

**BISHOP DR S. DWANE AND THE RISE OF XHOSA SPIRITUALITY
IN THE ETHIOPIAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH
(FORMERLY THE ORDER OF ETHIOPIA)**

by

PETER TSHOBISO MTUZE

submitted in accordance with the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY

in the subject

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA.

PROMOTER: PROF R.T.H. DOLAMO

JUNE 2008

Student number: **259-734-9**

I declare that BISHOP DR S. DWANE AND THE RISE OF XHOSA SPIRITUALITY IN THE ETHIOPIAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH (FORMERLY THE ORDER OF ETHIOPIA), is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....

SIGNATURE
(Prof P T Mtuze)

.....

DATE

SUMMARY

The thesis consists of seven chapters with each chapter focusing on a particular aspect of the research topic.

Chapter One deals with conventional preliminaries such as aim of study, method of approach, literature overview and other introductory material.

Chapter Two is an overview of the foundations of Bishop Dwane's spirituality and his church's struggle for autonomy. It also covers the origins, the nature and the purpose of Ethiopianism as the central thread in Dwane's theologizing and family history.

Chapter Three reflects the attitude of the Anglican Church to African traditional culture as reflected in three historical phases – the era of total onslaught on African culture and religion, the period of accommodation, and the phase of turning a blind eye to these matters for as long as Anglicanism remains intact.

Chapter Four contains Dwane's views on various cultural issues culminating in his decision to indigenize his Ethiopian Episcopal Church's liturgy and other forms of worship by incorporating traditional healers into the church and invoking the presence of Qamata and the ancestors in worship.

Chapter Five analyses Dwane's prophetic spirituality as evidenced by his advocacy role in fighting for justice and human rights in this country. He relentlessly fought for the rights of those who were victimized by the government of the day, and those who were willfully discriminated against.

Chapter Six is on the evolution of an authentic Xhosa spirituality, in particular, and African spirituality in general, in the Ethiopian Episcopal Church. While the main focus of the study is the evolution of Xhosa spirituality, it should be emphasized that the thrust of Dwane's theologizing extended to the evolution of other African spiritualities in the broader church.

Chapter Seven is a general conclusion that highlights the main elements of Dwane's spirituality and the heritage he left behind in this regard.

KEY WORDS

African culture, African religion, African spirituality, African theology, Cultural domination, Ethiopianism, Incarnation, Inculturation, Interculturation, Xhosa spirituality.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a great debt of gratitude to so many people for the success of this thesis that I cannot enumerate all of them by name. Besides God, my Creator, Qamata, and my ancestors, I cannot fail to thank my parents, Apollis Kusi and Esther Mtuze for the part they played in moulding me and bringing me up as an African Christian.

The Rhodes Department of Divinity helped me find my bearings in this research with their master's course in spirituality which, unfortunately, coincided with the closure of the department. The insights into Contemporary spirituality, Ignatian spirituality, Celtic spirituality, Reformed spirituality, and African spirituality sharpened my desire to explore my own roots.

My promoter, Professor Ramathate Dolamo, nurtured and guided me through the maze of research, ably directing my thoughts to issues that needed to be incorporated in a study such as this. His extensive knowledge of relevant scholarship in other parts of the continent enabled me to take a more global view of the issues concerned. His meticulous checking of the thesis has been indicative of his own interest in research on African Christianity today.

I am particularly indebted to Mary Louise Peires for undertaking the mammoth task of editing this thesis at short notice, and to Zweli Vena of the Rhodes University Cory Library for valuable help with research material.

Last but not least, a final word of appreciation and well wishes for her own doctoral studies goes to my wife, Khuthala, who stood by me throughout this hectic and demanding time so early in our exciting marriage.

Table of contents

Declaration	ii
Summary	iii
Acknowledgements	v
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Problem statement	1
1.2 Aim of study	6
1.3 Method of approach	10
1.4 Literature overview	11
1.5 Main assumptions of the study	24
1.6 Theoretical framework	25
1.7 The significance and benefit of the study	30
1.8 Definition of terms	33
1.9 Summary	41
2. The foundations and evolution of Bishop Dwane's spirituality and the Order of Ethiopia's struggle for autonomy.	42
2.1 Introduction	42
2.2 Origins, nature and purpose of Ethiopianism	42
2.3 The legacy of Bishop Dwane	52
2.4 A short overview of the Dwane family	58
2.5 Hallmarks of Dwane's spirituality	60
2.5.1 Ethiopianism	60
2.5.2 Africanism	66
2.5.3 Anglicanism	71
2.5.4 Ecumenism and other influences	74
2.6 The Order of Ethiopia's struggle for autonomy.	82
2.6.1 Introduction	82
2.6.2 The first breakaway	83
2.6.3 Opposition to the election of Dr Dwane as Bishop	84
2.6.4 Reasons advanced for breakaways.	85
2.6.5 Action, interaction and reaction	86
2.6.6 Bishop Dwane's account of the history of the Order	89
2.6.7 Bishop Dwane elected and rejected	90
2.6.8 The establishment of the Ethiopian Episcopal Church.	92
2.7 Summary	93

3.	Anglicanism and its attitude towards African culture and spirituality	94
3.1	Introduction	94
3.2	African culture and religion	96
3.3	The era of breaking down and supplanting African culture	101
3.4	Anglicanism and Xhosa culture	106
3.5	Attempts to accommodate African culture	112
3.5.1	God in Xhosa society	112
3.5.2	Ancestors	113
3.5.3	Evil spirits	116
3.5.4	Circumcision	118
3.5.5	<i>Izangoma</i> , evil practitioners and other unwanted practices.	119
3.6	The blind eye approach to inculturation	127
3.7	Summary	134
4.	Analysis of Bishop Dwane's contribution	135
4.1	Introduction	135
4.2	Christianity and culture (n.d.)	135
4.3	Poverty alleviation – the Grahamstown initiative (1988)	141
4.4	The ordination of women to the priesthood (1992)	146
4.5	The consecration of Peter as Bishop of Zululand (1993)	152
4.6	The President's Charge at St Matthew's (1996)	156
4.7	The President's Charge at St Bartholomew's (2002)	158
4.8	An overview of Bishop Dwane's Ad Clera	160
4.9	Summary	168
5.	Bishop Dwane's spirituality on Church and State relations.	169
5.1	Introduction	169
5.2	Letters of protest to the apartheid Government	170
5.3	Correspondence with Post-Apartheid Government	188
5.4	Summary	198
6.	The evolution of an authentic African spirituality in the Ethiopian Episcopal Church	199
6.1	Introduction	199
6.2	Contextualising the Anglican liturgy	201
6.3	The incorporation of traditional healers into the church	207
6.4	Analysis of the Order of Ethiopian liturgy	210
6.5	The new Ethiopian Episcopal Church Prayer Book	213
6.5.1	Morning and Evening Prayers	215

6.5.2	The Eucharistic Service	220
6.6	Summary	228
7.	Theological Appraisal of Dwane’s Spirituality	229
7.1	Introduction	229
7.2	Critique	229
7.2.1	Three Pillars	229
7.2.2	Dwane’s apologetic stance	230
7.2.3	Anglo-Catholic doctrines and Africanism	231
7.2.4	Dwane against White domination	232
7.2.5	Dwane’s spirituality grounded in praxis.	232
7.2.6	Centrality of prayer in Dwane’s life	233
7.2.7	Dwane’s <i>Ad Clera</i>	235
7.2.8	Missionary enterprise and African context	237
7.2.9	Culture and liturgy	238
7.2.10	Culture and Scripture	241
7.3	Conclusion	244
	Bibliography	247

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem statement

The problem to be addressed by this study is one of cultural imperialism which originates from the time of the introduction of Christianity in this country. The missionaries brought a double agenda of introducing Western religion, Christianity, on the one hand, and civilisation, on the other, to the so-called raw natives. This view is strongly supported by Nolan (1988:1) who contends that:

The history of the preaching of the gospel in our country is closely bound up with our social, political and economic history. The preaching of the gospel in South Africa has never been politically neutral even when, in recent times, some Christians have imagined that they have transcended worldly matters like politics and economics.

The gospel that first came to our shores with Dutch and then British colonialism was a gospel that justified and legitimised colonialism, imperialism and European superiority. Despite their barbaric methods and attitudes, the colonisers firmly believed that what they were bringing to this part of the world was 'civilisation' and that the basis of this 'civilisation' was the message of Jesus Christ.

A major problem regarding church and culture is that the Western church deliberately downplays the fact that it is culture-bound, and its cultural component is not the same thing as its religious content. It behaves as if these two form one inseparable package, whereas the following comment by Gaybba (2004: 40) clearly highlights the dual nature of Western religion:

With the spread of Christianity to parts of the world previously unknown to the west, the message went forth incarnated in western cultural categories. And, I suppose one must say 'inevitably', the Gospel was planted together with its cultural forms so that the first generations of Christians experienced not only a religious but also – to varying degrees - a cultural transformation. And there are those who continue to experience some sort of schizophrenia because their faith life remains incarnated in somewhat alien thought categories. Of course, this too is inevitable to some extent. But a greater freedom to inculturate the Gospel could have existed in some places.

There is a considerable gap between Western-oriented mainline churches and African Initiated Churches on the question of culture and religion. The tendency is for the mainline churches to eschew the cultural practices of the African people whether they belong to the mainline churches or the African Initiated Churches. Labelling African cultural practices as paganism has led to tension between the two streams of the Christian faith.

What is obvious in the debate that ensued was that the mainline churches refused to credit local indigenous churches with the right to worship God as Africans who have their own distinctive culture. While it is true that there are African cultural institutions and practices that go against the grain of Western Christian teaching and doctrine, it is equally true that this is not peculiar to African religion.

Christianity also has its roots in non-Christian religious practices and owes much to overlays from the different contexts and cultures it went through. The study will show that Christianity is far from being a pure, unadulterated religion. It bears the marks and manifestations of the various contexts and cultures it has gone through over the years.

The Bible itself is, in its entirety, culturally conditioned, as pointed out by Tate (1991: 28):

This means that the biblical authors communicate through their cultural filters, speaking to the people within the same culture and to people who would understand the communication within the same cultural patterns. The biblical authors were not consciously communicating to readers in a twentieth-century Western culture.

That Christianity traversed many cultural boundaries before it became Europeanised can be seen from the following comment on Judaism by Tate (1991:49):

Christianity was conceived at least partially in the womb of Judaism. But Judaism of the first century was anything but a monolithic religious tradition ...

The historical trek that eventually produced first century Judaism, or what some call Pharisaic Judaism, is a long and complex one. A reconstruction of that history should begin with the Exile, proceed to the Persian period (538 -332 B.C.), continue through the Greek Period (332 – 176 B.C.), and the Maccabean period (162 – 63 B.C.), until it finally arrives at the Roman period (from 63 B.C.).

The multicultural nature of the Christian faith is also attested to by Bosch (1991: 447) when he says:

The Christian faith never exists except as “translated” into culture. This circumstance, which was an integral feature of Christianity from the very beginning, has hopefully been made abundantly clear in the course of this study. Lamin Sanneh rightly says ... that the early church, “in straddling the Jewish-Gentile worlds, was born in a cross-cultural milieu with translation as its birthmark”. It should therefore come as no surprise that in the Pauline churches Jews, Greeks, barbarians, Thracians, Egyptians, and Romans were able to feel at home. The same was true of the post-apostolic church. The faith was inculturated in a great variety of liturgies, and contexts – Syriac, Greek, Roman, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopian, Maronite, and so forth.

It is obvious, therefore, that the message of the biblical authors was adapted to suit the various new cultural contexts, culminating in the European Christian context. This message later spread to Africa and the rest of the world. The founding church conveniently overlooked or even denied the fact that the church that was exported to all parts of the world was culturally-conditioned as pointed out by Bosch (1991:448):

By the time the large-scale Western colonial expansion began, the Western Christians were unconscious of the fact that their theology was culturally conditioned; they simply assumed that it was supracultural and universally valid. And since Western culture was implicitly regarded as Christian, it was equally self-evident that this culture had to be exported together with the Christian faith.

Maimela (1996:80) lays his finger on the pulse of African culture when he points out that “the importance of African culture is something that we, as black South African theologians, have been shy to talk about.” We need to be more open and more determined in our efforts to project our culture and

ourselves to other people if we are to regain our respect and dignity. We also need to liberate those fellow blacks who tend to be more oppressive about African culture than their former white counterparts, as pointed out by Maimela (1996: 84):

Because of the effective monopoly which Europeans had over the training of pastors and priests, most African church leaders tend to be theologically more conservative than their European counterparts, believing that such conservatism will win them applause from their European handlers. And those of us who happened to be under black leadership in those churches know from experience that African church leaders can be more oppressive than European missionaries.

Promoting the Word without due regard to its new cultural context creates communication problems as pointed out by Tate (p.3 above). The absence of cultural filters alienates the receivers of the Word as it is speaking a different language from them. The new text would lack its essential communicative value – its cultural context or *Sitz im Leben*.

We cannot separate the church from its people, its cultural context, as pointed out by Dwane (2002:5):

[While] on the one hand we believe that the church is of divine origin, and is the custodian of the unique revelation of God in Jesus Christ, on the other hand we also maintain it is the body of Christ which is made up of human beings. They bring to it their full humanity expressed in language, customs, thought forms, natural gifts and endowments both personal and collective, for the manifestation of their reconciled diversity in the Spirit, for the mutual enrichment of members of the body of Christ, and to the glory of God.

The problem to be addressed by the study is the reluctance of the main churches to recognise the cultural context of the African Initiated Churches, such as the Ethiopian Episcopal Church, and the black congregations that are an integral part of the mainline churches. The study will show that faith cannot be divorced from its cultural underpinnings, and Christ's message is not antithetical to indigenous culture. Refusal to recognise that led to the

breakaway of the African Initiated Churches, as confirmed by Maimela (1996:86):

It is this kind of resistance to Western cultural and religious imperialism which led to the breakaway of the so-called African Independent Churches from white denominations in the nineteenth century. These breakaways were nothing more than attempts by Africans to resist white cultural domination.

Catholicism, in essence, should mean the incarnation of the Word and the church in as many religions and cultural contexts as possible if it is to be the real global or catholic mission of God. God, being the Father of all, should be accessible to all in their diverse cultural contexts. Dwane (2002:5) suggests the following as a way of solving the current impasse between the mainline and the African Initiated Churches:

The Church in Afrika therefore must sink its roots deep into the Afrikan soil, and allow itself to be transformed by Afrika's own organic vitality if it is to be a church with an Afrikan identity and ethos. Secondly, if the church is seeking to make a meaningful contribution to Afrika's urgent task of reconstruction and renewal, then it is imperative that she becomes engaged in the rehabilitation of the Afrikan human and spiritual values, the ubuntu values, which have been made peripheral by the twin forces of colonialism and western christian imperialism, and are eroded further by the rampant materialism of the present generation.

This research into Xhosa spirituality is new in that it deals with an aspect of African theology that has not hitherto been at the forefront of theological discourse. With the Constitution of 1994 granting equal rights to all faiths and religions, interest in African spirituality has gained new momentum. One of the people who spearheaded this research was Bishop Dr Siggibo Dwane who ultimately became the first Bishop of the Ethiopian Episcopal Church, formerly known as the Order of Ethiopia. The current study focusses on his ground-breaking research and the role he played in introducing far-reaching reforms after attaining autonomy from the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, thus leading a move that was to have serious implications for black mainline churches in the Anglican tradition.

1.2 Aim of study

The aim of the thesis is to investigate the essence of Bishop Dwane's spirituality as reflected in his writings, speeches, advocacy, and the extent to which the Ethiopian Episcopal Church (EEC, in short), formerly the Order of Ethiopia, has embraced and given expression to African culture, in general, and Xhosa spirituality, in particular. Its primary focus will, therefore, be on culture in Bishop Dwane's spirituality and how the incarnate Word works to affirm African 'culturality'¹ as Bate (1999:59) says:

The Word takes on human flesh in order to redeem humanity. Part of humanity is our culturality. So the Word must penetrate to the depths of human cultures in order to redeem human cultures. This means that what is good and of value in human cultures should be preserved and incorporated into Christian life and practice.

The centrality of culture in religion is captured poignantly by Ngubane (in Mosala and Tlhagale 1986: 76):

Religion has always been the medium in which different cultures encounter and perceive one another most acutely and in which they communicate. But it is also in religion where African and western cultures clashed, and still clash, most violently with far-reaching consequences. Early missionaries theologized according to their own cultural frames of reference, for any theologizing is culture-bound, though Spirit-led.

Throughout its relationship with the American Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, the Methodist and the Anglican Churches, the Ethiopian Episcopal Church remained completely loyal to their doctrines and spiritualities. At no stage did it show any signs of either rejecting the extant spirituality or of wishing to revise or modify it in any way. Radical departure from the standard practices inherited from these churches appeared only as soon as the church received autonomy from its last associate, the Anglican Church of

¹ The term is borrowed from Bate's article as cited above, p.59.

Southern Africa. At that point it revised its liturgy and brought expressions of faith that were not only taboo in the original dispensation, but had also been serious enough to lead to the expulsion and excommunication of their exponents in the past.

In this sense, the Ethiopian Episcopal Church clearly spearheaded a move away from the spirituality of the mainline churches. This bold step on their part calls for investigation. The study will trace the roots of this thrust in spirituality especially in light of the fact that Bishop Dwane was a committed product of the missionary tradition. He was born into the Anglican tradition, worked as a staunch Anglican priest and as a member of the Anglican episcopacy for many years until his retirement and sudden death, in a car accident, on 2 July 2006. The presence of the Anglican Metropolitan and Archbishop of Cape Town at Bishop and Mrs Dwane's joint funeral on 8 July 2006 attests to the strength of that relationship. He had succeeded in maintaining close relations with the broader Anglican Communion even after severing the umbilical cord with the Anglican Church of Southern Africa to establish his own Ethiopian Episcopal Church (*UMzi wase Tiyopiya*).

Unlike previous moves and actions within the broader church in earlier years, Dwane's move was not a breakaway as had happened in the past. His was a culmination of years of negotiation and a desire to establish a fully-fledged church and not just an Order or an appendage of the Anglican Church.

Bishop Dwane was trained as a deacon in the church of the Province of Southern Africa and was ordained in London where he attended London University and obtained BD, MTh and PhD degrees. One would have imagined that, after this immersion in high church Anglicanism, he would have shunned his traditional roots and mimicked his icons and mentors. His staunch Africanism begs the questions – why the radical change of outlook? Where did his inspiration come from? What was his ultimate vision of black churches in Southern Africa?

To answer these questions has necessitated a thorough look into his spirituality and what it could hold for African Christianity at large. Maluleke (2000:50) stresses that the time has come for African Christianity to be taken seriously because it is 'not merely some exotic local Christianity, it is Christianity with global significance.' He argues that developments and issues within it may no longer be treated as if they were marginal to the 'Christian story' of our times and strongly contends that 'what happens (or does not happen) in African Christianity will therefore ultimately have a serious impact on Christian presence in the world.'

That the church at large could continue as if other cultures were not there is no longer tenable as Mbuyisa (2000:63) comments:

The Church, universally, has to be seen as all embracing, culturally. The people of Africa only ask for a chance to be loud and proud of belonging to a Church that accepts them as they are. Embracing them will send a clear message throughout this multifaceted continent and the world that diversity is a nettle to be grasped, an opportunity to be explored, and an occasion to be celebrated.

The old missionary antagonism towards African culture and religion is no longer acceptable as stated by Hastings (1976: 37):

There can be no question but that Europeans in general and European missionaries in particular, with some few exceptions, admitted little if any culture of value in Africa, just as many had denied that it really had any religion – other than fearful superstitions. It was more or less taken for granted by missionaries that the more a new social order, a new economy, a new culture, replaced the traditional one, the better for Christianity.

While one could understand missionary ignorance given the fact that they came from a totally different cultural background, one cannot condone their arrogance in their dealings with the situation. Hastings (1976: 38) comments:

Many missionaries were extremely ignorant of the societies they had come to evangelise, with an ignorance partly blameworthy, partly next to inevitable. Moreover they came with an almost impregnable confidence in the overwhelming superiority of the European west and in all the ways of society and culture which they had taken for granted in their own homes, whether Evangelical or Catholic.

However, the African churches, as exemplified by Dwane's Ethiopian Church, were, to use Hastings' (Hastings 1976:59) expression, 'deeply committed to the pursuit of authenticity – a cultural journey of self-discovery with its goal self-identity.'

The study does not seek to proselytize. Its aim is purely to highlight Dwane's spirituality and how he sought communion with the Anglican Church while reserving the right to exercise his faith in terms of his own culture. The best we can do to enable the thesis to reach its desired outcomes is to guard against fundamentalism which Barr (1984:vii) defines as follows:

For good or ill, it is a fact that many of those who enter into the active life of Christian faith enter it through the gateway of fundamentalism. But it is equally true that many of those who do so come to feel after some time that it is a deeply inadequate form of the Christian religion ... Fundamentalist society will do little or nothing to help the pilgrim who becomes convinced that he must leave it and seek a different world of faith. It is accustomed to paint in very dark colours such alternative understandings of the Bible and expressions of Christianity as may come to his attention. In particular, it commonly insists that in it alone the authority of the Bible is properly observed and preserved, and that any other ways of interpreting scripture are inevitably diminutions of biblical authority.

This tension between Christianity and African culture cannot make sense unless it is seen against the backdrop of unrelenting cultural imperialism and dehumanization that Mbeki (2002:5) explains as follows in relation to the maltreatment of Saartjie Baartmann who serves as a classical example of how everything African was trampled underfoot:

It is an account of how it came about that we ended up being defined as a people without a past, except a past of barbarism, who had no capacity to think, who had no culture, no value system to speak of, and nothing to contribute to human civilization – people with no names and no identity, who had to be defined by he who was “man par excellence”, and described by another French thinker, Diderot, as “always vicious ... mostly inclined to lasciviousness, vengeance, theft and lies”.

We are South Africans. To understand the meaning of all these things, we do not have to refer to England, Germany, France or elsewhere in Europe. We do not have to recall a European history that extends to the 19th, the 18th earlier and later centuries.

To understand the meaning of all these things, we need only to start here, on the banks of the Gamtoos River and advance to the rest of the country. We need to cast our eyes back to a period less than ten years ago. Then the state ideology, whatever the garments in which it was clothed, was firmly based on the criminal notion that some had been called upon to enlighten and tame the hordes of barbarians, as Sarah Baartman [sic] was enlightened and tamed.

1.3 Method of approach

The study will be based on an analytical study of Bishop Dwane’s philosophy and spirituality as shown in his writings, followed by an objective assessment of his role and influence in the Ethiopian Episcopal Church. In line with current thinking and methodology, the approach will be largely historical-analytical as emphasized by Pato (1990:1):

The need to move beyond description and classification to theory and explanation in the study of the African Independent Church (AIC) movement has long been recognized. The mere description and interpretation of the belief systems of the AICs does not explain why they exist in the forms in which they do. The prevalent descriptions and interpretations tend to be ahistorical, creating the impression that AICs have an origin independent of socio-historical developments. Those attempts which have been historical have tended to become bogged down in the notion of syncretism as an explanatory hypothesis for the phenomenon of the AIC movement.

A thread that runs through the whole study is Ethiopianism as an historical route that Dwane’s church travelled from its inception to the present because, according to Pato (1990:2):

Unless the AICs are seen primarily in terms of the historical, cultural and socio-political conflicts between the missionaries and their successors, on the one hand, and blacks and whites on the other, their character and worth cannot be adequately appreciated and understood.

