PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book was conceived in the old millennium and was finally completed in the new one. It was researched and written in three different countries and four cities, namely: England (Oxford); South Africa (Cape Town and Pretoria); and The Netherlands (Leiden) at various stages between 1999 and 2004.

To many present-day South Africans and the local inhabitants of Genadendal, Swellendam, and the Overberg region, Jan (Leonhard) Paerl is an unknown historical personality. Yet, at some point, during the latter part of the eighteenth century, he evolved into a figure of some significance when he attempted to liberate the Cape Colony from Dutch colonial rule by initiating a millenarian movement. His life happens to highlight and characterize the plight of the Khoikhoi people at the time they battled to give meaning and structure to their broken lives. Having written this book, depicting the life story of Jan Paerl, it is hoped that he will be better known and remembered in modern South Africa. Moreover, I hope that this segment and chapter in the colonial past of South Africa will encourage historians and students to “dig” into the archives to uncover similarly fascinating persons and personalities.

Financial assistance, working with excellent scholars, attending good universities, and having access to good libraries and archives normally provides a solid foundation to conduct research. I was fortunate and indeed, blessed to have had access to them all. Three major research grants and fellowships funded this particular research project at various stages between 2000 and 2002. The Oppenheimer Fellowship funded a seven-week research stint to Oxford University as research fellow in May 2000. In Oxford, Dr Stanley Trapido made my stay memorable and academically rewarding. His insights into South African history are superb and I hope that some had rubbed off on me. This project began largely as a result of fruitful discussions, which I have had with him at Rhodes House Library, Oxford University one sunny afternoon in May 2000. Dr Trapido suggested that we go to Blackwells for coffee, but I insisted that we stay at Rhodes House to savour a rare sunny afternoon. He gladly concurred, and we spoke for a considerable while about Jan Paerl and the possibility of a historical biography.

Subsequent funding to The Netherlands and Leiden University was made possible by two different research grants. The Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC), funded my first visit to The Netherlands through the Huygens programme. As a Huygens research fellow at Leiden University from
September to December 2001, I wrote the first draft of the book. The following year (2002), I became part of the TANAP programme. I am honoured and grateful to have been afforded the grace and opportunity to be included in the academic activities of TANAP. Thanks to everyone involved in the project, and for affording me an opportunity to attend Leiden University, the oldest institution of higher learning in the Netherlands founded in 1575, seventy-seven years before the Dutch settled the Cape in 1652.

In Leiden, I was blessed to have studied under influential and eminent historians, who graciously and unselfishly shared their knowledge and expertise. Prof. Robert Ross and Prof. Gerrit J. Schutte took me under their wing and taught me the finer art of being an historian. Apart from honing my research, writing, and analytical skills, I admire most their enthusiasm for history and love for their craft. Both are fine historians and extremely passionate about their subject. Not only do I admire them as historians and as individuals, but I also aspire to emulate their work and achievements. Robert Ross presided over the final details of the book. Prof. Leonard Blussé, the academic project leader of TANAP, read and commented on earlier drafts of the book. He, too, is a fine and influential Dutch historian, whom I admire and respect. I have learnt a great deal from these historians and sincerely hope that my development as a scholar and historian is reflected in this book. Prof. Peter Geschiere provided insightful and relevant comments. So did Dr Wayne Dooling, Prof. Hermann Giliomee, Dr Jan-Bart Gewald, Prof. Femme Gaastra, Prof. William Beinart, Dr Hans den Besten. Dr Lodewijk Wagenaar and Prof. Ena Jansen. Any inadequacies, or criticisms levelled at the book remain of course, my responsibility.

The Research School of Asian, African, and Amerindian Studies (CNWS) at Leiden University provided me with an unbelievable academic environment conducive to research and writing. Its staff members, in particular Dr Willem Vogelsang, were not only friendly and helpful, but also very professional. Ilona Grill-Beumer and Wilma van Trömmelen provided me not only with office space at the CNWS, but also with spectulaas and hot chocolate one cold December morning in 2001. Dr Hendrik E. Niemeijer, a fine historian himself and the project co-ordinator of the TANAP programme, was great. His all-round assistance and preparedness to go the extra mile is acknowledged and appreciated. Anton Feddema did an excellent job in designing the cover, so did the language editor Rosemary Robson, the Grafaria typesetters and the publishers of Brill.

