

**IDENTIFYING AND RECORDING THREE OF THE
IMPORTANT HERITAGE SITES PERTAINING TO
THE HISTORY OF THE BLACK PEOPLE IN THE
FREE STATE**

By

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BMS	-	Berlin Missionary Society
ANC	-	African National Congress
NMC	-	National Monuments Council
BNVC	-	Bloemfontein Native Vigilance Committee
ORNC	-	Orange River Native Congress
SANC	-	South African Native National Congress
CPSA	-	Communist Party of South Africa
SACP	-	South African Communist Party
AAC	-	All African Convention
NRC	-	Native Representative Council
SAP	-	South African Police
MEC	-	Member of the Executive Council
UOFS	-	University of the Orange Free State



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 OBJECTIVES AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Democratisation in South Africa has undoubtedly stimulated people's concern about their past. This interest resulted in a demand for information on the history of the Free State by various traditional communities, landowners, State Departments, the National Monuments Council, the National Museums, and to a larger extent by the media.

The protection of traditional and historical sites is a characteristic of almost all countries and the existing ~~lacunae with regard to~~ black history will certainly have to be addressed. Protecting and preserving such sites won't be beneficial only to the historians but they would be memorable sites for attracting tourists to the Free State province. They would also be of value and interest for disciplines like geology, geography, anthropology and archaeology. Memorable sites without being attractive for tourists, they are also antiques which usually increase in value, hence identification and preservation is of utmost importance.

The urge to protect natural and historical sites and objects often has a powerful and emotional connotation. Human beings seem to want to breathe something of the good old times in our modern world of violence and uncertainty. Unblemished nature, the mysterious cave, the intimate homely life of an old house, or the atmosphere of an old

church, school brings something of the quiet and timelessness of times gone by. But the strongest reason for protection is probably pride in national achievement, the drive to protect one's own heritage which is an important factor in patriotism.¹

The Free State province has many monuments and places of historical interest depicting the history of the whites in this country, but to date, very few pertaining to black history. Whilst traditionally, visits to places of historical interest had been mainly the domain of the whites, the changing political environment will definitely have an impact on this in the near future. In the Free State, the blacks have played an important role, but very little tangible evidence of their history and cultural heritage has been preserved for posterity. Blacks have played an enormous part in the history of the Free State, and this project is really a vast one. Unfortunately funds and time are pressing and only a few important places of interest could be investigated and described.

From the historical point of view, the reconstructing of the history of any traditional group is in line with the location of those sites where people were living. The main objective of this study is to identify a few heritage sites for the blacks in the Free State and also identifying their locality. These sites and the history they represent should be made known to the largest number of readers as possible. This study also includes the sites and places of

interest that signify black participation and contribution to modern and social history. There is an uncompromising need to protect these sites for generations to come. In this study an attempt has been made to evaluate the sites which are accorded the status of being of historical importance. All historical sites are important but not necessarily equally so. Certain sites pertaining to very important historical events or persons, may definitely be more important than others.

The Free State's historical heritage consists of the buildings, works, places and objects which are associated, on national, regional or local levels with people or events in our history, our social and cultural activities. The Free State has a rich heritage, both natural and cultural, to which numerous cultures, both past and present, have contributed. Due to the fact that this heritage is valuable and non-renewable, each generation has a responsibility to act as its trustees and pass it on to future generations.

This is not the first project dealing with black historical and cultural sites. The first study was undertaken in 1995 by Raditlhare Tshidiso, an honours student in the Department of History at the University of the Orange Free State. This research project is the second on this topic, but wishes to look at these sites from another perspective and will explore other sites which had not been previously researched.

The sites of historical importance differ, namely, graves of specific and named ancestors, may have special, even religious meaning for a group of people who do not wish people visiting their sites unless prior permission has been granted by family members. Certain sites may be very important, but for practical reasons, are difficult to gain access to.

The main objectives of this research topic is to identify historical sites and objects of interest regarding the history of black people in the Free State in order to rectify the eurocentric identification of these sites and present a more balanced view of the history of the Free State people.

Some sites may have a very local and restricted significance, but if exposed, may draw attention and interest from the outsiders to visit this province. Examples of such sites are many in the Free State : Nkoe (Harrismith) where a monument to commemorate eight generations of the Batlokoa chiefs buried in the area was erected in 1962 by the late Chief Wessels Mota; Ntswanatsatsi (Vrede/Frankfort) where the Bakwena of Napo initially settled;² Kurutlele (Senekal) where the Bafokeng of Patsa settled until they were uprooted by the Batlokoa of Mantatise in 1822, Maphororong (Ventersburg) where the Batuang of Mokhoana and Moletsane settled; Mabilela (Clocolan) the site where the Bahlakoana of Tseele settled

2 Machobane, L.B.B.J., A short history of Lesotho, p. 32., Maggs, T.M.O.C., Iron Age Communities of the Southern Highveld, p. 142.

before 1815 until they were driven away by Mpangazitha's Hlubi in 1823;³ at Maboela the remains of the mission house established by the Rev. Jean Daniel Kock in 1858 is still to be seen; Meriba (Ventersburg) was the living place of the Bakubung of Mosheing; Joalaboholo (Ficksburg) was a mountain occupied by Sekonyela's Batlokoa until attacked and destroyed by Moshoeshe in 1853; Bethanie (Edenburg) was a mission station depicting the history of the Tswana's in the Free State; Tihela (Excelsior) a mountain once inhabited by the Bataung of Ramokhele; Mapikela's House (Bloemfontein) where it is alleged that the African National Congress was formed in 1912.

This contribution about these sites should not be seen as a closed source in itself. If the History Departments of the different universities in the Free State, in conjunction with allied disciplines such as the Departments of Anthropology, Archaeology and Geography and display artists from the National Museum, the National Monuments Council (NMC) and other interested parties, were to work jointly in identifying and recording all the main historical sites pertaining to black history in the Free State, a significant and context sensitive contribution towards the reconstruction and development programme could be made and a better understanding of the history of the people of the Free State region could be gained.

1.2 HISTORIOGRAPHICAL DISCUSSION

The task of answering issues raised in this discussion, demands the use of a variety of sources and conducting informal interviews. From the source material used, three main streams of thought can be briefly defined. Certain authors are extremely pro-black and very much sympathetic to its cause, but unfortunately tend to be very unrealistic and unfair when evaluating black history in isolation of South Africa's white history. They apparently deliberately ignored certain basics of black history, for example, knowing the origins of a certain clan. Such authors attempt to place the blame for most of black history distortions squarely on the illiterate conditions of the black people they found themselves in, hence unable to narrate their history properly. Authors associated with this school of thought are : Ellenberger, V.; Ellenberger, D.F.

The second group of authors can be distinguished by their strong academic approach to the black history itself. These authors are far more realistic in their evaluation. Most notable authors from this group are : Schoeman, K., Maggs, T.M.O., Machobane, L.B.B.J. The third group of authors tend to ignore certain flaws made by the blacks themselves. They tend, instead, to place the blame on those people who had steadfastly refused to have any contact with the blacks. The authors who are associated with this group are : Odendaal, A., Van der Merwe, W.

This study will try to give, as far as possible, a balanced perspective of the issues surrounding the importance of identifying and recording heritage sites related to the history of the black people in the Free State. For the purpose of this study, only three important and most relevant sites are to be dealt with in detail. The sites will be categorised into three main sections, that is, missionary history (Bethanie Mission Station) in the Edenburg district; political history (Mapikela's House) in Bloemfontein and lastly tribal history (Sefate and Joalaboholo) in Harrismith and Ficksburg respectively.

2. HERITAGE SITES IN THE FREE STATE

2.1 MISSIONARY HISTORY : BACKGROUND TO MISSIONARY STATIONS IN THE FREE STATE

Missionary activity in South Africa during the nineteenth century was probably as intense as anywhere else in the world at the time. Missionary societies were in operation as early as 1834 in South Africa. Dating the sites such long shows that many of such sites needs upgrading and preservation; some are in a total state of collapse. It is well known that the condition of many of such stations and their environment has deteriorated rapidly due to some pressures or problems, for example, the effects of apartheid policy, the changing character of church institutions, poverty and declining local economics, changing demographic profiles, badly managed growth,

depopulation and violence.⁴ Mission stations were seen as centres of civilisation. Several mission stations were established in the Free State during the 1830's. Among them was Carmel, Bethulie, Beersheba, Umpukani, Mequatling, Makwasie and Bethanie.

Within a radius of 50 km from Smithfield, there remains two French mission stations, Carmel and Beersheba. These remains represent a piece of forgotten history of the two stations. Both tell stories of faith, perseverance and hard work in the face of adversity. Despite the fact that most of the buildings have been destroyed, their history stands as part of our heritage.⁵ In 1826 the mission assistant at Phillipolis, James Clark, approached the Colonial Government to establish the mission of Bushman Station hence the Bethulie mission station was established.⁶ During the same 1830's, in Thaba'Nchu, the Moroka Missionary Institute was established which attempted a more advanced training of future catechists and school teachers.⁷ All these missionary stations played an important role and had a large impact on black development. Not all developments were positive, however. It is for this reason then that in this study the researcher will specifically look at Bethanie as an example of such sites and to construct and reconstruct something of its history which is important to the reader.

4 Japha, D., and Japha, V., Mission settlements in South Africa, p. 1.

5 Badenhorst, L., Fragments of forgotten Free State history, p. 35 and Gous, H., Carmel-Sendingstasie, p. 11.

6 Schoeman, L., Die London se Sendinggenootskap en die San 1816-1838, p. 132.

7 Venter, I.S.J., Die sendingstasie by Thaba'Nchu 1833-1900, p. 54.

2.2 BETHANIE MISSION STATION AS AN EXAMPLE OF A MISSIONARY HISTORY SITE

In the Free State, only two missions are known to have survived to the present day in any recognisable form, namely, Bethanie and Modderpoort stations.⁸ Modderpoort station has a splendid complex of sandstone buildings which was once a school but now used as a conference venue. This study is intended primarily at describing the present state on Bethanie mission relating it to its initial settlement. To understand the present structure and character of this mission station and its pattern of survival, various historical process which affected missions had to be investigated. Bethanie station is one of the missionary stations that accommodated black people and offered various social services, of which education was the most important. Missions of this kind were always intended to be economically productive institutions. This part of the study of Bethanie also addresses the problem of ownership to land and that is what makes the Bethanie area to be one of the most important historical places for the blacks in the Free State.

The Berlin Missionary Society (BMS) established the Bethanie mission station in 1834 on the area previously occupied by the Griquas and the Tswanas. The missionaries initially occupied the Phillipolis district but later asked Adam Kok II for a settlement area in the interior of the Free State. Co-incidentally the Griquas at Bethanie had

asked protection against the Boers from Adam Kok II, therefore, Kok II sent the missionaries to Bethanie to offer protection hence the establishment of the mission station. Kok II gave them a little portion of the land, not the whole area as claimed by the missionaries. This later brought tensions between the initial inhabitants of the area and the missionaries. Bethanie station is situated in an outlying and inhospitable part of the Free State to which casual visitors have seldom penetrated, in the Edenburg district.⁹

In April 1834 missionaries, namely, Gregorowski R.T., Kraut D.A., Lange A.F., Schmidt, J. and Gebel A., established the oldest mission station in the Free State along the Riet River, which today is situated a few kilometres west of the N1 road between Bloemfontein and Edenburg. The Berlin Missionary Society had intentions of assisting the Griquas of Kok II in the establishment of their political power over the nomadic Koranna people. The Korannas were persuaded to accept the authority of the Griqua Council. Another intention was to spread the gospel among the Tswanas in Bethanie. By so doing, the missionaries guaranteed their permanent settlement at Bethanie. On the 24th September 1834 a station was opened and named Bethanie which means "House of Misery".¹⁰ Bethanie for most of its existence had been singularly unsuccessful. The missionaries had it tough to inculcate the Korannas into Christian thought. To the Tswanas it was much better

9 Schoeman, K., The British Presence in Transorangia 1845-1854, p. 58.

10 Schoeman, K., Die Huis van die armes, p. 24.

because they were regarded by the missionaries as a prosperous community and as essential for the spread of the Word of God and the creation of truly Christian communities. The missionaries also experienced problems in this regard. The problems mainly arose from the fact that they had to minister to people whose nature and habits they hardly understood.¹¹

One must bear in mind that only the church was regarded as the House of Misery or "Die Huis van die armes". The church was called the House of Misery because it was the only institution in the area which accommodated the spiritually poor people. The way it is depicted in Schoeman's book, sounds as if all the people of Bethanie were poor, therefore, the coming of the missionaries alleviated their poverty. Today the people of Bethanie claims that the missionaries made them poor because they (missionaries) barred them from ploughing and declaring the land as suitable for stock-farming only. Many people left the area to work in nearby towns of Edenburg, Reddersburg and Bloemfontein in order to maintain their families.

Rev. Carl Frederick Wuras¹² pioneered the building of the church and school in Bethanie. The Korannas who were not interested in Christianity as a religion vacated the area and the Tswanas occupied the area in great numbers. This was the realisation of a long awaited dream of the

11 Schoeman, K., Free State Heritage, p. 5.

12 Wuras was 28 years when he arrived in Bethanie. He was instrumental in the development of the Bethanie area. He consolidated spiritual development as a material building block to the development of Bethanie.

missionaries of regarding the Tswanas as the most desired people to be preached to. Richard Miles who was a Tswana-speaking person, was the first Tswana convert to the Berlin missionaries in Bethanie area. He later helped in interpreting between the Tswanas and the missionaries.¹³

Towards the end of 1856, there were about 150 Tswana huts of people who had accepted the missionary message against 15 huts of the Koranna people. This helps to explain why Bethanie was dominated mostly by the Tswana-speaking people.¹⁴ Later after the Tswana people, the Coloured people also came to settle in Bethanie.