It will focus very strongly on Bishop Dwane's views on African culture and religion. Unless these roots are properly analysed and understood, Dwane's decision to introduce radical changes to the received Anglican liturgy and tradition will not make sense.

The study will investigate how far Bishop Dwane succeeded in unmasking the African Christian church and divesting it of its Western trappings in favour of a consciously *Afrikan*, to use his popular expression, spirituality and form of worship that was strongly steeped in African culture. Given the vehemence with which the earlier church opposed such moves, and the autonomy that we now enjoy under the new dispensation, the black church seems to be at the threshold of radical transformation.

The Dwane move might itself not be a big bang or Damascus change, but it is a microcosmic indicator of the trend that black churches might have taken, if they had had their way or if the influence of Western oriented churches had not been so overwhelming. In the same way, it could be seen as a spark in the dark that many of the churches were looking for to take the African church forward. The political climate, with its emphasis on egalitarianism and equal rights, is very conducive for this kind of move.

1.4 Literature overview

Because of the apparent paucity of references in this field, particularly those on the spirituality of the amaXhosa, the research will make extensive use of texts written by Dwane himself, texts on spirituality and culture in general, as well as those authored by other African theologians and scholars.

The trail-blazer in this regard is Mbiti with his writings on African Religion and African Philosophy. Appiah-Kubi and Torres' *African theology en route*

(1979) should serve as an interesting introduction to theological thinking among fellow Africans.

Appiah-Kubi (1979:viii) begins his preface to *African theology en route* with a moving allusion to the Israelite bondage when he laments:

“How can I sing the Lord’s song in a strange land, in a strange language, in a strange thought, in a strange ideology? (cf. Ps.137:4). For more than a decade now the cry of the psalmist has been the cry of many African Christians. We demand to serve the Lord in our own terms and without being turned into Euro-American or Semitic bastards before we do so. That the Gospel has come to remain in Africa cannot be denied, but now our theological reflections must be addressed to the real contextual African situations.

Kalilombe (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres 1979:42) maintains that the negation of the people’s selfhood includes, among others, the negation of their culture:

The final obstacle to selfhood is that the local churches in the mission lands have usually been nothing more than imitations or ‘carbon copies’ of the older churches of Europe and America. The way the mission churches exist and operate is not primarily determined by the local situation: the culture of the people, their needs, their problems, their possibilities, or their outlook. No, it is first and foremost pre-determined by customs, prescriptions, and standards coming from elsewhere, and only secondarily from the exigencies of the locality.

Chipenda (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres 1979:71) makes a remarkable proposition regarding church and doctrine and the need for the church to be defined by its context:

[Theology] should help us to realize that faith does not come from doctrine to life. The contrary is true: faith flows from life to doctrine. Consequently our concept of the church must change. The church should not be a place people come to. The church ought to be a movement going to the people. Our pattern of thought must change. We need a sound spiritual frame of reference to enable us to go forward confidently to new experiences.

Dwane’s PhD thesis, *Christianity in relation to Xhosa religion* (1979), is a milestone in this kind of research as it introduces us to his philosophy, his spirituality and the origins of his interest in the field. These thoughts receive further impetus in his *God, Religion and Culture* (1989a.) Other African

scholars such as Gqubule (1989), Khabela (1996), Khabela and Mzoneli (1998), Pato (2000), Setiloane (2000) and Ngada (2001), also come up with interesting insights in the debate.

In *God, Religion and Culture* (1989a), Dwane discusses four major issues, viz. Christian Revelation, the Ethiopian Movement, African Spirituality, and reflections of a pilgrim. Pilgrimage seems to be central to all the discussions as Dwane moves from his traditional roots to his traditional roots in Christ, unlike the old tendency to move from one's traditional roots to foreign roots. According to him (Dwane 1989a: v), the Christian is in a constant pilgrimage 'forever responding to the lead of the Holy Spirit into fresh and greener pastures.' For him this pilgrimage had started many years ago when he was a student as can be seen in the following statement by Dwane (1989a: vi):

Since my student days, I have found a new interest in the area of contact and conflict between the Christian tradition, and the African tradition. The essay on African Spirituality is one of my several attempts to focus upon ways which Christianity impinges upon African religion and culture.

One of the key concepts upon which he focuses throughout his discussions of Christianity and African religion is Revelation which he (Dwane 1989a:vi) explains as follows:

Revelation is an ongoing process of exposing and acclimatising the Christian gospel to different human situations. If, as I believe, there is in Africa, a peculiarly African way of receiving the gospel, then surely, there must be an African way of expressing this response.

Ethiopianism served as Dwane's best liberatory tool to unshackle African religion from the bonds of orthodoxy and, like his forebears, Dwane (1989a: vii) regarded it as the best movement against 'colonial and ecclesiastical affront to [his] dignity.'

In his quest for a spirituality that would give expression to his Africanness, Dwane (ibid: vii) is convinced that he is journeying with Jesus Christ as the Father 'calls us, in Jesus, our brother and fellow pilgrim, in the power of his

Spirit, to a new Exodus, a new departure from bondage to the liberty of his sons and daughters.’

After discussing revelation from various theological and philosophical vantage points, Dwane (ibid: 48) concludes by emphasising the centrality of Christ in his spirituality as ‘Christ is the final offer to man [sic] of salvation, and fellowship with God. To accept Him, is to accept life from the Father who sent Him.’

Seen in this light, Dwane’s pilgrimage from Ethiopianism to Xhosa spirituality is assured of a compass that keeps it on course even though the nature of his intended destination is yet to unfold. The final product would only be known when the final status quo arrives – the eschatological New Kingdom of God. Until then, we are all on a pilgrimage and in a state of formation and reformation. This reformation is intrinsic and not extrinsic. God continues to re-make us to be like ourselves, and not other people. In the end, we will still be ourselves, in the new Kingdom.

Because Dwane’s theological standpoint and spirituality depend very strongly on revelation, it would be prudent to discuss his view of revelation in some detail and compare it with other theologians’ views on the matter. First of all, Dulles (1987:176) explains revelation succinctly when he says:

In all Christian ecclesiologies, the Church is intimately connected with the divine revelation. If there were no revelation there could be no faith in the biblical and Christian sense, nor any worship, nor any Church. If people accept the Church at all, it is because they find in it a way of communion with the God who freely emerges from his silence and discloses himself to them.

There are various theories of revelation, some dating back to earlier theologians. Only some will be touched on here. Revelation as the church’s final infallible Word on doctrinal teaching has gone through several periods in history. Later theologians started questioning rather dogmatic, exclusive

and so-called infallible, conceptions of revelation, as pointed out by Dulles (1987:178):

The conception of infallibility that emerged in this period of church history corresponds to its highly juridical, authoritarian, and propositional understanding of revelation. On some presentations it appeared as though the believer had to give a blank check to the magisterium. Catholic faith was understood as an implicit confidence in the teaching office, and the test of orthodoxy was a man's readiness to believe whatever the Church might teach for the very reason that the Church was teaching it. One danger in this approach was that it engendered a certain indifference to the content of revelation. Believers were heard to say that if the Church were to teach that there were five or ten persons of God, they would believe it with as much faith as they now believed in the three divine persons.

The fallibility of this conception of infallibility is too glaring. Hence it was challenged by leading theologians of the twentieth century. With the passing of time, and God revealing himself all the time, the current, more cosmic, conception of revelation took centre stage, as indicated by Dulles (1987:187):

The role of the church in this cosmic theology of revelation is not simply to proclaim the biblical message to the world, but rather to enter into dialogue with all men of good will, to discern the signs of times, and to interpret the many voices of our age, judging them in the light of the divine Word. It is taken for granted in this theory, as contrasted with the first and fourth types of revelation theology, that revelation is an ongoing thing. As the universe is being Christified (to use the Teilhardian term), the revelation of God in Christ becomes clearer; new aspects of the mystery of Christ are continually being manifested.

It is evident that Dwane's views on this matter are consonant with those of Dulles. God is continually revealing himself in Christ and in this continual revelation, no one is out of bounds, and no one can profess to have the final word as Christ is being incarnated in all societies and communities, with concomitant impact every time as we journey on our pilgrimage, to use Dwane's popular expression. It is for this reason that Dwane is confident that black Christians and their cultural environment fall within the ambit of God's grace and revelation.

Dwane takes his pilgrimage idea further in *Issues in the South African Theological Debate* (1989b) as he continuously grapples with spiritual and theological challenges.

Once more the book deals with what Gqubule (in Dwane 1989b: 3) calls in the preface to the book ‘a black perspective on the gospel and culture.’ Two of the major issues raised by Dwane in the book are, firstly, a common humanity. He contends that we all belong to one and only one human family. For this reason, all people are equal.

Dwane (ibid: 9) says that ‘the oppressed must stand up to the oppressor and look him in the face with nothing to fear.’ The second issue he (Dwane ibid:9) stresses is the equality of man and woman. According to him, ‘we cannot attain the full liberty of God’s children until we recognise that man and woman are equal and complementary.’

These views are both pertinent and radical in that one of the major crises in Dwane’s church revolved around the role of women in the church.

Clearly referring to those opponents who opposed full participation of women in church structures and activities, Dwane (1989b:10) states categorically:

Theology cannot ignore the fact that there is division within the church itself, caused by the unwillingness of one section of the body to share with the other the leadership which belongs to the whole. For as long as this situation remains, there will be unwholesome suspicion and confrontation between members of the body which might in the long run tear it apart.

Dwane (ibid:12) strongly believes that the Cross of Jesus and the Holy Spirit can bring about unity and mutual respect in the country because ‘there is surely hope for our country and subcontinent’ and that ‘it is possible that a true *metanoia* may happen and that people may yet learn to live together and share God’s gifts as members of the same family.’

Both as a biblical and a contextual theologian, Dwane (ibid:24) believes that he is a member of Christ's body who has to constantly seek the 'mind of Christ' among, and together with, other members of the family.

The theme of Gospel and culture permeates Dwane's writings. Besides incarnation, revelation, and contextualisation, this was, no doubt one of his greatest preoccupations. It always formed the central theme in his writings. To him the value of incarnation lies in the fact that 'incarnation also opens up cultures to each other so as to enable them to interact and enrich each other.'

Dwane's (1989b:27) unwavering belief in cultural diversity lay in the fact that:

What God in the incarnate life does is to indicate that the origin and the ultimate destiny of all these human ventures is Himself, because Christ as the New Adam has appropriated for himself what is best in all of them. In Him there is unity in diversity.

It is remarkable that Dwane, like other scholars of African religion, makes the vitally important point that incarnation means taking the best from each of the two cultures, western and African, to form African Christianity. This is clearly attested by Nyamiti (in Mugambi and Magesa 1990: 165):

As far as Christ is concerned, African physiognomy is based on the principle of his Incarnation, in that by becoming man the Logos assumed into himself not only his individual humanity and the particular culture in which he was born, but through that humanity he also took upon himself all human beings including all their positive religious and cultural values.

It is because of his strong conviction regarding unity in diversity that Dwane (ibid:28) could not countenance cultural imperialism in any form:

I maintain, and there is enough evidence of it, that the early missionaries to Africa behaved like Judaizers towards African converts. Instead of accepting them as they were, they attempted to make them in their own image, after their own likeness. Of course one has to admit that there were exceptions to this rule, but the general assumption was that Africans were 'savages' and 'thorough infidels' who had to be persuaded to abandon their own way of life, and adopt Christianity with all its Western trimmings, lock, stock and barrel. The outcome of this is that when African Christians now look at themselves, they realise that they are dressed up in borrowed robes.

Father Robert Stretton, holding an Open Door Retreat at Hillandale, Grahamstown from 22- 25 August 2006, quoted an anonymous author who gave very sound advice:

Our first task in approaching another person is to take off our shoes, for the place we are approaching is holy. Otherwise we may find ourselves treading on another's dreams. More serious still, we may forget that God was there before our arrival.

Once again, Dwane (1989b: 106) points to Scripture's reference to Christ as the New Adam and he continues to assert that 'Christ as the New Adam is God meeting His creatures in the concreteness and particularity of their existence, so as to enable them to respond to His love which accepts them where they are, as they are.'

Unlike some theologians, Western or African, Dwane has no problem with Xhosa religious rituals even those held for ancestral propitiation. In the essay entitled 'Some Reflections on the Xhosa Traditional Ideas of Sacrifice,' Dwane (1989b: *ibid*) gives a lengthy but very informative account of the significance of these rituals in Xhosa society.

Rituals solicited the severest sanction from missionaries. In defence of these practices, Dwane (*ibid*: 109) points out that the 'sacrifice has three aspects to it – propitiation, preservation of human values, and commemorating the spirits of the departed, and of giving them the recognition they deserve.'

Polygamy was certainly the polecat of the missionary era. Dwane (1989b:127) says in its defence:

Polygamous marriages are not temporary liaisons, but are by intention, permanent unions. And this is one of the characteristic features of marriage as God has ordained it. This cornerstone of marriage, is, in polygamous marriages, a ray of light which signals the fuller manifestation of the reality of marriage as ordained by God. That procreation and the upbringing of children is strictly bound up with the family, wherein there is a lifelong bond between husband and wife, is an indication of divine prompting, perhaps not fully grasped. Polygamy observed from this angle deserves no condemnation, and seeks no justification.

Of all the early missionaries, Bishop Colenso has gone down in history as the only one who came to the defence of polygamy, much to the displeasure of his colleagues as pointed out by Hinchliff (1968: 66):

Other missionaries objected most of all to the fact that Colenso allowed polygamists to be baptized. The bishop was by no means in favour of polygamy as such, but he maintained that it was part of the Zulu social order, and that it was not necessarily immoral. He thought it most certainly *was* immoral to make converts put away their extra wives. He believed that polygamists should be baptized, but that men who were already Christians should not be allowed to marry more than once.

This historical clash between Colenso and his colleagues is depicted as follows by de Gruchy (1990:17):

With regard to his missionary policies, Colenso was convinced that the way forward was not to reject African religious traditions and customs out of hand, as other missionaries tended to do, but leaven African culture and its social system with the gospel. What was required was the transformation of African society, not the detribalization of individuals by turning them into black Europeans.

It is patently clear from the above that Dwane's spirituality is not *in tandem* with early missionary teaching in this regard. While this is not surprising, it does beg the question – is Dwane's spirituality African or Western? The simple answer is that it is both, however paradoxical that might sound.

African Christians are loyal to both African and Christian spirituality and they are not shy to admit that they reserve the right to accept or reject whatever precepts they find questionable in the light of God's revelation that transcends time, space, culture, and even biblical texts.

Setiloane (1979:64) explains this paradoxical loyalty as follows:

The question as to why we are still in the Christian fold can be answered in different ways. For myself, first, I am like someone who has been bewitched, and I find it difficult to shake off the Christian witchcraft with which I have been captivated. I cannot say I necessarily like where I am. Second, I rationalize my position by taking the view that to be Christian I do not have to endorse every detail of western Christian theology. Instead, it is enough that I confess "Jesus as the Christ of God," i.e. as the unique, unprecedented, and, so far, unrepeated and unsurpassed human manifestation of Divinity.

Dwane's stance was not to reject any one of the two traditions in favour of the other. As an African Christian, he, like Setiloane, strongly believed that he could not dispense with Christ as his Redeemer, but maintained that Christ should meet him on his (Dwane's) home ground. That is why his spirituality contains elements from both traditions. He stood for the crystallization of the best in both traditions in order to produce what is good for the future.

His spirituality was premised on the black theological perception that the Christian church did not treat its black sister churches as its own biological children. It treated them as step-children. Dwane (2002: 3) explains this as follows:

Since my childhood days, I have been fascinated by the ambivalence of our people towards the church and their own Afrikan culture. On the one hand the church which had become their new spiritual home was to them rather like a step-mother who provided for her step-children's needs, but lacked the natural warmth and affirmation of a biological mother.

It is because of this ambivalence that Dwane (ibid: 5) insisted that 'the Church in Africa therefore must sink its roots deep into the Afrikan [sic] soil,

and allow itself to be transformed by Afrika's [sic] own organic vitality if it is to be a church with an Afrikan [sic] identity and ethos.'

That Dwane's spirituality, more often than not, cut across the grain of orthodox Christian spirituality cannot be doubted. He boldly propagated views that were clearly not *in tandem* with mainline thinking. In the book *Ingulo emhlophe (White Sickness in Xhosa society)* (1999b), he propagates views that could not have gone down too well with hardcore Anglicans. The phenomenon he calls 'white sickness' which relates to people being called to divinership, lay at the bottom of missionary antagonism to African culture. To them it was the crown of heathenism. Dwane, (1999b:4) in turn, does not see anything sinister with this institution:

White sickness is a common phenomenon in Xhosa society, and an integral part of Xhosa religion. That there is this connection between white sickness and traditional religion should not surprise us, in view of the fact that health and wholeness are central to African religions.

In this informative booklet on white sickness, Dwane refutes some of the misconceptions about this phenomenon. He bemoans the stigmatization of white sickness by church people, thus alienating the diviners and novices from the church.

Dwane (ibid: 21) contends that 'fear of rejection by the Christian community must, therefore, be very real to these people who, after all, are hypersensitive and vulnerable.'

He (Dwane 1999b:23) recommends that the church seriously consider this matter as it is quite prevalent in our churches:

I think that the apparent similarities between white sickness and certain Old Testament strands open up new possibilities of a fruitful dialogue between Christianity and Xhosa culture on this subject, which, for many Christians, is still a prickly pear. It seems to me that the greatest challenge is to come to grips with the reality that many of our people who are educated, articulate, and as far as we can make out, very good Christians, seem to have this calling of the ancestors to be diviners. This means that for the time being, *intwaso* is here to stay, and may be with us for a very long time.

Dwane's search for the relevance of Western theologizing to the African context is pursued as vigorously as ever in *Christ and our Salvation: Dialogue with the Christian tradition from an African standpoint* (2000). According to Pato (in Dwane 2000: Foreword), the book 'tells the story of what salvation means to many African people, and raises questions about Western European theological models of salvation that have dominated Africa.'

One of Dwane's (Dwane 2000: 16) strongest messages in the book is that 'Christ is our Brother Ancestor which puts him firmly on the side of humanity, something analogous to Paul's Christ as the second Adam.'

In *Between Two Stools: Issues of Gospel and Culture* (2002) Dwane continues his wrestling with the challenges of inculturation, incarnation, and revelation. He (Dwane 2002: 23) dismisses the dichotomy between the Gospel and African culture by saying that 'the conflict between the good news and the Afrikan [sic] culture is surely not real and cannot be.'

Dwane (ibid: 9) insists that 'the church must go beyond outward manifestations of inculturation to stretching the black people's own hands to God.' If inculturation is to be genuine and effective, Dwane (2002: 10) feels that it should do the following:

Inculturation needs to help the church to take on the post-apartheid task of rehabilitating Afrikan culture and restoring the dignity of Afrika's children which has been violated by the forces of colonialism and oppression.

After debating inculturation at length, Dwane (2002:23) boldly answers his own rhetorical question – Is there such a thing as Afrikan spirituality? - as follows:

To return to the question: is there such a thing as Afrikan spirituality, the answer must surely be affirmative. For as there is an acknowledged diversity of linguistic, ethnic, and cultural distinction around the world, so religion too has many different expressions which is not surprising seeing that its subject matter is the illusive supernatural reality. Out of this melting pot different forms of Spirituality emerge, and Afrikan Spirituality is one of them.

Archbishop Monsengwo, as cited by Magesa (in Africa Faith and Justice Network 1996:167) gives the gist of inculturation when he says:

[The] Church in Africa seeks to become more and more the family of God. The Church wants African families to become more and more the Church themselves. This Church-family should transform the society in which it finds itself into the kind of family-society where there is more fellowship, more equality and more love. To do this we have to be ready to share with the entire church the faith we ourselves have received. This is inculturation.

Magesa (in Africa Faith and Justice Network 1996:167) strongly supports this approach largely because “the family takes a central position in African society and African culture is a culture of the family.” By being Church, the family with the incarnated Jesus remains itself and projects that self to others which is exactly what Dwane’s spirituality aims to do by appealing to both incarnation and inculturation.

The main tenets of African spirituality are common cause. There is a clear body of knowledge that gives evidence to their role in African society, and a set of values that underpin their existence. *Ubuntu* is only one of those manifestations. Dwane (2002: 31) correctly points out that ‘*ubuntu* values therefore are the antidote of anti-social behaviour, the fibres which hold together the total fabric of society.’

It is the essence of *ubuntu* to make it imperative for people to reach out in their daily lives to those infected and affected by AIDS, to the orphans left behind to tend to one another, to the poor, and to those whose fortunes have been riddled by violence and crime. That is how Dwane sees *ubuntu* and its role in ensuring order, equality and justice in society. It is one of the strongest foundation stones of African religion and spirituality: close to Dwane’s heart

as he journeyed towards a church that would give credence to the values embodied in *ubuntu*.

1.5 Main assumptions of the study.

The first major assumption of the study is that all Christianity is culture-based. As it evolved, Christianity took over various cultural patterns and forms which it, in turn, bequeathed to the new-found Christian faiths and cultural contexts.

It is also assumed that African religion is culture-based and that this is not at variance with Christian teaching. Any points of dissonance should be reconciled by the incarnate Word of God, but these can also be purified and sanctified by it and the Holy Spirit.

This view is strongly supported by Mgojo (in Mosala and Tlhagale 1986:113) who says in this regard:

The Gospel does not fall from the sky. Our faith is a *fide ex audito*. The presence of the Gospel is tied up with the mystery of the incarnation. The Gospel is only a living reality when it is incarnated in a concrete context and partakes of the ambiguities and limitations of history. Only then is the Lord truly present in his community.

A further assumption made here is that Christianity's major shortfall in its dealings with African religion is its imperialistic tendencies. In its quest for dominance wherever it is planted, it rejects anything African. It refuses to acknowledge that God's revelation is accessible to all humankind, across the globe.

The study assumes that Christianity can be made truly catholic by spreading it to all nations and cultural contexts provided it is divested of its cultural baggage. There is space for all in the Christian faith. If this door is closed in

the face of those who have identified with Christianity for a long time, often receiving rebuff and rejection, the mushrooming of non-Christian faiths will have a field day among the rejected Africans.

The final and even more pertinent assumption is that Dwane's spirituality clearly shows that the situation we find ourselves in has been caused by people and consequently, it can also be put right by people, hence his demonstration as to how his church handled indigenisation, viz. rooting Christianity in African culture.

1.6 Theoretical framework

The basic theoretical framework to be employed in this study is African theology. Let me hasten to say that this will not be used to the exclusion of other related struggle theologies such as Black Theology and liberation theology simply because the line of demarcation is not too strongly defined in Dwane's theologizing. It is clear that he was influenced by all of them, to varying degrees, and biblical theology which Mosala (in Mosala and Tlhagale, 1986:120) associates with Black theology as follows:

Black Theology has roots in the Bible insofar as it is linking the struggles of oppressed people in South Africa today with the struggles of oppressed people in the communities of the Bible. The oppressed people in the Bible did not write the Bible. Their struggles come to us *via* the struggles of their oppressors. Thus Black Theology needs to be firmly and critically rooted in black history and black culture in order for it to possess apposite weapons of struggle that can enable black people to get underneath the biblical text to the struggles of oppressed classes.

