibility of discipline. Individualism and selfishness were discouraged and scorned. Everything was done for the good of all". (Nangoli, 1990:19)

Liturgy is about the holistic healing of a community which culminates in the life and death of Jesus Christ celebrated in the Eucharist. This holistic healing is salvation of humanity actualised and realised in and through the life and death of Christ. Christ became a person like us so as to be able to heal us ultimately to make restitution between the Creator and creatures by making us God's children and heirs of the heavenly reign. Liturgy implies building our community, taking responsibilty over ourselves, activity to transform, change and shape our world.

This is the social aspect of liturgy where the spiritual power within individual members of the community is able to be communicated with a view of continuing the mission of Christ of healing, restitution, restoration and rehabilitation. It should heal the social and natural evils such as suffering, poverty, oppression, injustice, drought and famine. It follows therefore that liturgy perceived this way is not necessarily a set of rules and regulations which are supposed to be observed by people, neither is it a question of knowing the said rules and regulations, but a way of actively participating in restitution, restoration, rehabilitation which is healing in community.

African Christians are obliged to pray to God with a liturgy that is not theirs, to live a morality which takes no account of their own life context, to follow a liturgy that has nothing do to with African realities and to reflect on the truths of faith using the philosophical and theological categories of the other Christian communities which evangelised them.

People were given European names during baptism of which Nangoli has this to say:

> "As a mark of being a Christian, the African was told he had to have a Christian name, such as David, Peter to mention a few. What the African did nor realise, however, was that these names were nothing more than English or French names. They were no more Christian names than Nangoli or Mandela. Sadly such was the success of the mental colonization of the African that to this day s/he goes round calling her/himself by these alien names". (Nangoli, 1990:72-73)

All these contrasted with the way of life of the Africans on a daily basis, ipso facto, it created two world- views in conflict.

Latin, the language and ethos further made Christianity a book religion, a religion active on Sunday on the Church premises, i.e. Africans were fully Christians only on Sunday while they are at Church. Sunday clothes became a sort of Christian vestment. Even prayer books were used only on Sundays at the Church

Liturgy in the Moravian Church has been conducted in a very German manner as it has been introduced by the German missionaries at the time of their arrival. The German missionaries came from pietistic movements in their country and were certainly influenced by the universal phenomenon of patriarchy and hierarchy. The Mission stations provided a chance to escape from a sinful world and an opportunity to live a Christian life. It was not seen, nor after the first few years did it ever function as a base from which to change the world. It was in this spirit that the Genadendal regulations stressed the need for submission to government and the laws of the country. In this, of

course they followed the quietest tradition of Herrnhut and of the Lutheran emphasis on the divine origin of the powers that be. Indeed, the Moravian Synod of 1826 specifically forbade its missionaries to agitate for the emancipation of slaves, since this would only cause difficulties in the exercise of their true vocation.

In the Moravian Church we find that the liturgies cannot be detached from their Sitz –im-Leben. What people experience on a Sunday cannot be detached from their daily experiences. The political and theological consciousness is of extreme importance. We also have the situation where members of the respective congregations who are politically conscious are often docile on a Sunday. We could pose the question as to why we have this dichotomy? The liturgy that is used in the Moravian church is very European, more specifically German in its origin and thus not in tune with the daily experiences of the people. Western culture was used as the normative or to determine the authenticity of anything.

Christianity is a culture of its own kind and thus has its own traditions, customs, worship, practices, rites, rituals, myths and symbolism. It has its own governance, politics, economy, philosophy, morality and ethics. It has its own way of celebrations and festivals which are essentially different from the African. Xhosa culture embraces the same issues although they are understood and interpreted differently. Hence for inculturation to take place, that is for Christ to be seen and felt to be African to the Africans, everything ought to be fermented, brewed and cooked by the Xhosa in a Xhosa way. Ipso facto, the Son of God who came in human flesh, who took on human nature

and became one with it, will be one with the Xhosa through their culture for the sole purpose of their salvation and not necessarily through the culture of the Biblical world. The incorporation of the culture as distinct from the message of salvation, of the Bible has long been a self-defeating gospel in Africa.

3. 3 **Kgari's Portrayal of the First Missionaries**

> "Reality is a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognise as having a being independent of our volition. It is taken for granted". (Berger, 1996:13)

In this quote taken from Kgari's thesis "From Religious Discrimination to Religious Tolerance", she contends that the essence of this quote is that reality is a dynamic social construct. This implies that society defines what is 'real' among themselves and in this way norms are constructed. The problem with the construction of reality is that the dominant ideas in society are those of the ruling classes, those who possess economic and political power as well as religious authority. Those that wield power in society have all the resources to promote ideas which ultimately are designed to suit their purposes and ideals. This leads to the perception that reality is God-given and anyone who deviates should be side-lined. In this process of defining what is real, we sometimes distort reality in order to suit our own purposes leaving the other less powerful groups disadvantaged or without any voice.

Therefore stereotypes and prejudices become the order of the day. Stroebe argues that "stereotypes are a biased perception or conception of an aspect of reality, especially of persons or social groups" (1989:5). He goes further to explain stereotypes as: "beliefs or opinions about the attributes of a social group or its members" and prejudice as a negative inter-group attitude with some degree of favour or disfavour. It is important to note stereotypes and prejudices are not always negative but can become a problem only when they discriminate against another group. The powerful form part of a socially constructed reality and this reality is expressed in language, which " transcends the reality of every day life altogether" (Berger 1966:54).

Moreover, as one of the agents of communicating reality, language can sometimes be used by those in power for personal ends. This is often done at the expense of those who are less powerful, viz the masses. In relation to the powerful, those less powerful, i. e. the powerless come to be regarded as the 'other' to indicate social, economic and religious distance. Most of the words used to refer to other groups are negative. Berger sums it up as follows:

> "For competitive society when a group maintains contact and/or relation with another group, each of them tries to achieve superiority over the other group. Groups compete among themselves and through comparison, strive to view themselves as more successfully developed or more moral and human. Delegitimation provides solid grounds for superiority in comparison to the delegitimised group as it lowers the value of the latter extremely. It indicates that the group has very negative characteristics to the extent that it should be excluded from the commonly accepted group" (Berger, 1966:54).

In terms of this group dynamic which aims to differentiate between one group and the other, it must be remembered that religion is also socially constructed. Within this social construction, cultural processes are at work whereby people always define what constitutes a true religion and how it could be identified in the process of defining other religions.

Worship is also socially constructed because as one of the cultural processes, westerners always define what constitutes worship and what does not. Terms used to refer to African religion are: superstitious, cultural, traditional, ancestral.

These names depict an extreme prejudice that Bar-Tal(1989) calls "delegitimation" which means a denial of a group of humanity. These prejudies show the effectiveness and power of language. The missionaries spoke a language which embodied and prescribed European norms and values, while the indigenous people spoke an anti- language i.e. a language which did not have the apparatus with which to decide or to understand the former language.

Discrimination against African religion and its practices in South Africa can be traced back to the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck and subsequent white settlement in the Cape. Their mission was not solely commercial and militaristic; it included religious coercion on the side of Africans (Chidester 1996:4). Their attitude was informed by knowledge that was circulating in their mother-country namely, that Africans were barbarians and

savages that needed conversion. They saw themselves as saviours of the heathens in South Africa.

In the process of this mission of conversion, African religion and practices were trampled upon. This religion was perceived by missionaries as barbaric, traditional, superstitious, inauthentic and cultural. In this process Christianity and western culture were uplifted as civilised and authentic. Therefore missionaries and other people who internalised western culture saw their duty as being that of civilising and converting Africans to western culture and Christianity. This is clearly put by Kgari (1995:76):

> "Christian teaching must be supplemented by teaching of another kind, in fact everything that is calculated to make them think and be systematic in action and be provident in their concerns...to teach to sit on chairs and eat off plates instead of squatting on the ground and eating with a chip out of a pot, to teach them to build square houses instead of round hovels are all parts of missionary teaching"

This statement sums up the attitude of missionaries towards Africans as a people and their way of life. The aim of someone like Callaway was to make Africans into Europeans. In the process of doing that he had to obliterate all forms of religious and cultural expressions by the Africans. Missionaries embarked on a strategy to disempower Africans, by denying them their right to traditional African religion. Later around 1917 African religion was designated as being a 'traditional' [static and barbaric] religion (Ranger 1972:44).

Kgari's critique of Ranger takes this further by arguing that the acceptance of African religion in 1917 as a religion which was 'traditional', was a way of increasing control over African people, due to the fact that Africans were denied an important aspect of their humanity, something that gave them identity. Therefore Africans were continually undermined and seen as old-fashioned. Those who practised it were labelled as idiots (Kgari 1995:35).

The impression that was created was that everything associated with or which had European origins was good and acceptable while everything African was bad and evil. Likewise this perception of reality argues that Africanised worship is evil. Such unfounded discriminatory utterances has led to Africanised worship not being recognised by most 'mainline churches' even in this current dispensation.

African culture and religion have been played down for so long that those who wanted to be in power due to their competitiveness began to perceive that which was African as inauthentic. The result was that African people were socialised into that reality. Therefore religious reality was such that people would side-line any one who practised African religion and culture. This is clearly evident in what one of my informants said,

> "When people see you going to an inyanga or a sangoma or seeing you practising your culture and religion, they would say you are evil and worst of all regard you as a witch, superstitious, idiot and traditional".

For Europeans, religion is Christianity. They use Christian characteristics to define a religion. Thus when they arrived in Africa they met something different, something outside their world-view. They regarded such a religion as 'primitive or traditional'. For them, "the simpler the technology and the social structure, the more degraded the religion and indeed any other conceptions" (Evans-Pritchard 1965:107).

Hence in the 19th century many scholars began to regard religion as a "uniform evolutionary development of totemism, animism, being rather a primitive philosophical theory than a form of religious belief" (Evans-Pritchard, 1965:5). This implies that people around this time according to Evans-Pritchard's analysis,

> "were seen as bad and stupid because they have bad institutions because they are ignorant and superstitious and because they have exploited in the name of religion by cunning and avaricious priests and the unscrupulous classes which have supported them".(1965:5)

This 19th century thinking on religion was taken by Westerners to Africa but was changed. It was African religion that was inauthentic, primitive, undeveloped, magic, simple and uncivilised. Christianity was perceived as authentic and modern and essentially rational. The European world-view of rationality was used to explain religion. This is the reason why there were changes on whether African religion existed or not. It was a constant shift of denial and acceptance of the existence of African religion. In the end, around 1917, it was said that it exists but it is 'primitive African religion" (Chidester 1996:85).

One can see that the 19th century European philosophers positively and negatively impacted on the study of religion. They contributed a lot to knowledge. If it was not for them we would not have the bulk of knowledge that we have at our disposal, but they also left a misconception that modernity is linked to religion, Christianity in particular. Evans-Pritchard argues that some of the philosophers saw African religion as 'primitive' because "they saw it as a weapon that could be used to down- play Christianity" (1965:15). Despite this reason, Evans-Pritchard fails to show the underlying factor, which is that these philosophers perceived Africans as barbaric, primitive, stupid and unscientific. Within this context one could clearly not expect something rational from someone who is regarded as stupid (Kgari 1998:4).

Kgari contends that those with power and influence in society define what is "real" in society, constructing norms and values to protect their position. They use language as a tool, a device to determine social, cultural and religious boundaries. They use language to create in-groups, i.e. those with similar interests, views and ideologies. In the same process they automatically signal those who are not part of the in-group. Missionaries, in this sense, had the necessary tools and ideologies to structure worship and religion to the exclusion of African culture and tradition, which was regarded as the "other" .

Further, Kgari correctively depicts the dominant conventional norms of the missionaries as "society" that speaks 'language'. Their worship and liturgy were extrapolated as normative and authentic.

3.4 Chidester's Assessment of the First Missionaries and European Travellers

Chidester (1996) in his book "Savage Systems" contends that the initial comparative manoeuvre under intercultural conditions was most often denial and the assertion that people had been found who lacked any religion. Ironically, therefore, the historical origin of the academic discipline of comparative religion can be traced back to European discoveries of the absence of religion.

South Africa has for a long time been under white minority rule. During this time western culture, tradition, custom, law and religion were forced upon all sectors in society. Western standards were used as normative or to determine the authenticity of anything . Religion was used to structure society with whites at the top and Africans at the bottom of the social ladder. Chidester (1992:89) backs this up by arguing that religion was used to differentiate along racial lines. Within this system Africans suffered because "they were seen by missionaries as people without a religion; thus without a right" .

Most missionaries held the same views as those mentioned above. The only difference is that missionaries wanted to dominate Africans. They wanted to convert them to Christianity and for them conversion meant becoming European before accepting the Gospel. Chidester has this to say about them,

> "In the history of missions large scale mass conversion to Christianity was in fact linked to the destruction of the independent African economical, social and political life".(1992:38)

In this manner Africans experienced the worst form of discrimination which Bar-Tal calls "delegitimation: the denial of categorised groups of humanity" (1989:171). In South Africa, Africans were dehumanised and were seen as sub-humans, an inferior race. Allport takes this further in his definition of discrimination as "any behaviour which denies individuals or groups of people equality of treatment which they may wish" (Berger, 1966:10). Thus one can see that discrimination is still practically observable in relation to African religion. This religion is perceived by many as "traditional, primitive, inauthentic: superstition, witch-craft". Many authors continue to treat African religion not only as handed down from generation to generation, but as static. Conventional philosophy of religion in the West has always tended to be the philosophy of the Christian religion.