Bethanie became helpful to the black communities. The blacks in the area learnt bricklaying and how to build. On the 11th May 1845, a new church was built in Bethanie. Today if one visits Bethanie, one can still see the remains of the old church in the same vicinity where the new church is today. Unlike the first church that was built with mud and reeds, the new church was built from bricks.¹⁵ The black people of Bethanie assisted in the building of this church. The church was erected with great difficulty because timber had to be collected from the eastern Cape. Towards 1867, there were about 118 communicants and it became necessary to enlarge the church.

In 1868 the corner-stone of the new enlarged church,

13 Van der Merwe, W., Die Berlynse Sendelinge van Bethanie en die Kora 1834-1856, p. 40.

14 Van Schoor, M.C.E., and Moll, J.C., Edenburg 1863-1963, p.28.

15 Van der Bank, D.A., National Museum News, No. 25, p. 9.

designed by the Bloemfontein master-builder, Richard Wocke, was laid. The new church had a capacity of accommodating about 500 people. With such a capacity, this church became one of the biggest rural church buildings in the Free State at that time. The construction work was pursued by the inhabitants of the station, that is, the Tswanas.

The involvement of the Tswanas in the construction process made this station to be of value to the black people because they were not only involved in the building process but some became Christian converts. The Tswanas were involved in the building process on a daily basis without any payment whatsoever.¹⁶ An inauguration of the church building took place on the 25th September 1869 and more than 700 people attended the celebration, including the hard-working Tswanas of Bethanie, whites from the surrounding areas and the Dutch community from Bloemfontein.

When visiting Bethanie today, a simple flat-roofed school is seen some distance from the church, partly still provided with reed ceilings which also dates back from the last century. A few metres away from the school there is a bell cage with a bell underneath. To the northern side of the church lies a cemetery with eleven graves. The church grounds also form a particularly attractive entity and serve as a striking reminder of the golden age of missionary work in the Free State and the numerous forgotten missionaries who worked in the Free State region.

The first school was a hut made up of reeds.¹⁷ Later bricks were used in building two additional classrooms. The Kora and the Tswana families began to send their children to this school. Between 1914 and 1923, three Tswana male teachers taught at this school, Mr Nicodemus Mathe, Mr Solomon Mereko and Mr Andreas Rampai with the enrolment of 184 pupils. The school by then started from Sub-Standard A to Standard III and mostly housed the Tswana speaking children.¹⁸ The opening of the school signalled the beginning of education for the community of Bethanie. This school was a mission school, therefore, religious instruction formed the central theme of the subject matter. Like the church, the school was also built by the Tswanas under the supervision of Rev. L. Meyfarth. The official opening of the school was on the 30th October 1860 and the costs estimated to R140.¹⁹

Bethanie farm-church and school, benefited most of the Tswanas. Some of these people became prominent leaders amongst the black communities. The valuable contribution made by this church and school to the black people makes these two institutions historically important and worth restoring for future generations. Solomon Plaatje, the first secretary of the African National Congress (ANC) once stayed in Bethanie farm. After his birth in 1896, his parents moved from Doornfontein farm to Bethanie. Four months after his birth, Plaatje was baptised at Bethanie.

17 Schoeman, K., Die Huis van die armes, p. 24.

18 (S00/1/1/95/N19/3) File from the Free State Archive.

19 Report to the National Monuments Council: Bethanie-sendingstasie-Edenburg: Restourasie in volle gang, p. 8.

The baptismal ceremony took place at Bethanie on 14 January 1877, and was performed by the senior missionary, the Rev. C.F. Wuras.²⁰ The return of Plaatje's parents to Bethanie for his baptism dates back to the fact that they had trust to Rev. Wuras, and they had friends and relatives left in Bethanie as part of the Bethanie's community; they had contributed to the development of Bethanie and they identified themselves with its values and religious beliefs.²¹

On the arrival of the missionaries in Bethanie, they found that the Tswanas were interested in farming. After 1860, the missionaries also turned to farming, thus sharing some of the land belonging to the Tswanas. The Tswanas were encouraged by the very same missionaries to attend school in order to maintain their farms effectively. Although the missionaries' introduction of education can be viewed in a positive light, their farming activities could also be negatively interpreted as a means of dispossessing the blacks of their land of origin. In Bethanie, the missionaries took up large tracts of black land. This reminds one of the Kikuyi saying on the West coast of Africa which says :

"You preach the golden rule but practise the rule of gold ... When you came here we had the land and you had the Bible, now we've

20 Willian, B., Sol Plaatje: South African Nationalist 1876-1932, p. 3.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

got the Bible, you have the land".²²

Later after 1870, the Tswanas became the labourers and were taught trade in order to work in the neighbouring farms now owned by the missionaries. The farms owned by the missionaries were Poortjiesfontein, Waschbank, Waterval, Viviera, Karroo, Melkbosch, Mullersrust, Elim, Daskop, Vooruitsig, Koelfontein, Poortjie, Kleinvooruitsig and Kopie-alleen. (See Appendix A) Rev. Fichardt one of the missionaries in Bethanie owned a wool washing industry and employed about 400 black labourers. In 1894 the Tswanas also played a significant role in the construction of a railway station in Bethanie. This railway line pass through Bethanie area giving the area the status of being both a mission station and also a railway station. This facilitated transportation of goods and communication improved because letters and telegrams could be delivered and received with ease.

As early as 1910 after the formation of the Union of South Africa, the blacks gradually showed signs of dissatisfaction in South Africa and became more politically inclined. This inclination also exhibited itself at Bethanie whereby most of the blacks started claiming some of the properties and land owned by the missionaries. In 1914 Rev. August Klonus put some restrictions on the blacks at the station. The Tswanas at Bethanie were prevented from having meetings as this was viewed as a way of influencing each other. An incident by Klonus of shooting

and killing a young Tswana boy outside the church building intensified the looming hatred between the Tswanas and the missionaries. For months later, the first world war broke out, marking the end of the Berlin missionary involvement in South Africa.²³

The black population of the Bethanie mission station who played such a significant role in the building of the church, the school and who were also helpful in the general development of the area, found it difficult to mobilise and demand their land back due to the legislation's passed by the Nationalist Party government in the early 1950's. Following the proclamation of the Group Areas Act (1950), the inhabitants of Bethanie, particularly the Tswana people, were forcefully removed from Bethanie to Thaba'Nchu which was by then under the Bophuthatswana's government.²⁴

Bare and without basic necessities such as water, the new place brought tremendous hardships. For many years, members of the Bethanie Committee were not allowed to set foot in the area which was "a haven of pleasure in the midst of poverty" under apartheid rule. Some of the Tswanas who couldn't go to Thaba'Nchu, were accommodated in the neighbouring towns of Edenburg, Reddersburg and some came to Bloemfontein. Only a handful came to the latter mentioned places because it was the Nationalist Party's policy of grouping people according to their ethnic groups hence many people flocked to Thaba'Nchu in the township of

23 Van der Merwe, W., Die Berlynse Sendelinge van Bethanie, p. 56.

24 Van der Merwe, W., Bethanie in die Vrystaat, p. 58.

Selosesha. Few Tswanas remained in Bethanie, most of the remaining ones were elderly people.

The Bethanie-Committee²⁵ under the chair of Mr Johannes Kraalshoek denies the government's statistics that only 65 families were removed to Thaba'Nchu. The Committee claims that some people left the area before force-removals fearing for their lives and confiscation of the properties by the government's officials, hence they left earlier. According to this committee, the government's statistics are based only on those people who were transported to Thaba'Nchu by the government's lorry. The committee also claims that more than 103 families were removed.

The Group Areas Act, 1950 has been called the cornerstone of apartheid, made provision for the physical separation of the various races. In terms of this Act, residential apartheid was forced upon most communities.

Owing to the fact that the Coloureds obviously received better treatment than the blacks, it is believed that many black people who remained in the area, had their surnames changed in order to be accepted within the Coloured community of Bethanie; for example Temeku became Temekie. The coloured people who remained in Bethanie are today owning plots in the area. Examples of those people are Mr. H. Booysen, Mr. A. Kraalshoek and Mr. J. Vinger. This endorses the fact that the coloureds were not treated in

25

Bethanie-Committee is a committee looking at the returning of the Bethanie area to its original inhabitants. The members of this committee are Mr. J. Kraalshoek, Mrs. L.L. Boom, Mrs. P. Bonyonyo, Mr. P. Bahomi and Mr. C. Olifant.

the same manner as the blacks. Imbalances existed between the coloureds and the blacks.

Generally speaking the Tswanas of Bethanie have for more than a quarter of a century lamented the dispossession of their ancestral land, forcibly taken from them to provide for missionary activities. However, today their tears may soon change to gold due to the involvement of different committees which propagate the return of the Tswanas to their dispossessed area.

Recently on the 21st January 1993, the Bethanie-project committee²⁶ was convened by the National Monuments Council Free State region under the chair of Ms. Herma Gous, the chairperson of the National Monuments Council (NMC) in the Free State. The aim of this committee was to look at the possibility of restoring the old buildings of Bethanie and to organise funds for such a project. Despite the dilapidated area of Bethanie where the church is situated, the missionary work still continues today and services are conducted to the small population remaining.

On Sunday the 9th May 1993, the Bethanie-project committee announced its restoration project. The costs of restoration were estimated at approximately R200 000 to complete the project. The project committee began renovations on the church building early in 1994. Sanlam

26 The members of the Bethanie-project committee are Ms. H. Gous, Mr. O. Liebenberg, Prof. D.W.B. Yuill from the National Monuments Council; Ms. I. Howard from the Simon van der Stel Foundation; Prof. K. von Delft from the Free State Branch of the South African Dutch Cultural Union; Pastor J. Britz and Mr. P. Peterson from the Evangelists Lutheran Church and Mr. J. Kraalshoek from the Free State Rural Committee.

donated R35 000 in 1995 for the restoration of the old school building but the estimated costs are far more than the received money. Hence, to date the school is still in dilapidated conditions. This is regarded as the oldest school building in the Free State which is still in use today for conducting classes.²⁷ According to Mr. T.E. Temeku, the former principal of Bethanie Missionary School, the school is presently used as a primary school for Bethanie children and the surrounding neighbouring farms.

Presently there is a hot debate and an unresolved problem pertaining to the future of Bethanie area. The original inhabitants of the area under the committee known as the Bethanie-committee are still negotiating with the Lutheran Church Bishop Hart on the possibility of getting their land back. This renewed demands for a return of the land to its original Tswana inhabitants was aroused by the fact that the Lutheran Church wanted to sell the whole of the Bethanie complex.²⁸

What puzzles the original Tswana inhabitants of Bethanie on the issue of receiving their land back is that the Church leadership denies responsibility of doing so. They are referred to the present occupants of the land. The present farms are occupied by the Boers who also denies responsibility of handing over land to the Tswanas. These Tswanas are being sent from pillar to post. Facing those difficulties, in 1994, the Bethanie-committee drafted a

27 Die Volksblad 6 September 1995.

28 The Citizen, 5 August 1993.

letter to the Berlin Missionswork (Berlin) inquiring about whose responsibility it is to hand land to the original owners.

Responding to the Bethanie-committee's letter, Rev. D. Gerd indicated that the committee should direct its concerns to the following bodies, that is, ELCSA Church Council and the ELCSA Property Management Company. The concerns were to be directed to individuals such as Rev. Thomas Mbuli and Rev. Reinhardt Schultz (ELCSA) and also to Mr. Martin von Fintel at the PMC offices in Pietermaritzburg. According to Rev. Gerd, the bishops of the Lutheran church had no right to sell land from the Bethanie area. (See Appendix B).

It has been years since Bethanie residents under the banner of the Bethanie-committee first lodged a claim with the Land Claims Court for the return of their ancestral land from which they were evicted and termed "squatters" by the Nationalist Party government during the 1950's when the Prohibition of Squatters Act was issued. At the meeting held in Bloemfontein on Wednesday 25th June 1997 between the Bethanie-committee; the Land Commission, and the representatives from the Lutheran Church council that currently claims ownership of the land the return of the area to its original inhabitants was debated.

According to the representatives of the Church Council, the church was prepared to hand over only the western side of the area to the original Tswana inhabitants of Bethanie and not the whole area. (See the shaded area on the attached

map : Appendix A). The Bethanie-committee and the Land Commissioner Dr. Peter Mayende objected to that proposal by the church leadership. The court was to intervene and make a ruling only on who owns the land if the parties involved in the dispute fail to reach a settlement. Unfortunately when conducting research for this dissertation (1997), no concrete resolution has been reached by the two conflicting groups.

According to the records of the Bethanie Committee taken from Mr. P.J. de Wet, a land surveyor in August 1993, Bethanie farm is 11 762,9172 hectares, therefore, the committee expected an area far bigger than the hectares indicated as the area should include some neighbouring farms which initially formed part and parcel of the Bethanie-area. According to Mr. Motshidisi Moleme from the Free State Land Committee, a task team was also appointed at the meeting of the 25th June 1997 to examine the documentation and other matters in order to effect the claim.²⁹ The resolution taken at that meeting was that the task team should compile a report not later than October 1997 for a final decision to be effected by the Land Commission.

According to Mr. J. Kraalshoek of the Bethanie-Committee, harmony can prevail in Bethanie among the church representatives and the original occupants of the land only if the bishops could be the "baas van die kerk" and exercise their authority over church matters only.