Goba (in Mosala and Tlhagale 1986: 61) makes a very lucid and necessary distinction and point of convergence between Black theology and African theology when he says:

Apart from this, there are those who have confused Black Theology with African Theology. Those who think when we focus our attention on the challenge of Africanization we are actually doing Black Theology. The problem here has to do with the kind of hermeneutic that one uses in his or her theological programme. Black Theology in its method of interpretation is intentionally political, on the other hand, African Theology tends to be more ethnographical particularly in its emphasis on African cultural values. Therefore we must make a clear distinction when we talk about the two. But at the same time we must also realize that it is possible to embody both interests in the kind of theological hermeneutic that we choose.

In support of my decision to use African theology as the basis of this study, I wish to cite Setiloane (2000:9) who says in this regard:

Much has already been said and written about Black and Liberation Theology. However, very little has been said about African Theology in South Africa. In fact there are some that would not even credit it as an acceptable academic activity. Yet it is the 'theology' that is lived and practised by almost all African Christians in this country and further north in the continent – indeed at varying levels.

According to Setiloane (2000:9), this manner of theologizing is still in its infancy in South Africa 'while it has been done quite extensively in other parts of the continent.' This view is strongly supported by Bediako (in Ferguson, Wright and Packer, 1988:8-10) who states that "the titles of significant publications by some of the leading theologians of the continent confirm this emphasis."

Setiloane (2000:11) decries the present generation's self-deprecation and its tendency to look down upon their culture and spirituality:

For many of us living in modern urbanised Africa, it becomes increasingly difficult to imagine how life might have been on this continent before the advent of Western people and their civilisation. We have become so conditioned (and brain-washed) that, even with the best education, we often look back at it with shame as 'savage', 'brutal' and everything that is bad. We look at it with the eyes and spectacles of the Western people who have conquered us, taught us their ways and made us slaves to their thought patterns, value systems and spirituality.

Setiloane (2000:111) contends that African theology is rooted in African myths and legends that relate to the origins of the earth and humanity. Community life is vital because the people live communally. All tendencies

to marginalise or exclude other people are frowned upon as explained by Setiloane (2000:22):

The most cherished principle in life-together is to include rather than to separate. Even the purpose of conquest in war was neither destruction; nor elimination, but incorporation of the vanquished. The aim all the time was to make one's group bigger and presumably stronger.

Being a person (or vital force) is crucial in African society as pointed out by Setiloane (2000:24), but it is even more vital to be a 'vital force in participation.' It is this 'vital force in participation' that makes it imperative for people to live in harmony, love, and peace with others because *Seriti* (loosely translated as a spirit of fellowship) promotes relationship. This explanation is *in tandem* with Setiloane's (2000:24) comment that 'a living being is like a live electric wire which is ever exuding force or energy in all directions.'

One of the major weaknesses of the missionaries was to bring their own agenda and be obsessed with their own culture to the exclusion of anything else, as pointed out by Setiloane (2000:29):

The people who first brought it to the notice of the outside world were the missionaries and they were definitely biased, because they had an alternative agenda and programme of belief to promote. Besides, they came out of a totally different background and experience of spirituality – which they came especially to be advocates of.

It was contended earlier on that African theology works hand in glove with other liberation theologies or political movements. A good example of one of these is the Black Consciousness Movement. Setiloane (2000:60) points out that Black Consciousness appears to be the rallying point around which Black Theology and African Theology come to meet and be reconciled. Setiloane (2000:61) poignantly comments in this regard:

There is a kind of child-mother relationship between Black Consciousness and African Theology. To them the message seems to be, 'Son behold thy mother – mother there is thy son!' For African Theology more than any other system of thinking ever espoused by Africans, provides a concrete base for our Africanness.

The link between African Theology and culture is twofold. First of all, African theology is based on cultural values and secondly, it has relentlessly fought against any forces that sought to undermine those cultural values. This view is articulated as follows by Setiloane (2000:49):

In short, what African Theology objects to in Western Theology is *the accretion of Western Civilisation and Culture which have come to be considered as inseparably part and parcel of Christianity*: 'the Western swaddling-clothes' that cover up Jesus and his message.

Pato (in de Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio, 1994: 154) clearly highlights this relationship between African theology, Black Consciousness and African culture as follows:

A further factor in the evolution of African theology was the rediscovery of the value of traditional African culture. In South Africa the emergence of the Black Consciousness Movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s with its stress on 'blackness' gave great impetus to a new respect for things African and black. This self-discovery led to the conviction that the African heritage is not and never was 'of the devil', but needed to be taken seriously and related to Christian faith. They began to realise that there are values in their cultures that are just as good as, if not better than, those of their colonisers. Once this was realised, black people began to have confidence in their ability to work things out for themselves, on their own terms and in their own way. Certainly, the rise of Black theology in South Africa in the early 1970s was a sequel to this development.

This link between African theology and Black Consciousness is also attested by Maimela (in Hulley, Kretzschmar and Pato 1996:91):

[The] Black Consciousness Movement that arose in 1968 under the auspices of the South African Student Organisation was another cultural, and spiritual movement that promulgated African culture and encouraged black people to take pride in their blackness, thereby challenging them to become subjects of their own history.

This theoretical framework is in line with the views espoused by many local and African scholars on the importance and the efficacy of African theology in dealing with the plight of African Christians in this country. Appiah-Kubi (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres, 1979: viii) comments as follows about African theology:

The struggle of African theologians, scholars, and other Christians in ventures such as this consultation is to find a theology that speaks to our people where we are, to enable us to answer the critical question of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Who do you (African Christians) say that I am?" Our attempt is to rescue theology from the shelves of the universities and the sanctuaries of the churches and to make it a living, dynamic, active, and creative reality in our societies.

Regarding the utility of our theology and how it should actively help us change our situation and address the various imbalances in society, Appiah-Kubi (1979: viii) comments as follows:

Our theology should be dynamic, ready to change and address itself to all situations in time and space. It should be liberating, freeing us from all chains, including social, racial, cultural, and even confessional domination. Above all, it should be healing and reassuring. It should free itself from empty arrogance and absolutism and allow the Holy Spirit to direct its path toward a total fulfillment.

Kasenene (in Villa-Vicencio and de Gruchy 1994: 139) encapsulates the essence of Appiah-Kubi's sentiments and Dwane's own ethical view when he says about African theology:

When the gospel is applied to a specific situation, it produces a relevant theology for the local people. African theology must be understood in this context, as incarnating the Christian faith in the culture and situation in which African people live. African people have problems and concerns, cultures and world-views which are unique to them. Theology made elsewhere cannot provide relevant and meaningful answers.

Pato (in de Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio 1994:156) aptly demonstrates that Black theology in South Africa tends to be more relevant as it deals with more immediate socio-political issues while African theology tends to concern itself with socio-cultural issues. He ends up showing that there is now a move towards a synthesis of the two: Pato (in de Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio, 1994:156):

However, some understanding has developed between these two experiences of God at work among the people of South Africa. African theology is increasingly seen as complementary to Black theology. Similarly, Black theologians have become more aware of their African heritage than before. Black theologians are, as it were, spiritual descendants of African theologians. The process of identifying integral connections between political struggle and culture holds prospects for the development of a more liberating theological reflection and activity in South Africa.

1.7 The significance and benefit of the study.

I consider that this study is both timely and essential to build bridges between mainline and African Initiated Churches. It could facilitate the restoration of mutual love and respect in these related Christian families and lead to closer relations between these groupings within the Christian faith. It is not aimed at converting mainline Christians into African Initiated churches. On the contrary, it is aimed at fostering Christian goodwill and good relations between these groupings.

The fact that these churches severed ties with the mainline churches but remained within the Christian fold, is significant. There are now greater opportunities for veering towards other new faiths in Africa, a move that will undermine the great achievements of the Christian faith so far in Southern Africa. We, in the region, have made great and commendable strides in reconciling the diverse populations of the various countries, but little is being done to reconcile the large numbers of Christians in the region.

The study comes at a time when the country's Constitution calls for mutual respect and tolerance in politics, religion and social relations. We can, therefore, not sit back and pretend that all is well in Christian relations when so many people feel disparaged, scorned and undermined when they try to promote their own culture within the Christian faith.

While authors in Africa and abroad have addressed some of these issues in publications written by black authors from an African's perspective, there is a dearth of such works on Xhosa religion by Africans. The importance of such theologizing is emphasised by Appiah-Kubi (1979: ix):

To be able to read the signs of our times, African theology should tap the resources of our entire community, in arts, literature, sculpture, and all human and academic disciplines, especially the social sciences. It should be a theology of the people, by the people, and for the people. The task is too precious, urgent, and important to be left in the hands of church functionaries or theologians; thus the involvement of men and women of all walks and stations in life is called for. It should be office theology, farm theology, market theology, street theology, household theology, etc.

The need for this kind of theology is further articulated as follows in the *Final Communique of the Pan-African Conference of Third World Theologians* (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres, 1979:11):

We believe that African theology must be understood in the context of African life and culture and the creative attempt of African peoples to shape a new future that is different from the colonial past and the neo-colonial present. The African situation requires a new theological methodology that is different from the approaches of the dominant theologies of the West. African theology must reject, therefore, the prefabricated ideas of North Atlantic theology by defining itself according to the struggles of the people in their resistance against the structures of domination. Our task as theologians is to create a theology that arises from and is accountable to African people.

Needless to say our brothers and sisters in the Roman Catholic church in Africa have journeyed further and longer on this path. We are not on a wild goose chase or out on a limb with nothing to emulate. This could be attested by the following reflections by Onaiyekan (in Africa Faith & Justice Network, 1996:213) on the African Synod in Rome from April 10 to May 8, 1994:

The Synod emphasized the need for serious studies of our cultures and their relationship with the principles of the Christian faith. Priests are expected to be in the forefront of this research and experimentation. However, they also ought to find ways of involving enlightened and interested laity who are often at the cutting edge of the dilemmas of the conflicts and tensions between our faith and culture.

The first major step we need to take is to question the selfhood of the church and to see how it could be aligned with our aspirations as Blacks. This could be seen from the following comments by Kalilombe (in Appiah-Kubi and

Torres, 1979:38), reporting on a group of Roman Catholic priests in the Pontifical Universities of Rome who, as early as 1956, questioned the selfhood of the church and advocated adaptation:

[It] was clear that the phase of radical questioning about the selfhood of the church in the missions was well under way. But at that time the watchword was "adaptation". Reflecting on past missionary attitudes and practices, these priests advocated a change of heart. They called a stop to seeing missionary work as an indiscriminate condemnation of the way of life of the evangelized peoples and an imposition on them of western culture in the name of Christianity.

It is important to note that the required changes should be generated by and within the black churches themselves and not imposed from above or outside, as stressed by Kalilombe (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres, 1979:39):

Adaptation as currently practised has become largely odious because it negates the very aim of the movement: selfhood, self-determination, self-reliance of the local church. What people are objecting to is not so much the changes in themselves. What puts people off is that such adaptations should again be imposed from outside just as they have always been. No real degree of selfhood is achieved if it is still the expatriate who tells the local church when and how to adapt! There is no selfhood if the local church's performance, be it liturgy, or art, or theology, still needs the condescending approval and ratification of the expatriate and is constantly subjected to judgment by the expatriate's own standards. There is no real Africanization, but merely another, more subtle, form of domination.

The need for this move is also ably and aptly stated by Setiloane (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres, 1979:62):

Content-wise I believe we have now established the legitimacy of the African claim to a unique and different theological point of view within the ecumenical Christian community because of our cultural, geographical, spiritual, social, and temperamental background. We have contributed not a little to the modern acceptance in world theological circles of the view that theology can be done only in context. Theology is a verbalization of an experience of the Divinity at work. Differences in environment mean different experiences of this one and all-pervasive Divinity at work, and therefore different verbalizations of these experiences.

1.8 Definition of terms

It is essential to start this section with an attempt to answer a question that many theologians and spirituality scholars always start with – What is Spirituality? The reason for asking this question is that spirituality is a broad term about which there is no unanimity.

Kourie (in Kourie and Kretzschmar 2000:12) contends that ‘there is widespread confusion regarding the meaning of spirituality.’ According to her, the confusion is due to the ‘amorphous nature of the term as it refers to otherworldliness and escapism with no relevance to today’s society.’ Having said this, she (Kourie, 2000: 12) ventures the following definition of spirituality:

Taking spirituality in its wider sense it is true to say that everyone embodies a spirituality of some sort: it refers to the *raison d’etre* of our existence, the meaning and values to which we ascribe, whether these be religious or not. Spirituality, in this wider sense refers to the ultimate values and commitments upon which we base our lives.

That Dwane’s spirituality was both integrated and contemporary cannot be doubted, viewed in the light of the following comment by Kourie (in Kourie and Kretzschmar 2000: 13):

Contemporary spirituality impacts on the totality of life; it is not dualistic; it does not posit a bifurcation between the secular and the sacred. It encompasses the entire life of faith, which includes body and mind, as well as the social and political dimensions.

This view strongly resonates with that of Rolheiser (1998:6) who maintains that ‘spirituality is not about serenely picking or rationally choosing certain spiritual activities like going to church, praying or meditating, reading spiritual books, or setting off on some explicit spiritual quest.’

McGrath (1999:8) adds interesting elements to the discourse by pointing out that ‘there is a wide variety of spiritualities which are encountered in Christian history,’ but he stresses two major factors, viz. ‘the basic belief of the individual or community’ and ‘a set of theological beliefs with a very specific set of personal and institutional factors.’

While McGrath clearly states that he (ibid:9) is ‘not arguing for the priority of either theology or experience’, he strongly stresses that there should be ‘*a process of correlation between the two.*’

In a nutshell, this is how McGrath (1999:9) relates these important elements of spirituality:

Spirituality is not something that is deduced totally from theological presuppositions, nor is it something which is inferred totally from our experience. It arises from a creative and dynamic synthesis of faith and life, forged in the crucible of the desire to live out the Christian faith authentically, responsibly, effectively, and fully.

Crane (1979:7) stresses the people-centredness of spirituality:

First of all, there is no such thing as a spirituality, biblical or otherwise, in the abstract. Spirituality exists only in people, so that when we speak of biblical spirituality, we mean the spirituality of the biblical people, that is, of the people who are represented and reflected in the Bible.

Although this study will end up focusing on how Dwane brought about transformation within his church, and by implication Anglicanism at large, by introducing radical liturgical changes in the Ethiopian Episcopal Church once it got its autonomy from the Anglican Church, we should not lose sight of the fact that his spirituality was ecumenical. It went beyond the four walls of his own church and those of parochial Anglicanism, to include other communities’ social and political issues.

It would, therefore, be wise to keep in mind that an integrated spirituality such as Dwane's would, according to Kretzschmar (in Kourie and Kretzschmar 2000:41) 'deliberately seek to engage the Christian faith with the context in which people live.' This, I believe, was how Dwane saw his role and exercised his spirituality.

Culture, as used in this study, refers to a broad spectrum of practices and actions by those concerned, ranging from what happens in the people's daily lives to their belief systems. This comprehensive view of culture is explained as follows by Ayisi (1988:2):

Culture, then, embraces everything which contributes to the survival of man [sic], and this will comprise not only physical factors but also sociological factors. A distinction has been made between our biological and social needs. The psychological factors will comprise all the non-material interests such as religious institutions, ritual observances, etc.

Since the main focus of this study is the centrality of culture in Dwane's spirituality, it is deemed necessary to draw attention to an issue that could cloud our quest for authentic African spirituality based on culture.

Torrance (in Regan and Torrance 1993:2) gives three crucial warnings about culture and religion. He premises these warnings with the statement that 'the theological affirmation of "culture Protestantism" shaped German self-understanding in the first half of this century (i.e. 19th century) in no small measure to this country's two world wars.' According to him (ibid:2) 'Germany was a deeply religious nation where the needs and demands of German culture too readily defined the church's agenda.' This clearly demands that we look critically at culture if we are to avoid its dominating both our religion and our spirituality.

The first of Torrance's warnings is: "fundamentalism of culture" where 'the demands of culture, defined in terms of its own prior self-understanding, are accepted uncritically as defining theological conclusions.'

The second is “cultural foundationalism” ‘where,’ Torrance (ibid:2) says, ‘it is believed (explicitly or implicitly) that the culture defines the necessary form of theological questioning, even though those who advocate this may wish to deny that they are conditioning in advance the actual content of their conclusions.’

The third issue that Torrance (ibid:2) warns against is the ‘naïve and destructive concept of a “culture-less” or culturally neutral Christianity where the inevitable and, indeed, necessary cultural and contextual “interwovenness” of the church is overlooked.’

It is therefore clear that we need to look at culture in this context very critically while bearing in mind that the text we bring into this context is also not culturally neutral. The fluidity and dynamism of culture, both indigenous and received, demand that we avoid compartmentalizing it as something fixed, as pointed out by Hardy (in Regan and Torrance 1993:23):

For what it is worth, I would add that there is a similar problem with the word ‘culture’. We are accustomed to hypostatizing ‘it’ as something fixed ‘into which’ the Christian mission goes – like a divine intervention – in order to ‘confront’ and convert it by the proclamation of the Gospel. But this is fair neither to the culture nor to the place of Christ in it.

Hardy (ibid:23) continues to show that every culture has the potential for God and God’s presence in Christ in it:

Cultures are not fixed and self-enclosed; they are dynamic and intertwined with others. And yet within this intertwining, there is a braiding in which God himself may be present. And the question before us is how, by recognizing the presence of God in Christ, we may further effect the consequence of this presence.

The interface between the Christian faith and culture is explained as follows by writers from the New People Media Centre (in Africa Faith and Justice Network, 1996:14):

The entire Christian faith expressed in daily life, in doctrine, in worship, in catechesis, and in spirituality should be incarnated in and enriched by local mentality, language, culture, and aspirations of the people. This involves not only the meaningful translation of the Bible, but also the achievement of a specific integral identity of the local church that is open to the universality of the Catholic church. The church must be seen and understood as being indigenous and local, and not as foreign, or a colonial imposition or importation.

Culture, as envisaged in this study refers to the African people's life-style, rituals, music, belief system, worship and many cultural practices that identify Blacks as Blacks, including the following hallmarks of African culture as highlighted by Oduyoye (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres, 1979: 10 -14) paraphrased here below:

- The divine origin of the universe and our being as God's stewards,
- The importance of the one community of past, present and future generations for land rights and global cohesion,
- Wholeness of the person as evidenced in the holistic approach i.e. not making a distinction between sacred and secular in communal life,
- The delegation of authority to human beings, eg. The belief in the divine right of kings,
- Reconciliation in terms of which broken relations are healed through sacrifices and other practices,
- Rites of passage,
- African liturgical practices as found in independent churches – music, prayer forms, drumming, dancing, extemporaneous prayer, healing and so on.

Several other terms have to be put into perspective. These terms are highlighted in the following comments by de Gruchy (1990:156):

Black theology, like implicit theology of the African Independent churches, is a theology of indigenization, but it is decidedly more than that. Indigenization describes the attempt to ensure that Christianity becomes rooted in African culture. Culture here refers to language, music, and life-style. Contextualization, however, is more embracing. A contextual theology has to wrestle with the socio-political and economic situation.

It should be stressed that African Christians differentiate between 'indigenisation' and 'Africanisation'. Turaki (1999:17-19) makes a clear distinction between indigenisation and Africanisation. Indigenisation, he argues, refers to 'making Christianity look more African and to rid it of all its foreign elements. Africanisation, on the other hand, goes beyond 'the need to

rid Christianity of Western trappings, to the need to control the institutional Christianity and determine its destiny in Africa.' He explains contextualisation as having, as its overriding goal the desire 'to make theology relevant and meaningful in its application within context.'

While Dwane's spirituality contains elements of all the above, in different proportions, his main personal objective was certainly indigenisation. Of course the nature of his Ethiopian Church meant an implicit and explicit subscription to all three principles – liberation, indigenization and Africanisation.

Dwane coupled indigenization with liberation because, as said by Cone (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres, 1979: 184), the two have to go together:

It is simply not enough to indigenize Christianity or to Africanize theology. The people also want to be liberated from racism, sexism, and classism. If theology is to be truly indigenized, its indigenization must include in it a social analysis that takes seriously the human struggles against race, sex, and class oppression. I contend therefore that indigenization and liberation belong together.

In this discussion of culture and spirituality, the political dimension and context in which they take place should not be overlooked. Indigenization and selfhood should not be divorced from the political backdrop against which they are taking place. Cone (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres, 1979:181) stresses this as follows:

The future of African theology is found in its creative interpretation of the Gospel for the African situation and in relation to the theologies of the poor throughout the world. This emphasis does not exclude the legitimacy of African theology's concern with indigenization and selfhood in its attempt to relate the biblical message to the African cultural and religious situation. But selfhood and indigenization should not be limited to cultural changes alone. There is a *political* ingredient in the Gospel that cannot be ignored if one is to remain faithful to the biblical revelation.

Perhaps the last issue to be crystallized in this section is the relation between indigenization and liberation, which Cone (Appiah-Kubi and Torres, 1979:184): explains as follows:

The relation between indigenization and liberation does not have to be antagonistic. In fact, we need both emphases. Without indigenization of theology, liberation theology's claim to be derived from and accountable to oppressed peoples is a farce. Indigenization opens the door for the people's creative participation in the interpretation of the Gospel for their life situation. But indigenization without liberation limits a given theological expression to the particularity of its cultural context. It fails to recognize the universal dimension of the Gospel and the global contexts of theology.

Mgojo (in Tlhagale and Mosala, 1986:112) deals with one of the most important issues in African theology – Africanization. After tracing the root cause of today's dilemma in African theology, he indicates how black theologians resorted to Africanization as a corrective measure to free themselves from white domination. Mgojo (in Tlhagale and Mosala, 1986:112) defines Africanization as follows:

This theme, Africanization, assumes that all people of Africa, i.e. those who have come to stay in Africa, are Africans. Theologically speaking, Africanization tries to adapt through translation models, what is perceived as the Christian message to local contexts and situations... The task of Africanization ... is to free the "data revelation" from those cultural accretions of the West in order to allow the Christian message to acculturate itself in new situations.

According to Mgojo one form of inculturation is indigenization about which he (Mgojo in Tlhagale and Mosala 1986:1120) comments: "One kind might be called the indigenization approach. Much liturgical adaptation is on this level – things like prayers and music are allowed to take local forms." Mgojo (in Tlhagale and Mosala 1986:115) aptly points out that:

"Africanization has now become a vogue, and frantic attempts are being made to dress Christianity in an African garb, without, however, totally stripping off the dress in which it cloaked itself on its way to Africa from Europe."

We are warned by some African writers that if the churches in Africa are to grow and develop, they must be allowed to take root in the soil of Africa where they have been planted. Our attention is drawn to the breakthrough in the independent African churches.

Ngubane (in Mosala and Tlhagale 1986: 79) makes a very important distinction between indigenization and Africanisation that would be useful to keep in mind throughout this study:

I make a distinction between the two concepts indigenization and Africanization. I see the Church as indigenized when it has at its helm sons and daughters of the soil, in full control, irrespective of colour or race. In this sense the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa can be said to be indigenized. For the same reasons, the Ethiopian Churches are indigenized because they are fully controlled by Africans themselves. But they may not be considered fully Africanized, for Africanization implies taking into consideration the culture of the people of Africa, their thought-patterns, their beliefs and their entire world-view when creating structures and forms of the Church.