As one frontier closed with the establishment of European hegemony over Khoisan people, a second frontier opened against Xhosa-speaking people in the Eastern Cape. The practice of comparative religion there also began with denial. According to the European missionaries, the Xhosa had no religion. Missionaries, travellers, settlers and agents of the colonial government consistently reported that they had no Christian perspective. This view is used to measure all other religions. And as a result African religion was inauthenticated and reduced to a tradition. Hence the name African

traditional religion. Therefore it was important to change this religion.(Chidester 1992: 73)

As a people the Africans were designated by the term "kafir" which meant unbeliever. During the seventeenth century the term "Cafres" was often applied to the Hottentots and Bushmen in the Cape. As Jodocus Hondius recorded in 1752, there were no signs of belief or religion to be found among them and it is for this reason they were called Cafres. By the end of the eighteenth century the term had been reserved for Nguni people in the eastern Cape and Natal regions.

In comparison with other wild African nations, such as "kafirs", Mentzel argued, "the Hottentots are far more moral, humane, just, honest and faithful. The unanimous European denial of the existence of any Xhosa religion continued as long as the Xhosa maintained political independence and mounted armed resistance against colonial encroachment. After their national destruction in 1857, the Xhosa suddenly had a religion, proving that even unbelievers could acquire a religion under colonial subjugation". (Chidester 1996:75)

Later the term "Christian" was modified into sociological and cultural terms and easily coalesced with the assumption that Blacks were inferior and less than human. Afrikaners came up with pseudo-theological interpretations which reinforced the sociological assumption of the inferiority of Blacks. During the 18th century, Blacks who were trained by European missionaries were still considered heathen while those European farmers or

cattle-persons who had no religious affiliation were considered Christian. This distinction was written on the hearts of Afrikaners as a sociological a priori. To ensure the continued existence of this Afrikaner ideology the Afrikaners introduced an artificial boundary, the political and social doctrine of Apartheid.

In one of the earliest encounters on the eastern Cape frontier John Barrow tried to engage the Xhosa in conversations about religion. Sensitive to the difficulties inherent in his enquiry, Barrow observed that "so different are the opinions and the feelings of different nations concerning religion and so difficult do the most civilised people find it to express their notions clearly and consistently of the unknown God that little satisfactory information can be collected on these points without a familiar and extensive knowledge of the language of the people among whom the inquiry is made.

In 1800 the first representative of the London Missionary Society in Southern Africa, the former soldier, farmer, linguist and biblical scholar J.T van der Kemp, reported about the situation in his mission field in the Eastern Cape. In the context of a general survey of customs, population, government, language, history and natural productions, Van der Kemp provided a preliminary assessment of the indigenous religion of the Xhosa-speaking people in the region. Van der Kemp made a surprising discovery. He had found "no religion", an absence , an empty space in the intellectual register and cultural practices of Xhosa-speaking people. If by religion we understand reverence of God, or the external action by which that reverence is expressed, Van der Kemp reported:

> "I never could perceive that they had any religion, nor any idea of the existence of God". Based on his single standard for what counted as religion, Van der Kemp was able to deny the presence of any religion at all among the Xhosa-speaking people of the Eastern Cape". (Chidester 1996:76)

To justify the absence of religion amongst the Xhosa Van der Kemp pointed to the presence of certain "superstitions". He argued against Le Vaillant's assertion that there could be no superstition where there was no religion. If Le Vaillant had lived among these unbelievers, Van der Kemp insisted, he would have observed that they were "extremely superstitious without religion". They combined "credulity and unbelief". Like Van der Kemp, the German traveler, Lichtenstein also measured the absence by the presence of "superstition". Among the people of the Eastern Cape he insisted, "there is no appearance of any religion and as a result of that absence, the people were addicted to the grossest superstition. They believed in magic, charms, oaths, curses, prognostics, piles of stones and an anchor that had been washed ashore from a shipwreck off the Cape coast" (Chidester 1996:76).

On another frontier, therefore another campaign of denial was mounted against local religion in southern Africa. But why this fascination with the anchor? It is tempting to speculate that observers were preoccupied with the apparent mystification of a European artifact as if it symbolised supernatural European power in Africa. It is important to note that the eastern Cape was not a region populated only by indigenous, Xhosa-speaking people living in primitive isolation. It was a plural, diverse social field, a

network of cross-cultural social relations that also involved Khoisan, Muslims and European settlers, as well as Christian missionaries, travelers and agents of an expanding colonial government (Chidester 1996:78).

To understand the Xhosa regard for this anchor, assuming that the reports by Van der Kemp, Lichtenstein and Alberti are in any respect reliable, we would need to know much more about the local symbolic idioms in which it might have been perceived by Xhosa-speaking people. It is important to place meaning and language within a specific context, i.e. that meaning attached to symbols et cetera depends on the context.

The dominant religious paradigm in South Africa is one which has a Western Christian perspective. Therefore it is important to change this reality of perceiving anything, including religion from a Western perspective. Reality is not static, it changes and for this reason Berger argues that:

> "everyday life presents itself as a reality interpreted by people and subjectively meaningful to them as a coherent world. People take it as given" (1966:33).

Ever since the end of the 18th century, with the arrival of Dr Johannes van der Kemp, the message of the social gospel has been a characteristic of at least some sections of South African Christianity. Indeed, the very logic of the missionary project, the total reformation of the personalities of those trapped in sin, required, where necessary, intervention to help create a society in which this would be possible. This could lead to

attempts to impose on African societies, those norms and values of nineteenth-century Europe which were thought to be essential to a Christian life. Nevertheless, the same impulse which gave rise to this arrogant and cultural imperialism, as it has been seen, also fuelled attacks on the structure of colonial society when this was thought inimical to a Christian life.

One can argue that the contributions of missionaries, some early philosophers and some scholars today have impacted negatively on the study of African religion. It resulted in many distortions about Africans and their world-view and it was used as a justification for their eventual subjugation. Christianity and its Western baggage was used as an interpretive tool to understanding African religion and its cultural practices. And as a result, African religion was misinterpreted and undermined. Evans-Pritchard (1965:6) writes:

> "Many anthroplogists whose theories have been influential have not been near a 'primitive people' and relied on information by European explorers, missionaries, administrators and traders. This evidence is highly suspect. Much of it was false and almost all of it was unreliable and by modern standards of professional research casual, superficial, out of perspective, out of context and to some extent this was true even of the earlier professional anthropologist".

It is, however, important to also note that the contribution of these people to the study of religion should not be underestimated. Their conclusions and analyses were influenced by their social and intellectual reality, a European, scientific world-view. According to

Berger their social and intellectual reality is, "a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognise as having a being independent of our volition. It is taken for granted" (1966:16). This reality is socially constructed and it is shared by people. It is taken as God-given by ordinary people. Everyone who deviates from the norm is sidelined and is regarded as an outsider or an outcast. And as a result, people are"obliged to suspend such doubts as [they] routinely exist in everyday life" (Berger, 1966:38). This implies that people end up not questioning things because they regard their life as unquestionable. Those who risk being sidelined are sometimes captive to what their society regards as real. They find it hard to rid themselves of the shackles that society imposes on them (Evans-Pritchard 1965).

Chidester's analysis sees religion also being used as a tool to structure society along racial and class lines. Missionaries simply denied the existence of African religion and forced it to occupy a "non-religious" category. Chidester argues that African resistance to colonial rule was an important component in the denial and non-recognition of their African religious heritage. Submission to political power of colonial rule in this case, also meant submission to missionary Christianity. The gross misconception by European missionaries and researchers about Xhosa tradition and culture, their symbols, their myths and rituals led to the assassination of what it it meant to be African in an African context. The inability and refusal of the missionaries to develop an effective 'language' with which to understand and interpret African culture and world -views, clearly and dogmatically signalled that there was room for compromise.

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Chidester definitely defines the two groups as well; one the colonial oppressor and patron – this is the dominant group. The other is the out-group. Chidester vividly depicts the power relations between the in- and out-groups. Religion of the in-group was also used to denigrate the powerful indigenous leaders. Throughout history this phenomenon runs like a tapestry. It had a political and an economic consequence just like the state.

3.5 **Bredekamp's Assessment of the First Moravian Missionaries**

Bredekamp in his book "Missions and Christianity in South African History" contends that during the period 1936 and 1945 a non-racial Christian community existed at Genadendal Mission Station in the Caledon district. At that time the boundaries of apartheid and ethnic differences did not exist. This mission also gave birth to the vision of ecumenism that made people realise that despite all the confessions that separate us, there is a deeper bond of Christian love and faith which could transform all these divisions.

He also looked at the variety of tensions which the naturalisation of Christianity brought with it. He shows how crucial the issues of the history of private life and of subaltern groups are to the history of Christianity. The Moravians were able to provide protection in what was a very hostile environment and in so doing, they reached an accord with the farmers of Stellenbosch district within a few years of Genadendal's foundation. It also shows how the destruction of Khoisan societies in the eighteenth and early nineteenth

centuries made these people particularly receptive to missionary messages, but equally demonstrates how the Khoisan adapted these messages in the light of their existing beliefs, to create an autonomous and specific spiritual repertoire.

From the early nineteenth century, Khoikhoi converts of the Moravians and the London Missionary Society(LMS) discussed by Elizabeth Elbourne, through to the praying and preaching manyanos, or the men and women of Mamre whom Deborah Gaitskell and Kerry Ward respectively have interviewed and written about, were said to possess a depth and sincerity of faith which was unmistakable. It is striking how much faster mission Christianity was adopted by the battered remnants of Khoikhoi communities of the eastern and western Cape in the late eighteenth and early nineteeth centuries than it was by less politically and economically damaged African societies outside the colony. (Bredekamp 1995:4)

"There is at present an amazing eagerness in the Hottentots to be instructed", observed in some surprise Hendrik Marsveld, Daniel Schwinn and Johan Christian Kuhnel, the first Moravian missionaries to resume in 1792, Georg Schmidt's abandoned mission which ran from 1737-43. The news of their arrival had spread like wildfire in the country. The interdenominational London Missionary Society(LMS) found itself in the middle of a war zone in the Eastern Cape, thrown into acting as political brokers. The founders of Bethelsdorp found themselves inundated with war refugees, many of whom subsequently adopted Christianity (Bredekamp 1995:50).

Christianity provided many of its African adherents with the strength to confront the many injustices they have suffered through the colonial ages. Christianity has been used to justify oppression at least as often as it has been used to justify liberation. Christianity was a justification for apartheid as well as a justification for the struggle against it. And even if this were not the case, Christian morality in South Africa could only become as widespread as it has done over the graves, as it were, of what had gone before it. As much as anyone it was the missionaries who worked to smash African religious, social and thereby, political systems, in order to replace these with those imported from Europe. They were never totally successful, of course.

The three Herrnhut missionaries of the United Brethren who arrived in Table Bay on board the vessel, t'Duifie, in November 1792, were granted permission the following month to settle at Baviaanskloof near the Sergeants River. At this former mission station of Georg Schmidt they were allowed to reintroduce the Christian faith to the Khoikhoi, to baptize them and to administer the Christian sacrements. The arrival of the missionaries in the Overberg region was marked by controversy and conflict. The most common contact between farmers and the Khoikhoi of the region in the latter part of the eighteenth century was that of master and servant. (Bredekamp 1995:50)

Unlike most farmers, missionaries had an enlightened view of Khoikhoi humanity. Their preaching of the Gospel was directed mainly at the poor and disadvantaged and they perceived the Khoikhoi to be potential Christians and not simply doomed heathens. It

was these conflicting opinions between farmers and missionaries and the latter's attempts to change the former's views that set the tone for strained relationships.

From the outset farmers displayed a negative attitude towards the Baviaanskloof missionaries. When the farmers heard of the missionaries' arrival in the colony, they began spreading a rumour amongst their Khoikhoi labourers that the missionaries intended to educate them as part of a recruitment scheme with the view to kidnapping them and sending them to Indonisia as slaves. Clearly this untrue rumour was spread in an attempt to ensure that none of their Khoikhoi labourers would leave their service for the proposed mission station. This false rumour also served to send a clear message to the missionaries that they were not welcome in the Overberg region. However, 'baas' Theunissen intervened on behalf of the Moravians, telling the Khoikhoi that these men had come to teach and baptize them. Soon after the missionaries' arrival at Baviaanskloof, a group of Khoikhoi joined them. Included in this group was the remarkable Vehettge Tikkuie (also known as Mother Lena), the only survivor of the few converts who had been baptized by Georg Schmidt in the early 1740's. She had kept the teachings of Schmidt alive until their arrival and showed them a copy of the New Testament. (Bredekamp 1995: 51)

The missionaries saw it as their duty and responsibility to protect, speak and act on behalf of Khoikhoi labourers. This brought about a paternalistic relationship between the missionaries and the Khoikhoi. However within a relatively short time, the Khoikhoi had responded well to the paternalistic aspirations of the missionaries and established new

loyalties, severing their ties with the farmers. The missionary influence was clearly visible in the behaviour of some of the Khoikhoi labourers who still worked on the farms. Many Khoikhoi who adhered to the teaching of the missionaries, resisted the liquor offered by the farmers and demanded proper remuneration for their labour.

In an atttempt to regain the confidence and support of the rural farmers as the British invasion and internal unrest became imminent, Governor Sluysken prohibited the building of a church at Baviaanskloof and prohibited the ringing of a bell to announce the times of worship. Then in January 1795 to accommodate the concerns of the farmers, he announced new labour regulations regarding the movement of Khoikhoi to the mission station. Khoikhoi labourers and their families were able to leave the farms and take their cattle with to Baviaanskloof, only with the consent of the farmers and not before their labour engagements had expired.