According to him, the original inhabitants should then become the "baas van die grond". To the church representatives such words are hard to swallow, because they claim that they are in possession of a title-deed.³⁰

Some black people still residing in Bethanie today (September 1997), have a lot to say about the loss of their stock to the church leaders. Few of the people who became victims are Mr. Papi Joseph Manka with eight dependants but owning one cow and a horse; Mr. Dawid Booysen with five dependants is having four cows, four sheep and four horses; Mr. John Lecoko with ten dependants, is having twenty sheep, five cows and four horses.³¹ All these people are presently unemployed and only depends on stock-farming which is also not so effective nowadays.

While the debate on the claim of the land still continues, one could hasten to make a conclusion that despite all the problems existing between the church leaders and the Bethanie-committee, the missionaries on their coming to the Free State region had both positive and negative impact to the indigenous population of this region, particularly the Tswanas at Bethanie.

The missionaries provided a basis of modern school systems with a general aim of teaching people reading skills to read Bible and spread the gospel on to others. The Tswanas

30 Die Volksblad, 10 November 1995.

31 Information and statistics taken from the Bethanie-committee offices while the committee was busy compiling a list of people who supported an idea of bringing the Bethanie land back to its rightful owners, June 1997.

were also taught new methods of cultivation, irrigation systems, disease awareness. The missionaries were also pioneers in the fields of health care. Besides the positive effects, there were some negative too. The negative effects were that the missionary groups came as competing institutions in the Free State, namely Catholics, Lutheran, Methodists, this led to much confusion among the people. Bethanie as a mission station took up large tracts of the blacks land and subsequently owned by the missionaries. There was also a neglect of the blacks traditional rituals by the missionaries who referred to them as barbaric acts. The missionaries felt superior to "the so-called" inferior Africans with primitive, pagan and backward customs. Missionaries undermined the power and status of chiefs. Nevertheless, the positive roles outweighed the negative aspects of missionary activity at Bethanie.

If the Bethanie community succeeds in reclaiming their land, the implication for standards of living could be significant. Among the Bethanie community, there is optimism that the land will one day be returned to them.

2.3 CONCLUSION

The missionaries also played a significant role in the social and educational development of the black people in the Free State; hence the study of the Bethanie mission station could also promote understanding of the role of missionaries to people who have viewed their coming

negatively. This study shows that the role of missionaries had both positive as well as the negative aspects. This is depicted by the protracted debate about ownership of Bethanie mission. This issue had a negative impact in the Free State, especially on the Tswanas of Bethanie who had lost their land. On the one hand the introduction of Christianity undermined the black community of Bethanie by prohibiting them from performing their cultural rituals, but it also introduced them to western values and standards.

3. POLITICAL HISTORY

3.1 THE BACKGROUND TO THE MAPIKELA HOUSE IN BATHO LOCATION (MANGAUNG)

In the Free State province, there are several houses of historical significance. The house number 73 in President Reitz Avenue in Bloemfontein is of historical importance to the Free State region. This is where an activist Abram Fischer grew up. Today the house is used as offices for a group of architects.

Another important house, is Winnie Mandela's house in Brandfort where she spent time under house arrest imposed on her by the apartheid government. This four-roomed house today houses two families who are renting it. The house presently belongs to the Brandfort town council. Presently the town council showed its commitment in announcing its intentions to preserve and restore this house as a national

monument and for future utilisation as a museum.

Dr. James Moroka's house in Thabe'Nchu is also of historical importance due to its association with a political figure who once became the president of the African National Congress (ANC). Presently (1997) the National Monuments Council has taken initiatives in declaring this house a national monument.

Besides the few above-mentioned houses, the Mapikela house in Batho location (Bloemfontein) played a significant role in both local and national politics of this country. All the houses mentioned above are equally historically important. For the purpose of this study, however, only one house will be thoroughly studied, that is, the Mapikela House, because very little has been written about its historical importance.

There was and there is still a negative perception or rumour that exist among many people that this is the house where the African National Congress was founded in 1912, therefore, that conflicting information about its historical origin made the researcher undertake this study to get to the real truth. The fact that the African National Congress was founded in 1912 and the house built in 1926, does not make the house less important. The importance of this house does not fully lie with the founding of the African National Congress. The house is of major historical significance because of its association with Mapikela who was one of the founding fathers of the

African National Congress and the speaker of the organisation for more than 28 years.³² The Mapikela's House is a symbol of unity among the blacks because the founding fathers of the African National Congress met in this house after its construction in 1926, hence this house became so significant.

Mapikela's involvement in civic and political matters had far-reaching implications for the political development of black people in the Orange Free State, particularly for the city of Bloemfontein (Mangaung) area where most of his activities took place. The Mapikela house was a personal property of the late Thomas Mtobi Mapikela, the builder and its owner. The African National Congress was not involved in the construction of this house whether by means of financial assistance or otherwise. To all the residents of Batho township, the building of the houses were the responsibility of the owners.

The issue of housing in general became a heated issue during and just after the Second World War. The South African Architectural Record of 1943 devoted several issues to the housing question in South Africa. The contribution for Bloemfontein was written by Mr. J.R. Cooper who was for 22 years the Superintendent of the Native Administration Department in Bloemfontein.³³ Cooper took up office in Bloemfontein. He was generally popular with the

32 Verwey, E.J., (ed), New Dictionary of South African Biography, vol. 1, p. 155.

33 South African Architectural Record. The Municipality of Bloemfontein. Native housing and accommodation by J.R. Cooper, June 1943.

inhabitants and even lived near the entrance of Batho township, probably close to Mapikela.³⁴ With the help from Cooper, Mapikela built his own house and took out smaller loans from the local authority to complete the house. Mapikela permanently had lodgers at his house and he was in fact obliged to have his lodging fees paid in Cooper's office at one stage, to reduce loans taken out by him.³⁵

Mapikela is no more, and what remains as a last monument to his struggling days is his house in Batho township. The Mapikela house should be valued and considered a valuable asset of the Free State province's heritage because of its close association with Mr. Thomas Mtobi Mapikela (1869-1945)).³⁶ Today Mapikela still lives on in the hearts and minds of the people of Bloemfontein and Batho township in particular. This legacy also remains visible in Mapikela's dwelling.

To reach an informed and scientific conclusion about the importance of this house, one had to depend on oral sources, and therefore, informal interviews were conducted. Such sources are limited and, as much as they are reliable, they have their own flaws, because many of those people available were still very young at that stage. The interviewees also had a very fragmented memory of certain aspects. Secondary sources written about Thomas Mtobi

34 City of Bloemfontein. Various dates. Erf 1436/7. File containing various correspondence and documents relating to the above erven. Photocopies are available at the National Monuments Council, Bloemfontein.

35 Ibid.

36 Mancoe, J., Bloemfontein Bantu and Coloured People's Dictionary : Bloemfontein, p. 72.

Mapikela are very limited and nothing at all on his house. To understand the importance of this house, one need to provide a short history on the life and struggle of Mapikela within a local, national and global context.

3.2 A SHORT HISTORY ON THE LIFE AND STRUGGLE OF MAPIKELA

Mapikela was born on the 21st November 1869 at Hleuhoeng in Lesotho (then Basutoland). Hleuhoeng ha Motsarapana is approximately 10 km south of Ficksburg. Mapikela was a Hlubi of the Radebe clan by birth and a descendant of the Zulu tribe. He was nicknamed "Map of Africa" because he had a vision that the whole of Africa was the African's country.³⁷ His parents left for the then Cape Colony while he was at a tender age. Opportunities were more promising at the Cape Colony than in the Free State Republic and Basutoland. He got his primary education at Queenstown. In 1886 Mapikela took a four years' apprenticeship in carpentry in Queenstown and obtained a first class certificate in cabinet making.³⁸ At the age of 23, in June 1892, Mapikela went to Bloemfontein and settled in the Waaihoek township³⁹ as carpenter and building contractor.

The Waaihoek township stood in strong contrast to the rest of Bloemfontein and visitors from overseas described the living conditions here as "most extraordinary and cramped

37 Dictionary of African Biography, vol. 3. Algonac : Reference Publications, p. 146.

38 Verwey, p. 155.

39 Haasbroek, J., Die Sosiaal en Vermaaklikheidslewe van die swart inwoners van Waaihoek : Waaihoek was so called probably due to the wind-swept location of the township on the outside "corner" (=hoek) of Bloemfontein 1; p. 138.

... little mud kraals, more like ant heaps than dwelling places".⁴⁰

These cramped and overcrowded conditions, the mostly unsuccessful attempts of the black community to obtain even the most basic improvements in their living environment, as well as a whole set of restrictive and discriminatory regulations promulgated by the local authority, led to great frustration and hardship.⁴¹

In 1903, Mapikela set up his own independent business as contractor. Realising his skills and efficient workmanship as a builder, carpenter and cabinetmaker, the government engaged him in the making of many descriptions of furniture for the Girls' High School,⁴² the Grey and Normal Colleges in Bloemfontein. Mapikela was in demand because of his excellent services as both black and white people sought his service.⁴³ Carpenters were mainly involved in the erection of timber roof structures, the installation or fabrication of specialist wooden items, most notably furniture.

According to Mapikela's grandson Mr. Sandy Thomas Mtobi Mapikela, named after his grandfather, Mapikela helped the black community with his construction skills. To show his willingness to help, the Mangaung Primary School ceiling

40 Schoeman, K., Bloemfontein. Die ontstaan van 'n stad 1846-1946, p. 130.

41 ibid., p. 218.

42 No actual name is given for this Girls' High School, but it could probably be Eunice High School.

43 Mwel-Skota, T.D., The African Yearly Register (Who's Who) of Black Folks in Africa, p. 185.

was constructed by Mapikela himself and assisted by his co-worker Mr. S. Mohapi. Using his skills as a contractor, Mapikela built himself an imposing double-storey house in Batho township. As a contractor he was also optimistic in obtaining work as several imposing structures were in the process of being erected in Bloemfontein, the new Raadzaal in President Brand Street being the most impressive. Mapikela was also kept busy by making coffins in his back yard because of the lack of mortuary facilities in the township.⁴⁴

Besides his business commitments, Mapikela was an active member of the St. John's Methodist Church where he held a number of key positions. Among the positions he held in church, was that of a Circuit Steward, Ex-officio Synod member, a Lay member representative. He also served in different committees like in education; missionary; local preacher's; trust property; and Sunday School Committee. He was also the founder and promoter of the Independent Order of True Templars.⁴⁵ All these positions were influenced in one way or the other by his political activities. In all these positions, Mapikela built up his influence and his political constituency. Holding such a great number of prominent and responsible positions in the community of Bloemfontein and nationally, is a proof enough that he was a man of great talent and sound leadership qualities and that he was accepted as such by the communities that put their trust in him, when they elected

44 Interview with Mr. Sandy Thomas Mtobi Mapikela, 20 September 1997.

45 Mancoe, p. 72.

him to these positions. The trust placed on him by the people who voted him to such positions was extended into the political sphere as well.

Prior to 1900 there was no political consciousness in the Free State, at least not on an organized scale. After the annexation of the Free State Republic by Great Britain in 1900, African political organizations emerged. Mapikela's political activities commenced in about May 1903 when the Bloemfontein Native Vigilance Committee (BNVC) was established and in 1904 formed with other similar organizations in the Orange River Colony (ORC), the ORC Native Vigilance Association (later renamed the ORC) Native Association.⁴⁶ In the Orange River Colony the most important issue for black leaders was the granting of political rights to blacks.⁴⁷ Mapikela was elected the general secretary of the ORC Native Association in June 1906 and in 1909 the organization was renamed the ORC Native Congress.⁴⁸ During this period, the main focus of African political activity became the question of the franchise in the Transvaal, Orange River Colony and in Natal.⁴⁹

The establishment and formation of the Orange River Native Congress (ORNC), paved the way for Mapikela's political prominence. The aims of the Orange River Native Congress was to promote the material, social, political and

46 Verwey, p. 155.

47 Grobler, J., A Decisive Clash? A short history of Black protest politics in South Africa 1873 - 1976, p. 22.

48 Belot, S.T., The Life History of Thomas Mtobi Mapikela 1869 - 1945, p. 8.

49 Verwey, p. 155.

religious welfare of the black people.⁵⁰ Mapikela with his leadership skills and talent to forge for unity among the black people fought constitutionally through his deputations for the improvement of the political and social conditions blacks. He endeavoured to achieve equality before the law for all the people of South Africa. For over a period of forty years, until his death in 1945 Mapikela selflessly served the black people of South Africa and the black community in Bloemfontein. He was actively involved in politics, proving to be a leader of moderation.⁵¹

According to Prof. C.J.P. le Roux, Mapikela played an important role as a national political figure within the African National Congress. Shortly before the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, Mapikela was closely involved with black protests against the colour bar in the draft constitution of the National Convention.⁵² He was organiser-in-chief and subsequently President of the Orange Free State Native Congress from 1907. He played an important role in convening the South African Native Convention (SANC) meeting held from the 24th to 26th March 1909 in Waaihoek township to discuss the draft constitution of the SANC and to counter against the proposed formation of the Union of South Africa which was scheduled for 1910.⁵³

50 Odendaal, A., Vukani Bantu!, p. 76.

51 Verwey, p. 156.

52 Le Roux, C.J.P., Rol van die Naturelle - adviesraad Contree 25, 1989, p. 5.

53 Verwey, p. 156.

The SANC became the first supra-tribal organisation to be formed in Bloemfontein. It was counter-convention to the South African National Convention of 1908 which met in Durban to draft the terms of the Union of South Africa. The SANC represented black grievances, and was also founded to overcome tribal divisions, and to attempt to get acceptance within the white polity through education, self-help and the accumulation of property. Mapikela highlighted the plight of the blacks under the different discriminatory laws which were passed by the different governments of South Africa during the period 1909 until his death in 1945.