Prof. Jarich Oosten and the staff of CNWS presented me with a memorable gift, which I shall always treasure. Thanks once again to Robert Ross and Janneke Jansen for the flowers, gifts, hospitality, and friendship. My fellow assistenten in opleiding or “aio’s” at the CNWS made my stay
equally enjoyable. Rosanna Woensdregt and Rivke Jaffe once assisted me with some illegible Dutch, while Julian Millie, an Australian, showed me around the city of Leiden and the University. I remember my fellow TANAP students, in particular, Alicia Schrikker and Ricky Goedeman my two paramifen, who did an excellent job at my promotie in 2003. Thanks also to the anonymous wieldoener from the TANAP steering committee, who co-funded this event.

My employers, the University of South Africa (UNISA), the College of Human Sciences and the Executive Dean, Prof. Mandla Makhanya deserve a word of special thanks. In 2001, the College granted me more than generous research and development leave which enabled me to spend a few months in Leiden. My colleagues, Profs. Greg Cuthbertson and Johannes du Bruyn, offered assistance and commented on earlier drafts. Prof. Archie Dick secured some funds which enabled me to conduct last-minute research in the Cape Archives. The Department of Technical Services at Unisa provided me with a notebook computer which assisted me a great deal. Prof. Henry (Jatti) Bredekamp uncovered and e-mailed to me an important reference which pinpointed the whereabouts of Jan Paerl in Stellenbosch. Thanks to Prof. Peter Buchholz who translated in record time an important document from German to English. I acknowledge the assistance of David Levey, Dr Alet Kruger, and Dr Alet Harmse. Ingrid Booysen and Magda Geringer designed the maps. Thanks to Dr. Tilman Dederer and Cecille Jooste for showing me how to convert footnotes from WordPerfect to Microsoft Word.

I also need to express a special word of thanks to the many librarians and archivists in South Africa and abroad. Rhodes House and Bodleian Libraries in Oxford University are home to vast volumes of books on colonial South Africa. In South Africa, the University of South Africa is proud of an extremely well-equipped library and archives. I need to thank the archivists at Unisa namely, Marie Coetzee, Annette le Roux, and Herma van Niekerk for their help and assistance. The main library of Leiden University and the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (KITLV) lists some useful titles on colonial South Africa. I also found some useful material in the South African Library in Cape Town. Of course, the staff of the Cape Archives Depot deserve a special word of thanks. Thanks to the archivists and assistants who carried volumes of documents to and fro, while others have provided assistance in finding relevant sources. They are Cecil Roberts, Abubakr Jardine, Ebrahim Kenny, Reginald Mtsabe, Constance Mthethe, Annelie van Wyk, and Erika le Roux. Gratitude is also expressed to the administrative and archival staff of the Nationaal Archief, in The Hague.

My trips to the Genadendal Mission Museum were equally reward-
Thanks to Dr Isaac Balie, the Director and Curator of the Genadendal Mission Museum and his assistant, Mr Samuel Baatjes. Both were extremely helpful as they sacrificed their vacation to accommodate me in Genadendal during the December vacation. Thanks also to the Seminary and Archives of the Moravian Church, located in Heideveld, Cape Town. The Reverend Cloete allowed me to read the original Genadendal diaries and other relevant material.

To Gillian, my wife, an academic herself, I give special praise. While I was away overseas doing research, she kept everything together, and I mean everything. Our time apart was traumatic on both of us, but we endured. She also read chapters and provided constructive criticism. My parents, Brian and Anne Viljoen, encouraged me all the way from Cape Town, so too did my in-laws, Lewis and Mona Simpson. In Cape Town, the Simpson family provided me with comfortable accommodation and transportation to the Cape Archives. Lewis Simpson not only accompanied me to Genadendal, but became a useful research assistant.

Not only did I experience help from below, but more so from above. My greatest intellectual debt and gratitude belong, however, to a much greater and powerful force, God and his Son, Jesus Christ.

Russel Stafford Viljoen
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