Furthermore these regulations stated that Khoikhoi servants who were acquainted with the new orders and who did not comply with them would be constrained to it by force or otherwise taken into custody and sent hitherto to be justly punished for having been disobedient.

New social and religious problems emerged as a result of the Khoikhoi labourers' association with migrant labour. Neglect of family life and liquor abuse now became causes of greater concern for the missionaries as farmers seemed to encourage farm labourers to consume liquor freely. In due course the 'tot system'(dop stelsel) became a

general practice on farms, depressing Khoikhoi wages to approximately three or four schellings a day for men and about one schelling a day for women.

Towards the end of the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) era, the Moravian mission station at Baviaanskloof not only became the centre of Christianity for a certain segment of the social underclasses at the Cape colony, but it also served as a reservoir for farm labour and military service. Although conversion offered the Khoikhoi a Christian identity, it did not give them equal civil rights. In the eyes of the farmers, their status as non-Christian farm labourers remained unchanged.

The achievements of the Moravian missionaries in the few years at the Cape under the DEIC government were quite remarkable. As pioneers of the missionary movement in South Africa, they paved the way for other missionary societies to follow their example. With limited success, they focused attention on the dignity of people irrespective of their social backgrounds. Their ability to respond to burning issues at that time, in respect of encroachments on the land rights of the Khoikhoi and the carrying of passes, must without a doubt, be regarded as one of their successes.(Bredekamp 1995:60)

However more significant was the Moravian Church's pioneering role in introducing Christianity to the indigenous people. In this way they fulfilled a spiritual need, denied to the Khoikhoi for years by the farmers. They did not address the slave question, though, which later was to make inroads on the individual rights of those Khoikhoi who still enjoyed some degree of freedom. For as long as slavery existed at the Cape, it constantly

jeopardized the free identity of the Khoikhoi. This legacy of slavery and slave mentality was illustrated clearly, both before and during the Swellendam rebellion, when farmers demanded that all Khoikhoi become their property and be bound to the farm for life.

However, despite the Khoikhoi's newly adopted Christian identity and values, a large section of the Cape society still refused to acknowledge them as their equals, or their brothers and sisters in faith. To the Khoikhoi, it seemed that the European community was always shifting the goal-posts and setting higher standards for them as a prerequisite for equality. Nevertheless, this did not deter the Khoikhoi from exploring other ways and means to achieve equality with the colonists. Towards the turn of the eighteenth century, the Khoikhoi inhabitants at Baviaanskloof were a community in the making. The Mission station was later appropriately renamed Genadendal, Valley of Grace. (Bredekamp 1995:61)

The German missionaries including Georg Schmidt, came from pietistic movements in their country and were certainly influenced by the universal phenomenon of patriarchy and hierarchy. This was quite evident in the familial, social, ideological and political system in which men by force, direct pressure or through ritual, tradition, law and language, customs, etiquette, education and the division of labour determined what part their women should or should not play and in which females were in every way subsumed under the males.

One such example is of Vehettge Tikkuie who lived in theOverberg region (now Caledon district) during the eighteenth century and came into contact with the Christian religion in 1737 when Georg Schmidt arrived in South Africa. From the diary of Georg Schmidt we learn that Vehettge was an intelligent woman and the first indigenous person in her region that could read from the New Testament. Her knowledge of scripture and the ability to read brought her in conflict with her family and fellow clan members. She had lots of inner conflict concerning her own indigenous religion and the pietistic religion that the missionary brought to her. This gave rise to the development of a distorted self-image within Vehettge of which the missionary had little or no understanding and he could therefore not identify with the tension she was experiencing. (Kruger 1996:17)

A significant happening in her life was 4 April 1742 when she became the first woman to be baptised by the missionary. He first baptised three men and because he could not find any other suitable male, he turned to Vehettge. He baptised her and renamed her Magdalena, totally denouncing her identity.

Strangely enough the missionary never used Vehettge to assist him with his missionary task. When he was forced to leave South Africa for political reasons in 1743 he left the responsibility of the congregation in the hands of the men who had been baptised with her. Soon after his departure the men disappeared from the scene and Vehettge prominently stepped forward and continued the work. She diligently continued to teach the Khoikhoi people to read from the New Testament and to pray.

She was the last living link between Georg Schmidt and the renewed missionary initiative of the Moravian Mission Board. In his diary Georg Schmidt makes more mention of her husband than of her. This significant woman occupies merely a peripheral position in the written documents of the Moravian church. Although she excelled as the first female person who spread the gospel among the people of her time, she never received credit for her contribution.

The missionary with his patriarchal teachings, wanted Vehettge to break with her own life-style, her culture and religion. This was extremely difficult for her and caused her much frustration and distress. Schmidt in turn blamed her for being disobedient unto Christ. It is clear that his limited theology and vision could not assist her in her search for understanding. He could not relate the biblical concepts to her life-style and questions and thus gave her a hierarchical concept of her being sinful and bad. She was thus dehumanised.

Vehettge is an example of denial of woman's language as language. The plight of this woman also symbolises the plight of women in the Church in South Africa as there are still many churches not believing in women preaching or even woman's ordination. In many African churches women are still regarded as being subservient to men and men still occupy leadership positions.

With Vehettge we are made aware of the conflict introduced by her knowledge of scripture and her ability to read this new language. My ideal is to soften and lessen this

conflict produced by the concept of the German European language with its different forms, meanings and symbols which are totally unfamiliar in the South African Black cultural context.

The experience of women through the ages gives us a specific life situation as a starting point of critical reflection and correlation to our present day context. The experience of Vehettge Tikkuie lends itself as a source of theological reflection regarding the dignity and worth of women in the commonwealth of God.

A critical reflection and analysis of the life of this unique and significant indigenous woman in the history of the Moravian Church in South Africa, will assist us as women continue with the restructuring and transforming of our own lives, the life of the church and society. In an effort to analyse and rediscover her story we must, however, be careful not to universalise or absolutise her experience as the experience of all women of her time.

3.6 SUMMARY

Bredekamp gives a far more positive analysis of missionary interaction with certain African sectors. In comparison to Kgari and Chidester, Bredekamp has a far more humane approach. This does signal a subtle shift in attitude on the part of some of the Moravian missionaries. The enlightened, more open attitude of Moravian missionaries allowed for the establishment of relationships between them and their African converts, in which missionaries became protectors/fathers of their flock. The question which arises: Did they speak a different language to the other missionaries?

The public image of the Moravian missionaries was vital within a divided Cape society, as it successfully demonstrated that skin colour did not determine access to Christianity. They made no distinction between rich farmers and their poor labourers when it came to the spreading of the Gospel. The enlightened attitude of the missionaries made their teachings extremely popular amongst the Overberg Khoikhoi. Christianity was seen as an avenue to explore spiritual freedom and salvation and the doctrinal differences between missionary societies were of no interest. Moreover, many Khoikhoi adopted Christianity as opposed to witchcraft, traditional beliefs or perhaps more important, the millenarian fantasies many had embraced in 1788.

However, the attitude of the Moravian missionaries towards their women congregants was extremely discriminatory as seen in the way in which they dealt with Vehettge Tikkuie. It is obvious that the women were regarded as being subservient to the men.

The language of the women was regarded as anti-language while the men spoke the language.

I would therefore like to confirm that the biblical concept of justice includes freedom from the bondage of male-oppression. As women we need to always have a critical mind capable of differentiating between the liberating spirit of the Gospel and the culturally-bound historical context. An increasing number of African women find the courage to knock down these prison walls and they write about their perception of male-domination.

CHAPTER 4: Africanisation and Inculturation of Worship in the Langa Moravian Congregation: Liturgy in a New Key

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores "inculturation, indigenization" and "Africanization" as it has and has not taken place in the Moravian Church at Langa, where I have been a probation minister and subsequently an ordained minister, from 1998. It explores the tensions that have been engendered and the steps which might be taken towards the amelioration of the present undesirable situation.

The conflicted history of inculturation in Langa needs to be addressed. It is recognised that life is not static but dynamic, that world-views change and human identity is reconstructed. So moves are indicated that will help to transform the attitudes of the faithful. The suggestions include dialogue within properly defined roles. The aim is an atmosphere of discussion and shared decision-making, that is, active participation in leadership and genuine collegeality in a Church which no longer insists on its own monochrome culture, but exists as a multicultural family of sisters and brothers in communion.

This chapter looks at the problems facing the church of the growing awareness of the relationship between gospel and culture. The problem of how the gospel relates to various cultures is a deep and complex subject as it affects people's Christian experience and their spirituality. It also shows how colonialism did not create space for the African culture. The African community accepted Christianity but clung to their own culture.

The dominant group did not recognise that African culture had its own wisdom, insights and values that shaped the lives of Africans.

This chapter also shows how those who propagated and adhered to Western Christian culture caused so many social injustices and oppression in our country. How could the values of a culture become sinful, dehumanising and contradictory to the gospel that shaped it? It was an exclusive culture that would not embrace all the citizens and inhabitants of this country. This Western Christianity became the language and was regarded by some people as an absolute to which the highest allegiance was to be given, while African worship was and still is regarded by many mainline churches as heathen.

The history of the Moravian congregation demonstrates that the society of the missionaries was the antithesis of the indigenous society. The culture and the customs of the missionaries were therefore products of the dominant society. All these phenomena were summed up in the name of 'worship or liturgy'. Missionary worship and liturgy were practices of dominant society.

We will also discuss how the African culture and spirituality were dominated by the language and spirituality of the patron society and how this in turn gave rise to the African Independent Churches which came into being as a direct result of the oppressive and exclusive nature of the Eurocentric-paternalistic tendency of the 'mainline churches'. This chapter will also discuss the place the Moravian congregation of Langa occupies in the total spirituality of Moravianism.

4.2 The Struggle between Africanisation and the Internalisation of Eurocentric Worship in Langa.

It goes without saying that in patron-client societies inculturation and indigenisation are processes that are dominated by patron societies. The African way of life, worship, ceremonial and festivities, characterised, inter alia, by clapping of hands, beating of drums, playing of marimbas, dancing, singing, ululating and narrating of poems is expected to manifest itself during the Eucharist. Africans should be able to worship through their own symbolism, mythology, rites and rituals and through their languages. The Western way of life, of worship, of ceremonial symbolism should be replaced by the African way of life. The loss of identity and belonging that came to Africans with their conversion to the Christian religion comes on top of the loss of identity that comes through education, industrialisation and urbanisation.

Religion and worship have allowed people to experiment in different ways of being human. However, religion has also been implicated in forces of dehumanisation in South Africa. Religion has been entangled with economic, social and political relations of power that have privileged some, but have excluded many from a fully human empowerment. Religion and worship must be allowed to appear within a history of the relations of domination, resistance and recovery that have made being human in a particular place meaningful. Religion was invoked in attempts to legitimate political, social and economic domination; but it was also drawn into struggles for liberation from domination.

It is rather surprising and of course totally incomprehensible how many of the 'mainline churches' in the African communities have adapted to the culture of their Westernised Eurocentric liturgies. This European liturgy and more specifically the German liturgy in the Moravian Church, has been practised very loyally and diligently over the years. This has been practised without any question about the legitimacy or authority of its form and structure and content. This is truly a reflection of how the clients internalised their suppression and how they never questioned their own suppressive and oppressive liturgy and worship as introduced by the masters. The language of the patron has been internalised by the client and Langa Moravian Church is a case in point of non-recognisable religious practices. Whatever form of worship and spirituality that were practised by the indigenous people before the colonialists arrived, had been consummated by colonial spirituality. The Moravian Church in Langa has no language of its own but makes use of the language of the missionaries. The content of the language is reflective of the patron. This internalisation of the language/culture of the master is what Freire talks about. Certain elements of African religious worlds can be assumed to have had a fairly long history, even though their form and content certainly changed under the pressures of colonialism during the nineteenth century.

However, there are those churches which no longer accepted the language of the patron and wanted to start their own indigenous churches in their own language and practising their own culture. Such a movement which started under the auspices of the Independent Church movement in Africa, has been in existence in various forms for well over a century. As early as the 1880's the first of these movements began to appear and today it

is a well- known phenomenon in every country where Christianity has become established.

With the suppression of African culture in the black 'mainline' churches, there has thus been the mushrooming of the African Independent Churches(AIC). These churches are sometimes called 'spirit' churches and came into existence precisely because they could not express themselves culturally in the mission-originated churches. In the indigenous churches, the gap between gospel and culture does not exist at all. In fact in these churches cultural practices and cultural elements are fully incorporated into worship. Hence the use of drums (*amagubu*) during worship services among the Zionists who form the majority of the African Independent Churches. African traditions and rituals like sacrificing animals to the ancestors, are part of the liturgy (worship) in these churches.

Nehemiah Tile, who broke away from the Methodist Church in 1884 to form the Thembu National Church, is credited with being the first AIC leader in South Africa itself, even though several earlier examples can be cited from other African countries. In due course some have disappeared, but the greatest majority have continued to exist and to grow. The largest group in South Africa today is the Zion Christian Church which was started by Engenas Lekganyane in 1924 and has today, under the leadership of Engenas' grandson Barnabas, an estimated following of well over a million. The annual Easter rally of this church at its headquarters at Zion City, Moria, in Northern Province, just east of the city of Pietersburg, has become a well publicised event, if for no other reason than

for the tremendous exodus from the PWV areas resulting in mammoth traffic congestions on the road to the North.(Pauw, 1993: 15)

To surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognise its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation – one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity. But the struggle to be more fully human has already begun in the authentic struggle to transform the situation. Although the situation of oppression is a dehumanised and dehumanising totality affecting both the oppressors and those whom they oppress, it is the latter who must, from their stifled humanity, wage the struggle for a fuller humanity; the oppressor who is himself dehumanised because he dehumanises others, is unable to lead the struggle (Freire,1972:24).