As a delegate of the SANC deputation to London in 1909, he felt humiliated when the British parliament rejected their claim on the illegitimacy of the draft constitution with its colour bar acts. The British government paid no heed to the pleas of the delegation, and the draft Act of Union was passed unchanged as the South Africa Act which came into effect on 31 May 1910.⁵⁴

The SANC was the most broadly representative African gathering to that date. It included such prominent African leaders as Mapikela himself, John Langalibalele Dube and John Tengo Jabavu to name the few. Groups and delegates from all the colonies were present. They represented both the small minority of Cape voters and the overwhelming majority of non-enfranchised Africans especially from Orange Free State, Transvaal and from Natal including

respected tribal authorities.⁵⁵

The SANC deputation's failure spurred Mapikela on, to look for a broader unity among the black organisations and political structures that existed. To achieve their aim of African national unity, Mapikela and other members of the Orange River Colony Native Congress took the initiative to extend an invitation to as many black people as possible to join the Orange River Colony Native congress.⁵⁶

Mapikela's flair for languages and his command of the Xhosa, English, Tswana, Zulu and Sotho languages counted in his favour, hence he became the speaker of the ANC for almost three decades. In 1911 Mapikela became involved in the attempts to establish the SANC as a permanent body. The first step in the establishment of such a body was taken shortly after the unification, when Dr. Pixley Ka lyaka Seme⁵⁷ did not hesitate to draw up a press release in 1911, pleading for the establishment of a South African Native National Congress in 1912. The organisation he envisaged was to provide a forum for all African viewpoints, forcefully present African grievances to the new Union government and to white public opinion, and serve as a new rallying point for political pressure on behalf of Africans throughout South Africa.

55 ibid.

56 Verwey, p. 156.

57 Pixley, K.I. Seme was a lawyer and politician; he was the principal founder of the ANC. He was educated at Columbia University in USA; Oxford University and the Middle Temple, London. He served as President of the ANC between 1930 and 1937.

On the 8th January 1912 representatives from the local Vigilante groups, chiefs and other prominent black leaders from throughout South Africa assembled in the vicinity where the Community hall stands today in Batho township. At this meeting, the SANNC was founded. In 1923 the SANNC was renamed the African National Congress.

In his inaugural keynote address, Seme emphasised both the negative impact of tribalism and disunity among the Africans as the reason for their defeat in the hands of the white government.⁵⁸ Writing in a newspaper 'Imvo Zabantsundu' in October 1911, Seme made an impassioned plea for unity endorsing Mapikela's dream of unity. Rejecting intertribal conflicts, Seme uttered the following :

"The demon racialism must be buried and forgotten ... We are one people."⁵⁹

In this meeting, Mapikela with a good command of the African languages became a natural choice for the position of speaker in the subsequent congresses of the South African Native National Congress.⁶⁰

Politically some of the highlights of Mapikela's career were his visits to England in 1909 and again in 1914. The second deputation was to protest against the Native Land

58 Meli, F., A history of the ANC: South Africa belongs to us, p. 38.

59 Reader's Digest: Illustrated history of South Africa, p. 289.

60 Karis, T., Carter, G., (eds), From protest to challenge, vol. iv, p. 74.

Act of 1913.⁶¹ With the Native Land Act, the white government laid a firm foundation for a race-based system of oppression and exploitation. This second deputation was also unsuccessful. After the return from England, Mapikela did not despair in his attempts to unite blacks with a view of building resistance in a constitutionally acceptable manner against laws that discriminated against blacks, for example, the Native Land Act of 1913 which prohibited black people for vagabondage, squatting, and it also took effective measures to restrict the purchase and lease of land by blacks. It is through Mapikela's pleas that the Department of Native Affairs in 1918 made land available for black farmers in Thabe'Nchu, Seliba and Witsieshoek and land certificates were issued to a number of black farmers.⁶²

Mapikela was constantly involved in protests against pass legislation and other discriminatory measures. He played an important role in the agitation for the repeal of the African Women's Free State pass laws. He also assisted in the establishment of an African Women's Movement in Bloemfontein to protest the pass laws.⁶³ In 1919 Mapikela became involved in the drafting of the SANNC's constitution. For Mapikela to have been a co-drafter of the organisation's 1919 constitution, shows the confidence

61 The Native Land Act of 1913 attempted to regulate the land question. It stipulated that no person who was not black could obtain land from a black and the blacks could not buy land outside certain scheduled areas except with the consent of the Governor-General. The scheduled areas included the existing reserved areas, townships and black trust lands.

62 Le Roux, C.J.P., Die openbare lewe van Thomas Mapikela, p.5.

63 Roth, p. 126.

people had in him, his talents and his commitment to the movement.

Mapikela supported the African National Congress after 1923 in the resolution that the ANC should assist the government in shaping its racial policy, and encouraged the establishment of local councils. He was a moderate leader. With other conservative ANC leaders he was concerned about the growing support among black people for the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) in the 1920's. The CPSA which was later renamed the South African Communist Party (SACP).

Mapikela's finest political hour was his role as an acting president-general of the African National Congress in 1929 after being instrumental in the removal of J.C. Gumede who has strong communist leanings.⁶⁴ Seme unsuccessfully took over as president-general in 1930. Mapikela's contribution, however, lies in his ability to organise endless meetings (within which his houses in Waaihoek and Batho played an important part) and his moderate and non-confrontational approach to politics. He remained committed to constructive dialogue with the white authorities and in Bloemfontein, served on the Native Advisory Council for more than 20 years.⁶⁵

Mapikela was also a founder member of the All African Convention (AAC) in 1935. The Convention was formed as a reaction of the African people of South Africa against the

64 Verwey, p. 156.

65 Le Roux, C.J.P., Rol van die Naturelle-adviesraad, p. 8.

Hertzog bills such as the Native Representative Bill and the Land Act and the Trust Act Bill.⁶⁶ According to Prof. Tom Lodge, the AAC failed because it used the traditional techniques of African pressure group politics like the deputations, vague calls for African unity and the adoption of a number of resolutions without engaging the government through the strikes, resistance campaigns or stay-away calls.⁶⁷ In 1937 Mapikela was chosen as a member of the Native Representative Council (NRC) which was created as a result of the Native Representative Act.

It is against this background knowledge about Thomas Mtobi Mapikela, that one could understand the historical importance of his house in Batho township (Mangaung), the house presently known as the Mapikela House. The house itself derives its historical significance from its association with its owner and builder, Thomas Mtobi Mapikela.

Today (1997) the house has undergone some renovations and alterations were also made by the present occupants of the house. These alterations only add to the architectural value of the house without really diminishing its political and historical significance.

4. THE MAPIKELA HOUSE IN BATHO LOCATION, MANGAUNG

Thomas Mtobi Mapikela is one of the founding fathers of the

66 Grobler, J., pp. 59 - 70.

67 Lodge, T., Black Politics in South Africa since 1945, p. 11.

African National Congress, a political party that finally reached its goal when South Africa, in 1994, was peacefully transformed to a democracy. Mapikela is in a sense different than other political leaders. Other leaders followed an aggressive path to reform and broke down barriers, both literally and figuratively. Mapikela built the African National Congress, intellectual brick by intellectual brick, under difficult circumstances, much as he built his own house in Community Street, Batho township, Bloemfontein. With his mind he contributed to the formation of the ANC but with his hands he built the house for unity.

Now that South Africa is at a dawn of the new era, the places behind the birth and inception of the ideas of the African National Congress could be traced by studying the Mapikela House as the only remnant to accelerate the spirit of unity among the South Africans. In this study, the Mapikela House will be investigated as an important local of events as well as an architectural artefact of considerable significance. The house will also be considered within its wider urban context.

It is important for one to get information on the motives that persuaded Mapikela in the building of this house which is so famous today. Mapikela initially resided in the old location of Waaihoek where he owned two houses before coming to Batho township. When the ANC (then called SANNC) was formed in 1912, Mapikela was still residing in Waaihoek and it was probably here that his political ideas were

shaped during visits by other prominent leaders of the ANC. Little is known about his house in Waaihoek.

The Waaihoek township was situated where the Bloemfontein Electricity Power Station stands today in the city of Bloemfontein. If one looks at the locality of Waaihoek it is clear that Waaihoek was just a stone throw from the city of Bloemfontein. (See Appendix C). Waaihoek was bulldozed in 1923 by the Bloemfontein City Council because it was not situated at the right spot in terms of the segregation policies of that time. The systematic razing of the Waaihoek township in Bloemfontein that started in 1923 was completed in 1940 - 1941. The expansion of Waaihoek location threatened the City Council.

The overcrowding in Waaihoek, the proximity of this township to white residential areas and the fact that land was needed to erect a power-station for Bloemfontein, were some of the factors that hastened the establishment of the Batho township directly east of Waaihoek and the railway line and the so-called Cape Stands which housed the coloured community adjacent to the north. The arrival of the railway line in Bloemfontein in 1890 with the concomitant availability of employment opportunities, attracted many black people to the town. In Bloemfontein Waaihoek township, between 1896 and 1904, the population grew from 1 302 in 1896 to 18 382 in 1904.⁶⁸ By 1895 blacks for the first time, outnumbered white citizens in Bloemfontein.

When Waaihoek was demolished, the residents of Waaihoek were taken to the present Batho township. As indicated before that Mapikela had two houses in Waaihoek, when the township was destroyed, so were his two houses. By the year 1923, restrictive laws on black ownership of the land were intense, therefore, Mapikela could not rebuilt his two demolished houses in the new Batho township. He thus decided to build one house on top of the other; this is depicted by his double storey house built at Batho township near the Community hall. This also shows the influence he had on the Bloemfontein Municipality and his financial status.

4.1 THE PRESENT APPEARANCE OF THE HOUSE

Although it was originally thought that the African National Congress was founded in the dwelling under discussion, it has since been established through this research project that Mapikela's house in Batho was only erected in 1926. The Batho house and its location are, however, in the researcher's view, of greater importance than the Waaihoek houses. The stand number 22093 initially registered as Erf 1436/7 in Batho township is the Mapikela's House presently owned by his grandson, Mr. Bobby Mapikela. The township was laid out in 1918 and the building of new houses commenced soon after.⁶⁹ People held deeds to the land in Waaihoek, and Mapikela who owned two houses in Waaihoek, was allocated two Erven in Batho namely Erf 1436 and 1437.

69 Schoeman, K., Bloemfontein : Die ontstaan, p. 285.

The architectural background to the house will assist the reader in understanding the whole study about this house. The house is a red-brick double storey building with pitched corrugated iron roof. The ground-floor of the house has seven rooms while the first floor has six rooms (See Appendix D). The double storey residence even today, dominates the immediate residential skyline. In the 1920's double storey houses were an exception. Double storey dwellings in Bloemfontein were only erected by the wealthy after 1900 along Park Road, and also along Aliwal street where it thrust northward past Naval Hill. It is quite possible that Mapikela wanted to follow this trend, but generally he explained his house by referring to the fact that he was not allowed to erect two houses in Batho, due to the progressively stringent laws governing landownership for blacks.

Originally this house was not plastered as it is today with two facades covered with cement. This misplaced attempt at "neatening" the house by plastering the two street facades has strongly affected the visual appearance of the house. The house has a veranda with arched openings, as well as a balcony with a timber floor. The front entrance into the veranda is led by stairs. On the riser of step leading to the front door of the house, partially hidden by a second step, added later is the inscription "Ulundi Kaya" that literally means "horizon house". Traditionally the house or ikhaya expressed both shared cultural beliefs whilst allowing individual expression. Spaces between structures were and still are, important places where day-to-day

activities and rituals take place. More than one house per member because of the belief in the extended family. The interior of the house was primarily the domain of the woman within which rituals, such as communicating with the ancestral spirits (amadlozi) to intercede with God (Unkulunkulu) to provide rain, good harvests, children, health and so forth, were performed. This traditional lifestyle - an authentic way of dwelling - was more or less eradicated by urbanization and restrictive political, social and economic laws.

At the rear of the house there is an enclosed lean-to corrugated veranda between the three projecting bays. The front entrance into the house is provided with a glazed timber door. Unfortunately the original brick pillars on the balcony have been replaced with steel pillars. Most of the original timber windows were replaced with steel windows. The interior of the building is provided with timber floors and ceilings. There is also a flight of timber steps going upstairs. As a carpenter, Mapikela constructed the steps himself. The rooms on both floors were protected on the street facades (north and east) with verandas, arched brickwork on the ground floor and brick columns on the first floor. Mapikela's study room was conveniently situated on the ground floor.

The building is almost in its original form except for modifications here and there. The roof has two chimneys protruding from it. The original louvered timber ventilators on the side walls are still retained. Like it

is the case with outside doors, the house is provided with timber doors in the inside. The building also has a built-in fire place in the dining room. Inside the house timber chairs are still kept.

4.2 THE MAPIKELA HOUSE AS A HALFWAY HOUSE AND ITS ROLE AS A MEETING PLACE

According to Mapikela's grandson, Mr. Sandy Thomas Mtobi Mapikela, the house played a significant role of being a halfway or lodging house for travellers who used trains as a mode of transport to their respective destinations. These travellers used to sleep in this house, due to the fact that the hotels had restrictions in terms of accommodating blacks. The blacks had no other places for sleep except sleeping in the dilapidated, unsafe waiting rooms provided by the railway stations. The other alternative except the railway waiting rooms, was the Mapikela house. Bloemfontein being the country's centre-city needed more lodging houses for people travelling and passing through Bloemfontein.