It is important to point out that the term inculturation is preferred to acculturation for the same reasons as stated by Biko (2006:44):

Since that unfortunate date – 1652 – we have been experiencing a process of acculturation. It is perhaps presumptuous to call it ‘acculturation’ because this term implies a fusion of different cultures. In our case, the fusion has been one-sided. The two major cultures that met and ‘fused’ were the African Culture and the Anglo-Boer Culture. Whereas the African culture was unsophisticated and simple, the Anglo-Boer culture had all the trappings of a colonialist culture and therefore was heavily equipped for conquest. Where they could, they conquered by persuasion, using a highly exclusive religion that denounced all other Gods and demanded a strict code of behaviour with respect to clothing, education, ritual and custom.

The last important issue to be explained in this section is what is taken for granted or erroneously regarded as common knowledge in this kind of research, yet this is not so – what is meant by religion. Radin (1957:3) gives a very lucid and useful explanation of ‘The nature and Substance of Religion’ when he says:

To describe the nature of religion is extremely difficult. Obviously it means different things to different people. We may safely insist, however, that it consists of two parts; the first an easily definable, if not precisely specific feeling; and the second certain specific acts, customs, beliefs, and conceptions associated with this feeling. The belief most inextricably connected with the specific feeling is a belief in spirits outside of man, conceived of as more powerful than man and as controlling all those elements in life upon which he lays most stress. On the one hand these two components may be regarded as always having been associated and thus as forming an inseparable and indissoluble whole; on the other, one of them may be regarded as having preceded the other in time.

The amaXhosa have always had a clear understanding and feeling of the existence of God (Qamata) and the hidden presences erroneously referred to as ancestral 'spirits' by some of our colleagues. They also meet the second part of Radin's definition in that the community shares certain specific acts, customs, beliefs and conceptions associated with this feeling.

Praxis and contextual meaning will prevail in those cases where our interpretations are not the same as it is not always possible to agree on the interpretation of some of these issues. For example, Bosch (1991:452-453) clearly demonstrates that there are different models of inculturation, e.g. the dynamic equivalence, the anthropological, praxis, synthetic, and semiotic models. Be that as it may, the view taken in this study is congruent with Bosch's (1991:452) contention that a plurality of cultures presupposes a plurality of theologies and therefore for the Third World churches, a farewell to a Eurocentric approach."

1.9 Summary

The chapter contains the preliminary data regarding the research, such as the problem statement, aim, method, literature overview, main assumptions of the study, its theoretical framework and its significance, as well as the definition of terms. Dwane's unflagging interest in Christianity and culture is attested to by the number of books he produced on the topic and related matters. The central theme in all his writings is Gospel and culture as underpinned by African theology. In the following chapter we will delve deeper into the origins of this interest and Dwane's struggle to free the Order of Ethiopia from Anglican domination, thus paving the way for an African church with its own liturgy within the Anglican Communion.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FOUNDATIONS AND EVOLUTION OF BISHOP DWANE'S SPIRITUALITY AND THE ORDER OF ETHIOPIA'S STRUGGLE FOR AUTONOMY

2.1 Introduction

Bishop Dwane's commitment to indigenization and inculturation stems from his equally committed lineage. His grandfather, James Matha (aka Matta) Dwane, together with Mokone pioneered the move away from the Methodist Church and the formation of the Ethiopian Church. His father, Reverend Ndabankulu, also served as a priest in the Order of Ethiopia for many years with Sigqibo as the third in a row of eminent Dwane priests of the same church.

2.2 Origins, nature and purpose of Ethiopianism

Ethiopianism has become one of those enigmatic historical accounts whose truth can only be read between the lines of the many records that have been written about it. The reason for this situation is that the accounts are characterized by subjectivity, depending on the views of each author. Pro-missionary and pro-colonialist accounts brand the movement as anti-Christ and an effort to undermine colonial rule. They problematise it right from the beginning by referring to it as a political movement instead of a religious movement. This serious mistrust of Ethiopianism comes out very strongly in the following remarks by Wirgman (n.d.:27) in *The South African Church Quarterly Review*:

We must now deal frankly with the danger to our native people which is involved in the ideals of what is commonly termed “Ethiopianism.” We must briefly trace its origin and progress. It is fundamentally racial, and so far as it is due to race antagonism, it is clean contrary to the spirit of the Christian religion.

Heese (n.d. 1ff) comes out with overwhelming evidence to show that the movement was not only countrywide, but also multifaceted and multi-pronged in nature. The Berlin Mission Society, like the London Missionary Society, had its hands full trying to contain a movement that stretched from Ladismith [sic], Haarlem, Riversdale, Mossel Bay, Herbertsdale, Laingsburg, Hex River to De Aar. Heese (n.d.: 6) explains the movement as follows:

At this stage “Ethiopianism” seems to have become a very loose term used by the missionaries of the BMS [*Berlin Mission Society*]. Read in context, it seems as if any resistance to the white missionaries, or any dissatisfaction with the running of the mission stations or schools, was seen as Ethiopianism. It also seems as if any political activity among coloured or black people were labeled in the same way. Although the term originally applied to black, and not coloured people, the activities of the APO [*African Political Organisation*] were often described as such by BMS missionaries. (My insertions).

The inception of the brand of Ethiopianism that culminated in the Dwane version of this movement is described as follows by Heese (n.d. : 6):

At the mission station at Haarlem the term “Ethiopianism” was probably partly correctly applied. According to the 1906 report, there was an influx of Fingu [sic] and Tembu people from the Eastern districts who could have propagated Ethiopianism which was an essentially black (African) movement.

Stormont (1902) sketches the development and the gains of Christianity among the indigenous cultural groups of South Africa until the orderly progress was derailed by the actions of some black assistants. This sudden blockage of orderly progress is explained as follows by Stormont (1902:1):

Then suddenly there came a disturbing element in this hopeful [sic], from work, from a side too from which no man [sic] had expected it, viz., from the side of the native assistants, who had been educated by the missionaries and who, it was hoped, would take over the pastoral work of various congregations. There was formed a so-called Ethiopian Church, which broke away from the European missionary, and henceforth would suffer neither pastor nor teacher who was not native.

The impression created by this statement is that the black assistants were anti-White. Black accounts, on the other hand, emphasize the imperialistic, domineering, tendencies of the white missionaries who treated the black assistants as perpetual underlings.

Stormont (1902:1) ascribes the secession of the Ethiopian Church to desire, on the part of the black assistants, to hold the high positions held by their white superiors:

The reason of this secession of assistants lay mostly in the social position which existed between them and the white population, including the missionaries, and it must be recognized that the position was hard. They had grown beyond their people through their better education, there was no class of educated men amongst their own countrymen to which they could belong, and closer relations with white men [sic] was denied them on account of their colour, origin, and language. Thus they felt themselves isolated, and easily grew distrustful and bitter against the white men to whose weaknesses and sins their eyes were wide open.

From this account it is quite obvious that the black assistants found themselves in a very difficult situation. They were not very welcome to their own people because of their identification with white missionaries and their foreign church. They were not acceptable to the whites because of their colour and origins. They felt rejected by their own people, and undermined by the whites. This dilemma is expressed quite poignantly in the following comments by Isichei (1995:100):

Those who became Christians were often ostracized or punished, yet they also experienced discrimination from their white co-religionists. An African Methodist said in 1863 'to the natives we are but despised believers – to the English we are no more than Kaffirs.'

This ambiguity is also attested to by Isichei (1995: 124) with regard to the Improvers, i.e. those who joined the Christian churches:

When they joined the Ethiopian or mission churches, the Improvers were destined to a lifetime of ambiguity and pain. They identified enthusiastically with Christianity and European culture, but were often rejected by European Christians.

Stormont (1902:2) also sketches a situation that was totally untenable for the black assistants. They had to do all the spade work but their stipends were deliberately kept far below their colleagues'. They were clearly being discriminated against when it came to stipends and other benefits:

The difference between them and whites was noticeable also in other ways. They did more or less the same work as the European missionaries and accomplished in their opinion often more than the others. In spite of this, their salaries were very small in comparison with the white mission worker, for it was expected that they should not rise much above the position of the coloured people in their mode of living. Thus it came about that many Societies and Synods of Missionaries were unwilling to, or doubtful of, granting ordination to such helpers. Frequently these people had to give instructions to the candidates, especially at out-stations. When the instruction was finished, however, they could not baptize; the white missionary must come and perform that duty.

This discriminatory treatment could not even be ameliorated by ordination as attested by Stormont (1902.2):

Those who had been ordained complained because they did not receive all the privileges of the white ordained missionaries. At the meetings of Synods, the native helpers, even when they were ordained, could, as a rule, only take part in very limited numbers, and in these circumstances even, friction could only be avoided if the helpers acted modestly in relation to their numbers, and if the missionaries organized things over these numbers with wisdom and fatherly good sense.

It cannot be doubted that the black assistants had their own expectations and aspirations. Sometimes these shocked their superiors who felt Blacks, generally regarded as "coloureds" in those days, were either undeserving or not ready for those positions, and also far from suitable to take up active leadership roles in the church.

Stress of work and obvious lack of recognition and appreciation from those set above them led to great disgruntlement among the black assistants as evidenced by Stormont (1902:2):

The number of helpers considerable [sic], and in most English Societies as the Wesleyans, the Congregationalists and also the congregations of the Episcopal Church, the work was almost entirely in their hands. Discontent with their position was widespread amongst them and thus the idea of starting an independent church of coloured people, in which they alone should be the leaders, found fruitful soil amongst many of them.

What should be patently clear by now is that there were no uniform reasons for Ethiopianism or any schism for that matter. Even the reactions varied according to the exigencies of each situation resulting from action and reaction on the part of those involved – the missionaries with their colonial masters, on the one hand, and the black assistants, on the other. Of course, it could not be denied that each of these groupings had its own legitimate concerns about the actions of the other, with missionaries and colonialists grudgingly seeking to protect religious and political interest and blacks fighting to uphold African nationalism and freedom from religious oppression.

This multiple-cause problem is explained as follows by Barrett (1968:97):

No single factor, then can be considered as the cause either of independency in any given case, or of the whole phenomenon of independency in Africa. None of the causes considered is present in all cases across the continent; and cases of separatism exist in both the presence and the absence of any factor we care to propose.

The explanation for the presence or absence of independency in a given area must therefore lie in the presence together of a number of factors at the same time. For each case there proves to be a whole complex of causes, some of which are of only local application whilst others are of universal significance.... Different observers of a given case tend to arrive at different explanations, since they select for emphasis from the whole complex only those causes of interest to their particular approach and experience.

Oosthuizen (1968: 15) concurs with Barrett's multiple-cause idea and says about these movements:

There are many reasons for their existence, and a whole series could contribute to the formation of one movement. This is a much more complicated matter than is usually suggested. When a cause of a movement is detected it may only be a spark which has culminated a process in which many factors have contributed to the final break when what seems to be a relatively insignificant issue leads to a secession. This process of religious independency must be caused by deeper issues especially when one also looks at it in the Americas and Asia. During the Industrial Revolution England experienced many secessions. The same was true of America, especially on the Western frontier, where the phenomenon occurred before its appearance among the negroes.

Of all the factors mentioned by Oosthuizen - economic, historical, denominational, religious, ethnic, ecclesiastical, and non-religious, the religious factors resonate with some of Dwane's aspirations and views. Here are some of the factors mentioned by Oosthuizen (1968:20):

Religious Factors.

- (i) Basically they look for a religion which gives spiritual autonomy and security;
- (ii) The religious life of the African, together with his psychology, philosophy, culture and traditions, have been neglected, and many missionaries spoke when they should have listened;
- (iii) Traditional religious aspects such as the ancestor cult, mediatorship, 'eschatology,' concept of sin played their role in the formation of these movements;
- (iv) Missionaries refused to baptize men, women and children associated with polygamous marriages, while in the independent movements they find a spiritual home;
- (v) There is a reaction against the introspective attitude of the Church which is directed to the welfare of its own members while these movements are communities for others although some have introvert notions;
- (vi) The missionaries are accused of withholding from the African the vital force, numinous power, the mysterious magical power of the man's religion; they have not received its special and financial benefits. The result was bitterness, frustration, disappointment in the 'mission' churches, while in the independent movements they receive new vitality, a new sense of freedom and spontaneity and new hope;
- (vii) The desire for an integrated religion which takes heed of all spheres of life – the "comprehensive approach."

Isichei (1995:125) traces the evolution of secession from the white mainline churches as follows:

The Ethiopian churches were founded as a protest against white domination, and the ceiling it imposed on the aspirations of African church employees, against the readiness with which Africans were expelled, especially for plural marriage, and against the growing segregation of black and white congregations. The denominational differences of European Christianity empowered Africans to make new choices of their own. White Christians understood little of this.

Even a government appointed commission did not attribute Ethiopianism to political agitation, as pointed out by Hinchliff (1968:93):

The report of the commission dealt with Ethiopianism and the commission's opinion was that the movement was not as a result of political agitation but a natural expression of a desire for ecclesiastical independence. This desire the commission refused to condemn, but it said that "in the case of a subject race such an aspiration, misdirected on the one hand by the leadership of ignorant and misguided men, and repressed by misunderstanding and harshness on the other, might be fraught with the seeds of racial mistrust and discontent."

According to Dwane (1999a:9) "the converging of a diversity of African scholars on local boarding schools at the turn of the 20th century brought 'pan regionalism' that led to the blossoming of modern African nationalism. Ethiopianism was carried in the wings of this newly found solidarity. He (Dwane 1999a: 10) ascribes the second major causal factor to the 'well known and often repeated grievances of the black people against a church which practised discrimination in salaries, in its denial of equal opportunities, and its show of paternalism and overt racism.'

Mangena Mokone was one of the leaders of this movement. His pioneering role is described as follows by Stormont (1902. 3):

[He] separated from his Society and founded at the end of the eighties a national church, which he named the Ethiopian Church. He chose this name that he might avoid the word African, which might lead to misunderstanding, because the terms Africander, African were taken by the whites born in S.Africa as their own peculiar title. Ethiopian was recognized by him and the black Christians as a Biblical term (Acts 8:27). He wished, he said, to be free from the imported Christianity of the European and urged his followers to work for the raising of their race. They were to work quietly till the Ethiopian movement reached expansion ...

Closer to home, Stormont discusses the role of James Dwane in the movement. He points out that Dwane left his church because, firstly, he did not want to account for the large amounts of money he received from England, and, secondly, he 'could not fit himself into the subordinate position which coloured people take.' Stormont (1902:4) continues to give a third, more radical, reason for Dwane's secession:

The hate towards the white man turned in him and drove him to seek an independent position. He separated from his Church, had trouble over money which had been entrusted to him in England and so gathered a free congregation round him. But this was not all, he wished to fill a wider circle of his country-men with his social-political ideas.

No doubt, religion played an important role in Ethiopianism's efforts to mobilize blacks throughout the country. It gave them a sense of identity and belonging, thus fostering the much needed hope of the rise of African nationalism. After all, the colonialists treated them as non-humans, while the Western church would not accept them as equals by any means. The only choice open to them was, therefore, clearly their own African style religion that would have no problem with identifying with them.

Given the relations between church and state, it came as no surprise to see the missionary fathers join forces with the state to fight any such form of solidarity or national spirit. The Ethiopians' seeking relations with equally depressed black Americans accentuated the colonialists' frustrations with the movement.

Matta Dwane's relations with the American Methodist Episcopal Church stemmed from this feeling of rejection. The political overtones in Dwane's teachings here and abroad come out clearly in Stormont's (1902:5) comments:

In September, 1896, Dwane returned to S.Africa where the Superintendent-General had to try next to stem a current which had come against him like a river. He had said far too much in America about the oppression which the S.African coloured suffered at the hands of the white people. On the subject the S.African Press made a fuss, and not only did the coloured Christians of the old [sic] become his opponents, but also many who joined the Ethiopian movement.

Having established, with Mokone, Tile, and Kanyane, the African Methodist Church, James Dwane spread his influence to the Cape Colony. The Transvaal Government preferred to acknowledge this church, hoping to be able thereafter to control its influence. Needless to say, the movement was strongly opposed by other missionary and colonial powers. The bone of contention was, according to these adversaries, the politicization of the church or the use of the church as a camouflage for political agitation.

The story of the further development of the Order of Ethiopia is common knowledge. Some aspects thereof will be discussed in the next chapters of the thesis but what needs to be highlighted here is the fact that the protagonists of the Ethiopian Movement refused to have it branded a political movement. To them the struggle for religious freedom could not be wilfully separated from political and social freedom. After all in African societies, there is no distinction between secular and sacred. The vertical and the horizontal interface in people's daily lives.

Wells (n.d. 288) seems to be closer to the truth when he says about Ethiopianism:

Ethiopianism is the reply of the native to the unfriendly attitude of the colonist in the press, on the platform, and in private life. It was thus the product of the many subtle and complex influences which create the ferment and 'growing pains' of national adolescence.

While those opposed to the movement demonized it and tore it to pieces, some of those who were sceptical of it in the beginning, had a change of outlook with the passing of time. Wells (n.d. 290) also cites the apposite

comment of the Native Affairs Commissioners who came to the conclusion that “it is the outcome of a desire on the part of the native for ecclesiastical self-support and self-control.”

Stewart, as cited by Wells (n.d. 293) only had harsh words about Ethiopianism and nothing would make him change his mind:

Ethiopianism has become very much a Home Rule movement, and it is charged with having made a compromise with heathenism. It is not doing mission-work among the natives, and it threatens to become ‘the parasite of African missions.’ All the elements of discord are fostered by it, and its recruits are gathered from all the missions, but it has created nothing. It is without unity or leadership. Powerful to disturb and destroy, its career has been like the torrent accompanying a thunder-shower, which loses itself in the sand, leaving only a discoloured sediment. It adds its current to the terrible undertow that makes for a carnal Christianity.

Support for the work of the Ethiopian Movement, in general, and the Order of Ethiopia, in particular, came from the following comments by Wirgman in *The South African Church Quarterly Review* (n.d.:577):

No one has accused the “Church Order of Ethiopia” of political views of any kind. Their desire for a certain “say” in the management of ecclesiastical affairs is not condemned by the Commission. Nor can any reasonable man condemn it. The Commissioners warned the clergy against misunderstanding and harshness in dealing with these people. In the first issue of this Review in October, 1906, we said: “We are face to face with the aspiration after “religious independence.”

The second unqualified support for the ideals of the Order of Ethiopia came from Bishop Cameron, as reported by Wirgman in *The South African Church Quarterly Review* (n.d.: 578):

Bishop Cameron began his ministry in the Diocese of St. John’s, some 30 years ago. He is the only Bishop who can preach in the Xhosa language. His testimony is worth having. He has said of the movement for ecclesiastical independence, “that its root principle is patriotism, or in other words, the self assertion of a growing national life.” It is not our duty to make the natives bad imitations of Europeans, but to guide with wisdom and sympathy their growing aspirations. We cannot do so by a policy of suspicious jealousy with regard to the Order of Ethiopia. We must take heed to the signs of the times.

It should be admitted, in conclusion, that Ethiopianism was not only an emotive issue for those who had to undergo the experiences, but is also for us who have to try to make sense of an issue that was very threatening to those involved. We can never vouch for the truth in this matter, not with the many partisan and biased reports we have inherited, but at least we can try to strike a good balance between rejecting it as political agitation fueled by disgruntled delinquent assistants and their masters from America, and genuine efforts by Blacks to draw attention to their plight and to secure for themselves and posterity an identity, dignity and a place in the religious and political sun, as people with their own culture and way of life.

2.3 The legacy of Bishop Dwane

Bishop Dwane left behind a great legacy of publications setting out his convictions regarding African spirituality. His appetite for the incarnation of the Gospel in the African context was insatiable. He strove to ensure that the church he so fervently served and promoted bore the stamp of his own cultural group, in line with what Pato (in Kourie and Kretzschmar 2000: 98) says:

If the Church and Christian Spirituality in South Africa are to remain viable options, they will, inevitably, have to bear an African stamp. They will do so not with black, coloured, white and Asian spiritualities, within South Africa, as antithetical realities, but as complementary partners.

If Christianity has to have an African stamp, there should, of necessity, be an African to stamp it, in the first instance. Dwane shone like a beacon of hope in a world in which Africans eschewed their own culture as attested by Maimela (in Hully, Kretzschmar and Pato 1996:80):

The importance of African culture is something we, as black theologians, have been shy to talk about. This is understandable, given the fact that we went through many centuries of attempted suppression of African culture and religion by our white colonizers. For the most part we were made to feel ashamed of our Africanness which, under white domination, only reminded us of the collective helplessness and uselessness of African culture, religion and gods in their failure to protect us against European military assault and our subjugation and domination.

In order to pursue his dream of an African Renaissance, Dwane had to have self-knowledge and knowledge of what God wants us to do here and now. Stradling (1997:1) says that ‘we should be helping one another to know what it is that God is asking from us here and now. In every generation, country and denomination new emphases, interpretations and expressions are needed. We can gather up the riches of the past but we have to convert them into modern currency.’

Dwane’s monumental doctoral thesis, *Christianity in relation to Xhosa religion* (1979), is a comprehensive study of the impact of Christianity on amaXhosa religion. The study reveals Dwane’s views and convictions regarding certain key aspects of amaXhosa religion. These could be summed up as conceptualization of the Deity, ancestors and related customs and rituals, and evil spirits. The research rightfully extends to the practice of rituals and the significance of cattle, the kraal, and dwellings in amaXhosa religion. Central to all these are the ancestors.

Dwane then reflects on the meaning of the birth of a child, initiation for both sexes, divinership, and death. After bringing under the spotlight attitudes and tendencies within the church, and in urban Christians, Dwane gives practical guidance as to how some of the practices could be ‘baptised’ and taken over by the Christian church.

What is of great significance in Dwane’s research for the current study is its apologetic nature by which we mean its deliberate defence of amaXhosa religion from unfounded distortions, accusations and condemnation by people who clearly knew very little, if anything, about amaXhosa religion.² His stand

² According to Reid (1999:13) ‘apologetics engages with confessed enemies of Christianity outside, defending it against the ignorance, misunderstanding and defamation of unbelief.’

is based on two strong pillars – revelation and incarnation. Dwane (1979:219) says about revelation:

I believe firmly that the two traditions must begin dialogue with each other. I hasten to add to this that I hold the conviction firmly that this has already taken place in and through the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. The purpose of bringing the two traditions to a common meeting ground therefore is not to put them into a melting pot of religions, so as to produce in the end a mixture which is neither Xhosa religion proper, nor genuinely Christian in the New Testament sense.

Dwane's (ibid:219) second pillar in his argument comes out clearly in what he says below:

But the object of the exercise is to try and discover how Christ of the Gospel can speak intimately and intelligently to the Xhosa people. This is an attempt to open the way into the heart of Xhosa religion where the Kingdom has to be established.

Dwane (1979:219-220) addresses one of the fundamental questions regarding the relations between God and the ancestors, and the need for intercession on their part:

This Supreme Being is distinguished from the ancestral spirits, though he dwells with them in the spiritual realm. From the point of view of man in this world, he is utterly transcendent, and, he cannot be approached by mortal man, except through the ancestral spirits.

Intercession by the ancestors, thus breaking the direct line between God and the living, invariably leads to God's transcendence that, in turn, compromises his immanence. Dwane (ibid: 222) argues that 'it is this very transcendence that causes Xhosa religion to emphasise the care, protection and help given to a family or clan by its ancestors in times of need, because they are closer to humanity than God.'