The oppressed, who have adapted to the structure of domination in which they are immersed and have become resigned to, are inhibited from waging the struggle for freedom so long as they feel incapable of running the risks it requires. Moreover, their struggle for freedom threatens not only the oppressor, but also their own oppressed comrades who are fearful of still greater repression. When they discover within themselves the yearning to be free, they perceive that this yearning can be transformed into reality only when the same yearning is aroused in their comrades. But while dominated by fear of freedom they refuse to appeal to, or listen to the appeals of, others, or even to the appeals of their own conscience. They prefer gregariousness to authentic

comradeship; they prefer the security of conformity with their state of unfreedom to the creative communion produced by freedom and even the very pursuit of freedom (Freire, 1972:24).

Paulo Freire's thoughts represents the response of a creative mind and sensitive conscience to the extraordinary misery and suffering of the oppressed around him. His early sharing of the life of the poor also led him to the discovery of what he describes as the 'culture of silence' of the dispossessed. He came to realise that their ignorance and lethargy were the direct product of the whole situation of economic, social and political domination and of the paternalism of which they were victims. Rather than being encouraged and equipped to know and respond to the concrete realities of their world, they were kept 'submerged' in a situation in which such critical awareness and response were practically impossible. It became clear to him that the whole educational system was one of the major instruments for the maintenance of this culture of silence (1972:10).

Similarly, one sees the exact culture of silence amongst the congregants of the mainline churches and especially at Langa. Often the congregants are not even aware of their own oppression and subjugation of the forms of worship which they have grown accustomed to and seldom, if ever, do they question anything. They struggle Sunday after Sunday with the German/European tunes and never even realise how they have silently internalised this European culture. The client has internalised its suppression as well as the language of the patron. Langa is a case in point of a non-recognisable religion. Whatever happened before has been consummated by the colonial spirituality.

Traditionally, Xhosa music is not heard, it is not part of the old key. Yet Xhosa music is music in a new key. Whoever sings this music is singing in the new key as well. All this music has a spirituality which should be linked to liturgy. This music should form the core of African spirituality and should be the core of Africanisation.

According to Freire (1972:13) the oppressed person feels an irresistible attraction towards the oppressor and his/her way of life. Sharing his way of life becomes an overpowering aspiration. In their alienation, the oppressed wants at any cost to resemble the oppressor, to imitate him and to follow him. The oppressed wants to internalise the language of the oppressor as this gives the former a false sense of power. Almost never do they realise that they too know things which the oppressor does not know.

At all stages of their liberation, the oppressed must see themselves as people engaged in the ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human. Reflection and action become imperative when one does not erroneously attempt to create a dichotomy between the content of humanity and its historical forms.

Many of the hymns composed by Ntsikana are being sung in Langa community, in most of the churches. Ntsikana(c. 1780-1821), a Xhosa composer, through his compositions, is an example of the internalisation of the language of the patron. He is linked with the beginnings of Christianity among the Xhosa-speaking people. He is remembered for preparing the way for the Gospel among his countrymen during the early part of the

nineteenth century and is revered by many Africans as a prophet and a saint. His teaching has been kept alive by successive generations of Xhosa Christians and the four hymns which he composed, the earliest in Xhosa, are a vital part of this living tradition. On examining the Great Hymn, its significance can be regarded as the beginnings of an indigenous theology in Southern Africa, one hundred and sixty years ago. (Hodgson 1980: 4).

Ntsikana moved from traditional religion to Christianity in two stages. The first followed his conversion and incorporated the relation to a 'God' rather than the ancestors without it being clear how much this was 'God' as understood in the Xhosa tradition and how much the concept at this stage owed to Christianity. During the ensuing years Ntsikana regularly visited the station to receive religious instruction and to take part in the worship, so gaining a deeper insight into the Christian tradition. His more biblical teaching clearly dates from this period. He felt the great need to disregard his own traditional religion in favour of the religion of the 'masters'. He disregarded his own language in favour of the language of his oppressors.

Ntsikana is an example of internalisation of the language of the patron by the client. If his hymn is unpacked then the Eurocentric methods of theological expression emerge. In traditional Xhosa poetry a distinction can be made between praise-poems and lyric and traditional verse, including songs. Although praise-poems are described as being sung, they are actually shouted. They differ from songs in that they are not delivered to a recurrent tune, nor are they ever antiphonal or choral, for the poetry is always the

production of an individual. Xhosa songs on the other hand are more often than not communal and antiphonal, in that many voices may sing in unison, or many people may clap rhythmically while one sings or many may lay down a recurrent refrain while a leader sings a fixed or improvised song. (Hodgson 1980:8)

Ntsikana's other hymns show similar links with Xhosa musical tradition. They are composed in a cyclical form and are sung antiphonally. Further the 'Great Hymn' is sung today to the same melody and harmony pattern as the 'Round Hymn' which therefore also links it with umdudo music. At the same time cognisance must be taken of the innovations which Ntsikana introduced. For example, although the popular themes of war and hunting are present in the Great Hymn, this imagery is used as the carrier of new concepts and although the hymn is in the literary form of a praise-poem, its Christian content is a radical departure from tradition as is the singing of it as a praise to God.

Bokwe's findings about the chequered history of the music of the 'Great Hymn' are corroborated by J.J.Owen as he wrote to the correspondence column of the Methodist Churchman of 1916:410:

> "Native Christians have become so much accustomed to the English metre and tunes that in some places they have lost the art of singing in their own way. There are two Xhosa ways of singing Ntsikana's hymn, but most of the folk I have known are not acquainted with one of the tunes at all and in the other, with which the majority are still familiar, there is frequent confusion in several of the lines owing to a difference in the number of syllables in the lines, or to the length of words varying in a similar number of beats".

A criticism of Bokwe's transcription is that he wrote down and arranged the music in Western style using tonic sol-fa notation. Dargie argues that this 'encourages the singing of the music according to the scale intervals of the Western scale intonation. Nonetheless, he maintains that western influences do not detract from the fact the the music is still strongly Xhosa in character, even as performed on the Tracy disc in a hall and by singers whose ear is somewhat influenced by Western notation.

In his comments on the musical style of Ntsikana's hymns, Dargie notes that the music of the 'Round Hymn' as transcribed by Bokwe is substantially the same as the recorded performance of the 'Great Hymn' by the Zwelitsha Choral Society and as a wedding song. The melody is the same, they all exhibit the same typically Africa 'saw pattern' of pitch relationships in which the melody moves in a descending pattern of small or great intervals. The harmony pattern is also the same, what Kirby calls the parallelism of the vocal parts. It is based on typical Xhosa tonality shift between two triads a whole tone apart and contrasts with Western harmonic usage. Tonality shift is almost universal harmonic practice but the way it is used by the Xhosa is possibly unique. In traditional music where this harmony pattern is used, the melody also uses the raised fourth and not the perfect fourth. Dargie concludes, therefore, that the perfect fourth in the melody of all recorded choral performances of Ntsikana's hymns as well as in Bokwe's transcriptions is not authentic and shows European influence. In addition, he indicates a number of other ways in which the recorded choral performances exhibit influences of

makwaya style, i.e. the style affected by African musicians in attempting to perform or compose in European choir style. (Kirby 1975:13)

Another example of his internalisation of the language of the patron is also his usage of the words 'heaven up there'. This is clearly not the African way as Africans generally regard God as being amongst them and not far removed as in the European tradition.

Similarly like in the case of Ntsikana, we find that most of the hymns in the Xhosa hymnal are sung to European tunes at Langa Moravian Church, although the lyrics have been translated from German, English or Afrikaans into Xhosa. Because the Western musical scale differs from the African scale, people often struggle with the German tunes. Sunday after Sunday we have the same phenomenon whereby the congregants struggle to sing the hymns from the hymnal. Some of the more rhythmical ones, have been Africanised by the congregants over the years and they now sing it in a transposed way. In fact, without even realising it, the congregants are trying to compose a liturgy in a new key.

African music and dancing have revealed to many the depth of the spiritual and cultural will to survive amid situations of extreme oppression, thereby encouraging people not to lose hope but to keep on fighting until freedom comes. The spirituality of Black churches creatively expressed in worship and the theology emerging from it, have also been taken to many parts of the globe, strengthening the determination of the oppressed "to keep

their faith in the God of justice" whose righteousness is always found in the liberation of the oppressed.

Langa township is on the periphery of the city, out of sight on the far side of the buffer zone which was required by the former apartheid policy, very poor by comparison with most of the suburbs and was reserved for occupation by Black Africans, most of them Xhosa-speaking. Langa has a total population of approximately 40 000 people. Despite the rows and rows of matchbox houses which accommmodate most of the people who mainly live in overcrowded conditions, despite the appalling socio-economic conditions in Langa and that most people live in abject poverty, they sing the most vibrant and uplifting music.

The attitude of the whites who settled in South Africa, towards the presence of Africans in the towns and cities has always been ambivalent. On the one hand, more and more black labour was required as the mines and industries grew and measures such as imposing cash taxes on black peasants and restricting their access to land were used to force them into wage-earning employment; on the other hand, once Africans had moved off the land, whites were unwilling to accept them as full and permanent members of urban communities. Today the situation has not changed much. African people still reside on the outskirts of the towns although their serivces are required in the cities.

The African labourers who first came to Cape Town were housed by their employers, some in compounds specially designated for them, such as that for dock-workers which

was already in existence by 1890, but others were scattered throughout greater Cape Town on their employers' premises, or wherever a room could be found. Those who were living under insanitary conditions in the slums of Cape Town were offered accommodation at a low rental in a new suburb called Ndabeni.

In the early 1950's black inhabitants of the nearby areas of Kensington, Maitland and Ndabeni were moved en masse due to the notorious Group Areas Act. The move and all that was experienced as a result of this, has built a long history of solidarity among Langa residents in general and among members of the congregation in particular, many of whom knew each other from the days when they worshipped together in places such as Maitland and Kensington.

4.2.1 **Socio-Economic Profile of Langa**

Of the approximately 40 000 inhabitants, about 20% of the population is between ages 5 and 19 (school-going age). About 58.2% is economically active (between ages 16 and 64). A notable feature is that the male population is much higher than the female population (by 66,6% or 8 000 people). About 49% of the population earns no income at all. 35,85% of the income earners earns less than R10 000 per annum (approximately R835,00 per month). Only 14, 53% of the populatiobn earns more than R2 000 per month.

The Langa community is housed under the following conditions:

12 000 people in 1 025 "converted hostel units"

12 000 people in 1 808 row housing units

2 200 people staying in 220 semi-detached housing units

1 700 people in 335 individually designed (middle to higher income) housing units.

Notable community facilities in Langa include the community hall, day hospital which will be moved to Bonteheuwel, the adjacent township, post office and a police charge office.

The above-mentioned facilities are not able to meet the requirements or needs of the community. This is evidenced by:

Large number of students who have to commute for approximately 10-15 km daily, to tertiary insitutions and schools in certain instances;

A large number of people have to be treated in Groote Schuur Hospital (in Observatory) as the hospital in Langa is a day hospital.

For shopping, recreation and other high order facilities, the people of Langa either have to commute to the city (Cape Town) or to the surrounding suburbs, eg Claremont. Therefore there is a dire need for the upgrading of those existing facilities and the establishing of others.

The Moravian Church is situated in Brinton Street which is the last street before the station. Langa is about 13 kilometres south-east of Cape Town. Access to the city is by means of the freeway (N2) running east-west south of Langa. There is also access by means of a rail line running east-west north of the township.

Cape Town itself is situated in the south-western Cape Province (in South Africa) and lies 33 South 18 East.

The Langa Moravian Congregation stems from the Maitland Moravian Congregation and the latter was served by several ministers since its inception in 1903. Not much has been put on record with regard to the Langa parish and therefore I had to rely on some of the older congregants of Maitland and Langa respectively for information. According to my informants Tata Sipambo, Francis Harris (nee Joggems) born 13 August 1914 as well as Helen Kronenberg, born 17 December 1920, daughter of the late Rev David Samuel Kronenberg, all the members of the Moravian Church residing at the squatter camp at Ndabeni, attended worship services together at Maitland. The late Sister and Brother Oliphant served as the link between the congregants and the ministers, helping especially with interpreting from Xhosa to English and vice versa.

Next to Maitland station a squatter camp called Ndabeni was erected and this camp had several members of the Moravian Church, who had moved down from the Transkei area, among them. The Moravian congregants were formerly served by the ministers of Maitland, namely Rev R. Rasmus and Rev D. S. Kronenberg. When the notorious Group Areas Act was implemented, this squatter camp was demolished and people were forcibly removed. A new sub-economic township called Langa, which is situated about 17 kilometres outside the city of Cape Town, came into being with residents of Ndabeni moving there. Thus when they moved to Langa, they continued to be served by Rev D.S. Kronenberg as he travelled to Langa twice a month to conduct services and to serve the sacraments.

Initially the Moravian members of Langa worshipped outside. It was only much later that a certain medical doctor donated a particular hall which he formerly utilised as a surgery, to the Moravian congregtion at Langa. They continued to use this hall for church services and it was only in 1952 that they were able to build their first very own church building, which is still in use today.