A wise plan by Mapikela for using his house as a halfway house benefited the people of Mangaung and nationally. In this house, Mangaung residents could meet and talk to prominent ANC leaders. The house did not only accommodate the ANC leaders but also people who were travelling for non-political business. To have a halfway house in Bloemfontein was long overdue especially when looking at the centrality of Bloemfontein geographically. While

Mapikela was still residing at the Waaihoek location, with the support of the other residents, he tried unsuccessfully to persuade the Mayor of Bloemfontein to grant permission for the opening of the Native home or lodging house in Waaihoek. This never materialised until the people were removed from Waaihoek. Hence on his arrival to a new location of Batho, Mapikela used his new spacious house to serve that purpose. Here is a copy of an open letter written by Mapikela to the Bloemfontein Mayor in 1909 (See Appendix E).

Mapikela was later granted permission in 1909 to open a "native home" since "Native Religious, Educational and Political Conferences" were frequently held in Bloemfontein and delegates to such meetings were often left stranded when coming to accommodation facilities.⁷⁰ According to Belot, S.T., Mapikela was highly religious and served in various official capacities in first, the local Wesleyan Church and later, the Anglican Church hence his house was mostly used.⁷¹

His involvement in church affairs as a prominent leader also had a significant impact on the politicisation of the people in the church. Some of the meetings pertaining to church affairs were held in his house and he indirectly influenced the people on political matters. The black community was generally church-bound and that enabled Mapikela to communicate his political desires and

70 Interview with Mr Sandy Thomas Mtobi Mapikela, 30 September 1997.

71 Belot, pp. 6 - 7.

intentions to his people. By so doing Mapikela increased his scope of influence and source of information to the community as a whole. Mapikela never separated his political activities from church responsibilities, and used this platform to propagate his political ideals.⁷²

The house became important for the fact that Mapikela served in a number of committees, of which many meetings were held in his house. It was in this house where most meetings of the Local Advisory Board Congress were held. It was from such meetings that Mapikela got support from other board members to name some of the Mangaung township streets after the founding fathers of the African National Congress. Such a decision was taken during the 1930's in the Local Advisory Board Congress meeting held in the Mapikela's house. Among these street names are Msimang, Rubusana, Mahabane, Dube, Jabavu, Kadalie and Mapikela himself, whose street is somewhat longer than most of the others. With street names now bearing the names of the leading members of the African National Congress, Mapikela could instil political consciousness and a cultural awareness of resisting injustices among the Free State and Bloemfontein blacks. Mapikela also fostered the culture of serving in the community organisations among the people. As it was also the policy of the African National Congress to have street committees to assist the Blackman, Mapikela won some of the South African Police (SAP) members over to the African National Congress side as some of these SAP

members became the street committee members.⁷³

With the demolition of Waaihoek, Mapikela was one of the early residents in Batho township to start with the construction of his house, sometime during 1923. From the available information it seems that Mapikela did not intend the house to be merely a dwelling, but being a business minded person, he also thought of using this house for financial gain. Even though he and his wife, Martha (née Schultz) had six daughters and three sons, he used his house as a native eating house and for political interest as a meeting house. By 1934 only one son (Winnington) and four daughters had survived of which three were married.

According to Mrs. A.M. Jacobs, Mapikela's daughter, the house was sometimes used as a protecting or hiding place for African political activists, particularly those who were harassed by the South African Police. Mrs. Jacobs stated that the house played a significant role in her father's political career and activity : "There were always people coming in and out of the house. Our dining-room table could seat 12 and there were always meetings there."⁷⁴

To Mrs. Jacobs, Bloemfontein was the headquarters of the African National Congress; thus Mapikela's house became the meeting offices. She stated that prominent ANC Youth League leaders also met in this house before the death of Mapikela in May 1945. She quotes leaders like Nelson

73 Free State Archive : File number MBL 1 /2/4/1/1

74 Sunday Times, 12.1.1992.

Mandela and Walter Sisulu among the youth leaders.⁷⁵

The role played by Mapikela as a member of the ANC and his role in the socio-political activities of the Mangaung township justifies the attention given to this house; both from the African National Congress and the National Monuments Council. Mapikela being the speaker of the ANC, he had to organise and arrange all the infrastructure needed to the ANC conferences mostly held in Bloemfontein. It is through his house that Mapikela managed to popularise the ANC and bring it to the members of his immediate community. The house itself became a unifying zone. Besides his positions in the political arena, Mapikela held position of Superintendent of the African Life Assurance Co., President of the Bantu Trader's Association and the Non-European Cricket and Soccer Union.⁷⁶ Most meetings of these sporting activities were usually held in this house therefore putting the house in the spotlight for recognition as an important historical building.

As a Headman of the new Batho township, Mapikela easily propagated the African National Congress programme through the blockmen. The blockmen were in charge of the different wards. The participation of the blockmen in arranging for the African National Congress conferences politicised them and ultimately their wards were politicised as the people had trust in their blockmen. Since it was customary then to call community meetings to discuss matters of local

75 Interview with Mrs. A.M. Jacobs - Nee Mapikela, 14 July 1997.

76 Mancoe, p. 72.

concern, the blockmen could communicate the African National Congress messages to their wards at such meetings.⁷⁷

4.3 THE ATTEMPTS TO DECLARE THE MAPIKELA'S HOUSE A NATIONAL MONUMENT

As early as February 1990, the Free State Regional Committee comprised of Prof. A. Wessels and Prof. G. Mills was instructed by the National Monuments Council (NMC) to pursue a research on the possibility of preserving the Mapikela House. Unfortunately no submissions were forwarded to the NMC by the two academics.

According to Prof. A. Wessels, such a study needed people who knew the language spoken at Batho township, namely Sotho or Tswana in order to effectively communicate with the people of the area. Another obstacle was that fact that, the house itself was not the place allegedly to have been the house where the ANC was formed in 1912. They discovered that the house was built in 1926 long after the ANC has been founded. Prof. Wessels indicated that the impression they had about the house was vague, and that is the reason why a formal report was not submitted to the National Monuments Council. He also indicated that there were some misunderstandings within the Regional Committee itself on why is the house to be preserved if it is not the ANC's house. Such misunderstandings led to the withdrawal of some members from the committee, Prof. Wessels being one

of them.⁷⁸

According to Prof. Dawid Yuill, the former Head of Architecture Department at the Free State University and a local architect, the house played an important role in popularising the African National Congress in Mangaung and the Free State at large. Prof. Yuill initially dated the construction of the house to the late 1890's. This was based on the visual elements of the house and strengthens the argument that much of the building material was recycled. Due to the fact that the building of houses in Batho township remained the responsibility of owners, it is quite likely that many inhabitants used materials such as bricks, window and door frames and corrugated iron roof sheets that were salvaged from the demolished houses in Waaihoek. His viewpoint on the architectural features of the house, that is, the size of the house showed that it was sizeable enough to could have housed a substantial number of people hence the ANC members could assemble in it.⁷⁹

On the 20th February 1991, the Free State Regional Committee comprised of Prof. Yuill, Ms. Herma Gous made a submission to the National Monuments Council that the house deserve to be preserved and restored. After this submission to the Council, a mammoth task began on the side of the NMC to get permission from the present owners and occupants of the house about a move of attempting to preserve and declare

78 Interview with Prof. A. Wessels, 30 September 1997.

79 Interview with Prof. D. Yuill, 9 October 1996.



the house as a national monument. To proceed with the project of preserving and declaring the house, the family's approval was necessary. According to the National Monuments Council, the current owner of the house, Mr. Bobby Mapikela, showed willingness to co-operate in an attempt to preserve the house.⁸⁰ This was seen as a plus factor by the NMC because getting approval from the family members would facilitate the restoration and declaration process with ease.

Mr. Thamsayi Makhubalo, the then Professional Officer of the National Monuments Council in the Free State and North West provinces, played a significant role in explaining to the family members why the house should be preserved and declared as a national monument. After the explanations by Mr. Makhubalo, the family members promised mutual co-operation during the process of declaring the house a national monument.⁸¹ Though the house is structurally sound, it needs some repair and painting.

Long before the National Monuments Council could take the front seat in the attempts of declaring the house, as early as 1990, Mr. Segopi Malebo, the then chairperson of the Southern Free State branch of the African National Congress proposed to the African National Congress to recommend for the restoration and declaration of the house as a national monument. Mr. S. Malebo was asked by the Free State

80 Interview with Ms. Herma Gous, Area Manager of the National Monuments Council in the Free State Province, 28 May 1996.

81 Interview with Mr. Thamsayi Makhubalo, 28 May 1996.

Regional Committee to be involved in these attempts of declaring the house as a representative from the African National Congress. Ms Herma Gous in her capacity as the Area Manager of the National Monuments Council in the Free State also approached the ANC in this issue. Mr. S. Malebo as the chairperson supported the idea and indicated that the ANC would not oppose such a good motion, but in vain.⁸²

Mr. Malebo also played an important role in making the family understand the importance of preserving the house, hence he timeously liaised with the Mapikela's on this sensitive issue. This was a sensitive issue because the Mapikela's thought that the National Monuments Council together with the African National Congress wanted to take their personal property away from them.

Recently the National Monuments Council announced its intentions to provisionally declare the Mapikela House as a national monument after the granting of permission by the family members.⁸³ The family members were initially hesitant to have the house declared as a national monument. The family feared that they might lose the house and became reluctant to co-operate. According to the press statement made by Ms Herma Gous to the Express newspaper, after the family granted permission, it was later discovered from the Bloemfontein City Council that Mapikela did not own the site on which the house was constructed. According to Ms Gous, these factors were not to be seen as

82 Interview with Ms. Herma Gous, 28 May 1996.

83 Express, 28.5.1997.

an obstacle in an attempt to preserve and declare the house. On the 27th June 1997, in the Bloemfontein City Council's monthly meetings, the Council supported the decision of provisionally declaring the Mapikela house a national monument.⁸⁴

In an interview with the Free State Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Environmental and Tourism Affairs, Mr. Tate Makgoe, he indicated the importance of developing and restoring the house. He also suggested future plans in using this house fruitfully, for example, the house could be used as a guest house or an ANC museum. He also indicated that the Free State province has several houses of historical importance, the Mapikela House also included.⁸⁵ By the time of writing this dissertation (1997), the house was in urgent need of repair. Although the structure is sound, serious damage is caused to brickwork due to gutters and downpipes being rusted through. According to Mr Anton Roodt, a senior lecturer at the Architecture Department at UOFS, the roof sheeting will need replacement and the slender brick columns supporting the roof over the veranda on the first floor have been replaced by steel pipe columns.⁸⁶

4.4 PRESENT CONCERNS AND APPROACHES TO THE FUTURE

The current and previous owners of the house have also

84 Express, 2.7.1997.

85 Interview with the MEC for Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Mr. Tate Makgoe, 8 August 1997.

86 Interview with Mr. Anton Roodt, 13 August 1997.

attempted to "modernize" the house by removing wooden windows (that had probably disintegrated due to the effect of sun and rain) and making unsympathetic additions.

The National Monuments Council has made funds available to address the most serious maintenance problems. These funds will, however, not cover the rehabilitation or restoration of the structure and additional funds will have to be sought. The researcher suggests a number of scenarios in this dissertation that could assist with a final approach of utilizing this house profitably.

4.4.1 SCENARIO 1 : The current owners are descendants from Thomas Mapikela and continue the tradition of taking in lodgers. Historically it would be fitting that this situation continue as it would preserve living ties with the past.

One of the ground floor rooms could be converted to a reception room with an exhibition of relevant material. The Mapikela's could possibly even act as guides or information officers and could charge a small entrance fee. A visitors centre could be erected as part of the Community hall. This would eliminate the need for the owners to engage with visitors. The centre could then serve as a museum and might even contain a small commercial outlet that could sell books and memorabilia.

4.4.2 SCENARIO 2 : The house could be purchased from the owners. The house could then be converted in toto to a museum that could display aspects of the development of the African National Congress in South Africa. The house would be restored to its original condition. In this scenario the house will function as a museum which will act as a centre for information, education and tourism. The existing accommodation will be adapted to this use e.g. office, bookshop, exhibition space etc. The museum will be part of the provincial portfolio of museums and will be funded accordingly. It is also envisaged that the adjacent hall will form part of the museum programme which could include seminars and education sessions for larger groups.

4.4.3 SCENARIO 3 : The house could be purchased from the owners and converted to a guest house. This approach will link the use of the house functionally to its original purpose. The conversion to a guest house could be funded with public money and then put out to tender. Private enterprise could then take over and lease the property from the government. The house would thematically project the use and history of the house via artifacts, furnishing and photographs.

The house will be restored to its original

condition externally.⁸⁷ Internally the accommodation will need to be adapted to cater for contemporary needs, e.g. en suite bathrooms, suitable kitchen and catering facilities etc. The guest house would offer employment and a business opportunity for interested entrepreneurs.

4.4.4

SCENARIO 4 : The scenario forms part of the previous scenarios. The researcher proposes that the "public" space to the north of the house be developed into a public plaza that could be used to honour the house as a memorial house and gatherings on the 8th January each year could be held to commemorate the first national meeting of the ANC in 1912. The public square could also be used as an informal market space. If the museum or guest house is marketed correctly it could attract many tourists. The public square could be a convenient place where cultural displays could be hosted, memorabilia be sold etc. This area would also be one of the first if not the only space of this nature in the Mangaung area. The other houses and buildings in the immediate vicinity that date back to the early days of Batho should also be considered as part of this conservation programme. Tourists could visit other sites where important personae resided.