On the equally vexing problem of so-called dual loyalty – to Christ and to the ancestors – presumably by the adherents of African religion, Dwane (ibid:224) points out that there is really no conflict between Christ and the ancestors because, 'however close they [the ancestors] are to Qamata, none

the less they are creatures and human beings. They are treated with reverence and respect, but they are not accorded divine status.’

This view resonates with Mtuze’s (in Mtuze 2003:45) that:

The ancestors do not purport to displace the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ from their position as a direct line of communication. Fundamentalist Pan-Africanist Christianity sees God and the Holy Spirit as one. It is only the historical Jesus who gained himself the position of Proto-Ancestor through incarnation. Working through the ancestors does not undermine the Holy Spirit who remains God (Qamata) and all his vital force.

Having dealt with the Deity and the ancestors, Dwane continues to discuss the third major element in African spirituality – evil, and the role of such anti-evil agents as traditional healers, and such evil agents as witches and wizards.

In all religions, perhaps more so in Xhosa religion, evil is the murkiest water to navigate. Both Mtuze (2003) and Dwane (1979) give detailed accounts of Xhosa fears, beliefs and superstitions concerning evil, but neither of them endorses or condemns these beliefs. The fact remains that, regardless of our own views on this matter, some people on the ground implicitly believe in them. Researchers have to work within those parameters as pointed out by Mtuze (2003: 59):

It cannot be doubted that these and many other beliefs or superstitions have a strong grip on the lives of many African people, including some who profess to be practising Christians. They impact on their view of life, sickness and death. Their behaviour would be largely circumscribed by these fears and doubts, potentialities and realities because to some these are not mere superstitions but realities.

Dwane (1979: 297), concludes the study by commenting that, ‘just as much as the revelation of God in Jesus Christ could not possibly make sense to the Christians without the history of Israel, and the Scriptures of the Old Testament, so the Xhosa people cannot grasp this revelation adequately, until they see how it applies to their own historical and religious heritage.’

It is clear, from his obituary and from his Curriculum Vitae that Bishop Dwane was an Anglican spiritualist by upbringing. He implicitly believed in the Anglican creeds and doctrines as he transported these with him when he migrated to establish his own denomination, the Ethiopian Episcopal Church with strong ties with Anglicanism. In this way he established himself not as one of the many sectarians or the disgruntled breakaway leaders, but as one who legitimately exercised his right to worship God as he pleased, and to relate to him as he “was”. Perhaps the latter is closer to the truth.

One might be constrained by conventions and traditions to worship God as one pleases, but one can always choose to worship God as one ‘is’. There lies the crux of Dwane’s decision to change to his own way of worship when he left the Anglican church. He could worship God as he “was” – an African believer who was rooted in his life and traditions.

The church spent many years of valuable time trying to change the African from his own “being” to something else, something nearer to what the missionaries were. Strangely enough, determined as the missionaries were to bring the “savage” Black converts nearer to what the missionaries were, they never fully accepted that the converts could be “like the missionaries”. At best they could be poor imitations of their white masters and madams, which, to the missionaries was good enough.

The mere fact that a black priest, fully trained and ordained, could not share the same shelter and facilities with his white counterpart, clearly showed this dichotomy between a black believer and a white believer. Both could not transcend their person-imposed statuses and meet each other as human beings, beyond the dictates of imperial politics, let alone discriminatory temporal distinctions.

It is of great interest to study the writings of this great thinker to establish the roots of his decision, a decision that was so uncharacteristic of his nurture and tutelage in the Anglican tradition. Several of his writings give clues to this decision and they clearly indicate that this move was not a sudden and impulsive one. It was rather nurtured for many years, conceived in a mind that always sought answers to issues that challenge the Christians – identity, revelation, incarnation and so much more.

While many eminent theologians such as Tutu and Boesak sought to free the oppressed masses from the grip, literal and figurative, of the oppressive regime of the past, Bishop Dwane aimed to free the captives spiritually from an oppressive religion. They had to see themselves as worthy believers in their own right, not poor imitations of those who brought the Western church to them. The Western church, according to Dwane, had to resonate with the people's understanding of God, for the missionaries wrongly believed that they brought God to Africa, not knowing that God was already here long before they came.

The three basic motivations in Dwane's spirituality – Ethiopianism, Africanism, and Anglicanism will be discussed in turn, which is not to suggest that they appealed to him in any particular order. They have been ordered in this way by this researcher surmising that Dwane's interest might have been activated by Ethiopianism, which could have triggered his own Africanism and both then impacted on his Anglicanism.

Anglicanism is therefore placed centrally in the equation because it would have been the first externally acquired wisdom that tended to jettison any indigenous inclinations in the possessor. Ethiopianism would be an instrument with which to counter the invasion in an effort to re-establish "one's own" which is Africanism – that vulnerable little seed that easily gets stifled by external forces in our quest for a better status in the church of God.

We say it is vulnerable because we were told, in no uncertain terms, that to enter the church of God, let alone the kingdom of God, you had to throw away your 'heathen' God, Qamata, your so-called heathen gods or idols, e.g. the ancestors, and your heathen names and adopt Christian names, your heathen practices, e.g. circumcision, and your heathen clothes. The list is endless. Psychologically, this would suggest that being an African is not compatible with being a Christian. Perhaps being a pseudo-African would be.

2.4 A short overview of the Dwane family

Cone (1975: vi), the renowned African American theologian, states, quite strongly that:

Theologians do not normally reveal the true source of their theological reflections. They often tell us about the books that are similar and not so similar to their perspectives, but seldom do they tell us about those nonintellectual factors that are decisive for the arguments advanced on a particular issue. More often than not, it is a theologian's *personal* history, in a particular sociopolitical setting, that serves as the most important factor in shaping the methodology and content of his or her theological perspective. Thus theologians ought to be a little more honest, and let the reader know something about those nonintellectual factors that are so important for the opinions they advance.

The brief account given here will give us a glimpse of the life of Bishop Dwane. The study as a whole is designed to reflect some of his crucial life experiences. His theologizing comes out of those experiences and reflects the philosophy and reason behind the choices he made in life.

Although the main focus of the study is certainly Bishop Dwane and his spirituality, this research would not be complete without reference to his family, especially because the Dwanes were a very close-knit family, bonded even in death when the couple died together in a horrific car accident on 2 July 2006. The liberty of going beyond Bishop Dwane's life, to the lives of his whole family, stems from that compelling reason. He and his wife,

Ntombezintlanu, were inseparable unto death. After all, spirituality is the sumtotal of one's relations with oneself, one's family and broader community, and the Deity. Besides, Mrs Dwane's life throws a lot of light on the life of Bishop Dwane as the two complemented each other so well.

Bishop Dwane's obituary (EEC 8 July 2006) has been abridged and edited below for convenience:

Sigqibo was born in Lady Frere on the 28th June 1941 as the 5th son of the late Revd Ndabankulu and Mrs Ella Nontsikelelo Dwane.

He began his primary school education at Lower Primary School, ku-Bengu. The family moved to Grahamstown due to the relocation of his father and he studied at St Philip's (Std 3 & 4) and Andrew Moyake (Std 5 & 6). Sigqibo then attended secondary school at Lovedale High School from 1963 – 1964, up to Std 10.

As a child he was very close to his mother and would attend Thursday prayer meetings with her, where he enjoyed serving as a collection bearer. He also enjoyed imitating priests in their duties around the altar and sermons.

He then went to Fort Hare where he obtained a B.A. degree in religious studies which he completed under Rhodes. He was involved in the Students Christian Association (SCA) where at one of their conventions he met his Ms Right, Ntombezintlanu Dwane. Sigqibo pursued the cause of the African National Congress in the struggle for liberation from apartheid and collided on numerous occasions with the police.

The Dwane family once more moved from Grahamstown to Port Elizabeth around 1972-73 and Sigqibo, on occasion, found himself a fugitive from the police.

Sigqibo began his training for the priesthood at St Peter's College at the Federal Theological Seminary in Alice (1965-1966) and was ordained to the priesthood in 1968. He later obtained his Bachelor of Divinity degree from King's College, London, where he was awarded the Relton prize for theology and biblical theology, and became an Associate of King's College, in 1970. He obtained his Masters in Theology in 1971 with the thesis: Christian revelation in relation to the differing human cultures, and his doctorate (PhD) in 1979 with the thesis: Christianity in relation to Xhosa religion, from King's College.

Sigqibo served as an assistant curate at the following missions: St Matthew's Mission, Keiskammahoek (1966-1967), Holy Trinity, Kingsway, London (1967-1969); St Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill, London (1969-1970); St Paul and St Martin, Canterbury (1970-1971); St Michael's Mission, Herschel, Eastern Cape (1971-1973).

The Dwane family then moved to Alice where Sigqibo served as a chaplain and tutor at St Peter's College, Federal Theological Seminary (Fedsem), Alice and Fort Hare (1973-1974). He then became Principal of Fedsem from 1976 – 1983.

Sigqibo was nominated to become the first Bishop of the Order of Ethiopia. He accepted the nomination after intense negotiation with both himself and his wife Ntombezintlanu. He was consecrated on the 24th April 1983 in Bloemfontein and was subsequently elected Presiding Bishop (2001) of the Ethiopian Episcopal Church (EEC) when the church became autonomous and assumed the name of EEC.

Sigqibo was an accomplished theologian and served as the President of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) (1995 – 1997). He had extensive teaching experience in New Testament Studies, Systematic Theology, Philosophy of Religion, African Traditional Theology and black African Theology, from Fedsem and the University of Cape Town. In his capacity as a theologian, he served on and chaired numerous ecumenical theological commissions with member churches of the SACC and the World Council of Churches (WCC), and beyond. In addition to Sigqibo's religious commitments, he was also involved in education committees.

Sigqibo distinguished himself in his commitment to a devoted life of prayer, celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and teaching. He was totally committed to the spiritual expression of Afrikan culture in worship and liturgical formularies. To this end, he led his church in the development of liturgies of all sacraments in the idiomatic and spiritual essence of Afrikan culture. He was committed to the principle that all are called to use their God-given gifts and talents regardless of race and gender.

The bishop was also a very loving father, brother and friend. He is survived by his children, Bulelwa Cetu, Phumla Dwane-Alpman, Vuyokazi Dwane, Zinzumzi Dwane, Ntabozuko Dwane and two brothers, Sithembile and Linda Dwane, and four sisters, Nyameka Mdyesha, Feziwe Bekwa, Nomfundo Dwane and Namhla Mendleton.

...

2.5. Hallmarks of Dwane's spirituality

2.5.1 Ethiopianism

Dwane's deep interest in Ethiopianism should primarily be attributed to his grandfather's engagement with Ethiopianism in their quest for a church that would embrace efforts to introduce an authentic African spirituality.

Mata Dwane's pioneering role in the establishment of the Ethiopianism movement is explained at length by Wells (n.d.: 288) who stresses that

Ethiopianism was chiefly a minister's movement. It had its source in a schism in the Wesleyan Church in Pretoria, in 1892. When James Matha Dwane joined the breakaway group in 1896 he soon became its leader. The cause of the conflict between him and his church was allegedly that he had gone overseas where he raised a substantial amount of money which he refused to hand over to his church authorities. When he could no longer see eye to eye with his superiors, he left the Methodist church thus giving rise to the Ethiopian movement.

While the general reaction to Ethiopianism was hostile, Wells (ibid:289) found its aim commendable:

Its Aim. – The avowed aim was excellent. It was to plant a self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating Native Church, which would produce a truly African type of Christianity suited to the genius and needs of the race, and not merely a black copy of any European Church. All the home churches had from the first avowed the same aim. The foreign mission was a foster-nurse for the rearing of an infant native church that should by and by be able to stand alone. All would admit that for Africa's redemption, the African must be the chosen instrument.

Sigqibo Dwane's father, Ndabankulu, was also a priest in the Ethiopian church. Ethiopianism was therefore the ancestral link with the movement that led him to write the book, *Ethiopianism and the Order of Ethiopia* (1999), in which he expounds the philosophy and the motivation behind the movement.

The book's blurb confirms my earlier contention that Dwane's spirituality was, in essence, akin to the Black Consciousness Movement which Dwane (1999a: blurb) terms as follows:

As the narrative unfolds, so the story of James Mata Dwane is told, and a chapter is devoted to the philosophy (literally love of wisdom) of Ethiopianism, **and its offspring, the Black Consciousness Movement of the 1960s and 70s** (My emphasis).

Biko (2006:53) aptly defines Black Consciousness as 'the realization by the black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression – the blackness of their skin – and to operate as a group in

order to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude. Biko reveals that the movement started because of the need to infuse self-esteem and a sense of courage in the black masses. This spirit was clearly in tandem with the ideals of the Ethiopian Movement.

The 60's and 70's were formative years for the young academic, Siggibo Dwane. Coupled with the fact that one of his staunch colleagues in the top echelons of the church, Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana, was a strong ally of Steve Biko and a key figure in the Black Consciousness Movement, this political thinking could not fail to bolster Dwane's interest in the movement.

Needless to say, the Black Consciousness Movement sought to restore the African people's dignity, self-awareness and self-love. For people who were alienated and undermined by both the church and the state, this ideology could only bolster the oppressed masses that were made to feel unworthy, unwanted and subhuman.

Carrick (1993:75) highlights something essential in our relations with other people and with God, something we tend to overlook as we were made to feel inferior and ashamed of ourselves – the importance of self-love:

Unfortunately many Christians have been brought up to regard loving themselves as self-centred and sinful. To love God and their neighbours is virtuous, but to love themselves is wrong. This is not biblical teaching. We are to love our neighbours *as* we love ourselves, equally with ourselves.

Dwane made an extensive study of Ethiopianism. He consulted various sources in a relentless effort to grasp the gist of this movement that shone like a beacon of light ahead of his ancestors as they sought to free themselves from oppressive mainline churches. As for sources on this subject, these were abundant. These ranged from Stormont's *Ethiopianism* (1902), Saunders' *Tile and the Thembu Church*, (1970), Cameron's *The Ethiopian Movement and the Order of Ethiopia* (1904), to Stead's *The Order of Ethiopia and its*

relationship to the Church, to mention but a few of the long list of Ethiopianists whose books he consulted in his own research.

It is, therefore, obvious that Dwane had read widely on Ethiopianism – books, unpublished theses, journals and newspapers, papers on Ethiopianism, borrowed archival material from the library of the University of the Witwatersrand and the Historical Material Church Office in Cape Town.

Dr K. Mgojo (Dwane 1999a:4) in the foreword to the book, refers to the main thrust of Ethiopianism as being ‘born out of a need and conviction when there was overt racism within the so-called multi-racial churches’. The resultant movement is associated with erstwhile pioneering church fathers such as Nehemiah Tile, Mangena Mokone and James Mata Dwane.

It can, therefore, not be doubted that Dwane’s philosophy resonated with those of his ancestral church leaders even though he thought it prudent to stay within the Anglican fold until the Ethiopian Church was granted peaceful autonomy. This peaceful parting of the ways between the Order of Ethiopia and the Church of the Province of Southern Africa is stated movingly by Mgojo (in Dwane 1999a: 4):

Patiently waiting for the realisation of the original vision and dream, Chapter 8 deals with the recent events which began at the 1998 Conference and culminated in the state of autonomy reached through negotiation and prayer without losing the theological depths of spirituality; and legislated by the Provincial Synod of the CPSA in July 1999.

Let me hasten to add that the resolve to part ways with the Anglican Church peacefully does not at all suggest that the parting was without hitches, nor does it suggest any form of docility on the part of the Ethiopian Church. On the contrary, the road ahead was fraught with difficulties and tensions, sometimes bringing both parties to the brink of deadlock. The bone of contention was the notorious Canon 48 which was regarded by the Ethiopians as a strategy by the Anglican Church to continue treating the Ethiopian

Church as its perpetual vassal with their Episcopacy subjugated to the Anglicans for as long as the Order remained in full communion with the Anglican Communion.

It is very interesting to note that when the Ethiopian Church sought autonomy from the CPSA, in 1899, they, according to Dwane (1999a: 5), solemnly pledged, among other undertakings:

[to] regard themselves as bound by the doctrine and disciplines of the Catholic Church as received and understood by the Church of England and the Church of the Province, **and would use no other form in celebrating the sacraments save that which is provided in the Book of Common Prayer** (my emphasis).

The ultimate establishment of an independent Ethiopian Episcopal Church (EEC) (*Umzi wase Tiyopiya*) in 1999, followed by the introduction of a new liturgical form of worship spelt the rise of a new consciousness and a dogged determination to be themselves, on the part of the Ethiopians. It paved the way for the realisation of a long cherished vision of being what the people “were”, as distinct from what the mainline church authorities and their hegemonic forces wanted them to “become.”

The Ethiopians were strong in their resolve to establish a church that would affirm their humanity, in the first place, and that would acknowledge their being Black African Christians, in the second. Dwane (1999a: 38) articulates this as follows:

As a result of the circumstances not of their own making in which however they perceived the hand of providence, the Ethiopians felt called to give authentic African witness, to the humanity of Jesus. That they were now Ethiopians was the consequence of their response to the calling of God, as children of Africa, to stretch out their hands to him, and allow him to embrace all that they were and had.

To emphasise this resolve to approach God and the church as Africans, Dwane (1999a: 38) says categorically that the Ethiopians ‘felt called by God

to be a church in which they would not feel ashamed to stand in the presence of God as Africans.’

This is *in tandem* with the reasons given by Reverend P J Mzimba for leaving the the Free Church of Scotland which are, according to his son , L. N. Mzimba (1923:71):

Mzi ongama-Kristu, ndiyanibikela ukuba mna P.J. Mzimba ndicelwe ngabatile abantu bakowetu ukuba ndinazise ukuti ndiziroxisile ngokwam ekubeni ngumfundisi kulawulo lwe-Free Church Presbitari yaseKafraria, ndibangwe zizizatu endizilandelisayo.

Andixabene nabafundisi abamhlophe, ngabahlobo bam bawuncedile umzi ontsundu wakowetu. Kodwa kum kumhlophe ukuba nomntu ontsundu nalapa e-Afrika makazimele kwinto zonqulo njenga kwamanye amazwe, angasoloko ebelekeke emhlana womntu omhlophe. Kudala wafunda ukuba ebambelele ngomntu omhlophe, namhla makazimele engabambelele mntwini ngezandla, koko ku-Tixo wake, ukuze umsebenzi welizwi ucume wande. Lifikile ixesha lokuba naye lomntwana untsundu azihambele axele lo umntu uzihambelayo umhlophe.

(Fellow Christians, I wish to let you know that I have been asked by some of my people to inform you that I have withdrawn voluntarily as a priest from the Free Church Presbytery of Kafraria for the reasons stated below.

I have not quarreled with white missionaries, they are my friends and they have done a lot for our black people. But to me it is obvious that the black person in Africa too should stand on his own with regard to matters of faith as in other countries. He should not be forever dependent on the whites. He has been leaning on white people for a long time. Today he should stand on his/ her own feet not holding on to anyone with his/her hands, except his/her God, so that the work of God's word could progress and grow. The time has come that this black child should also walk on his/her own just like the white child.)

Dwane would not let his church leaders' vision disappear from sight. He decided to use their newly acquired autonomy to give the Ethiopians a sense of identity. That is why he continued to popularise the second name of the church – *Umzi wase Tiyopiya*. This name gave the church an African identity. This is attested by Dwane's (1999a: 88) comment that the first feature of the Ethiopian Movement was 'that the African people began to make overt expressions of their racial pride.'

The ground work for divergence in liturgical and doctrinal practice was prepared by the 1998 General Purposes Committee's reformulation (Dwane 1999a: 131) that:

Full Communion does not require from either Communion the acceptance of all doctrinal opinion, sacramental devotion, or liturgical practice characteristic of the other, but implies that each believes the other to hold all the essentials of the Christian faith.

The spirit of the ancestral church leaders, as embodied in Ethiopianism, won the day, paving the way for the ushering in of a new dispensation, in many ways, particularly around liturgical worship – one of the pillars of Anglicanism. The new dispensation was certainly not one of disgruntlement, self-aggrandisement and lack of discipline as the antagonists of this movement regarded its pioneers, but one infused with a non-abating desire by the Ethiopians to express their faith in terms that would resonate with the culture of amaXhosa.

2.5.2 Africanism

Dwane's bold move to replace the received Anglican liturgy with an African oriented one begs the question from where did this emanate? The most obvious response, of course, is that it all started with Dwane's being an African. But there are many African priests. They do not deviate from the Western forms of worship they inherited in their churches. In this section, an attempt will be made to throw some light on these and other questions.

Dwane's love of being an African primarily stemmed from his roots as a member of one of the respectable royal houses of the Eastern Cape, the amaTshawe clan. The amaTshawe are the reigning chiefs of the amaXhosa clan. Although all amaTshawe are not necessarily reigning chiefs or kings, attachment to this clan bestows derived dignity on all those who belong to the

clan. Dwane belonged to the Ntinde section of the amaTshawe chiefdom. This places him in the same lineage as Jan Tshatshu, the eminent Ntinde chief who took the trouble to go overseas in an effort to seek new light for his people.

It was this pride in his roots that prompted Dwane to write a doctoral thesis on Christianity and religion when he studied at King's College, London. British culture did not blind him to his own cultural background and he refused to succumb to the demonisation of his culture and spirituality. Instead, he took pains to defend the culture and all its institutions.

His challenge to the church is unambiguous when he (Dwane 1979:1) says in his thesis:

It is a mistake therefore, to treat Xhosa religion as a tottering institution which, if left alone, will soon come to its inevitable end. The church has got to raise the question whether this tradition is or is not compatible with the Gospel. The position taken in this thesis is that there is here a challenge to the church in that part of the world, to 'de-hellenize' and 'de-westernize' itself so that Christ of the new covenant community can manifest Himself to the Xhosa people as '*Umntu wegazi lethu*' (our real brother), and '*umntwana wegazi*' (the Royal Prince).

The second indicator of Dwane's interest in Africanism is certainly his interest in Ethiopianism-*cum*-African nationalism that led him to write a comprehensive doctoral thesis on *Christianity in relation to Xhosa religion* (1979). In this extensive research Dwane gives an overview of amaXhosa religion and the impact of Christianity on it. Whereas my own contribution in this regard largely deals with the Deity, the ancestors and evil spirits in Xhosa society, as well as the impact of Christianity on them, Dwane's thesis is much more comprehensive. It differs from J.H. Soga's monumental *Ama-Xosa: Life and Customs* (1931) in that the latter work is more social-anthropological in nature, whereas Dwane focuses more on religious and spiritual issues.

That the thesis is apologetic in nature cannot be doubted. Dwane, like all apologetics, goes all out to defend Xhosa religion, thus laying the foundations of what could have prompted him to veer away from the beaten track in his church, in later years. A clear indication of the apologetic nature of Dwane's thesis comes to light in Chapter 7 of the thesis, entitled *A consideration of some of the objections raised against the attempt to relate Christianity to pre-Christian religions* (Dwane 1979: 249-271).

Dwane's personal convictions come out very strongly in this chapter. He (Dwane 1979:249) argues for the recognition of pre-Christian religions:

And the main emphasis of the argument in this thesis is that this pre-Christian religion contains insights and spiritual truths, which not only prepare the way for the preaching of the Gospel, but also have a continuing importance as a means of interpreting some of the central truths of the Gospel, in a way which makes them come home to those who belong to this cultural situation.

This view is *in tandem* with the attitude of the early Roman Catholic church in Ireland which, instead of condemning and throwing the indigenous Celtic religion overboard, decided to 'baptise' some of its institutions and used them in the new religion. In this way, new converts could relate to their new faith as it resonated, in parts, with what they already knew.