In Langa as well as in the rest of the African Church, the gospel-culture theological debate will continue to remain relevant for the Church. This is the case precisely because of the continued suppression of the African culture in the Western forms of worship which characterise worship in the so-called "mainline chuches" mission originated black

churches. This alienation of people's culture in worship sadly has, as will be seen in the following paragraphs, tragic implications for the black "mainline churches".

The suppression of African culture in the Church is most evident in our worship services here at Langa Moravian Church, as well as at other "mainline churches" especially the Sunday morning service as well as Holy Communion. During these services lively rhythmic singing mainly of choruses to which African people like to dance thereby expressing themselves culturally, still remains very much on the periphery. They are first and foremost seldom sung and when they do get sung, it is normally "on the fringes' of the worship service as it were, i.e. after the formal "official" service. As is the case with the black Moravian church, the benediction is pronounced and the congregants shake hands on their way out of the building, whilst choruses are being sung.

If this is bad for worship services, the Holy Communion services are even worse. During these "holy" services nothing of the African cultural rituals be it dancing, clapping hands, ringing rhythmic bells, rhythmic beating of small hand-made cushions (iMpapampa) are allowed. These services are so westernized and typically cold that for one moment you would think that you are somewhere in Europe, in our context, in Germany. Nothing resembles Africa at all. As one German visitor remarked, "I think South African Moravians are even more German than what we (Germans) are when it comes to worship". This worship model reflects Germany of 1700's. In other words what we hold so dearly and cling to so obstinately is not even preserved by its country of origin. This is totally ironic.

The practice of Umjikelo's and Umlaliso's is very popular and extremely well-loved by the African community. They both take the form of preaching, singing and dancing which takes place right throughout the night. Umjikelos's are usually conducted as fund-raising events simultaneously. It is really very moving, touching and spiritually uplifting. It really depicts how the congregation expresses itself in heart and soul and it always appears as if the whole congregation is rejuvenated and spiritually uplifted afterwards. It would be even better if this form of worship could be performed during the Sunday morning service as well, as it really inspires and uplifts the congregants in so many ways.

It is no wonder that the few Africans who remain in the churches of missionary origin (few compared to the the millions who flock to the African Independent churches) e.g. the Zion Christian Church, under Bishop Lekganyane alone has over one million members going to Moria mountains in Pietersburg every Easter for celebrations in their desire to have the gospel connect with them culturally and those who are not bold enough to leave the mainline churches have as a result obtained dual membership. Many of them are "Anglicans by day and Zionists by night" as Bishop Dr Seoka of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa, once remarked. They are good Lutherans/Moravians/ Methodists or members of any other mainline church on Sunday morning and at night they go to the services of the Independent churches. Some of them eventually are lost to these churches. These people appear to be confused by being denied the opportunity to express themselves culturally.

All this is evident of the suppression of African culture in the 'mainline' black Churches which they can ill afford as it has far-reaching implications for the Church. The obvious and serious implications of this is a loss of membership and in consequence a loss of income for the church. No members, no income. This serves as incentive for the Church to become introspective pertaining to their situation . The Church as a self-supporting organization cannot afford to let any member go. Every cent counts.

Preaching and testifying are areas where African culture is not just suppressed but outrightly condemned. All preaching tends to be anti-African and rife with patronising and condescending undertones. African cultural practices, customs and rituals are often spoken ill of. Any attempt to do the opposite is regarded as taboo. As it was during the time of the missionaries when they regarded African cultural practices and customs as being "heathen". The only difference now is that the custodians of the system are the blacks themselves, very ironic indeed! One would have thought African priests taking over from their Western predecessors would have reversed their situation and opted for an affirmation of their African culture.

The popular notion "being saved" in pentecostal circles does not have the same emphasis as denoted by the common belief with the Evangelical/Pentecostal churches where "accepting Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Saviour" is the norm. This repudiation of cultural practices by the very same people who are supposed to uplift these is not just ironic, but also defeatist as it has very negative theological implications.

Furthermore this continued alienation of culture in the life of the mission-originated black churches makes a mockery of the whole question of the Incarnation. When the word became Flesh, it became Flesh in a specific culture, in this case the Jewish culture. In other words, the gospel from it's origins has never been culturally neutral, but in fact racially biased and still remains a bone of contention for black theology. Thus the prevailing situation in our mainline churches clearly goes against the very core of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Incarnation.

4.3 **Inculturation**

Culture is a complex phenomenon within which human beings exist and interact with one another and ultimately with the Supreme Being. It influences human behaviour, emotionally, physically and rationally. Kraft (1984:47) says:

> " Not only is our physical behaviour governed by such cultural patterns.
> Our mental behaviour is likewise pervasively influenced by our culture.
> Our culture shapes both our acting and our thinking."

Culture manifests itself through images and symbols within a particular community and accounts for the essential differences between communities. To be part of a particular culture entails sharing in a unique and complete belief system, unique symbols which may be essentially different from those of the Bible and Christianity. Hence, if they are to be employed for the purposes of inculturation, for understanding Christ, it would necessarily imply a different perception of these old symbols, rites and rituals, as well as

the inevitable filling of new symbols with old meanings. African culture with its emphasis on the ancestors, the living dead, as mediators inevitably shifts some of the focus from Christ and Christ will be understood as dealing with the ancestors and shifting some of the focus from them.

According to Moloi (1995:1) inculturation is an attempt to bridge the gap between the universal Church and the local Church in matters of symbolism, worship, festivals, practices, rites, rituals and mythology. It is the attempt to recognize the fact that the Church is by the nature of its mission, sent to all people of every time and place. It is encumbent upon us to endeavour to create an atmosphere where the African person feels that Christ is truly African.

Ruy O. Costa (1988:x) contends that inculturation and contextualization are distinct and related concepts. Because they are related and because they point to dynamic cultural and social phenomena, they are often used synonymously. This use, however, deflates their peculiarities.

There has been conflict, not necessarily in the belief, but in the expression of that belief. Worship within the Church has been, since its inception, formal, official and legalistic and as a result people became passive participants, unproductive and less committed in faith. The approach of the church has never taken into account the people's cultural background, their way of worship or celebration. It also never took into account their

belief systems. As such, it was Western oriented and it excluded and marginalised many of its members.

Costa further contends that the concept of contextualization was introduced in 1972 by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in response to the need for reform in theological education. The difference between indigenization and contextualization is stated in Ministry in Context, published by WCC Theological Education Fund (TEF):

> "Indigenization tends to be used in the sense of responding to the Gospel in terms of a traditional culture. Contextualization, while not ignoring this, takes into account the process of secularism, technology and the struggle for human justice, which characterises the historical moment of nations in the Third World" (Ministry and Context, 20)

According to Ruy O. Costa, inculturation, indigenization and contextualization are evangelistic-apologetic concepts; inculturation and indigenization are apologetic methods focused on the translation/interpretation of a received text for a given culture, whereas contextualization sees this translation/interpretation as a dialetical process in which text and context are interdependent. The agenda of the first paradigm is what German theologians baptized as "history of salvation", the agenda of the second is what has been called "salvation in history".

Contextualization invites polemical disciplines - such as theology, social philosophy and the social sciences - to an interdisciplinary reflection. Such a reflection, however, is not without methodological puzzles and dilemmas, such as:

1. The axiological place of the disciplines involved: Does any of these discipines have priority over the others?;
2. Intradisciplinary debates: structural vs functional; dynamic vs static views of culture;
3. The circle of questions raised from the self-critical method itself; is not contextualization a child of Western rationalized religion?

Some advocates of inculturation or contextualization claim to find their paradigm in the Bible itself. Saul, the Pharisee who became Paul in order to preach to the gentiles, for example, quoted Greek poetry as the Word of God to Greeks in order to convert Greeks. Similarly in worship much more emphasis should be placed on African tradition and culture, instead of the strong German influence which still tends to permeate worship in the Moravian Church, in order that the Gospel becomes more meaningful to African people.

Discussions on inculturation focus on the symbolic exchange between the faith being preached and the receiving culture. Debates over indigenization include this cultic agenda, but go a step further with the inclusion of conscious power struggles between foreign missionaries and national leaders. Reflections on contextualization represent a

third level of interpretation of the faith, in which, to the cultic aspects and the intrachurch power struggles, is added a process of conscientization about power struggles in the world in which the church actively or passively participates.

According to Imbisa (1993:3) the process of inculturation of the gospel in Africa had been underway for several generations. It is not new but needs to be intensified. Although the terminology is new, the ideas and practices are not. These can be traced through the formation of the people in the Old Testament. This is a lesson on how God formed a people, in an on-going manner over a long period of time. In a similar way inculturation is a process which does not have an end, but is forever being revised.

In considering inculturation one may consider a definition of inculturation and indigenisation. What is indigenization? What challenges are entailed for the Church by indigenization of the liturgy? Who inculturates what and for whom? What is being inculturated, that is, what is the object and what is the subject of inculturation? These are the questions that I will attempt to answer.

By inculturation one is made to think of something which is actually fermented, brewed and cooked by the indigenous for their own common good out of the universal ingredients. The very word "inculturation" is derived from the European language and as such carries with it a particular cultural background. Africans have proper words in their languages which represent their cultures and through which they can best talk about the same things as cooking their own meal, an African meal proper for an African stomach.

To begin with, the concept of inculturation refers to the relationship between culture and religion or between two cultures, Christian culture and Xhosa culture. It refers to the need to recognize that there is an African Theocentricity as opposed to the Eurocentric perception of Christianity. It refers to the African reality and cosmology as opposed to the Christian perception of reality and cosmology. It is mainly about the encounter or confrontation of two certainly different, if not diametrically opposed cultures. What ought to happen in this encounter is a disclosure of each culture to the other in order to create a conducive atmosphere for a dialogue to take place. To be in a better position to deal with this complex phenomenon, a working or operational definition of inculturation is imperative.

Inculturation in the context of this study, is the attempt to make the Christian religion prevalent in Africa by making it truly representative of the indigenous people. Inculturation is a concern or a movement within the broader Church that aims at bringing Christian religion into African cultures in order to be in a better position to express and live the Christian message of salvation through Christ in an African context with an ultimate view that Christ can, as a result, be incarnated into these cultures.

The attempt in the past has too often been to undermine, invade and manipulate the African way of life by means of a foreign religion with the intention of transforming it. It implied that the African way of life is UNGODLY and hence should be transformed into a Christian way of life which is ideal and Godly. The assumption was that the Christian

religion must be accepted in the form in which it was offered, whether that form be American, English or anything else. This is imposition at its worst.

Fr Schineller (1990:16) of the Catholic church in Lesotho says:

> "Inculturation is the incarnation of Christian life and of the Christian message in a particular cultural context, in such a way that this experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question, but becomes a principle that animates, directs and unifies the culture, transforming and remaking it so as to bring about a new creation".

The main issue is not to manipulate with an intention of transforming other peoples' way of life as if God had not already manifested Him/Herself in and through Christ in other peoples' cultures and ways of life; to avoid the imposition of one culture upon another with the unfounded assumption that one culture is superior and the other inferior.

Culture is one of the most emotionally charged concepts in Southern Africa today, mainly because of the invasion by Europeans which resulted in colonisation, domination and then Apartheid, particularly but not exclusively in South Africa.

This colonisation took many forms, not only in governance, but also religion, economy, education and politics. The whole process of colonization led Europeans, whatever they might say to the contrary, to actions tending to the annihilation of African cultures,

customs and traditions through their foreign societal principles. Western mentality, as opposed to African, deals with dichotomies in reality, where beings, humans, animals, all sentient beings, were and are classified and studied under the principles of morphology, taxonomy or genealogy.

Father Schineller (1960:22) says:

> "The dichotomy affecting the modern world is in fact, a symptom of the deeper dichotomy which is in man himself. He is the meeting point of many conflicting forces".

African cultures which are the totality of the people, their thinking, religion, mannerisms, behaviour patterns, philosophy et cetera are still afflicted by the European invasion of Africa.

Fr Salvoldi and Fr Sesana (1986:26)say:

> "Now, culture is being defined as the totality of the life of a people. It's relations and it's fundamental aspirations and manifestations result in the loss of one's culture which signifies finding oneself in a more dramatic situation than facing the worst economic breakdown".

The important question remains: How can African cultures be in context with and in collaboration with religious forms, rituals, rites, myths, symbols, which for centuries were originally not only foreign and imposing, but were hostile towards them? Again

one is forced to ask, who inculturates what and for whom and what is being inculturated? While these questions are not being answered yet, they keep on surfacing because they pose the real problem of inculturation which is , "Is inculturation a problem? And if so, is it a problem in Africa? Is it a problem for Africans? Do Africans need to inculturate? Who is the proponent of this problem? What is the object and the subject of inculturation?

Fr Shorter (1994:5)says:

> " In all known historical cultures, religion is the essential element of culture, indeed it is its determining core. It is religion that determines the structure of values and and thereby forms its inner logic. But if this is the case, inculturation of the Christian faith in other cultures appears all the more difficult. For it is difficult to see how a culture, living and breathing the religion with which it is interwoven can be transplanted into another religion without both of them going to ruin. If you remove from a culture its own religion which begets it, then you rob it of its heart. Should you implant in it a new heart, the Christian heart, it seems inescapable that the organism will reject the foreign body".

It follows therefore that inculturation is a complex and difficult phenomenon particularly if no culture is ready or willing to compromise.

Again it is more complex and difficult when the cultures are diametrically opposed to one another, for in African cosmology the invisible is within the visible, in Christian cosmology it transcends it.