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It is unlikely that the plaster on the walls of the street facades could be removed without damage to the brickwork. A solution might be to paint the plaster to match the colour of the brickwork and then replant the creepers that once covered the house.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The section on the Mapikela house clarifies the misconception which many people have about the area or site of the foundation of the African National Congress in 1912. Arguments in this section showed exactly that the ANC could not have been formed in the Mapikela house since it was only built in 1926, long after the formation of the ANC. Mapikela was the builder and the owner of the house where most of the ANC meetings in Bloemfontein after 1926 took place. He strove for unity among black people in South Africa.⁸⁸

In conclusion, considering the events of Mapikela's public and private life, it could on the surface, appear that most of his endeavours and struggles were partially successful. Politically he achieved only small victories and suffered setbacks and disappointments in most his major efforts. In his private life he had limited success with his profession. His death in March 19, 1945 was a blow to the black community. Certainly in the decades after his death in 1945, the political scene was progressively dominated by racial issues after the taking over of the government by the Nationalist Party which endorsed apartheid.

5. TRIBAL HISTORY IN THE FREE STATE

Most historians prefer to use the term African chiefdoms rather than tribes. The word chiefdom is probably seen as

an accurate expression as it reflects the political structure of the African communities. The word tribe has been accorded negative meanings, namely, to be primitive, backward, uncivilised or having little in the way of political; economic or cultural organisation. Avoidance of using the word tribe prevails in many works by different historians. Instead words like ethnic groups are preferred. Nevertheless, for the purpose of this study, the word tribe is used and not in a negative sense as stipulated above.

The third part of the dissertation will also reveal problems encountered in undertaking such a study. Problems are caused by the unavailability of written sources on the history of the sites to be discussed in this section. Most of the information written in this section is based on the researcher's historical observations. Historical literature also proves some of the facts which are to be stated in this section.

This section is mostly about the historical and cultural sites at Nkoe/Sefate and Joalaboholo settlement areas. According to the historical literature, the two sites were allegedly occupied by the Batlokoa of Mantatisi. Another source of information in this section is arguments based on oral traditions. These oral testimonies were compiled by authors such as D.F. Ellenberger to give a broader picture on the history of the Batlokoa. To overcome these questions of speculating, historians as well as the archaeologists should embark upon a thorough research of

the sites. The information gathered from the few secondary sources written by both historians and archaeologists made this study possible. Another problem when undertaking such a study is the fact that views usually differ upon the use of various oral traditions and the presuppositions of the early writers. This section does not necessarily aim to be exhaustive by discussing the history of the Batlokoa, nevertheless the focus will be on the sites which were used as dwelling places by this tribe.

5.1 THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES OF NKOE/SEFATE AND JOALABOHOLO

Different sites are identified and described according to a classification based on the arrangement of the huts, byres and middens in a particular placing in the settlement pattern. It is also a fact that different settlement patterns are associated with different tribal groups. Nkoe/Sefate and Joalaboholo sites are used together in this study because they depict the history of the Batlokoa tribe. The study of the settlement areas for tribal groups of the Free State province is timely and appropriate for the history of this province and its inhabitants. Although a number of important scholarly works have already been published on the history of the different tribal groups in the province, little has been done on the history of their settlement areas. Therefore, certain gaps remain in the understanding of this history. It becomes difficult and incomplete to understand the history of the tribes without understanding where and how those people lived.

Nkoe and Sefate villages were settlement areas of the Batlokoa in the Harrismith district. For this study, these two villages are combined because Sefate was just an extension of Nkoe village both housing the Batlokoa. Nkoe/Joalaboholo sites have been chosen for this study as the most valuable and viable historical and cultural heritage sites without actually undermining the importance of other sites in the province. Hopefully, this kind of a research will inspire other historians to take studies such as this one further.

Fact findings by the archaeologists on the excavations done in some of the sites within the province are of cardinal importance for history scholars undertaking a study such as this one. This study also depicts the relationship that exists between History as a discipline and Archaeology. According to an archaeologist Mr. J.J.B. Dreyer, many Iron Age stone-walled settlements have been found in the Free State and the former Transvaal area, mainly by means of aerial photographs. Mr. Dreyer stated that aerial photographs were used to trace the settlement areas of the black tribes in the Free State. Many excavations were made during the period between 1980 and 1986. With the help of historians, the discovered settlement areas were associated with the tribes who lived in them. The historians themselves based their conclusions on the oral testimonies by elderly people who passed this history to the children through word of mouth. Most stone-wall settlement discovered in the Free State by aerial photography are believed to have been occupied by the ancestors of the

present-day Sesotho and Setswana speaking people of South Africa.⁸⁹

Dating artefacts and the wall patterns by the archaeologists has revolutionised the historians understanding of the early history of South Africa. The fact that black tribal history has no written tradition should be overcome by tracing the dates of the ruins in order to validate the existing information. Most of what is written in this dissertations about the sites depicting tribal history, is based on the researcher's historical observation during the visit to many Free State cultural sites in August 1997. To the researcher's observation, all cultural sites are important but some need to be brought to the attention of both the National Monuments Council and the Free State Environmental and Tourism Board with a view to preserving these sites. The sites which need attention also include Nkoe/Sefate and Joalaboholo sites.

5.2 LOCATION OF NKOE/SEFATE AND JOALABOHOLO SITES

The Nkoe/Sefate site, is currently situated on the farm Sunrise, about 45 kilometres outside of Harrismith on the road to Verkykerskop village via the N-3 road to Warden. According to the present owner of the Sunrise farm, Mr. W.J.S. Sharrat, the Nkoe/Sefate area is approximately 60-70 hectares.⁹⁰ This settlement area shows that the Batlokoa who settled in this area were not in big numbers.

89 Interview with Mr. J.J. Dreyer, 13 August 1997.

90 Interview with Mr. W.J.S. Sharrat, 14 August 1997.

Permission to visit the sites today is arranged with the farm owner prior to the visit. The Meul River flows near Sefate. This river is said to have provided the Batlokoa with water and food in the form of fish. The area has ruins which consist of the outlines of old circular dwellings and large cattle kraals, extending for about three miles along the slopes. The royal kraals (Metse ya Marena) overlook a deep valley through which the Meul river flows.

The Joalaboholo site (Dawidsberg) is currently situated on a farm called Avandon about 10 kilometres from Ficksburg town on the road to Fouriesberg. This farm is presently owned by Mr. J.H. Vermooten. This was also a settlement area for the Batlokoa tribe. Like the situation at Nkoe/Sefate site, visits to Joalaboholo should be arranged prior to the visit with the owner of the farm (See Appendix F).

5.3 THE PRESENT CONDITIONS OF NKOE/SEFATE AND JOALABOHOLO SITES

It is a distinct possibility that sites depicting cultural and tribal history can be destroyed by agricultural or industrial developments during the remaining years of this century and that could mean the end of tribal history in the Free State. It is therefore important to strive for the preservation of such sites for future generations. A good example to elucidate this is the erection of a cellular telephone pylon in 1995 whereby certain structures of settlements were destroyed at the Maribo site. This

incident led to a 50/50 programme on SABC TV addressing the inconsiderable destruction of heritage sites by the so called land developers.⁹¹

Today numerous stone-walled structures are found at both Nkoe/Sefate and Joalaboholo sites. Prof. Tim Maggs of the Pietermaritzburg National Museum conducted a thorough research on the settlement patterns of the tribal groups in the Free State, hence he identified three kinds of settlement patterns. In order to understand the nature of the sites which is dealt with in the third section of this dissertation, we need to study the settlement patterns.

Maggs's classification was based on the settlement patterns recognised from aerial photographs. This classification produced an archaeological framework for the description of a standardised arrangement of structures at sites characterised by connecting the walls. The three categories of settlement patterns described by Maggs are as follows; the Type V settlement, Type N and Type Z settlements.⁹²

The type V is named after Vegkop, the well-known Voortrekker battle site near Heilbron. Major excavations were done some 50 kilometres away at Makgwareng near Lindley as well as at Tihela in the Mequatling area, Clocolan district. The Type V settlements are also located

91 Dreyer, J.J.B., The Iron Age Archaeology of Doornpoort, Winburg, Orange Free State. Navorsing van Nasionale Museum, Bloemfontein, Vol. 8 (7), pp. 261 - 278.

92 Maggs, T.M.O., Iron Age communities of the Southern Highveld, p. 159.

in the eastern Free State over a considerable area roughly marked off by the towns of Marquard, Senekal, and in the districts of Bethlehem, Reitz, Warden and Frankfort to Vrede in the east. Corbelled huts⁹³ are found in these sites.

The type N settlements are named after Ntsuanatsatsi (Tafelkop), a solitary hill along the road between Vrede and Frankfort. These settlements are also found in the North-eastern Free State around the towns of Warden, Frankfort and Vrede. Excavations were only done at Ntsuanatsatsi and not in the other settlements. Excavations clearly show that the people who settled in these areas owned small and large stock and that they carried on farming operations. Hunting and gathering of food also formed part of their everyday life.

When the corbelled huts were added to Type N settlements, those Type N settlements were transformed into Type V in order to accommodate new immigrants hence they made certain architectural and structural changes to their building to accommodate their changed needs.⁹⁴ The difference between the Type N and Type V settlements is in the inclusion of the corbelled huts (See Appendix G). The change of the Type N settlements into the Type V allegedly took place during the 16th to the early 17th century or even as late as

93 A corbelled hut is a building of stone where the stones have been stacked in such a manner that every layer protrudes increasingly towards the inside of the building, with the result that the wall eventually meet at the top.

94 Maggs, p. 159.

the beginning of the 19th century.⁹⁵

Under the Type V settlements, Prof. Maggs points out certain particularly large living units and speculates that these could have been the houses of affluent leaders, but stones reveal no secrets.⁹⁶

The type Z settlements are sparsely scattered over a relatively limited area in the vicinity of Doringberg ridge, adjacent to the Sand River near Ventersburg, and to the north along the Vals River in the district of Kroonstad and Bothaville, including a few sites on the Renoster River, east of Viljoenskroon. Type Z excavations were done at Mophathe (Bothaville district) and at Matloang (Ventersburg district)⁹⁷. The dwellings in these areas differ notably from the previous types and consists mainly of two adjoining circles or lobes and are characterized by the dense way in which they were grouped together to form a village. According to Mr. Dreyer, the sites on which excavations were done, were chosen because of the easy accessibility as well as the fact that they depict tribal history of the Free State.⁹⁸

Besides all efforts by the archaeologists in pursuing excavations, much still needs to be done. Sites like Nkoe/Sefate and Joalaboholo need much attention from both

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid.

97 Ibid.

98 Interview with Mr. J.J.B. Dreyer, 13 August 1997.

archaeologists and historians. The condition of these sites calls for immediate attention. The sites are left dilapidated. Up to date, no excavations have been done on these sites even though the history of the Batlokoa tribe is well written up.

The present condition of these sites could develop to a point whereby everything is destroyed. The stone-wall settlements at Nkoe/Sefate and Joalaboholo sites are often found in grassland areas where timber is scarce. This shows that the Batlokoa's building material was preferably stone unlike other Basotho tribes who used reeds and stones. The diversity of layout patterns shows that independent tribes occupied the different settlements in the Free State.

Even if no excavations have been made on Nkoe/Sefate and Joalaboholo sites, that does not make these sites less important. Concerning the three classifications of the settlement patterns by Prof. Maggs, none of the three patterns fits Nkoe/Sefate and Joaloboholo sites. As indicated, no excavations have been done on the two sites, so that present assumptions on the stone walls and pottery decorations are based on surface observations only. The arrangements or the structure of the settlement patterns in the two sites shows that the Batlokoa tribe attached great importance to their cattle. This is signified by the central position of the possible cattle kraals. The kraals are usually surrounded by stone-walls of the possible lelapa (huts where people lived). From this observations,

a conclusion can be drawn that the dwelling places of the Batlokoa could have consisted of a cone on cylinder hut structures.⁹⁹

Large middens and extensive ruins of stone-walls currently visible at Joalaboholo for instance, suggest a prolonged occupation of the site. When looking at the two sites, it is clear that the Batlokoa lived in clustered groups. The stone-walls in these settlements are particularly concentrated, but still leave sufficient space to facilitate movement, but in most cases the structures are crammed together.

In the two sites, namely, Nkoe/Sefate and Joalaboholo, it is evident that there were no surrounding walls nor any other arrangement of structures forming a boundary. Joalaboholo itself was a protective site by nature. The fact that the site is a hill, shows that the Batlokoa were naturally protected. Joalaboholo site was occupied strategically by the Batlokoa of Sekonyela for defence purposes. At Joalaboholo, the arrangement of structures forms pathways along which stock could be driven without disturbing the human living areas. At the Nkoe/Sefate site, several smaller rubbish dumps are visible on the surface behind each and every stone-walling.¹⁰⁰

5.4 VISIBLE ARTEFACTS ON THE SITES

99 Machobane, pp. 27 - 39.

100 Ibid.

Fragmented pottery decorations are found on these undisturbed sites. Pottery taken from Nkoe/Sefate display the characteristic grooved decorations similar to the ones found at Kurutlele in the Senekal district.