Dwane (ibid:249) highlights one of the strongest pillars of the amaXhosa religion when he points out that God is the Creator of all humanity and that 'he manifests himself through universal channels in order that all his creatures may come to acknowledge him'. A parochial view that appropriates God for a particular group is not tenable. To Dwane, God's revelation in Jesus Christ is indicative of his universality.

Under another interesting subtopic – *Biblical revelation: a death blow to pre-Christian religions?* – Dwane (ibid:253) traces the debate regarding Christianity and pre-Christian religions from Tertullian to Karl Barth and

concludes that ‘what he (Karl Barth) does say about religions other than Christianity reveals a certain amount of impudence and a presumption to know all about God’s operations.’

Having dealt with, and even dismissed, some of the philosophers and theologians’ views, Dwane tackles one of the fundamental issues in the debate – syncretism, Christianity’s greatest fear. Dwane (ibid:258) prefers a definition of syncretism that accommodates other religions, as he maintains that ‘the definition of syncretism as the attempt to dissolve the uniqueness and finality of Christian revelation, with a view of producing an amalgam consisting of elements from different religions, including Christianity itself, is a helpful one.’

Dwane deals at length with the objections raised by various protagonists of the Christian faith all of whom call for the demise of African religion before Christianization. He (ibid:258) dismisses these views by stating that ‘it is of course difficult to comment on these views because they are not based on any recognizable theological premises, but on sheer prejudice.’ In his defence, and in defence of African religion, Dwane cites a number of scholars whose views are opposed to those of the anti-African religionists.

It is clear from this chapter that Dwane is tirelessly seeking affirmation of his own view that the amaXhosa religion is not at variance with the Gospel. He is very critical of people whose aim is clearly to colonize African religion and to supplant it with the imported religions. He (Dwane ibid:266) cites Mbiti who categorically states that ‘the Gospel does not throw out culture, it settles there, it brings its impact on our total life within that culture.’

Dwane and Mbiti’s views are strongly supported by the following comments by Barrett (1968:165):

[There] has been the determined attempt to vindicate Africanism as not only good in itself, but also as a culture closer than the European to the biblical way of life and therefore more suitable as a basis for building a Christian society. The discovery that traditional customs hitherto denounced by the missions were by no means always inconsistent with scripture came to many with the force of revelation.

The seeds of Africanisation had taken root in Dwane's mind when he (Dwane *ibid*:270) talked about 'the black Christ or the Christ who is truly African' as being 'not an exotic or romantic figure set up as a rival to the Biblical Christ.'

The foregoing analyses of the foundations of Dwane's spirituality highlight the path Dwane had walked from his formative years as a young priest and academic. What comes out clearly from the study is that he had pondered seriously over the plight of amaXhosa religion. His later decision to bring it into his own church was therefore not an impulsive one.

His conviction in this regard was so strong that, as early as 1979, Dwane (1979: 79) felt compelled 'to bring his people's particular gifts to the service of the Gospel and pledged himself to work towards the realisation of that goal.'

This resolve is summed up articulately when Dwane (1979: 298) says:

It is necessary to urge that our religion be presented to the Africans, not in antagonism to, but as a fulfillment of their aspirations. In actual practice this means, among other things, cultivation of their languages, consecration and sublimation of the measure of truth contained in their religion. It implies not a paganization of Christianity for the purpose of making it easier to the Africans, but the Christianization of everything that is valuable in the African's past experience and registered in his customs.

It is therefore evident from the above that a major thrust of Dwane's spirituality was not only to be apologetic, but also to 'missionize Christianity'

and open it up to the vast wealth of experience and expression derived from African culture.

2.5.3 Anglicanism

There is no need to go into a deep discussion on Anglicanism in this section. The reason for this stance is that Dwane did not abandon Anglicanism when he moved to his new church whose name he immediately changed from the Order of Ethiopia to the Ethiopian Episcopal Church (*Umzi wase Tiyopiya*).

The seed of indigenisation was planted long before the parting of the ways. The Order of Ethiopia was a daughter within the Anglican Church as well as the Anglican Church's indigenised child. This view is confirmed by Hinchliff (1963:202) who comments in this regard:

This is one of the few formal experiments in what it has now become fashionable to call 'indigenisation' in which the Province has ever indulged. In the sense that those who now write about missions and the ecumenical movement use the terms, the Province has never been either a 'younger Church' or 'indigenised'.

It is important to know the major tenets of the Anglican church that Dwane, in spite of his quest for the acceptance of African religion in life and worship, held dear. This is important because, without it, one would be tempted to dismiss Dwane's move as one of those breakaways that were driven by personal ambition without any theological doctrine or base.

To summarize, we could say, right from the outset, that Dwane did not renounce any of the faith pillars of the Anglican church. He embraced all of them without exception but called upon Anglicanism to reciprocate and accept those tenets of African religion that are held dear by its adherents. He questioned the tendency to condemn without proper understanding of the meaning and significance of some of the cultural practices. A classic example

of this condemnation without understanding was when the early missionaries went out on a full-scale war against circumcision, thus undermining and alienating large numbers of potential converts.

They excommunicated anyone who either underwent or allowed this custom to be done in his household. We now all know that this was a serious blunder in that amaXhosa society being patriarchal, the circumcised males have roles to play that cannot be performed by uncircumcised boys in society. In the first instance, boys cannot marry, they cannot perform any social rituals, nor can they deliberate on any matters that affect the community. Even up to the present, boys are not normally allowed to hold key positions or to preach in certain, if not most, mainline black churches. The trauma caused by this ignorant prohibition to the social fabric must have been enormous as could be seen from the following comments by Mills (n.d. :4):

Without undergoing this rite a male would always be referred to as *inkwenkwe* – boy – no matter how old he became. He would be excluded from all male activities, prohibited from participation in councils and be unable to inherit. The uncircumcised male would be subjected to the intense ridicule of women as well as men; no woman would have anything to do with him, and no family would agree to arrange marriage.

To show the force of this custom on Xhosa males, they still insist on doing it the traditional way in spite of the high mortality rate that accompanies it at present. Social stigma, ridicule, and peer pressure force many young men to the initiation school regardless of the consequences.

The Anglican ethos contains a variety of activities that relate it to other catholic churches. The hallmarks of Anglicanism, to which Dwane fully subscribed, are summarized as follows by Suggit (1999:16-17):

- (i) The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the rule and ultimate standard of faith.
- (ii) The Apostles' creed and the Nicene creed.
- (iii) The sacraments of baptism and the "supper of the Lord".
- (iv) The historic episcopate.

By retaining Anglicanism, Dwane subscribed to all these hallmarks and more, reserving the right to adapt them to their new environment provided their incarnation would not undermine the golden link between his church and the Anglican communion.

It is interesting to note that Canon Suggit did not include in this list what many Anglicans would consider a strong pillar of Anglicanism – liturgy, especially the *Book of Common Prayer*. He does, of course, include it in the discussion in a subsequent chapter where he (Suggit 1999:23) points to its original immutability and subsequent flexibility:

In sixteenth century England the form of worship (the liturgy) was very closely defined, and deviations from the authorized prayer-book were penalized by the state. This was the position of the Church of England until the twentieth century when *it was recognized that new forms of worship were demanded in the rapidly changing circumstances of today. This was in line with the Reformers' understanding that as far as possible the language and symbolism of the liturgy should be intelligible to the worshippers* (my emphasis).

Contrary to what fundamentalists and conservatives would like us to believe, Anglican worship has not been static. It has evolved over many years and keeps on changing as pointed out by Wakefield (in Stevenson and Spinks 1991: 176):

There is much more variety in Anglican worship than was traditionally permitted. There are para-liturgies and family services, with the possibility of enrichment provided by such proposals as those contained in the recent Liturgical Commission Reports, *Patterns for Worship* (1989) and *The Promise of His Glory* (1990). There are guitars and overhead projectors, choruses, uplifted hands, charismatic hugs and 'happy clapping'.

While Wakefields' comment is plausible and therefore completely acceptable, it does not go into the really critical area of conflicting dogmas and ethics. Anglicans do not only differ on outward actions such as singing, dancing and clapping as illustrated above. They also differ on cultural beliefs and practices as the study of Dwane's spirituality will soon reveal. The syncretism ogre is soon hauled onto the stage immediately something exotic

to the English church is done. In some instances, any deviation from the standard procedure would only be said to be acceptable if it emanated from the dominant cultural group.

2.5.4 Ecumenism and other influences

Bishop Dwane could not escape the winds of change that blew over the world and Africa with regard to ecumenism in all its manifestations, even though available research by him in this regard does not emphasise ecumenism.

It cannot be doubted that Dwane owed his interest in indigenization and inculturation to a variety of forces and influences, the strongest of which being, as indicated above, Ethiopianism, Africanism, Anglicanism, and ecumenism, in any order. As a theological scholar of great distinction, Dwane was, no doubt, greatly influenced by other black theologians such as Manas Buthelezi, Buti Tlhagale, Itumeleng Mosala, Simon Maemela, and, on the ideological side, Steve Biko and the Black Consciousness Movement.

Biko used culture to restore the black people's dignity. He was strongly opposed to cultural imperialism, as attested by his (Biko 2006:26) remarks cited hereunder:

For one cannot escape the fact that culture shared by the majority group in any given society must ultimately determine the broad direction taken by the joint culture of that society. This need not cramp the style of those who feel differently but on the whole, a country in Africa, in which the majority of the people are African must inevitably exhibit African values and be truly African in style.

Further afield, Dwane could also not escape the influence of such great African theologians as Magesa, Mugambi, Martey and Mercy Oduyoye. The views of these scholars will form the crux of the arguments raised about Dwane's spirituality and theology as they strongly underpin Dwane's views

and actions. Suffice it to acknowledge that they played a great role in alerting Dwane to some of the crucial and central issues in his spiritualizing.

One can see that Dwane's interest in the Black Consciousness Movement did not start in the 1960's SASO and BCP era. It had its roots in the Ethiopianism of the 19th century as can be seen in Dwane (2002:3):

When the black consciousness movement came into the South African scene in the late 1960s' history repeated itself as the lessons of the Ethiopian movement of the late 19th century had to be re-learnt, and its vision appropriated and sharpened for the cut and thrust of the South Afrikan political debate at the time.

Dwane (2002: 4) openly acknowledges his indebtedness to a number of people who influenced him and those who were instrumental in getting him to write the essays contained in one of his revealing books on his theology, *Between two stools: Issues of Gospel and Culture* (2002):

[W]ithout the challenge of the invitations and the pressure of the deadlines, the incentive to gather the harvest in these pages would have been absent, and this material would therefore not have seen the light of day. *Intaka yakha ngoboya benye* as we say in SiXhosa, a bird builds its nest with the feathers of another. I must therefore acknowledge my indebtedness to many of my Afrikan brothers and sisters who have given me clues, and in that way advanced my thinking, and also closed the gaps in my thoughts consequently making me realize more that I am because I belong.

As said above, Dwane could not escape the influence of other African or black theologians. This comes out clearly in his discussion of inculturation and contextualization where he (Dwane 2002: 7) says:

In the heyday of Black Theology, use of the word context was in vogue as much as globalization is today. Since then much water has gone under the bridge, though the underlying issue of relevance remains with us. The context was of much importance to Black Theology because theology had to address, as a matter of urgency, the age-long question for theodicy, whether faith in God is not, in the face of wanton suffering, and the prosperity of evil in the world, a currency without value.

That his views on inculturation were strongly influenced by African theology, by definition, and Black theology, in practice, comes out very clearly from the following statement by Dwane (2002:10):

Inculturation will not rise to the occasion if it does not pay due attention to Afrikan ideas of God, and the pivotal role of ancestors in religion. Its outcome will be a sham and hollow thing if Afrikan customs, rituals and beliefs are yet again ignored. It must look again with fresh eyes at the much vilified institution of diviners and healers whose practitioners are the consultants in matters of health, fertility and welfare. Concerted efforts must be made to retrieve and restore to their rightful place those humanitarian and community values, the *ubuntu* values which are the backbone of Afrikan religion.

It should be stressed that while we ascribe Dwane's spirituality to African and Black struggle theologies, it should not be forgotten that Dwane was a Christian priest and bishop in the Anglican tradition. Christian biblical spirituality also played an important role in his theology and spirituality, as evidenced by his (Dwane 2002: 41) comments on poverty:

The issue of poverty has been on the human agenda for a very long time. It was Jesus who told his followers the story of Lazarus and the rich man, with a clear bias in favour of the poor. The story does not say that it is good to be poor, but instead it says look, how real and uncaring the rich are! It does not say the poor should accept their poverty, with equanimity while they wait for a better life in the next world, but they are special to God, so special that, as illustrated in another story of Jesus, they are the honoured guests in God's banquet, and consequently to ignore them in this life is to invite eternal judgement and condemnation (Matthew 25). God loves the poor but hates poverty.

This influence on Dwane's understanding of African theology, indigenization and inculturation is also evident in the following statement by Dwane (1989b: 13) who says, "here are the words of one of the celebrated sons of Africa written some years ago, which I find both illuminative and persuasive":

Without cultural transmission the Gospel might as well have remained and been forgotten in Jerusalem. So the Holy Spirit entrusted the Gospel into the hands of human cultures, and this divine arrangement has remained that way ever since ... It is within our culture that we have to propagate the Gospel of our Lord. The Gospel does not throw out culture, it settles there, it brings its impact on our total life within that culture. God does not want us to be aliens to our culture – but only aliens to sin. (J.T.S.A. Sept. 1977)

Perhaps the most fundamental influence on Dwane in this regard came via his links with the University Christian Movement (UCM) of which he was a staunch member at the University of Fort Hare. Pityana (in de Gruchy and

Villa-Vicencio 1994:173) sheds the following light on the link between the evolution of Black theology, the Black Conscious Movement, and the UCM:

Black theology broke into the public realm in South Africa with the publication of *Essays in Black Theology* in 1972. But the publication was preceded by the banning of its original editor, Sabelo Ntwasa, and the subsequent banning and exile of its remaining editor, Dr Basil Moore.

Long before these events, Black theology was being developed through workshops and seminars throughout South Africa. The University Christian Movement took the initiative in organizing and encouraging a movement of Black Theology in South Africa. In doing so, it was largely inspired by the Black Consciousness Movement. The target audience was ministers and pastors as well as theological colleges and seminaries.

Pityana (in de Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio 1994: 175) also attests to the link between black theology and the Bible. The spiritual nature of black theology is supported by its links with the Christian Bible and Christianity itself, hence Pityana's comments:

Black theology is steeped in the black church and in the faith and life of black people. In these communities the Bible has become normative. Scripture is closely identified with the being of the Christian.

Having dealt with inculturation and indigenization at length, it is important to note that culture should be treated with some circumspection as it is easy to fall in the trap that Pityana (in de Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio 1994: 179) cautions against. According to him we need to be aware that culture is practised in a political environment that denigrates some cultures and promote others. He also cautions against what Biko termed 'an arrested view of culture' which manipulates culture for self-interest. We therefore have to view culture critically, as something dynamic.

Ecumenism is, no doubt, an important part of the strategy used by Bishop Dwane to reach his goal of having African Christianity understood by the founding faith. It opened the door for mutual respect, understanding, and

recognition. Cooperation formed the pillar of ecumenism as pointed out by Oduyoye (in Van der Bent, 1981:70):

The call to structured ecumenism based in Africa was issued by the International Missionary Council. The members of this overtly Euro-American institution, having introduced a divided Christianity into Africa and elsewhere, came to see that cooperation is better than competition; and at Accra in 1957/58 they accepted in principle the integration of the WCC and IMC. But if the swaddling clothes of this call to ecumenism were African, the baby itself was of uncertain parentage.

Oduyoye (ibid:71) continues to point out that “the marriage between the WCC and IMC in Africa was never a real union because the vow that ‘the two shall be one’ was not taken with full seriousness – the AACC – developed a sort of schizophrenia.’

It is clear from Oduyoye’s comment that the ensuing All African Church Conference (AACC) held in Ibadan in 1958 to integrate the two ecumenical bodies – the IMC and the WCC – had its own agenda that impinged on nationalism and blurred the lines of demarcation between the AACC and the Organisation of African Unity. (*Vide* Oduyoye in van der Bent, 1981: 71).

As a direct result of this agenda, the South African Council of Churches, of which Dwane was once President, acted as a watchdog against racism and oppression. Its agenda spread beyond purely doctrinal issues and its spirituality was holistic in the sense that it sought to ensure the establishment of an egalitarian society through unity in diversity.

Mugambi (in Mugambi and Magesa, 1990:7) comments as follows about this quest for unity in the Ecumenical Movement:

Theologically, Christians do not have any option over the question of Christian unity. In the teachings of both Jesus and Paul, the unity of the Church is emphatically mandated. Christians are challenged to shed their differences and interests for the sake of Christian unity. The centre of that unity is Jesus Christ, and all Christians without exception are challenged to focus their identity on Jesus rather than on any apostle, saint or doctrine.

The centrality of Jesus in the identity of the Church is the essence of Dwane's incarnational spirituality. Jesus came and dwelt among people of all nations who acknowledge him as Lord in order to perfect their lives and their cultures. That is certainly how he upheld the best in Jewish culture and changed from within those elements thereof that were at variance with God's will.

Dwane (1989b: 18) comments as follows on Vatican II's stand on ecumenism especially with regard to relations with non-Christian religions:

Vatican II devoted some attention to this issue in its 'Decree on Mission' as well as in the 'Relationship of the Church to non-Christian religions'. The Council acknowledged that there are profound religious insights in some of the non-Christian religions, and that some of their rules, teachings, and sacred ceremonies, reflect a ray of light which enlightens all men [sic]. The Decree on Mission emphasizes especially the comprehensiveness and universality of God's plan for the salvation of mankind [sic].

Dwane (1989b: 27) emphasizes the significance of incarnation with regard to African culture. He points out that each person is influenced by the environment. While incarnation identifies each person with a particular environment, it also opens cultures to one another, thus facilitating interaction and mutual enrichment.

The primary objective of the Ecumenical Movement was very noble but it unfortunately got entangled in the conflicting agendas and attitudes of its protagonists and antagonists as attested by Mugambi (in Mugambi and Magesa, 1990:8) who points out that 'the modern Ecumenical Movement is entrusted with the responsibility of facilitating consultation and co-operation between Protestant churches.' Although Vatican II had taken strides to promote ecumenism, progress was marred by the members of both the

Second Vatican Council and those of the World Council of Conference of Churches who cling to old prejudices and differences.

Since the establishment of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Amsterdam in 1948, it had worked hand in glove with the Faith and Order Commission trying to foster unity among Christians. Gaybba (in Rakoczy 2000: 20-21) lists a number of good initiatives in which it was involved. Some of these initiatives were at inter-church level, e.g. the Church Unity Commission which sought unity among Anglicans, Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians.

According to Gaybba (2000:21) 'the Catholic Bishops of the region produced a local Directory on Ecumenism that spearheaded the establishment of formal ecumenical dialogue with the African Independent Churches that were traditionally viewed as being too syncretistic to warrant acceptance as Churches.' There is no unequivocal evidence to show that this initiative or any other similar initiative was followed through with diligence. South Africa sorely lacks serious dialogue between mainline and African Independent Churches, hence the widening of the gap between these two groupings. To be exact, this dialogue has to start between the mainline white churches and their black congregations.

The latest intra-ecumenical efforts to address the differences within the various strands of the Anglican Church in Africa is reported as follows in Mtuze (2003: 86-87):

After years of rejection, denial and apathy, the CPSA is beginning to take the question of African culture very seriously. It has now established what is appropriately called The African Culture and Christianity Standing Commission (ACCSC) which explains itself as follows in a memorandum dated 29 October 1997 circulated by Kuse (1997: 1) to all Dioceses, Parishes and Congregations and Chaplainces:

A few years ago the CPSA felt the need to take African Culture seriously. This was seen as a continental as well as a universal phenomenon. An example of this was in 1991 when African Liturgists decided to meet as African Liturgists. This meeting – in Kanamani, Kenya 1993 – resulted in the formation of the Consultation on African culture and Anglican Liturgy (CACAL). This was under the auspices of the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA). That in turn had arisen out of need for inculturation generally which culminated in the Societas Liturgica and the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation (IALC) meetings in York 1989 which had the theme “Inculturation and the Liturgy”.

A major weakness in the way in which the church corporate handled ecumenism was that it was fettered by its own agendas and its own inhibitions as pointed out by Thomas (in Van der Bent 1981: 99) with regard to ecumenism in Asia. He cites Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios of the Orthodox Church of India who commented as follows in this regard:

“It is naïve to assume that the church as a whole will be faithful to the fullness of its vocation. The official church is always likely to be fulfilling some of its tasks while neglecting others, and quite often standing in the way of genuine liberation and social righteousness.” In his opinion, “criticizing the church may be too lazy and unproductive.” The church’s vocation is to undertake a “pastoral role towards revolutionaries,” to interpret socio-economic and political reality fearlessly, to exorcise the evil powers of society, to expose the ideological fetters of Christians and the “questionable character” of current economic concepts, and to support revolutionary movements or parties. But the official churches cannot do these things because they too often lack the insight or courage to challenge the establishment and are often hampered by vested interest and fear of the cross.

Despite its glaring short-comings and omissions, ecumenism has not been a total failure in Africa. It has kindled and rekindled the spirits of those who seek to find common ground on interfaith matters. Its main weakness had been the paucity of meaningful dialogue between the stakeholders and the domination of those who constantly see themselves as the chosen few who have correct answers to all matters of faith and religion. One of its major challenges was to find a common denominator in the needs of the Western

theologians and those of the large number of African Christians who seek affirmation and confirmation that they belong to the church of God. Bishop Dwane was certainly in that league.

Needless to say Black Theology took over where ecumenism failed to yield the expected results. The former turned out to be a more proactive tool in bringing about change and mutual respect among diverse denominations.

2.6 The Order of Ethiopia's struggle for autonomy

2.6.1 Introduction

The oral account of the history of the Order of Ethiopia³ is a very interesting one albeit fraught with challenges. As suggested by the name, the church is rooted in Ethiopianism, stretching far back into the past when Nehemiah Tile and others seceded from the established church to found the Ethiopian Church in South Africa. They had a vision of an African church with a traditional cattle kraal as part of its ethos.

This group of visionaries was joined by Matta Dwane from the Methodist church. The people had no priestly or theological background. Matta Dwane with his Methodist training and background was the obvious choice for the leadership. He grasped the opportunity with both hands. Given an opportunity to visit America in search of a church that would ascribe to their ideals and vision, he came back with the AME church in mind. It is said that he was impressed with the pulpit as a powerful symbol of a place for the propagation of the Gospel. The people were not interested. They wanted the image of the kraal-like sanctuary to be part of the symbolism of the new church.

³ This was Revd Baxana's account of developments in the Ethiopian Church. It was included to counterbalance Bishop Dwane's version, to give an outsider's (non-family member's) view.

This reluctance of the people to accept the AME church saw Matta Dwane pay a visit to London where he met the authorities of the Church of England. The vision of a kraal-like sanctuary where only men officiated resonated with the aspirations and the expectations of his people. He struck a deal with them to train his people in Catechism for five years.

The authorities in the Anglican Church in South Africa could not agree to having what they called 'a church within a church.' They could agree to be a surrogate mother to the new church only if it became an Order within the Anglican Church Communion. In 1900 the name Order of Ethiopia was adopted.