This must result in a localized, particular Church, rooted within Africans as well as it can be, while at the same time adhering as closely as it can to the universal principles of the Church. The question is if this could possibly lead to a diversity in unity and not to conflict.

The mission of the Church being salvation for all, liturgy, law, evangelisation as well as Christ Himself must be interpreted in the first place from within a culture, using the peoples' own symbolism, myth, rites and rituals. Where it moves beyond that will depend on many factors.

In many African churches inculturation has been introduced through African languages, that is by performing the Eucharist in the African languages which carry the African symbols; by the composing of hymns which reflect African melody and rhythm; by translating the Bible into African languages and the playing of African instruments. This approach somehow bridged the gap between the former and the latter way of worship but it has not touched the real problem. Fr Schineller (1990:15)says:

> "The danger is that translation becomes not only the starting point, but the only method. That is, the entire catechism, the prayers and liturgy and the Bible are simply translated into the new languages with no creative adaptation or modification in accord with local customs or thought patterns".

Who is adapting and for whom?

While focusing on language we left out another real issue of inculturation which is the structures of the Church.

4.3.1 Structures of the Liturgy of the Moravian Church

The Church is still European in its leadership which suggests that once the African way of being the Church is fully accepted in African communities, the European way of Christianity will go back to Europe and stay there. Fr Schineller (1990:24) says:

> "To be honest, very often we have started the task of inculturation from the wrong end. We introduced drums in the Church, composed local hymns in the vernacular or spoke about specific African values and virtues without first ironing out our mutual relations. The new names we gave each other: cardinal, bishop, priest, religious, deacon, catechist layperson et cetera do they fit in an African home or is it more a question of elders, of parents (fathers and mothers) who have the responsibility of passing on values that symbolize life?"

The inculturation of the structures of the Church will have to focus on the African community which is based on a decentralized planning, shared decision-making and collegial leadership of both the living and the living-dead. From this perception of leadership we no longer make mention of a bottom-up hiearchy but of a communal encompassing of all sectors of the African societal infrastructure. On the same note Fr Shorter (1994:10) says:

> "The life-stream of authority is not so much from high to low but reciprocally from outwards to inwards and back again from within from within towards the outer periphery, all mutually dependent on one another".

The African perception of a community includes both God, the living-dead and the living, as a result the invisible reality is viewed as being within the visible. Fr Bujo (1992:20) says:

> "This hierarchy belongs both to the invisible and to the visible world. In the invisible world, the highest place is occupied by God, the source Then come the founding fathers of clans, who participate most fully in the life of God. Then comes the tribal heroes, deceased elders, other dead members of the family and various invisible beings, including earthly powers, although these belong partly also to the visible world. It seems likely that the cult of tribal heroes is of rather recent origin. Then come beings belonging to the visible world. They include the king and the queen-mother, as well as those of whom wield or represent the royal power; the chiefs of the clans and the older members of families; heads of households; family members".

The living dead are a link between God and the living while the elders are a link between the living and the living-dead and all this is for the common good of all. The elders are seen partly as being linked with the authority of the living dead and with the living generation as upholders of the faith and the morals of the commnuity. They are the go-

betweens, the intermediaries, the pontifics, the bridge-builders between the people alive and the living-dead.

The neglect and marginality of the African way of life which is communal, its entailed relationships, its prototype leadership patterns and its beliefs system in the living- dead often results in the lack of respect for African religion. It is also a confrontation of two world-views which are different in their perception and interpretation of reality.

Christianity is a culture of its own kind with its own tradition, customs, worship, practices, rites, rituals, myths and symbolism. It has its own governance, politics, economy, philosophy, morality and ethics. It has its own way of celebrations and festivals which are essentially different from the African practices. Xhosa culture embraces the same issues although they are understood and interpreted differently. Hence for inculturation to take place, that is for Christ to be seen and felt to be African to the Africans, everything ought to be fermented, brewed and cooked by the Xhosa in a Xhosa way. Ipso facto, the Son of God who came in human flesh, who took human nature and became one with it, will be one with the Xhosa through their culture for the sole purpose of their salvation and not necessarily through the culture of the Biblical world.

In 1989 the Bishops of the Association of Episcopal Conferences of Anglophone West Africa held their Plenary Assembly in Kumasi, Ghana on the theme Evangelization with inculturation as its main orientation. In their published report the bishops stated:

"However, what Jesus spoke regarding traditions he spoke to African traditions. Not only were Jewish traditions marked by features in many African traditions but they also had their roots in the African soil. Christianity is rooted in Jewish history and Jewish history is rooted in turn in African soil. Even without this African connection, the Old Testament reads like a detailed description of what can be found in many African Cultures. Their prayers invoked the supreme God through the name of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – the founding ancestors. They sacrificed animals and poured libations, they had a tribal mark, circumcision. The Jewish practices associated with marriage – polygamy and levirate – are common enough in various ethnic groups in Africa".

(Imbisa 1993:8)

Tradition is defined by Setiloane (1976:13) as the "quality of reasoning about cause and effect". Sharpe (1975:8) takes this further by arguing that tradition means the "living transmission of the crystallised experience of what has happened; not in a stagnant way but in a continual manner". Religion is defined here as the way of life of people. And culture is defined as a "system of symbols and norms which guides a society or group by providing general images of the nature of the world, the purpose of life and at least some of the basic principles by which life should be lived". (Ayisi 1988:17).

In South Africa many people have confused these concepts and ended up arguing as if African religion is the only religion that has traditions and cultures. Likewise they saw the concepts as static when referring to African religion. From the definitions above one

can argue that all religions have two aspects because they form part of the social construction of reality of what religion is. That is the reason why Benavides (in Fu 1989:181) argued that "religion is not an independent variable" it is made up of many aspects of which culture and tradition are parts. These aspects are dynamic in order to fit the status quo.

In South Africa it is vital to understand that all religions should be recognised because every healing system is based on faith and integrated in a world-view. As Blakely (1994:26) observes:

> "We are shaped by tradions and cultures, whether we know it or not. We bear the mark of our broader past that extends temporarily beyond boundaries of our isolated biographies-even when we are unable to recognise it or put it into words".

4.4 Africanisation: The Need for an Africa-Centred Liturgical Order

Africanisation of worship should be seen as a form of liberation. It seeks to plump the oppressed condition in the light of God's revelation of Jesus Christ, so that the oppressed community can see that the gospel is commensurate with the achievement of black humanity. Inculturation is the anti-language of oppression and westernization. It is the affirmative of black humanity that emancipates black people from white racism, thus providing authentic freedom for all people who still suffer from the yoke of oppression

and exploitation. It affirms the humanity of African civilization in that it says no to the encroachment of white and western oppression.

It is one thing to proclaim Africanisation, but quite another to develop a systematic and comprehensive exposition of the faith using the experience of the struggle as the chief source. Very few black theologians and scholars tried to implement this. And most of them did not try to associate the gospel with inculturation. Their views were similar to those who maintained that the universal character of the Christian faith precluded the very idea of an Africanised and inculturized theology; it would reduce Christian theology to the particularity of one people.

Because white theologians still control the seminaries and university departments of religion, many blacks are under the impression that only Europeans and other Westerners have theological supremacy.

Africanisation, it is being said today, does not mean adapting a Western gospel to African culture or thought patterns. According to Idowu, Africanisation means 'allowing the gospel to be reborn in Africa'(1973:11). But as Boesak points out, we cannot begin to talk about ethics, morality and the will of God for us today outside of the context of what God is doing in our present situation (1977:90).

4.4.1 The Drum

One of the most precious gifts God has given to Africans is the gift of singing and dancing. Africans dance on all sorts of occasions to express their inner feelings, whether of joy or of sorrow. While dancing is spontaneous and voluntary, the drumbeat provides the rhythm that holds the dancers together. As the drumbeat sounds, the leader chants the invitation to gather together in rhythmic words.

Although drums in more recent years have become ornaments for decorating the home as well as popular souvenirs for tourists to African countries, their primary function remains their role in cultural activities and rituals. In villages throughout the continent, the sound and rhythm of the drum express the mood of the people. The drum is a sign of life; its beat is the heartbeat of the community.

Such is the power of the drum to evoke emotions, to touch the souls of those who hear its rhythms that the earliest Christian missionaries to Africa forbade its use in church services, imposing instead the organ or piano, sober instruments whose appeal was meant to be cerebral rather than emotional.

A poem by T. Viki published in the Mambo Book of Zimbabwean Verse (1986:17), captures well the way in which the sound of the drumbeat and of singing keeps people togther in Africa. She writes:

"Africa you are symbolised

By the beating of the drums

The drumbeat everywhere

Please don't drift away

We are joyful nature's musicians

We need not be taught to sing

Our voices, tongues and lips are blessed

Please don't drift away

Africa you have many sounds

Sounds in the mornin

At noon, at night

Sounds of women humming

When grinding maize

Singing at the weii

And when babies cry

Or go to sleep on their mothers' back

Please don't drift away

Africa's men sing when they hunt

They sing when one has died

Please don't drift away".

On the same issue Nangoli(1990:61) writes:

"Africans are known for singing and dancing. Most joyful as well as sorrowful occasions are accompanied by music and dance. The drum(ngoma) is the central musical instrument and beating it is quite an art learned over the years. Often the craft is passed down from father to son and generation to generation. Traditional African relies on the drum and its music in every walk of life. Sending messages; calling people together; announcing a birth or death; during burial of people; initiation; naming of a child; working in the field and wrestling competitions are situations

where the drum is used. Drum music would accompany men going to war and the music would be played in the background during combat urging the warriors to fight on to victory. Furthermore, singing and dancing in Africa is a form of spiritual demonstration. Dancing is seen as a celebration of life over death. Often God is worshipped through music and dance. Through dance the entire body and soul are involved in prayer and thanksgiving".

Africans like to celebrate life. They celebrate events in the life of the individual and the community. These include occasions like the birth of a child, the giving of names, circumcision and other initiation ceremonies, marriage, funerals, harvest festivals, praying for rain and many others. These rituals and ceremonies have a lot of spirituality and religious meaning and through their observation, religious ideas are perpetuated and passed on from generation to generation.

Much of African music and songs deal with religious ideas and practices. The religious rituals, ceremonies and festivals are always accompanied by music, singing and dancing. Music gives outlet to the emotional expression of their spirituality and religious life and it is a powerful means of communication in African traditional life. It helps to unite the singing or dancing group and to express its fellowship and participation in life.

The sound of the drum plays a similar role in calling members of churches from all over to assemble and celebrate God's gift of life. This sound sets the mood, the rhythmic beat of the drum symbolises the desire expressed to drift together, like an African village community, under the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

In an African community, coming together in response to the beating of the drum is an opportunity to give one another a sense of belonging and of solidarity. It is a time to connect with each other, to be part of that collective rhythm of life in which young and old, rich and poor, women and men are all invited to contribute the gifts God had given them. As they celebrate life and offer these gifts, they in turn receive new energies, new orientations and security.

For the African, dancing is thus therapeutic. This does not mean that you "dance away your problems," rather you dance with them in the rhythm of life which includes both sorrow and happiness. In a continent well known for its ability to endure suffering, for Africans turning to God is a completely natural/normal thing; indeed life would be unimaginable if we did not have the possibility of turning to God for protection and help. Africans expect God to be with them, to see them through droughts and wars and diseases through exploitation and oppression and slavery, through all of life and through death. Africans naturally turn to the God who participates in their suffering. A common expression used during times of crisis by the Shona-speaking people of Zimbabwe is "Mwari ega ndiye anoziva" – only God knows our plight. Life would be unthinkable without this dependence on God. Therefore in African tradition normal daily activities in private or public spheres, is not divorced from religion, it is their religion. It is a way of life; a way of viewing the world.

In African culture, community is the cornerstone for the individual and for his or her survival. Indeed, the individual has no meaning outside the context of the community. The community defines how the individual functions; in turn, the behaviour of the individual affects all the other members of the community. The community is a unit and acts as one. It celebrates life together. At religious festivals, weddings and other social events, its members dance together. At funerals and other tragic moments its members mourn together.

Life is something shared, which is given to the community by God, who is the ultimate link and destiny of the community. Thus young and old, rich and poor act together for the benefit of each person and for the common welfare of the community. This oneness of the community is not limited to the living members, but extends to the "timeless living", who share in the community's joys and sorrows.

The African concept of community has close parallels with the biblical idea of a community bound together through a covenant which governs it and lays out the boundaries to be observed by its members. The biblical community confesses that Jesus is Lord and that God is a God of justice, so that every member of the community is to practise justice towards every other member for the common welfare. Dispossession, selfishness and oppression or exploitation of one member by another are contrary to the spirit of the covenant and destroy the unity and life of the community. The biblical idea of community places a high value on inter-human relations; similarly, an African will strive to maintain good relations with the community in order to live a long life.

When the missionaries came to Africa, they proclaimed a gospel enshrined and confined in the culture from which they came- which was not of course in the culture in which the Word was incarnated. They failed to see that the incarnation speaks of God's presence in every culture. African Christians need to draw on their own stories and idioms and proverbs in articulating a theology of incarnation that is born from their own world-view.

African oral tradition is very explicit about the idea of God as Creator who encompasses the land. God is everywhere, embracing the creation; His/Her girdle has no beginning and no end. Because Africans have respect for all of God's creation, their traditional beliefs are sometimes understood as belonging to God. God has given it to humankind. It is thus not to be owned by any individual at the expense of other members of the community. The land is our mother, to be respected, loved and looked after, so that succeeding generations may also benefit from it. Trees and rivers enjoyed the same respect before the Western concept of nature was imposed on Africa and the land and its resources began to be plundered and exploited in the name of development.