A number of stone that might possibly be viewed as grinding stones were found at Nkoe/Sefate site. The kind of stones used for grinding are almost the same as those used for building the stone-walls. At Nkoe/Sefate and Joalaboholo sites, stones were used to build kraals. What is interesting about the two sites is the fact that there is no quarry nearing these sites; therefore, a question may be asked on the availability of these stones. Since there is no quarry nearby, it is possible that the Batlokoa used stones lying around on the mountain of Joalaboholo and the hill of the Nkoe/Sefate area. In the Free State, some sites like the Matloang on the farm Strydfontein in the Ventersburg district, a quarry is visible. This dolerite quarry at Matloang from which building material was extracted, appear undisturbed.

5.5 THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE SITES

Nkoe/Sefate and Joalaboholo settlement areas derive their importance from their association with the early ancestors of the Batlokoa tribe who lived there and therefore, the two sites are tangible traces from the previous centuries that still exist today. These sites stand as a symbol and proof of a people who once stayed there. This can be deducted from the remains of the stone-walls and rubbish

dumps. The sites also depict a way of life for the indigenous Sesotho-speaking people who are a distinct element of our diverse South African society. The sites are also important as potential tourist attraction centres for both tourists within and outside the country. It must also be understood that the ruins are not only valued in terms of tourism and scholarly interest, but the heritage value of these stone-walled dwellings cannot be over-emphasised. The ruins themselves play an important role in the writing of tribal history because they are the evidence and proof of the historical habitation of Sotho-speaking peoples in this area.

Tracing the historical and the cultural value of these two sites, the background history of the Batlokoa tribe cannot be left undisclosed. The two sites gain their historical importance from their association with the Batlokoa of Mantatisi and Sekonyela who once lived at those sites. As indicated in the introduction of this section of the dissertation, the background history of the Batlokoa is compiled from secondary sources written on the Batlokoa. The Batlokoa history confirms that they had settled in the Nkoe/Sefate and Joalaboholo areas. Several writers of the early Batlokoa history agree on most and sometimes differ on some of the factors.

It is believed that the Batlokoa originally emigrated south many centuries ago, probably from the Great Lakes of Africa. In their march southward they lived among the Bakgatla and other groups near the junction of the

Crocodile (Mohaleankwe) and Marico (Madikwe) rivers. From this area, they moved and settled at Magaliesberg in the province previously known as the Transvaal. After leaving Magaliesberg, the Batlokoa tribe split into two parties, one remaining in the north with Khoali as chief; the other wandered south under the chieftainship of Molatoli son of Molefe. This latter groups settled in a district now known as Wakkerstroom where Molatoli died.¹⁰¹

Molatoli was succeeded by Lepatsoe. According to Ellenberger little is known about Lepatsoe. Lepatsoe was then succeeded by his son Tsotetsi. A split occurred again during Tsotetsi's reign. This split was caused by Tsotetsi's cousin Motonosi. After the split, Motonosi journeyed southwards with the Makhokokoe of Tsotetsi and settled between the Elands river and the Drakensberg mountain. Tsotetsi and Motonosi brought into existence the two distinct branches of the Batlokoa, namely, the senior branch being that of Tsotetsi known as the Bamokhalong-a-Machocho; the junior branch being that of Motonosi, known as the Bamokotleng.

The quarrels that existed between the Bamokhalong and the Bamokotleng branches led Motonosi with his Bamokotleng branch to settle permanently at Nkoe/Sefate site in the Harrismith district. The settlement of Motonosi at Nkoe/Sefate area shows how these people came to settle at this site, that makes the study such as this one to be more important. To show that different chiefs once settled at

Nkoe/Sefate village, a monument to commemorate eight generations of the Batlokoa chiefs allegedly believed to have been buried in the area, was laid by the late Chief Wessels Mota of the Batlokoa.

Here at Sefate, the Batlokoa tribe lived for over one hundred and fifty years before being massacred and expelled by the Hlubi tribe under Mpangazitha, who was fleeing from Shaka. During their stay here, the Batlokoas buried no fewer than eight chiefs at Nkoe as indicated in the previous paragraph. The eight chiefs were Mohoeshe (1630), Makhalaka (1630-1670), Molefe (1650-1670), Sebeli (1670-1690), Makoro (1690-1715), Motonosi (1715-1735), Montoeli (1735-1755) and Mokotjo (1755-1755). Dates can be clearly seen on the monument but are considered as only approximate, the reason being that the Batlokoa worked by lunar year, and the other reason being the problem that dates were handed down from generation to generation through the word of mouth.

In 1813, Mantatise's husband Mokotjo passed away and he was also buried with the other chiefs at the Nkoe/Sefate site. Mokotjo's eldest son, Sekonyela, was to take the chieftainship after the death of his father. Sekonyela was too young to take the reign, therefore, his mother Mantatise acted on behalf of her son as the ruler of the Batlokoa tribe. As a young energetic woman, Mantatise faced a difficult task of ruling elderly men who most of the times neglected her. She became unpopular among her husband's people. The quarrelsome nature of these people

posed problems for Mantatisi.¹⁰²

By means of oral history, it was established that the Nkoe/Sefate site is where the Batlokoa of Mantatisi took the brunt of the attack by the Amangwane¹⁰³ and the Hlubi at the beginning of the Lifaqane in 1822. Mantatisi was attacked at her village of Nkoe/Sefate by the Hlubi because she had given refuge to Motsholi who had quarrelled with Chief Zwide of the AmaHlubi tribe. Later misunderstandings existed between Motsholi and Mantatisi that led to the assassination of Motsholi. Motsholi's assassination sparked attacks from chief Mpangazitha. This attack came as a surprise to Mantatisi. During the attack by Mpangazitha, the Nkoe/Sefate area became a battlefield until the Batlokoa were driven away from Nkoe/Sefate area.¹⁰⁴

While Mpangazitha was attacking Mantatisi, Matiwane was hot on his heels. The attacks of Mpangazitha, Mantatisi and Matiwane created a fashion of inter-tribal warfare that was to become unique in the history of the Basotho people. Due to these attacks at the Nkoe/Sefate site, the huts and kraals were allegedly destroyed. Today only the remnants are visible at the site. After being attacked, Mantatisi and Sekonyela continued to attack other smaller tribes. While conquering other tribes, they retreated until they

102 Steytler, F.A., Die Geskiedenis van Harrismith, pp. 13 - 15.

103 The Amangwane is a Zulu-speaking tribe residing in a reserve in the vicinity of Mount-aux-Sources in the Bergville district, Natal. Around 1800, they were an independent tribe living peacefully on the White Mfolozi in Northern Natal. Their chief was Matiwane. In 1818, they were attacked by Shaka. Fearing an attack from Sheka, they moved until reaching the South-Sotho tribes dwelling in the Free State (Van Warmelo, N.J., History of Matiwane and the Amangwane tribe, p. 5.)

104 Steytler, pp. 13 - 15.

reached the Joalaboholo area.

It is at Joalaboholo, where Mantatisi retired as ruler and handed over the chieftaincy to her son Sekonyela. Joaloboholo is historically important for the fact that it is the place where Sekonyela grew up. Mantatisi spent most of her time as a ruler at Nkoe/Sefate, while Sekonyela spent his time at Joalaboholo. When Sekonyela settled at Joalaboholo, the site was unoccupied. Near Yoalaboholo was a site called Kooaneng, where Khoabane, chief of the Marabe dwelt. Having lived a quarrelsome life, Sekonyela at Joalaboholo troubled the Marabe people. He prevented their stock from grazing in his territory, namely, Joalaboholo. He also prevented women from gathering grass at Joalaboholo. Sekonyela desperately wanted to attack the Marabe but he couldn't because Kooaneng settlement was a fortress by its nature. Sekonyela devised a plan to capture the Marabe's cattle. He let his brother Mota hold a dance on the far side of Joalaboholo, while Sekonyela himself set an ambush for the Marabe on the near side. When the Marabe heard that the Batlokoa were going to participate in festivities, they allowed their cattle to graze Sekonyela's fields at Joalaboholo without realising that a trap had been set for them. While the Marabe's cattle were feeding themselves and the women gathering grass for household purposes, Sekonyela's warriors appeared killing women and seizing cattle belonging to the Marabe tribe.¹⁰⁵ These events at Joalaboholo, confirm its historical importance and contribute to the significance of

this site as a historical and cultural site for future preservation.

5.6 CONSERVATION POTENTIAL

Although it is only the ruins of the original settlement that are still standing today on both sites, much can nevertheless be learned from them. The two sites played a crucial role in the history of the Free State because they housed one of the Free State's great tribes, namely the Batlokoa. These sites are, however, subject to neglect. With the researcher's recent visit to the sites, it was noticed that walls were sometimes destroyed by grass growing within the walls bearing testimony to the neglect of the sites. In an informal interview conducted with the MEC for Environmental and Tourism Affairs, Mr. T. Makgoe, shows that the MEC himself would like many of the black cultural sites to be restored and preserved. Referring to the sites that need immediate attention the MEC mentioned the Nkoe/Sefate and the Joalaboholo sites. The main impediment was however, the lack of government finances. This lack of funds will prolong the urgent need of preserving these sites. These sites need protection, for example, to have fences erected around the stone walls. According to the MEC, it is the responsibility of both the National Monuments Council and the Free State Department of Environmental and Tourism Affairs to look at the possibility of upgrading these sites and later to be

declared as national monuments.¹⁰⁶

5.7 CONCLUSION

Tribal history also deserves a place in the study of the Free State history. This province has a rich legacy pertaining to this kind of history. There are many tribal group sites around this province which need to be investigated by undertaking studies such as this one on those sites. The history of the Free State is important for both local, regional and national people. The Free State itself is a historical region which needs to be surveyed and excavated to enable historians to write black history of the Free State from mostly non-documentary sources.

6. SUMMARY

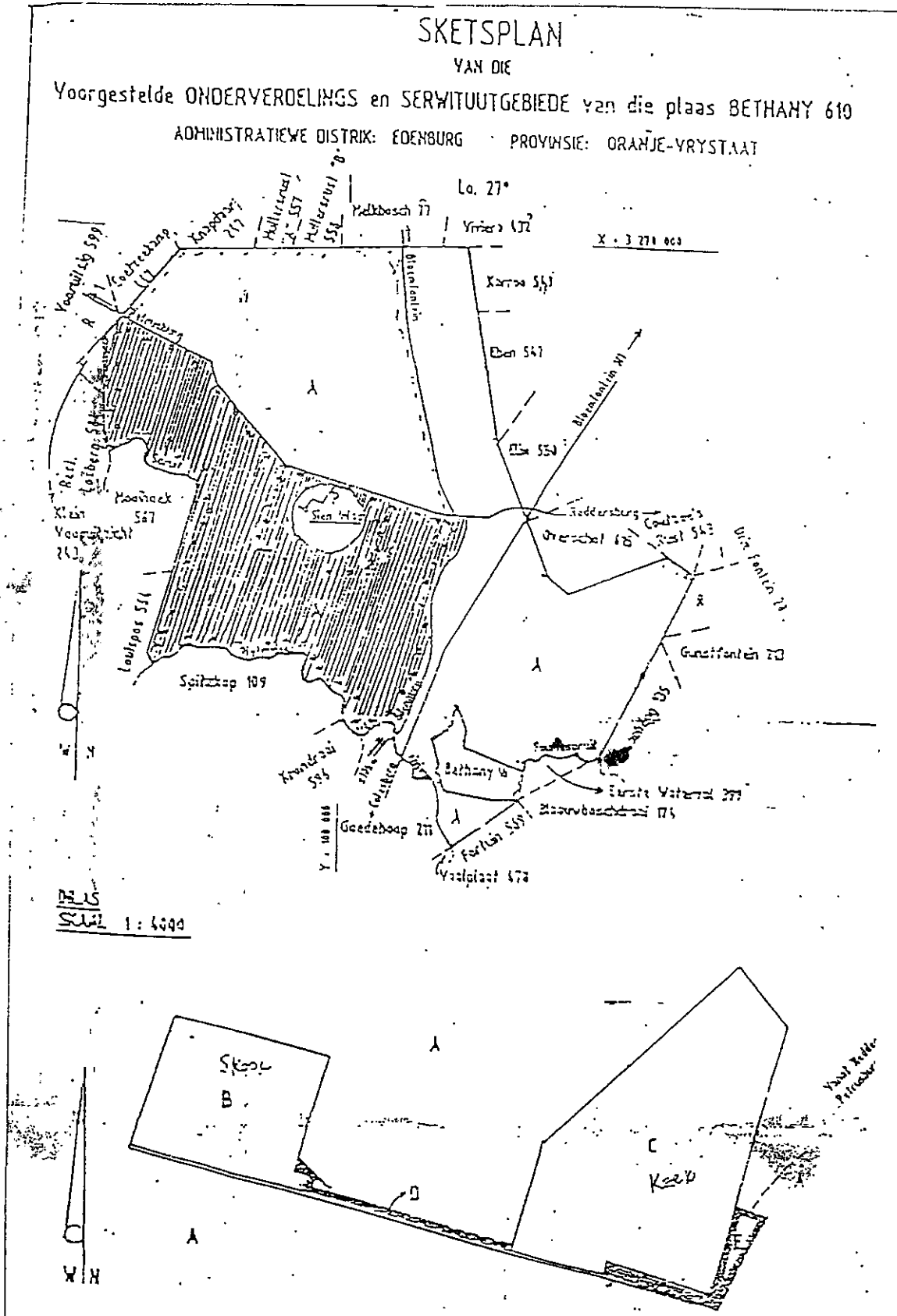
This project is aimed at identifying historical places of interest concerning black history. A similar project has been done before by Tshidiso Ratithlare. This shows that black history has been ignored for a very long time. This has brought about a lack of self-identification and confidence in black people and also implanted an inferiority complex towards their own history.