2.6.2 The first breakaway

No sooner had this happened, than there was a major split in the Order of Ethiopia when dissidents from the church's ranks broke away to form the Ethiopian Catholic Church led by the formidable Reverend Dube Rula. This group felt that the Order did not give the church a complete status as a church, a battle that raged until the 60's with such prominent roleplayers as Rula playing a key part in planning the hierarchy of the new church. He vehemently opposed what he termed the swallowing up of the Order of Ethiopia by the Anglican Church. Matta Dwane had by then also joined this group of traditionalists.

Rula left the Order of Ethiopia to join the Coptic Orthodox Church. One of the basic differences between the Order of Ethiopia and the Coptic Orthodox Church was that the Order of Ethiopia had conferences, not synods. It was merely represented on the Anglican Synods. Training for the ministry proved very difficult because Order of Ethiopian clergy who sought training in the Anglican colleges were trained there at the Order's expense whereas the Anglicans expended substantial training funds for their own students.

The relations remained tenuous and tense over decades while the Order of Ethiopia sought ways of ending the marriage with the Anglican Church amicably so that the two churches could stay together even after the separation.

2.6.3 Opposition to the election of Dr Dwane as Bishop

When the time came for the election of the first bishop in the Order of Ethiopia some of the delegates proposed a counter name to the hot favourite, Sigqibo Dwane. Reverend Lulamile Ntshebe was a popular choice. He had a master's degree from Edinburgh University and was the only person who could stand against the record and the high academic and clerical qualifications of Sigqibo Dwane.

Although Sigqibo Dwane was a direct descendant of the founder of the Order of Ethiopia, and although his father, Reverend Ndabankulu Dwane, was also a staunch clergyman of the Order of Ethiopia, hardliners influenced people not to elect him because he was "Anglican." If he was not Anglican, then, the hardliners contended, he was an opportunist who abandoned the Order of Ethiopian Church during the difficult years, and joined the Anglican Church. Now that there were prospects for a high leadership position in the Order, he was said to have readily cast off his Anglican stance to come and head the Order of Ethiopia. This led to a great controversy in the church.

Coming from Reverend Baxana, a priest who had left Dwane's church to join one or other of the splinter groups, the value of this account is only that it is more nuanced than the pure historical accounts gleaned from the writings of Hinchliff and Dwane himself. The following history is largely based on Hinchliff⁴ and Dwane's writings.⁵

⁴ Hinchliff P. (1963:200-205) ascribes his original source to T D Verryn's History of the Ethiopian Church.

2.6.4 Reasons advanced for breakaways

Several disparate reasons have been advanced for the major breakaway movements from the established churches. It cannot be doubted that the historiographies have become tainted in favour of one or the other point of view, but most of the key elements remain constant. Makhubu (1988:24) expresses this move as follows:

Some white missionaries, instead of teaching Christianity, promoted and taught white civilization. The blacks were stripped of their customs, and in exchange were forced into a culture they could never embrace. When the blacks read the Bible and found something about polygamy and cirucumcision they were puzzled. The very things condemned by missionaries were found right there in the Bible. The black leaders gave their own interpretation to those portions of the Bible which confirmed aspects of their culture and customs.

Makhubu advances many other reasons for the breakaway. The primary reason he mentions seems to be a psychological reawakening among the Blacks. This was caused by their being exposed to greener pastures overseas when black South Africans such as Mzimba, Dwane, Soga and others went to study or visit overseas. They experienced a culture shock because what they saw and experienced there changed their minds and outlook. Even former American slaves were enjoying freedom.

Locally, the winds of change were beginning to blow strongly as the African National Congress was ushering in a new era in South African politics. According to Makhubu (1988:17) “both clergy and politicians were gripped by the prevailing national spirit and worked hand in hand.”

A major factor in the developments, according to Makhubu (1988:18) was that “the uneducated ordinary black man at the turn of the century could not

⁵ Dwane, S. (1989b:83-101) and Dwane S. (1999a)

understand why the white man was treating him like a virtual slave in his fatherland and land of his ancestors.”

According to Makhubu (1988:20), this treatment even manifested itself in church where Blacks were clearly discriminated against, thus generating anti-white feelings and attitudes among some Black converts.

1990 (1979:45) also touches on the issues commonly mentioned in this regard:

There were various reasons for this separatist movement. First of all, it was a rejection of white control both in the mission and the multiracial churches, especially with regard to questions of church discipline. Secondly, it was a rejection in many instances, and especially in the case of the “Zionists,” of European culture and of the suppression of African culture in the life of the church. African culture was customarily rejected by missionaries, including men of the stature of Robert Moffat, as heathen or at least inferior.

2.6.5 Action, Interaction and Reaction

It is clear that the Ethiopian Movement aroused great concern among the missionaries and the government alike. It was a movement that threatened to challenge with impunity the status quo, something these institutions were not only unaccustomed to but were also not prepared to countenance. Just as they thought that the Cattle Killing of 1857 had broken the last atom of anti-colonial energy in the indigenous peoples of the country, they soon found themselves facing a rapidly growing movement of clerical ‘freedom fighters’.

Ethiopianism whipped up resistance and resentment against white domination in both church and state. That is why it soon became a menace to both institutions. From this movement the Order of Ethiopia received surrogate motherhood in that it rode on this wave and found a home for its own ambitions. When Mokone left the Methodist Church in 1892 he established a

separate Ethiopian Church. Not long thereafter, in 1895, he was joined by James Mata (aka Matta) Dwane who also came from the Methodist Church. Dwane soon proved to be more energetic and influential than Mokone. He took over the reins and literally ran the show from then on.

His negotiations with overseas fellow Christians unleashed proposals for the church to join the American Methodist Church. J.M.Dwane then went to America where he came back as leader of the new church because he was made superintendent and Vicar-Bishop of what was now called the AME Church in Africa.

Not being totally satisfied with these credentials, Dwane sought affiliation with the Anglican Church in South Africa. He approached the Anglican Church with a proposal that his church become what he termed 'a uniate attached to the Province.'

Having considered this proposal thoroughly in 1900, the Anglican Church was unwilling to admit the new church on those terms. It was prepared to accept it as an Order within the Anglican Church. Effectively, this meant that the Dwane church was not a church in the true sense of the word as it was like any of the many church societies that were run under the auspices of the main church, with no jurisdiction of their own.

This position was sealed when a so-called Compact was signed in 1900 creating an order of clergy within the church, governed by a Provincial and a Chapter. The bone of contention in the relations between the Anglican Church and the Order of Ethiopia was the notorious Clause 12 of the Compact which was seen by the Order of Ethiopia as subjugating it to the full authority of the Anglican Church's Diocesan bishops, leaving no power or discretion on the office bearers of the Order.

According to Dwane (1999a:117), the Order clearly articulated what they wanted from the Anglican Church in this regard:

- a) Their own bishop with complete and undisputed jurisdiction;
- b) Scrapping of the Compact which they described as a set of petty rules;
- c) Establishment of a new relationship with the CPISA.

In order to achieve these goals, they also made the following undertaking according to Dwane (1999a:117):

- d) [The] order recognises the CPISA as part of the Catholic Church, though not entirely happy with the imperialistic undertones of Anglicanism.
- e) It values its association with the CPISA and through it links with the wider Church though wary of domination leading to subservience.
- f) The Order of Ethiopia, therefore seeks to retain all those links established for it by its founders with the Church of the Province. Yet on the other hand it desires freedom to organise itself as a separate body under its own Bishop.

One of the worrying stipulations in the Compact according to Dwane (1999a:118) was that the Bishop of the Order of Ethiopia ‘could not license the clergy of the Order, but had to ask the diocesan Bishops concerned to license them and they had to make their oath of allegiance to them, and not to himself.’

James Mata Dwane was then confirmed and ordained deacon at the end of 1900 thus staking a claim for a succession of Dwane priests who followed after him, interspersed with a number of Provincials and other priests. Dwane soon proved no push-over as the Anglicans soon discovered. He invoked whatever semblance of authority he had, resulting in his being removed from office and replaced with a Provincial from the Anglican Church. He was reinstated later but the writing on the wall clearly indicated that relations were not going to be smooth.

Hinchliff (1963:203) correctly points out that “the creation of the Order within Anglicanism was one of the few formal experiments in what has now become fashionable to call ‘indigenisation’ in which the Province has ever indulged.”

2.6.6 Bishop Dwane’s account of the history of the Order

Dwane’s account (1989b:83-101) throws more light on the personality of James Mata Dwane, ostensibly because of the affinity between the two figures. He takes the story from the time when Mata Dwane, son of Mcebuka of the amaNtinde tribe in King William’s Town, approached the Anglican Church of South Africa for permission to join them after he had quarrelled with his superintendent, left the Methodist Church and founded his own Tembu National Church in 1884.

A few years later, around 1892 Mokone established the Ethiopian Movement after having left the Methodist Church. The young Mata Dwane who was born in 1848, qualified as a teacher at Healdtown in 1869 and was ordained priest thereafter. He worked in various centres as a Methodist priest until he left for England in 1892 which visit precipitated his quarrel with his superintendent and he left the Methodist Church and joined the Ethiopian Church in 1896.

It was then that the Ethiopian Church sought union with the American AME Church to which Mata Dwane was invited. He was then appointed superintendent of the new church in South Africa assigned the task of reorganising the Ethiopian Church as a branch of the AME Church. Consequently, he was ordained Vicar-Bishop.

When promises of financial support failed to materialise, Mata Dwane and his group withdrew from the American connection and opened negotiations with

the Church of the Province of South Africa where they were accepted, having signed the Compact that made their church an Order within the Anglican Church.

According to Dwane (1999a:54) relations with the Church of the Province of South Africa were right from the beginning, far from smooth. The role of the office bearers of the Order was strongly circumscribed. This did not change even after the ordination of Mata Dwane as priest in 1911.

A string of Provincials served from 1900 until the appointment of Bishop Sigqibo Dwane as the first Bishop of the Order of Ethiopia in 1983:

James Mata Dwane	1900-1916
William Gcule	1916-1926
Chalmers Dakada	1926-1928
James Daniel Antoni	1928-1937
Kayser G. Ngxhwana	1937-1956
Elijah N. Sipoyo	1957-1960
Solomon X. Dakada	1960-1970
Ephraim M. Hopa	1970-1983 defected 1983.

2.6.7 Bishop Dwane elected and rejected

In 1982, after an elective assembly in Port Elizabeth that failed to come up with a new Bishop, the Anglican Synod of Bishops duly elected Bishop S. Dwane as the first bishop of the Order of Ethiopia. He was consecrated in Bloemfontein in 1983 amidst great jubilation.

The ensuing installation service in Grahamstown ended up in bitterness with Reverend Hopa, the former Provincial, and a number of clergy and congregants breaking away from the Order to establish their own church. This precipitated many other breakaways thereafter but it never tarnished the vision of Bishop Dwane to lead his church, the Order of Ethiopia, to greener pastures, clothed in its own image as an African Christian Church.

The 1996 Biennial Conference of the Order resolved to seek ways to include what were termed 'hospitable elements of African culture in worship,' which Dwane (1999a:125) explains as follows:

With this resolution, the Order welcomed with open arms, the institutions of African culture and their positive values. It recognised that the poor are the custodians of this culture and its values and that it is a church of the poor. It gave substance to its quest for an expression of Christianity which is authentically African, and therefore oriented towards the poor.

Matters later came to a head when the bishop's own clergy and some of the members rose against him and his wife accusing them of various shortcomings and derelictions. The church was involved in several court cases in which the bishop came out victorious.

Bishop Dwane (1999a:129) narrates how the dissidents took the Dwane group's churches by force:

Various judges of the High Court saw through this, and they lost every single case and were evicted by the police from the premises of the Order. They looted and vandalised as they moved out of the premises. It was a nightmare of the most brutal, cruel and vitriolic attack upon the fabric of the Church that one had ever witnessed, and needless to say, it left many scars.

The church took a bold step, in the face of strong resistance, when, in its January 1988 Conference, it passed a resolution calling on gender equity in all church structures, thus opening the doors wide open to women as deacons and priests within the church.

In 1997 the Order of Ethiopia ordained its first woman and four others into the diaconate. This was a bold move as there were those within the church who vowed that such a move would happen only over their dead bodies. Bishop Dwane's resolve, certainly with the support of Mrs Dwane, saw this happen long before those concerned died.

2.6.8 The establishment of the Ethiopian Episcopal Church

In 1999 the Order of Ethiopia took a most important step by changing its name to the Ethiopian Episcopal Church. There was even greater jubilation for at last, the church had found its roots. It had anchored its long sought after autonomy on the firm foundations of its patriarchal or, better still, ancestral past. According to Xhosa spirituality, it had reunited itself with its ancestors.

Dwane's determination to free the Ethiopian Church from Anglican oversight and direct control, was *in tandem* with one of Black Consciousness Movement's key operational stances as articulated by Motlhabi (1987: 113):

The Black Consciousness Movement rejected integration, especially if this was understood to mean assimilation of Black people into an already existing white society with pre-established values and norms. The idea that a 'settler minority should impose an entire system of values on an indigenous people' was frowned upon.

This "settler minority rule", to borrow Motlhabi's expression, could not be tolerated by Biko who decried the fact that although the Blacks are in the majority in the mainline churches, the top echelons in most of them consist of whites. This does not only smack of bureaucracy but it also renders, according to Biko (2006:62), the churches irrelevant:

In that case therefore, black people who are Christians are not only conniving at the hitherto irrelevant nature of Christianity as spelt out by the Churches, but they also allow a non-sympathetic minority which is not interested in making Christianity relevant to people remain in control of the working of the Churches. This is an untenable situation which if allowed to continue much longer will deplete from the already thinning crowds that go to Church on Sunday.

2.7 Summary

The chapter dealt at length with the foundations of Bishop Dwane's spirituality and the nature of Ethiopianism as the driving forces behind the ups and downs of the Order of Ethiopia from the time of its secession from the Methodist Church to the time it gained autonomy as an independent Afro-Anglican or Ethiopian Church within the Anglican Communion. What becomes clear in the discussion is that the Ethiopian Movement was brought about by a combination of factors, including religious and political pressures on the founding leaders of the church. Throughout the many years of prayerful association and negotiation with the American Methodist Church and later the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, the Order of Ethiopia sought to establish itself as an independent African church with its own Bishops and the right to worship God as Africans within the Anglican Communion. The next chapter will throw light on the conservative traditions of the Anglican Church and how these impacted on the Order of Ethiopian's aspirations for indigenization.

CHAPTER THREE:
ANGLICANISM AND ITS ATTITUDE TOWARDS AFRICAN
CULTURE AND SPIRITUALITY.

3.1 Introduction

The battle between Christianity and African culture in general is no secret. It is a well-known fact that, wrongly or rightly, Christianity came to Africa coupled to an unfortunate hidden agenda of imperialism. The relations between church and state were too close, so close that the indigenous people could not always make out the distinction between priest and soldier as the two often worked hand in glove.

The demise of amaXhosa culture and the dominance of Western culture are clearly encapsulated in the following comments by Khabela (1996: 5):

[The] missionary movement was a handmaiden of colonialism. In most cases missionaries conspired with the settlers in pursuit of colonial goals. While the colonial forces were often deployed to undermine the military power of the Xhosa, the missionaries were actively engaged in undermining their culture by preaching a colonial form of Christianity that advocated the superiority of the Western culture.

De Gruchy (in Regan and Torrance 1993:132) also highlights the same problem when he says:

Within South Africa two cultures, one European and dominant, and the other indigenous and subservient, have coexisted since the Dutch and British colonial powers and settlers gained control. Both the settler and the missionary church, with few exceptions, sided with the dominant culture. This has led to a compromised and ambiguous witness in which Christ has been made subservient to white interests.

Colonization also had other baggage. It was blind to anything indigenous. Anything from the indigenous culture was regarded as paganism that had to be uprooted with the full might of the forces at hand. Both Dwane (1979) and Mtuze (2003) list a litany of derogatory statements by the early missionaries about African religion and culture. Some of those utterances were way off the mark as those uttering them spoke from a position of total ignorance regarding some of the cultural issues. One classic example of missionary misgivings about African religion appeared in *The Kaffir*⁶ *Express* in 1872.⁷

On the slow spiritual growth of Native converts

From a useful and thoughtful paper in the *Little Light of Basotoland* on the reasons why the growth of spiritual life is so slow among Basuto converts, we extract what is given below. It applies to all native converts in, as well as out of South Africa. After stating that the writer does “not question the sincerity of their conversion,” he says, that in the majority of cases it is too evident that some evil influence is clinging to the native mind, mingling with the convert’s faith and preventing the development of Christian life
....

“Whence then the cause of their defects? We can but mention some, but they are weighty and serious. Superstition has reigned supreme, age after age, among these natives; none ever had a doubt that what their fathers believed was sure to be right. A thick layer of superstition clings to the heart of every native: in his mind there is some superstition connected with every circumstance he encounters, with birth, with death, sickness, and returning health, with the clothes he wears, his journeys, his sitting down and his rising up, with his every day work, whether in digging his field or sowing his seed, in the weeding or the reaping of his corn, or the carrying of the harvest home.

The picture drawn of the superstition-consumed “savage” is so grotesque that further light on it cannot be productive. The sole purpose of listing all these superstitions was to justify the need for the missionaries to have to act harshly to rid the benighted natives of the burden of heathenism as could be deduced from the following justificatory apology from the missionaries:⁸

⁶ Common parlance then, but the term is now derogatory

⁷ The Kaffir Express, Vol 2, No. 26, p.2.

⁸ The Kaffir Express, Vol 2, No.26, p. 3.

Even friends of the missions, looking on from a distance, may think that the missionaries act in an arbitrary manner, or keep the people too much in leading-strings because they interfere in family matters. But these friends know not the difficulties to be encountered in rescuing a people from heathenism, and then leading them onward in the paths of Christianity.

In this chapter an attempt will be made to highlight the attitude of Christianity as embodied by the Anglican Church towards some of these cultural practices. This exposition is not merely academic in nature as it is an important corollary to the innovations that Dwane found himself introducing into the untouchable holy cow that is Western religion, thus spearheading a movement that had not been seen before.

As can be seen from de Gruchy's (in Regan and Torrance 1993:132) comments, Dwane was not the only one to eschew the supremacist attitudes of the church towards African culture:

[There] have always been some Christians who have confronted the dominant culture in the name of Christ and have affirmed the culture of the victims of oppression and exploitation. In more recent times, by far the largest number of Christians in South Africa, have, in fact, been part of the oppressed, many of whom have sought to relate their culture to their faith, and their social expectations to the coming of God's reign in Jesus Christ.

The chapter will be divided into three main subsections that will firstly deal with the time of fierce antagonism to Xhosa culture and religion on the part of the church and the missionaries, followed by some attempts by certain individuals to accommodate aspects of Xhosa culture, and finally culminating in the third phase when the church turned a blind eye to some of the practices in their black congregations as if to say 'let them do their thing as long as they do it amongst themselves.'

3.2 African culture and religion

Conventional definitions of culture make a clear distinction between culture and religion. In fact, religion is an aspect of culture in all societies. Ayisi (1988:1) gives a very lucid definition of culture, viz.:

The culture of a people may be defined as the sum total of the material and intellectual equipment whereby they satisfy their biological and social needs and adapt themselves to their environment.

Beattie (1985:13) defines culture to include all conscious human activities that are peculiar to any community:

For human beings have cultures, systems of beliefs and values which are themselves powerful determinants of action, while so far as we know ants and bees do not. Unlike other animals, men live in a symbolic universe...

African religion is a broader activity as it covers collective or communal action as can be seen from the following definition by Mbiti (1994:15):

African Religion is an essential part of the way of life of each people. Its influence covers all of life, from before the birth of a person to long after he has died. People find it useful and meaningful in their lives, and therefore they let it spread freely.

This clearly shows the interconnectedness between African culture and life in general. The religion, like that of Israel, is lived out in the people's daily activities and in their culture. In this way, there is no separation between religion and culture. It becomes very problematic, therefore, when either the church or the state seeks to divorce culture from religion or religion from culture. For the purpose of brevity, this discussion will centre around Dwane's thinking in this regard, and how he tried to circumvent any tendency to undermine African culture.

The battle around culture in church circles is on-going. It is rooted in both tradition and imperialism. Traditionalists and fundamentalists believe, without exception, that the only way to go is total assimilation of African culture by western culture. Imperialists follow the same convictions by insisting that they are duty-bound to dominate over all so-called pagan

cultures to replace them with the only legitimate and civilized culture – Western culture.

Dwane's preferred solution to some of these problems and issues is inculturation. Although inculturation cannot be the panacea for all the ills around cross-cultural relations, it throws some light on what could be done to address some of the challenges.

Schineller (1990:1) illustrates inculturation by referring first to the Zaire rite mass at which the members of the congregation 'form a procession dressed in traditional clothing. They do traditional dance and call forth animated responses from the participants as the gifts are brought forward.' The second illustration is that of a Nigerian Igbo priest who 'conducts research into the traditional belief of the Igbo people in respect for the ancestors as he seeks to relate this belief to the Catholic belief in the communion of saints and the church as the body of Christ.' Schineller (1990:1) comments in relation to these activities:

All these incidents are examples of inculturation. They represent the efforts of Christians in particular places to understand and celebrate their Christian faith in a way peculiar to that situation or context.

Critics of black Christians who belong to the Christian church but pay homage to certain aspects of their own African culture condemn this duality. Schineller (1990:1), on the other hand, adopts a more accommodative attitude towards it:

While sharing in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church, they are searching for the particular way in which this faith must be lived in their situation. Instead of a totally monolithic or uniform Catholic or Christian church, the catholicity of the church consists in the richness of its two thousand year tradition, a tradition extended not only in time but also in space.

Schineller associates inculturation with incarnation in the same way as Dwane does as could be seen from his (Schineller 1990:6) comments:

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

It should be stressed that the two interfacing cultures should mutually enrich each other by coalescing instead of conflicting with each other, as articulated by Sanneh (1993:15):

[Christianity] has entered a renewed destiny with its affirmation of cultural particularity, and vice versa. Thus, in so far as modern Africans have become Christians, they have done so with a Christianity mediated to them by the West, but in so far as Christianity has penetrated African societies, this is largely because it has been assimilated into the local idiom, without, however, the local idiom being unaffected or Christianity itself being immune to the intellectual critique of the Western tradition.

Pope John Paul II (as cited by Montefiore 1992:1) also made a similar comment in his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* in respect of the gospel and culture:

Through inculturation the Church makes the gospel incarnate in different cultures and at the same time introduces people, together with their cultures, into her own community. She transmits to them her own values, at the same time taking the good elements that already exist in them and renewing them from within.

Western superiority imposed a package of culture and religion that masqueraded as sanitation and salvation, respectively, as attested by Sanneh (1993:22):

Notions of Western cultural superiority found a congenial niche in Christian missionary enterprise where spiritual values were assumed to enshrine concrete Western cultural forms, so that the heathen who took the religious bait would in fact be taking it from the cultural hook. Indeed, in numerous cases, culture and religion, as sanitation and salvation, were for many missionaries one and the same thing.

Sanneh (1993:121) stresses a vitally important issue about the role of culture in Christianity – viz. the fact that Christianity, contrary to what many people believe, is culture-specific:

One of the most forceful presentations of the cultural basis of Christianity is the work of the German scholar, Ernst Troeltsch, whose book, *The Absoluteness of Christianity* has had an enduring impact on subsequent generations of scholars. Troeltsch's central argument is that the gospel and Western culture are indistinguishable to the extent that people cannot speak of the one without implying the other. Two pessimistic conclusions are drawn from this: first that Christianity has become so culture-specific that it is incommunicable cross-culturally; and second, that non-Western converts face the doubly impossible burden of 'Westernization' and 'Christianization,' simultaneously.