African culture is full of ritual expressions which could enrich worship services. While the Western-oriented churches in Africa have tended to retain the static and lifeless forms of worship inherited from the missionaries in the 19th century, which have little to do with local experiences and idioms and whose use is declining in their countries of origin, the African independent churches offer lively ritual expressions based on local culture. Everyone brings his/her own instrument – drums, hoshos(shakes), horns, whistles. There are no professionals set apart to perform; in this dance of life everyone participates.

place in the village centre in anticipation of taking part in the dance of life. To this dance of life each participant will come with a story to tell. Only through the Holy Spirit can congregants be empowered to confront the issues great and small which threaten to undermine the sacredness of life. We in the Church should work together to give participants that feeling of connectedness without which the dance will lose its rhythm. To drift together towards unity, to dance together the dance of life, is possible only if Christians begin to see the presence of God in the person next to them.

The use of drums, dancing and ululating within the mainline churches is regarded as defilement of the holy and sacred place, the Church and the Holy Eucharist. At the Roman Catholic Church it is even worse because the first French Canadian Missionary, Joseph Gerard, who is regarded as a "Saviour God" of Basotho, is buried within the Church buildings. He is more of a saviour god than Christ is in the same manner as Basotho would seem to give more respect to their ancestors than to God or Christ. Therefore, dancing and playing drums in that Church amounts to the defilement of the burial ground of the holy ancestors of the Church. The drums are regarded as belonging to the Zionists and the diviners, therefore, whoever uses them within the Church turns the Church into the zionists' and diviners' church. They are first excommunicated then condemned (Moloi, 1995:35).

According to Parrinder(1974: 22) western missionary Christianity had some serious shortcomings. While Christianity itself was deeply important, it was felt that the form in

which it had been presented had failed to penetrate to the heart of the African personality. Two main areas of complaint were identified:

a) There was an awareness that Christianity had been introduced into Africa during the colonial era and seemed to have prospered largely because it had been supported by the ruling European powers. Not only did it seem foreign in itself, but also in a sense shared in the responsibility for injustices carried out by the colonialists;
b) There was a tendency of missionary Christianity to devalue traditional African culture and especially to dismiss traditional religion as heathen or pagan.

This attitude left no room for a sympathetic appreciation of all that was good in African culture, nor for the assimilation of traditional ideas and rituals into Christianity. A leading West African theologian, John Pobee has expressed this problem as follows:

> "Western missionaries stressed aspects of discontinuity between Christianity and African cultures and traditional religion to such an extent that they excluded aspects of continuity between Christianity and African cultures and religion". (1971:29)

The sharp division between Western missionary Christianity and pagan African culture tended to lead to a dilemma in the experience of many African Christians. While some African converts were able to break completely with their traditional heritage, more frequently the adoption of the new faith produced Christians with a foot in two worlds, who found it diificult to reconcile their sense of belonging to their African heritage witha

Western form of Christianity. President Kaunda gave expression to this dilemma when he confessed that he felt within himself a tension created by collision of two world-views, which he never completely reconciled. Archbishop Desmond Tutu in his Collection, The Voice of the One crying in the Wilderness(1982:13) makes the same point when he speaks of Africans suffering from a form of religious schizophrenia because of the struggle between their Christianity and their Africanness. Consequently African Christians began to address themselves to the question: How can we be Christian and African?

African heritage is very rich. It is historical, cultural and religious. Religion is part and parcel of the African heritage which goes back many hundreds and thousands of years. African religion is the product of the thinking of experiences of the forefathers. They formed religious ideas, they formulated religious beliefs, they observed religious ceremonies and rituals, they told proverbs and myths which carried religious meanings and they evolved laws and customs which safeguarded their beliefs.

Tutu(1995: 26) senses in Africa an innate spirituality that he described as the "footprint of God". The saving grace of God transforms the whole world into holy ground. Grace is barefoot...the cross is the most holy ground before which the very sandals of God are removed.

African worship could be bewildering, chaotic, colourful, rich with spirituality and that mystical African gentility and humility so difficult for the western mind to grasp. When

the drums throb and the mbiras hum there is a kind of infectious happiness that comes from a spirituality and culture that defy the more cerebral western sense of order and logic.

The origin of music is inseparable from the origin of language and whatever views are held with regard to one, will hold good of the other. Singing is little else than a highly beautiful speaking. A very important characteristic of languages is rhythm. The more or less recurrence of intonations and of similar cadences constitutes the most agreeable form of music. The more rhythm is accentuated, the better people are pleased. Very few people can escape the "tyranny" of rhythm. Rhythm seems to contain some general law, possessing power over almost all living things. One could say that rhythm is the dance of sound, as dancing is the rhythm of movement. It is certain that at one period of the development of humanity, rhythm constituted the only music known and that it was intertwined with language itself. Music as produced by human beings basically consists of words and certain sounds which are sung to the rhythm of a number of beats. (Agawu 1995:31)

Music plays such an integral part in the life of African worship and liturgy. It cuts across all aspects of Nguni culture, being closely associated with technology, social, economic and political life and religion. Musical activities are organised as social events which occur in the context of various social situations. For each of these there is a special type and style of music which is named in terms of the situation with which it is associated. Music is therefore classified according to its social function and the name of the function and its music is usually the same.

4.4.2 Categories of Xhosa Music

Much of the following information was researched by the writer when she was doing research for her dissertation on Xhosa music, for the degree Bachelor of Music, 1983, College of Music, University of Cape Town. Personal communication and interviews were done with people in Baziya Mission, Ikwezi township, Engcobo, Umtata, Mvenyane and Matatiele which are all part of the former Transkei.

The peoples' description of their different styles of music emphasise its utilitarian function; it is always 'done on a special occasion; it goes with that occasion, it belongs to it'; it is used for that event. Accordingly, the music performed at umtshotsho is classified as 'umtshotsho music' or 'music of umtshotsho' (*iingoma zomtshotsho*); wedding songs are classified as 'songs of the wedding' *(iingoma zomtshato*), while the songs which are performed at events related to the initiation of boys are collectively referred to as 'music of circumcision' (*iingoma zokwalusa*).

According to my informants, groups of songs that are sung in the context of various social occasions constitute musical categories and the people who perform these generally belong to the same social or core group. A musical category may be named after the group that performs it; the beer songs that married men and unattached women sing at their special beer drinking sessions *(ibhasi pl. iibhasi* from English 'bus'*; itimiti pl. iitimiti* from English tea-meeting) are known as *ibhasi/itimiti* songs *(ingoma*

zebhasi/zetimiti) and as music of the Tshawe people (*iingoma zamaTshawe*) because these people are known as amaTshawe.

Other categories of music which are named after the category of people who perform them are: umtshotsho music which is traditionally called 'the dance of uninitiated boys' (*iingoma zomxhentsho wamakhwenkwe)* (Hansen 1980:13)

Music is a vital part of the religious activities of the diviner and the music used at their seances and initiation ceremonies is named after them – Diviners' music (*iingoma zamagqirha/zezangoma*). This classification is more commonly used than 'seance music" (*iingoma zentlombe*) because it distinguishes these songs from the dance songs of young unmarried adults of the older chiefdom clusters which are called 'intlombe' or dance party songs. The people themselves usually add a qualifying noun (kwabafana – meaning initiated young men) when they employ this classification so that one is quite sure what particular category of music they are discussing.

The coming out ceremony (*umphumo pl. imiphumo*) of initiated youths is often referred to as *umyeyezelo* which is in fact the 'praise song' of initiated boys. It is an important item of circumcision music and it is always sung at post-initiation events. On several occasions I was invited to attend umyeyezelo which I subsequently discovered was the name of a type of music and not the actual event at which it, along with other types of circumcision music, is performed. (Personal experiences in Transkei in 1982)

All music is therefore classified primarily on the basis of its social function and its rhythmic structure which is of course related to the former. Each category of music has its own characteristic musical traits, its peculiarities of phrasing, tempo, vocal organization, rhythm and modality, all of which gives that music its unique 'sound'. Yet all the categories show an affinity with one another and the sum total of their stylistic characteristices constitutes the whole tradition of Xhosa music.

This relevance of music in the community is widely held among the Cape Nguni and is aptly expressed in the words of one of our congregants when she states:

> "Olubini uhlobo lokuvuma; ukuvuma ngelizwi kanti kukho ukuvuma ngezinto ezikhaliswayo" (There are two ways of singing; there is singing with the voice; on the other hand, there is singing with 'things made to cry', i.e. musical instruments).

These two widespread opinions, therefore emphasise that music is regarded as a social fact and that it is organised around the rhythmical expression of words and sounds and the physical movements employed when clapping or playing an instrument. Within Xhosa culture and African culture in general, dancing is an integral part of musical activity. Indeed, dancing is so highly integrated with music-making that the one is never done without the other. Singing and dancing are delicately and deliberately interwoven to compliment each other in a way which not only reinforces a sense of culture, identity and belonging, but also produces the means through which one can internalise and conceptualise the type of deeper metaphysical understanding which informs this type of African world -view.

All songs, whether they are sung or played on an instrument, are called 'songs in the Xhosa language' i.e. Xhosa music (*ingoma yesiXhosa*). Many individuals speak of their music as being specifically 'the songs of the Thembu people' or the 'songs of the Xhosa people'. The people belonging to the older chiefdom clusters- the Xhosa, Thembu, Bomvana and Mpondo – alternately refer to their music as the"music of the sons of Xhosa' (*iingoma zikwaXhosa*) meaning we are all people of Xhosa and our music is his music. (Hansen 1980:22)

There is a definite link between the Xhosa identity/culture and the music which they produce as expressions of their cultural identity. The language of music therefore acts as an 'indicator' of who and what Xhosa people are. It acts as a signal through which Xhosa identity and belief are structured and expressed both inside and outside of the Xhosa community. Understanding the Xhosa people therefore requires that one develops a sense of how and why they produce music. Since singing and dancing cannot be seen as separate entities, so too can Xhosa identity and belief not be separated from Xhosa music.

All music performed in European run churches such as European hymns whose texts have been translated into Xhosa and sacred choral songs and carols by Xhosa composers are called "*iculo pl. amaculo*"(song, hymn). The term *ingoma* is for all music that has nothing to do with the missionaries and and the term iculo has to do with all Christian church music. For this reason *iculo* is used in church. Statements and evidence collected during my reasearch confirmed the validity of this distinction which is made by all Cape

Nguni. These are the hymns which appear in the Xhosa hymnal of the Moravian Church and which have been translated from either German, English or Afrikaans into Xhosa. There is a dinstinct contrast in the way these songs are performed. With the singing of *ingoma* the whole body is used, whereas with *iculo* there is no movement at all.

According to our congregants intense feelings of joyous exalted excitement are always experienced by people when they sing and dance together. Although they say that the music induces such feelings, it is in fact the musical process that does so. Music is appreciated and linked for its own sake and its sound does affect people, but it is the meaning of that sound and above all, the process of making music that has the greatest impact. Music within the Xhosa community is something which is so vibrant, strong and compulsive that almost everyone who hears it feels compelled to sing and dance along with it. In the ideal situation music is performed on a large scale. A large number of people combine in singing and dancing and achieve what is required of any good performance, a shared transcendental experience in which the participants are 'raised up' and venture 'out of themselves' to engage on another highly emotive experiential level which goes beyond the bounds of normal spoken language.

It is this type of experience according to Cumpsty (1992:126) which cannot be fully explained by 'ordinary language'which he refers to as 'mythological language'. There is a strong resonance of this type of feeling in a comment made by one woman in our congregation:

"Speak to me about music and you bring joyous excitement to our community. People cannot help but get this feeling *(ihlombe)* when they sing; even those who listen to them, shudder (-*hlasimla)* when they hear music".

This type of emotion can be found in the different styles of music performed occasionally by different groups within the Xhosa society: *umngqungqo* and *umyeyezelo* performed by married women at girls and boys' initiation celebrations; intlombe or 'doctors' music performed by diviners and their associates at seances; intlombe music performed by young unmarried adults at their dance-party of the same name and umtshotsho music performed by teenagers at their dance-party, *umtshotsho.* Both the communal activity and the sound it produces affects the individual performers so powerfully that they reach a state of being that can only be described as transcendental. This condition is known as *ihlombe* and it is induced only by music and music-making. Informants are adamant about this and I never heard it mentioned in non-musical contexts. It is something which people become fully aware of and experience when they sing and dance together and even those who observe them are affected by it. Their joy is derived from their associated action as well as their reciprocal response which acts to unite all of them – performers, audience and onlookers alike – in a very close bond of ihlombe. This is representative and indicative of the close sense of community which the xhosa people share by which an individual is made whole by virtue of belonging and acting within a group. (Personal interviews done by the researcher)

Today *ihlombe* is a synonym for 'song' or 'music' particularly among the urban Africans. The announcers on Radio Xhosa who present musical request programmes usually state

that they are going to '*play ihlombe' (betha/shaya ihlombe*) rather than 'play a song' (*betha/shaya ingoma*). Also, when one has to attend school concerts, during which serious choral singing alternates with more light-hearted musical items. Certain members of the audience will almost always sing along with the performers, or even on the stage with them.

Another type of song is known as 'personal songs' (*igwijo pl. amagwijo*) and they are considered to be the most emotionally expressive music in the Xhosa musical repertoire. Composers of these songs usually perform them themselves, either as vocal songs with an instrumental accompaniment, or as instrumental songs with short refrains which an audience may sing at appropriate moments. The songs may be new or variations of old ones, but in both cases they are treated as a medium for self-expression.