The identification and preservation of the heritage sites

is an emotional issue which can either rally or divide people. The story of site tells, can be one person's dream and another's nightmare. South Africa is a particularly fragmented society, and many people clutch onto the safety and familiarity of the exclusive and divisive symbols at hand. Sites themselves seek to include group members in a shared understanding of culture and heritage.

Becoming a more democratic society means, inter alia, finding new heritage sites that reflect and reinforce this new identity. However, heritage sites should not be allowed to become a political football and arouse conflict, and great circumspection should be exercised with the choice of heritage sites.

The sites discussed in this dissertation are not only of interest or importance to blacks, but also to the entire population of South Africa, particularly of the Free State province. In the Free State province there is a wealth of historical resources still to be tapped. History as a discipline must proceed alongside adjacent disciplines such as archaeology, ethnology, geography, anthropology and the expertise of the National Monuments Council and National Museums must be utilized.



SOURCE : FILE FROM THE OFFICES OF THE LAND SURVEYORS IN
BLOEMFONTEIN

APPENDIX B

SEKRETAR MISIONERES - MISIONERES/19 - 10119 BLOEM

Mr. Johannes KRAALSHOEK

43 Frederic Street
Heidedal

BLOEMFONTEIN, 9306 RSA

Telefax : 0027-51-471023

MISIONERES DE LA EVANG. KIRCHE
DE BERLIN-BRANDENBURG (APOST.)
DE LA EVANG. LUTHERISCHE ANHANG
(ORIGINE)
DE LA EVANG. KIRCHE DE LA KATHOLISCHEN
SACHSEN (NACHRUHE)
DE LA LUTHERISCHE EVANG. KIRCHE
(GHEFFALD)
DE LA EVANG. KIRCHE DE LA SCHLESISCHEN
OBERLAUSITZ (GHEFFALD)
DE LA EVANG. KIRCHE DE LA USINE

TEL: 030433 0094-0

TELEFAX 030433 3111
TELEFAX 030433 3111

ZIELLAND:

Overseas:

Code: TROKOD/22:

SOUTHERN AFRICA

32/35

0e/Su

18-7-1994

Dear Mr. Kraalshoek,

thank you for your fax of 14th July. Unfortunately it was very difficult to read it, because several letters and words were illegible. But I think we figured it out.

We share your concern to have a clear understanding of who it is to be dealt with concerning Bethany. We can assure you that it is ELCSA Church Council and ELCSA Property Management Company, i.e. for practical purposes Gen. Sec. Rev. Thomas Mtuli, Gen. Treasurer Reinhardt Schulze in the ELCSA headquarters in Bongera Park and Mr. Martin von Fintel at FMC offices, now in Pietermaritzburg. I am sure you have all their addresses, telephone and fax numbers.

Someone from Edric Trust has no right whatsoever to speak about "selling the land as mandated by Bethan Mission". We haven't even had any contact with such a person or firm until - accidentally (?) - the same day your fax came. A Mr. Chris van der Merwe from Edric Trust called me from Bloemfontain - unfortunately before I had deciphered your fax - and asked whether we would be in a position to sell Bethany. I told him "no" and that any decisions on Bethany would be made by ELCSA Church Council and FMC. I did, however, sense, that he was somewhat tricky trying to talk me into becoming interested in selling the land, because, as he said, the government is buying it for the people to help them return to the land and he was going to buy it on behalf of the government. I guess, we need to be aware of tricky people who are trying to profit from the present situation.

So, however, assured that we have not changed our policy that ELCSA Church Council and FMC are the ones who make decisions on the land.

Yours sincerely

Gerd O. J. Joubert

cc: ELCSA Rev. Mtuli, Rev. Schulze
FMC, Mr. von Fintel

RAV. Gerd O. J. JOUBERT - SEKRETAR MISIONERES - MISIONERES/19 - 10119 BLOEM - TEL: 03043 31-304

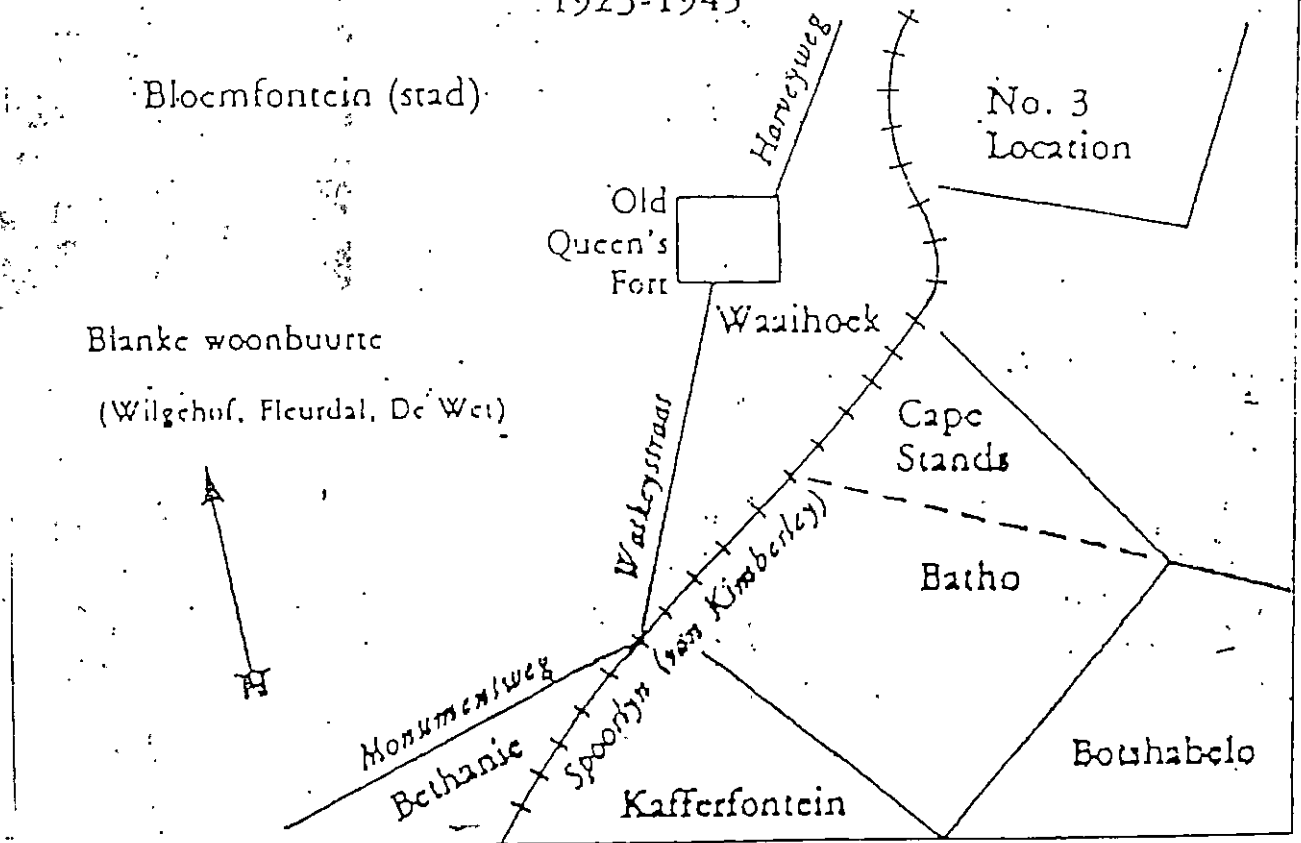
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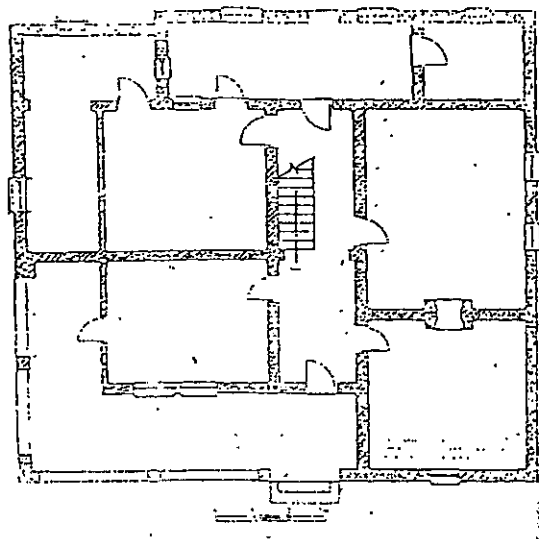
MISIONERES/19 - 10119 BLOEM - TEL: 03043 31-304

SOURCE : LETTER TO MR JOHANNES KRAALSHOEK OF THE BETHANIE COMMITTEE

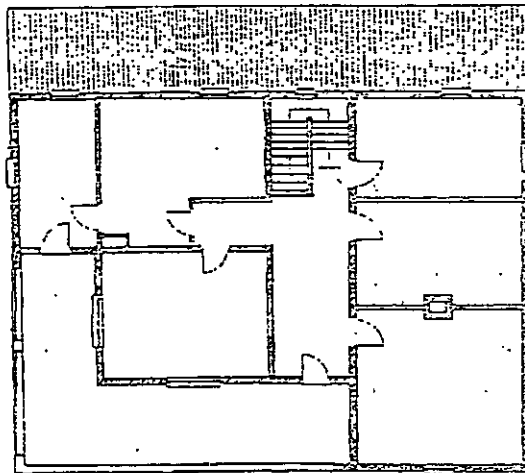
APPENDIX CLIGGING VAN SWART WOONBUURTE BY BLOEMFONTEIN
1923-1945

SOURCE : ROL VAN DIE NATURELLE-ADVIESRAAD OP PLAASLIKE
BESTUURSVLAK IN BLOEMFONTEIN, 1923-1948 BY C.J.P.
LE ROUX

APPENDIX D



MAPIKELA HOUSE
GROUND FLOOR



MAPIKELA HOUSE

SOURCE : SKETCHES BY MR ANTON ROODT (SENIOR LECTURER :
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE UFS)

APPENDIX E

T.C.
193/09
P.O. Box 88.
Wacahock
Bloemfontein
January 28th 1909.

His Worship the Mayor and Councillors
of Bloemfontein City
Bloemfontein

Application for permission to open Native Home.

Your Worship and Hon Councillors.

I respectfully beg to submit hereby
my application for permission to open a Native
Home in Wacahock location.

A Native Home is, of course, a boarding and lodging
home. This is a pressing necessity in our location;
Bloemfontein being the most central station in
S.A. it is always full of strangers who owing to
absence of such homes experience great difficulty
in finding such accommodation.

Native Religious, Educational and Political Conferences
are frequently held in this city and delegates
to such meetings have often been stranded.

I the applicant have resided in this city
for over 16 years and am Secretary
of the O.R. to Native Congress.

Your Worship
Obedient Servant

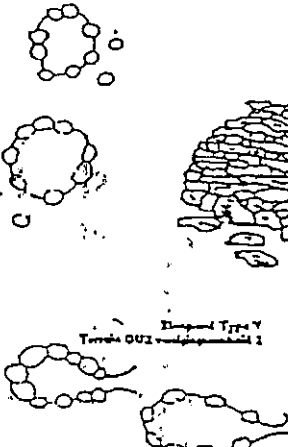

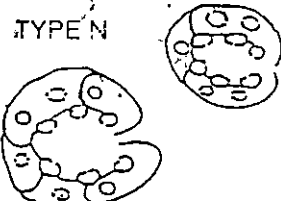

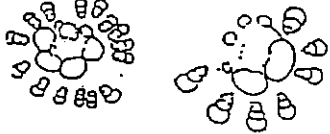
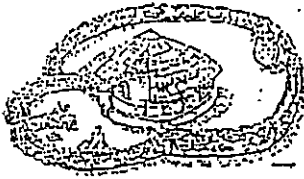
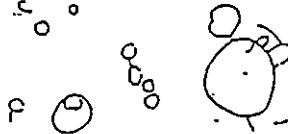



J.M. Mafikela
P.O. Box 88.
Bloemfontein O.R.C.

APPENDIX F



MAP OF THE FREE STATE PROVINCE

APPENDIX G

SETTLEMENT PATTERN	HUTS	DATE	OCCUPANTS
<p>TYPE V</p>  <p>Expanded Type V Trough 002 veldkopsveld 1</p>		<p>17th CENTURY</p> <p>19th CENTURY</p> <p>← ← 17-19th CENTURY ±1850</p>	<p>KGATLA TAUNG TLOKWA</p>
<p>TYPE N</p> 		<p>← 15-16th CENTURY</p> <p>15th CENTURY</p> <p>← 16-17th CENTURY</p>	<p>KWENA FOKENC KGATLA</p>
<p>TYPE Z</p> 		<p>← 16-17-19th CENTURY</p> <p>← 18-19th CENTURY</p>	<p>KUBUN TLHAPI ROLON</p>
<p>CALEDON VALLEY</p> 		<p>±1650</p>	<p>KWE FOKE</p> <p>PHE POL. PHU</p>
<p>DOORNPOORT, WINBURG</p> 		<p>17-19th CENTURY</p>	<p>KWENA FOKEN TAUNG KUBUN</p>

SOURCE LISTA PRIMARY SOURCES1. ARCHIVAL SOURCES (GOVERNMENT ARCHIVE DEPOT,
BLOEMFONTEIN)

- 1.1 S001/1/95/N19/3
- 1.2 T.C.: 193/09
- 1.3 MBL 1 /2/4/1/1

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- 3.3 Die Volksblad, 6 September 1995.
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- 3.5 Die Volksblad, 28 June 1997.
- 3.6 Express, 28 May 1997.
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Interview with Mr. S.T.M. Mapikela, grandson of Thomas Mtobi Mapikela, 74 years old. September 1997.

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