There are different Xhosa terms for the different forms of speech and other vocal utterances: ***ukuthetha*** (to speak), *ukushumayela* (to preach), *ukubiza* (to call), *ukubonga* (to praise), *ukuvuma* (to agree), *ukumemeza* (to shout), *ukubhomboloza* (to shout loudly), *ukukhala* (to cry), to name but a few. It should be noted that ukubonga is not music. The phrase 'sing the praises of the chief' which crops up in so many books is rather confusing; it usually refers to the praises (*izibongo*) which are declaimed (-bonga) by a praiser (*imbongi).* There is a special type of praise song which is sung in honour of a chief, the wife of the chief, his favourite ox or cow and nowadays anyone whom the people wish to honour. It is known in Xhosa as *isibuliso pl. izibuliso* and falls into the category of Xhosa music. (Hansen 1980:26)

What distinguishes speech from song is rhythm. Any pattern of words sung or recited to a regular metre is music. Many dance songs have sections consisting of rhythmically recited words. These occur either between sung repetitions of the songs or as closing sections to them. Similarly all patterns of non-musical sounds, eg barks, yells, shouts, exclamations, snorts and grunts are accepted as music when included in a musical context as in the performance of choral dance songs.

The traditional ox-horn *isigodlo*, which yields one tone, was formerly used as a signal horn to announce an important event in the community – a war, a meeting of the chief, or a hunting expedition. It was also used at the boys' initiation ceremonies of the Bomvana, who called it ***butyu***. The term isigodlo is rarely heard today. Also the Bomvana appear to have dropped the use of the horn in their initiation ceremonies for boys which are today celebrated in an attenuated form. Its present day prototype, *uphondo* (lit. horn), is still used, particularly by some Zionist groups in their religious music and the single tones which are of course non-rhythmical but which occur at certain points in the music are accepted as music.

Rhythm not only differentiates speech from music, it is a 'law in music and if you do not have it, then all you have is noise' (Tracy 1948:44)). It is the fundamental regular beat in Xhosa music which is known in the vernacular as *ngqongqo* (beat), an onomatopoeic term derived from *ingqongqo*, the stretched ox-hide which was beaten by women with sticks as an accompaniment to their singing, at events celebrating the initiation of boys and which today has been replaced by more easily available substitutes. This basic beat

is expressed manually, i.e. by hand-clapping (ukuqhwaba) and /or physical movements made when dancing eg stepping from one side to the other, kicking up and down and stamping to a regular metre.(3-6)

Polyrhythmic performance in Xhosa music depends on a 'number of people holding separate parts within a framework of metric unity'. This framework is determined by the number of handclaps, the total number of which constitutes the metrical framework of the song. In songs which are not accompanied by clapping, the framework is fixed by a specific number of dance steps or instrumental beats. When performing polyrhythmically, individual singers sing essentially the same melody, but in a slightly different manner, thereby varying it. The variations are usually melodic and/or rhythmic and may arise from variations in the words. Singers may introduce new words and phrases whose speech-tones and-rhythms generate contrasting vocal patterns (Tracy 1948:48).

Cross accents occur when the main accents of the basic melody and all its varied repetitions do not agree with each other. The total effect of a large number of people performing at a high level of co-ordination and singing many different versions of the same melody at the same time, can be very complex, but it is in fact the result of considerable individuation. The choral dance songs of unmarried and married adults of the older chiefdom clusters are typical examples of this polyrhythmic vocalization.

Clapping is commonly described as *'ngokwenz' imiphetho ngezandla* (making borders/rims/edges with the hands) a phrase which was elucidated by a Bhaca girl. Thus in any musical situation the melodies arise with and are controlled by the motion of the rhythm which also generates the clapping. The claps remind each singer that while he/she is free to do what he/she likes when singing, he/she is still part of the group. Their combined vocal patterns must always be rhythmically grouped and related to one another and this ensured by clapping, an integrating factor that keeps everyone harnessed to the rhythmic scheme of the music.

The polyrhythmic process is essentially a process of variation of the repetition, unity in the diversity, in which each person retains his individuality but agrees to co-operate with others. It is also active in Xhosa instrumental music in which it is applied in a similar way with different results. For example, in uhadi music, which takes the form of accompanied song, the vocal line has its own rhythm, but it must synchronise with the rhythmic pattern of the instrumental accompaniment. Thus both vocal and instrumental parts, whose starting and ending points usually differ, have independent but nevertheless strictly related rhythmic patterns. The whole song itself is the result of two agents (voice and instrument) combining polyrhythmically (Tracy 1948: 50).

Dancing adds to the complexity of the total pattern of a number of rhythmically interlaced vocal patterns. The rhythm of a dance has many aspects, for several singers will choose several patterns for dancing. Just as each singer improvises on the song-melody when singing, so does he/she similarly improvise when dancing, such

improvisation consisting of a varied selection of standard patterns. Therefore polyrhythmic technique is applied not only to voices but also to the movements of the dancers and their dance steps in relation to a clapped core rhythmic pattern, which depending on the social situation, might be reinforced by an instrument, such as the drum in divination music. This combination and synchronization of different rhythms – vocal, dance, clap and instrumental – expresses what is desired at any musical event in particular and in society in general: the co-operation of many people who retain their individuality by keeping their different patterns.

The terms *uku-xhentsa*(v.also *umXhentso, ukuxhentsa*, n.) is known and used by all Cape Nguni, but its meaning differs according to the context in which it is used. Among the older chiefdom clusters (the Xhosa, Thembu, Mpondo, Mpondomise and Bomvana) it is the general term for dance. When people come together to dance or ***–xhentsa*** they do so in age groups, eg circumcised young men and their girl friends will attend their dance party (*intlombe pl. iitlombe*) at which the men will do most of the *–xhentsa* while the girls sing and clap for them. (Hansen 1980: 35)

Likewise older men and unattached women will gather at a specified place for their favourite sport or amusement – special beer drink known as *ibhasi* or *itimiti*. As members of an exclusive club they will attend in full tribal dress to while away the next four or five hours in gossip, beer-drinking and a great deal of singing and dancing.

The dance of all Cape Nguni diviners is called *umxhentso wamaGqirha/weZangoma* and has two characteristic movements: (a) a stamping action with each leg alternately, in which the leg is thrown forward and brought down in an arched manner onto the ball of the foot; this is followed immediately by one or two jerky movements of the ankle and a thudding descent onto the heel; at the same time the dancer performs –tyibilisa, shaling of parts of the body and muscles already described. The heel stamping sends a sharp impulse through the body as though suddenly shaken by an unexpected spasm or an electric shock. A great deal of energy and physical endurance is necessary for performing this dance; it is usually of short duration, the movements of the dancer becoming more violent until a climax is reached and the dancer drops from sheer exhaustion, only to resume the dance after a short interlude.

Speaking generally, Cape Nguni dancing consists of muscle-quivering and vigorous movements of various parts of the body thrown into different positions. Dancers will assume certain body attitudes, they will posture and even perform contortions known as *imityulubo.*

4.5 Summary

As can be seen from the above information, music in itself is an extremely important language in Xhosa culture and consequently it is of vital importance during worship services. Music as language is able to produce a level of substantial meaning and

significance which under normal circumstances would not have been achieved without music. This language of music within Xhosa culture is a kaleidoscope of different movements, rhythms, actions beats, sounds et cetera all of which synthesise in a meaningful and functional manner providing a unique transcendental space in which feelings, emotions and deep felt experiences can be internalised beyond the scope and capacity of normal spoken language. Music sheds light on the spoken word therefore during church services, religious feeling/faith cannot be divorced from all this.

The liturgical music that is sung by people in all Eurocentred churches is not African, but European as the music that is sung Sunday after Sunday is the same as the music which is sung in Berlin, Amsterdam or London. This has proven to diminish the quality of worship as the congregants just sit there lifeless, while singing iculo without experiencing these intense emotions they usually experience during the singing of iingoma or the choruses.

In this regard Xhosa music must be understood as anti-language as it expresses the depth, the height and the breadth of African spirituality. It is music in a new key.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to problematise the current worship and liturgy in the Moravian Church. This study has also attempted to explore "inculturation" and Africanisation as it has not taken place in the Moravian Church. The study tries to problematise Eurocentric worship and liturgy and thus European theology for the African context as well. The study looks at the role of colonialism through the missionary enterprise. It tries to demonstrate how this colonialism and the missionary endeavours have brought about a deformed spirituality in the mission churches which is demonstrated by the internalisation of western worship or liturgical models.

The question thus arises why is there still a need for Africanising our liturgy and worship? For too long a time worship in South Africa has been dominated by the Europeans and thus is conducted in a Eurocentric manner. This is indeed a very biased approach and they also ignored the reality that the culture of Africans is different from that of Europeans. European scholars argued that African people had no culture or religion prior to the European domination and exploitation. Africans have become so conditioned and brain-washed that even those who are highly educated are often ashamed of the traditional lifestyles of Africans and they see it as savage, brutal and bad. They look at it with the eyes and spectacles of the western people who have conquered them, taught them their ways and made them slaves to their thought patterns, value systems and spirituality. They have indeed internalised the culture and language of the master.

Due to the fact that African people were made to forget their heritage and their religion has been misinterpreted by the Europeans and Americans. There is a definite need to rediscover African heritage. There is a need to rediscover the experiences of African people and the way in which they operated before foreign domination. However to acquire knowledge about African religion, African people are not only dependent on tools, weapons, slaves' writings and so forth. The religion and spirituality of Africans are not written on a paper, but in the people's hearts, minds, oral history, rituals and religious personages like priests, rainmakers and officiating elders.

African worship and spirituality try to experience the black condition in the light of God's revelation in Jesus Christ, so that the black community could see that the Gospel is commensurate with the achievement of black humanity. It is the affirmation of black humanity that emancipates black people from European domination. It affirms the humanity of Eurocentric oppression. All South Africans need to be free from all that dehumanises them together, to set them free for the service of one another in a more just and open society.

The Moravian Church in general, and specifically Langa, as well as other 'mainline churches' need to break away from everything that enslaves it, everything that treats them like little children. It needs to address the internalisation of the master's liturgy where the client regards the liturgical model of the patron as being normative. The study challenges the status quo by contemplating new models of liturgy. I would like our worship services, as well as the Eucharist (Umthendeleko) in Langa Moravian Church to take the

form of Umlaliso's i.e. more lively singing, dancing and preaching on a regular basis. This would definitely enhance the services and more of the congregants, especially the Youth (Ulutsha) will feel much more at home. Over the years more and more members of the Moravian Church in South Africa have left and are still leaving the Church in order to worship elsewhere. As one the former congregants who have left the congregation informed me:

"We do not feel very much at home in the Moravian Church as we cannot even sing the tunes. We are not used to sitting still for so long; it is not part of our culture. We feel more at home in the Zionist church and other similar churches". Mama Kotelana.

This to me, is a matter of concern as the number of the Moravian members is dropping rapidly, all because people feel foreign in their own congregations. As a minister in this congregation I want to strive to make the gospel and the liturgy, more relevant to people's culture and traditions. I would like our congregants to feel that God can be worshipped in an African manner. I have already re-introduced the bell(*intsimbi*) and I hope in due course to re-introduce other African instruments as well as I believe the use of these instruments can only serve to enhance our worship services and not to detract from them. We in Africa need to revisit our roots and ensure that our culture remains in tact.

In the Presbyterian Church of Africa this form of worship has been taken place for the last ten years and attracts many people. As Rev Faleni, minister at Khayelitsha told me:

"Once a year we encourage our congregants to dress in traditional clothes when attending church services and during this service we try to focus on our background and we go back to our roots. We try to show that

there is absolutely nothing wrong with worshipping God in a manner where we all feel that our culture is being respected and not just the traditions of the missionaries".

This thesis is therefore preparatory study which calls for a next phase where liturgies of other related churches will be studied. This topic has not been researched before and thus has to be followed up. This topic therefore needs much more research in order to to justice to it. It became a challenge to me and I hope it will become a challenge to the reader, especially the African Christian who worships in South Africa and in other African countries. I want to suggest that Seminaries and Theological Institutions on the African continent should the initiative of engaging in the study of African Religion and Culture and of introducing it into their curriculum.

Much work needs to be done in conscientising the mission churches to form themselves into alternative societies/religious groups/churches that will take culture and African spirituality into their liturgies. These churches must redefine themselves, their language and the content of this language.

"All of us Africans are bound to mother Africa by invisible but tenacious bonds. She has natured the deepest things in us as blacks. All of us have roots that go deep in the warm soil of Africa; so no matter how long and traumatic our separation from our ancestral home has been, there are things we are often unable to articulate, but which we feel in our bones, things which make us, who we are, different from others who have not suckled the breasts of our mother, Africa....Many characteristics of our music, our religion, our culture and so on, today in Africa and America can be explained adequately only be

reference to a common heritage and common source in the past. We cannot deny, too, that most of us have had an identical history of exploitation through colonialism and neo-colonialism" (Desmond Tutu 1995:47).

When pursuing the quest for an Africanised worship/liturgy as well as an Africanised Christ it is imperative to do so through ideologically coloured glasses. Each successive epoch of theology found its own thoughts in Jesus that was indeed the only way it could make Him live. But it was only each epoch that found its reflection in Jesus; each individual created Him in accordance with his/her own character. It is ultimately the construction of my own face dressed in the mask of the historical Jesus that stares up at me from the bottom of the well.

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