To counter Western domination, non-Westerners sought refuge in cultural relativism which Sanneh (1993: 230) explains as follows:

[The] theory of cultural relativism sought on one level to cope with the demise of the West's hegemony over the rest of the world and with the dispersal of power to the former colonized peoples, Africans included. The vehemence with which missionaries condemned traditional cultures, it is argued, was only the moral version of material superiority that the West in its military and political projects established over non-white races. Thus religion consecrated the sentiments that stemmed from military and political control. Now that the West has lost the substance of its power, the argument proceeds, it can afford to forego its moralizing posture, although paradoxically the West by its academic specialists remains the arbiter of cultural relativism.

According to Hunsberger and van Gelder (1996:vii) the gulf between Christianity and local culture could be bridged if the church is prepared:

[to] encourage the encounter of the gospel with our culture. It will mean learning how to be a church that by its nature lives always between gospel and culture, recognizing, on the one hand, the cultural dynamics that shape us as well as everyone else in this society and, on the other hand, hearing the gospel that calls us to know and value and intend things in a very different way.

In order to meet each other half way, both parties, Christianity and culture, should be prepared to know and accommodate each other as suggested by Hunsberger and van Gelder (1996: viii):

For another group of readers, the primary interest is how to understand what is going on in our culture, to gain self-understanding as well as an understanding of people around us. But starting with an assessment of culture never leaves us at ease. It begs the question whether the gospel welcomes the dynamics of our culture's ways of seeing things or whether it contends against them. Invariably, it does some of both, but the answer takes sorting out and requires the church to be deeply theological in its way of life.

Among the Independent Churches, interesting innovations are noticeable in the so-called Shembe Church. Weinberg (2006:28) comments as follows regarding prayer and dance in this church:

To an outsider, these two seemingly opposing rituals of prayer and dance at first seem at odds with one another. The Reverend Mthembeni Mpanza explains the mix of Zulu tradition and modernity as part of the Shembe Church's contribution to the now fashionable concept of African Renaissance. 'Dance has always been part of the Bible,' he explains. 'Isaiah Shembe integrated African dance into Hebrew dance. He merged religion and culture. Dancing is a way of worshipping God.'

These innovations have ushered in some changes in symbolism within the church. Weinberg (2006:28) explains this as follows:

But this hybrid ritual has another resonance for Mpanza. For him the Zulu traditional warrior has been turned into a peace-lover. Sticks, spears and shields are metamorphosed into symbolic peaceful accruals. These weapons have become biblical staffs.

3.3 The era of breaking down and supplanting African culture

The early missionaries were totally opposed to the bulk of Xhosa customs and traditions as can be attested by the following comments by Goedhals (1982:35):

[Merriman] rejoiced that all the converts living on Anglican mission stations had "remained loyal." He had little understanding of the cultural crisis conversion to Christianity occasioned for many blacks, or of the reaction in Nguni society prompted by the challenge and threat of western culture as represented by missionaries as well as by government officials and traders. Anglican missionaries had at first attempted to abolish initiation and had expelled all converts who underwent the rite, but by

1871, circumcision itself was permitted, although the ceremonies associated with it were frowned on. Lobola was not allowed, and polygamists remained hearers, although the Christian wives of polygamists could be baptised and were allowed to live with their husbands. After the war, when a review of this policy could have been expected, and even with black deacons present at the missionary conference, there was no change in these requirements. Acceptance of Christianity meant abandonment of tribal custom.

Lobola (erroneously called bride-price or dowry by Westerners) was certainly one of the most hated customs, and certainly the most misunderstood Xhosa custom. Its intrinsic value did not lie in how many heads of cattle a parent received for their daughter, but in the bond that the *ikhazi* (heads of cattle paid) sealed between the two families. This is articulated very aptly by Mills (n.d. :6) who contends that *lobola* is the foundation stone of African marriage. He also correctly stresses that *lobola* is indispensable because it legitimizes marriage and gives the children's father parental rights to the children. As far as the woman is concerned, *lobola*, is designed to compensate her parents for loss of her productive and reproductive contributions.

Soga (1931:263) strongly supports the efficacy of this custom in Xhosa social life by pointing out that the custom gives the woman status and protection against physical abuse. What is significant about the custom, according to Soga, is that it gives a woman complete protection outside a court of law. According to him this protection is 'entirely in the woman's hands' because she can invoke her rights under *lobola* without recourse to courts of law.

The immediate benefits of being *lobolaed* and the obligations of those who received the *lobola* are spelt out very clearly by Mills (n.d.:6). First of all, it helps meet the expenses borne by the bride's family as she has to carry several essential commodities to her married home, e.g. a wardrobe, presents for the in-laws and other household goods normally exchanged between the two families during a wedding. *Lobola* also ensures good behaviour on the

part of the bride as her parents would have to return the *lobola* should she be found blameworthy for the collapse of the marriage.

One could call this early phase of the missionary era “the bulldozer phase” as in it the missionaries went out of their way to vilify and to uproot African religion. The symbol of the bulldozer is appropriate as we all saw during the dark days of apartheid. Nothing could stand in front of those heavy machines when they were used to get rid of unwanted shacks and other structures. The missionaries came in with as much resolve to do away with African religion and culture. Nothing was regarded as worth conserving.

This determination to wipe out African cultural aspects that were perceived as pagan is illustrated as follows by Mills (n.d. 2):

In the second half of the nineteenth century, a number of traditional Xhosa social customs were opposed by missionaries who tried to insist that their Xhosa converts abstain from all observance or participation on pain of discipline, even expulsion from the church. Of special concern were *intonjane* (girl’s initiation puberty rite), *ukwaluka* (circumcision-boy’s initiation rite) and *lobola* (bride-price). The making and drinking of *utywala* the Xhosa beer, was also attacked with increasing vigour.

The seriousness of the onslaught on African social, cultural and political systems is clearly set out by Kiernan (in Prozesky and de Gruchy 1995: 76):

The cumulative result of these combined missionary and colonial interventions in African life was to demolish the political, social and moral foundations of African society and to propel its occupants into a way of life not recognisably their own, patterned on categories and values embedded in Christianity.

This vicious onslaught was not only waged on the ecclesial site. The church reflected what was generally happening in all walks of life where black and white converged. The same force was applied in education at large to re-create the black people in the image of their white conquerors, as attested by Hodgson (1987:50) in regard to what was done to chiefs’ children at Zonnebloem where Emma, Chief Sandile’s daughter was sent for school:

Whatever the motive, the children's education at the Cape tended to transform them into English ladies and gentlemen: to so immerse them in European culture that their African identities were soon submerged. They were fitted out in western clothing: the girls in flannel petticoats, dresses, aprons and shoes, and the boys in flannel shirts, duck or moleskin trousers, caps and blucher boots. They were also introduced to all the paraphernalia of western living such as soap, scouring, blacking, wax candles and sheets, and their diet was comparable to any similar English boarding establishment.

This hostility towards black culture and religion came out very strongly as far back as in the nineteenth century when Shepherd, the editor of *The Kaffir Express* of 4 February 1871, p.3, responded to correspondents' calls for more articles on African religion:

It is very plain, that there are two parties even among the natives – the one progressive, and the other conservative of the old customs and non-progressive – to whom times gone by are brave days of old, - far better than the present. Our sympathies are entirely with the party of progress. There is very little in old Kaffirland worth preserving – and we think it will be in the wisdom of the natives as soon as possible to move forward into day – and secure the blessings which the present time brings to them. We make this statement even while we intend if possible to publish from time to time brief notices of Kaffir Laws and Customs. These possess a value, as enabling us to understand the native people better – and have an interest as belonging to a certain state of society. But this is a very different thing from holding up that society as worthy of imitation or preservation. There is a portion of every nation's history which must be forgotten: and to this, that of the Kaffir people is no exception.

Barrett cites numerous examples of the destructive role the missionaries played in Africa in their quest to introduce 'pure' Christianity. He (Barrett 1968:83) presents us with a very stable and dignified social system of the Africans before the arrival of the whites and missionary encroachments:

For centuries, the foundations of culture in African tribes have rested on a number of dynamic institutions and beliefs found in varying forms in all parts of the continent, and which, within a given tribe, centre on the family and on the home. Strong loyalties are engendered at various levels of society: the family, the clan, the tribe, the wider state. Basic to the loyalties are certain time-honoured institutions: the family unit; the family land; the polygamous economy; the lineages; traditional religion; the ancestor cult; the magical world-view; divination and the like. All these and numerous other features of the social structure are the end product of long and involved histories; and although by no means static and unchanging, they have been so closely knit together that in a given tribe no change can take place in one feature without affecting all the rest.

He continues to give vivid illustrations of how the missionaries went out of their way to destroy African social systems and implant their own western social systems in their place. Barrett (1968:87) gives a lucid description of missionary activities all over Africa, in general, but in Cameroon, in particular, where the latter went to extremes in their efforts to destroy traditional religion. The missionaries were not aware of the damage they did to traditional institutions by disturbing the balance of Duala tribal society. The trail of destruction left by the missionaries is reminiscent of what they did in other places of the continent thereby negating their commendable work in bringing Christianity and education to Africa.

A classic example of how blacks were undermined by the very people who set themselves up to ‘uplift and Christianize’ them is provided by Wells (undated: 280), who comments as follows about European antagonism towards the indigenous people:

J.S.M. McArthur, Esq. The discoverer of the Cyanide process of extracting gold, thus describes the scorn with which some regard the native Christian: ‘As I began to mix more with the people in South Africa, I got to understand the prejudice against the Kafir Christian. Those who reviled him often knew nothing about him, and those who really did know about him were, in most cases, a low type of European who considered that every nigger requires to be kicked, beaten, thrashed, and sworn at. The Christian Kafir had been taught that he was a man, and he resented that continual ill-treatment. To the consternation of the bully the “converted nigger” showed himself a man. The bully did not like it, and then blamed Christianity for spoiling niggers.

McArthur, as cited above, touches on a raw nerve that had evaded the detractors of the Africans for centuries – ignorance. So many of them came with wide accusations and condemnations of the indigenous people, without knowing them at all and without even trying to understand their culture.

Matta Dwane⁹ (n.d.: 15) comments as follows on the lack of knowledge about African customs on the part of the missionaries:

⁹ *Imaz’ enethole* by James Mata Dwane, Dwane Collection in Cory, Rhodes University, Box 174.

The treatment of these customs with carelessness and indifference has not been beneficial to the cause of missions and general welfare of the natives. These native traditions and customs are not only inseparably bound up with the past history of these people, but form essential material with which that history is to be built. Without a sufficient knowledge of these customs the permanent and satisfactory improvement of the Bantu tribe socially and religiously would almost be impossible. The proper understanding and right treatment of them is absolutely necessary to the good government and guidance of the natives.

3.4 Anglicanism and Xhosa culture

The attitudes of the early missionaries have, generally, been adequately documented and dealt with in theological literature. Attention will rather be devoted to Anglicanism and its attitude to Xhosa culture, especially in this part of the country. That will be more in line with the scope of this study as we seek to understand the relations of the black and white Christians as they grappled with inter-cultural tensions. These issues are deliberately foregrounded here because of the very nature of the study. We need to constantly trace the reasons that led Bishop Dwane to deviate from the Anglican ethos and some of its revered traditions.

As in all African and missionary encounters, the Anglican pioneering missionaries never bothered to make a deep study of the spirituality of the people they so fervently wished to convert to Christianity. To confirm this, Brooke (1947:41) captured a very interesting and telling moment in inter-religious relations in the Anglican Church when Bishop Gray, the first Bishop of Cape Town, met Xhosa Chiefs and their subjects in King William's Town, in 1848. The meeting reported below reveals a lot about attitudes between the new Anglican leadership and the new Xhosa converts:

The Governor told them all about the great White Queen, whose subjects they were. He told them about the Queen's religion and how one of the Chiefs of that religion had come to see them and to bring them her greetings. He tried to impress them with the importance of the Bishop in comparison with other ministers of religion, illustrating what he said with two sticks, one much longer than the other.

Although the coming together of the two religions offered a great opportunity to explore one another's cultures, nothing of the sort happened. Neither the Governor nor the Bishop was interested in that side of the deal. When you colonise, you impose your own ideas. They clearly had their own agenda – to impose the Queen's religion on the new 'subjects' at whatever cost. The Queen was greater than all their Chiefs whose subjects they, in their colonised state, no longer were. To ensure their loyalty and subservience, the Governor acted as the Administrative Chief of the Area, accompanied by another Great Chief from the Queen herself – the Bishop. It is clear that the local Chiefs had not only been besieged and confronted by a new religion, but they were also subjected to a new political order. The package was non-negotiable.

The Chiefs' response (Brooke *ibid*:49) was very diplomatic:

The crafty old Chiefs listened and nodded their heads and thought their own secret thoughts. Afterwards they expressed their interest in the religion of the Queen of England. They also said they would be grateful for any gifts of blankets, tiger-skins or brandy which the white visitors might feel disposed to offer. These things were easier to understand than a new religion!

The arrogant imposition of one religion upon another is too glaring not to be noticed in this encounter. The political domination of one group of people by another is patently clear from the officious statements of the Governor with his two-pronged attack derived from the authority of the Queen and the power of the Bishop who came as the Queen's Chief.

The white entourage, no doubt, left gloating profusely over their success in conquering the minds of these 'heathen savages' who ended up begging for certain favours. Little did they know that these people were testing the tenets and genuineness of their religion against their own *ubuntu* philosophy. Their religion could only be genuine if they were willing to provide for the needy, and share their humanity with others.

As for the brandy, if it was good for the old religion, it would be good for the people of the incoming religion. Secondly, it would seal the relations between the two groups. Proof of this, is that until today, any such tying of new relations, e.g. marriage negotiations etc, is sealed with brandy provided by the group that has come to ask for the woman's hand in marriage. The same group, according to Xhosa spirituality, is expected to provide the new relations with goods that serve as a bond between the two parties – presents for the various members of the groom's family.

This view is supported by Kiernan (in Prozesky 1990:13):

Africans, however, responded to the missionary message through the filter of their own culture, not least of which was the cultural expectation that religious observance and good behaviour should bestow tangible blessings in the form of material endowment, social advancement, a better way of life in the here and now.

It cannot be doubted that the Governor and the Bishop could not see this side of the deal. To them these requests only meant two things – destitution and love for liquor, on the part of those who made the request. Considering the former's imperial agenda, they could not have wished for a better surrender.

The ignorance and arrogance alluded to earlier is also discernible in Grant's comments (as cited by Goedhals, 1982:99) on Xhosa religion:

The third form of idolatry and darkness to be assailed by the Gospel, is the debased superstition which prevails ... among the African... Among these the idea of the Great Spirit is obliterated in proportion as the tribes are more or less barbarised. Yet, commonly the superstition is rude and formless, with no creed or system of worship, accompanied by cruel rites and a belief in a magical virtue, attended by a degraded state of civilized life. It is the religion... of barbarism, of the primaeval tradition run to its very dregs, varying its form according to the state of the savage understanding, and modified by local custom and peculiarities.

With regard to Bishop Merriman's own ignorance and sense of superiority, Goedhals' comment (ibid:99) is very interesting:

There is nothing to suggest that Merriman questioned this view, or thought otherwise himself. He knew little of the dynamics of Nguni society, and assumed the technological, political, moral and religious superiority of his own culture.

It is quite evident, from what Goedhals says about Merriman after this event, that the latter was very accommodative, and even appreciative, of Xhosa culture. He was not as condemnatory as his compatriots, not even as Grant. He overlooked many of the practices that were disapproved of by his colleagues – circumcision practices and rituals, naked dances by young male initiates, and even polygamy (*Vide* Goedhals, ibid: 100 – 103).

According to Goedhals (ibid: 103ff) the Anglican Archdeacon's limitations regarding Christianity among the Xhosa people were typical of all the missionaries of the time:

Merriman did not doubt, as many settlers did, that Africans were capable of receiving the gospel, and as deserving as their white fellow frontiersmen. Though undoubtedly Merriman saw conversion to Christianity as the solution to the frontier conflict, his chief concern was to make disciples of all nations and bring men to free and equal brotherhood in the church. He had the limitations of his age, one of which was a tendency to regard western civilization as superior to all others and to undervalue African social institutions. It is unfortunate but not surprising that he and his fellow missionaries regarded the easiest way of bringing about their goal among the Xhosa as the creation of ersatz Europeans. They did not envisage the next stage, the formulation of a black Christian culture and theology by black Christians. Nevertheless, the most revolutionary offering, the gospel in their own language, had been made to the Xhosa.

It is quite interesting that Bishop Dwane waited until he received autonomy from the Anglican Church before he made his momentous innovations to the liturgy. This could only be ascribed to his canonical obedience to the Metropolitan. As a senior member of the Anglican Communion he must have been aware of the consequences of what had happened to Colenso when he departed from the rubrics, as explained by Hinchliff (1963:50):

What complicated the issue was that Colenso departed from the strict rubrics of the Prayer Book and composed a different Prayer for the Church for use at afternoon or evening services, planning to have an 'offertory' even when the service was not a celebration of the Eucharist. This embroiled him in a controversy, not only with the laymen of Durban, but also with James Green (who was never very anxious to like Colenso) and with Gray who accused him of liturgical innovation and of going beyond the proper canonical authority of a bishop.

The planting of the first black Anglican churches in this part of the country coincided with the 1857 Cattle Killing disaster among the amaXhosa. From then, Blacks became like putty in the missionaries' hands. From that time onwards, they could not offer any serious resistance to missionary dislikes, hence the ensuing long period of calm in the church and in the country as well. They were reduced to total subservience. It cannot be doubted that they had to obey what orders they received from the missionaries when the latter became their only saviours as many amaXhosa had landed at mission stations as destitute beggars.

The Cattle Killing had killed not only thousands of livestock, but also the cultural fabric of African society, as can be seen from Hinchliff 's (1963: 56) gloomy description of the plight of thousands of people faced with hunger and starvation. Several thousands of these people sought refuge in mission stations but because they were so many, they could not be properly fed. Consequently large numbers of them died. The chiefs were hardest hit by the disaster because it broke their power for ever.

Although the black people were forced by circumstances to join the church, their suspicions of the missionaries and of Christianity did not diminish. The plight of the early converts is epitomised by the experience of Reverend Tiyo Soga's father who found himself in the invidious position of being forced not to send his son, Tiyo, to a circumcision school, against the grain of African culture. There could be no worse embarrassment to him than this as can be seen in Khabela's (1996:10) comment on the matter:

There were both political and cultural reasons for Soga's suspicion of white missionaries. On the political side, the Gaika had lost vast lands to the colonists. On the cultural side, the new religion made a heavy assault on African culture. The attack on important practices such as polygamy and circumcision, and the exhortation to wear Western clothes were some of the obstacles. For these reasons, those who became converts were ridiculed.

Having narrowed down the focus from missionaries in general to Anglican missionaries, one can make one objective observation. By and large, it does appear that the Anglican church leadership, in the public domain, were more tolerant towards African cultural practices than other colonial missionaries. Having said that, one must hasten to add that in the private domain, it cannot be denied that their whole attitude was one of great dislike of some of the cultural practices.

Be that as it may, the church avoided getting embroiled in a serious controversy regarding this and related matters as it moved into the second phase of its relations with black converts. Having said that, I must hasten to add that this does not mean that the earlier church leadership, at the micro-level, that is in their parochial dealings with the converts and congregants, did not follow what was happening at the macro-level. The church itself did not take a publicly announced collective stand on these cultural issues except in what will be discussed in the following phase of the encounter.

The church at large could not countenance any deviation from its stand. What is patently clear from its attitude to African culture is that it was motivated by the fear of syncretism as can be seen from de Gruchy's (1990:46) comments about the proliferation of African indigenous churches that arose in later years:

Opinions have varied about the significance of this rapidly growing movement. Sundkler first regarded it negatively as a bridge across which black Africans would return from Christianity to heathenism. He discerned the danger of syncretism, the confusion of culture and Christ. This was the view of most missionaries and the mainline churches until the sixties.

3.5 Attempts to accommodate African culture

The clash or conflict between Christianity and African religion has its roots in African culture. Because the missionaries eschewed African culture, they could not countenance African religion as it espoused African culture. Ayisi (1988:71) comments as follows about this conflict between Christianity and African religion:

Sociologists and social anthropologists have treated African religion as if it were a bizarre museum item entirely different from other religious phenomena found in Western culture. They have given it a conceptual interpretation that betrays their prejudices about African cultures, which in many ways are not valid and lack rational justification.

African religion, on the contrary, has a great role to play in ‘the search for new values, identity and security’ as attested by Mbiti (1990:268):

Singly, jointly or in competition, the religions in Africa should be able to exert a force and make a contribution in creating new standards, morals and ethics suitable for our changing society.

There are clear areas of difference and even conflict between Christianity and African culture, let alone African religion. Over the years African theologians and African scholars in general have tried to reconcile these but the areas of divergence still remain. Before discussing these efforts to reconcile the two divergent religions, I will raise some of the areas which Dwane addresses in his thesis on *Christianity in relation to Xhosa religion* (1979).

3.5.1 God in Xhosa society

This was one of the bones of contention between the missionaries and the Xhosa converts for a long time. The reason for the dissonance emanated from the fact that the Xhosa knew about God long before the arrival of the missionaries. When the missionaries came, the Xhosa people told them about their God, Qamata. As could be expected, the missionaries refused to accept

Qamata as referring to God as known in Western religion. To them Qamata was one of the many pagan Gods, hence their refusal to include Qamata in the Xhosa Christian Bible. Until today, Qamata does not appear in the Xhosa Bible. Instead the translators came up with Thixo and later Ndikhoyo about which it would be better not to venture any comment. Paradoxically, some of the earlier missionaries discerned some reference to God in the religion of the primitive Xhosa people. They called him Qamata, uMdali and by other names.

Dwane (1979: 10) says in this regard:

The Xhosa people and other Xhosa-speaking groups have for a long time maintained that it is untrue to suggest that they had no notion of God before the arrival of missionaries. For example J.H. Soga, a prominent Xhosa Christian and writer had this to say in 1931: "They (the Xhosas) have a conception of a Supreme Being. Clearly defined: A God who is the Creator of all things, who controls and governs all, and as such is the rewarder of good and the punisher of evil."

This debate would have been only academic had it not been for two reasons – the Anglican Xhosa Christian liturgy still shuns the use of the appellation Qamata, secondly, Dwane, on the contrary, preferred to use this very term in his liturgy.

3.5.2 Ancestors

A second area of discord between the Xhosa congregants and their white counterparts centres round the question of ancestors. It leads to numerous questions from those who are battling to locate the ancestors in Christian spirituality where Jesus is the only mediator between Christians and God. The waters become even murkier when one introduces the rituals and other such practices into the equation.

In spite of cultural conceptual inaccuracies in Hodgson's thinking, she comes the closest of most Western scholars to the actual role of the ancestors and Qamata and their relationship to people in Xhosa society, when she (Hodgson 1987:34) comments:

The senior men were the guardians of the traditions and customs, and they would lead their people in the rituals of the ancestor cult. The ancestors were the spirits of the members of the family and were the focus of religious activity in daily life. The Xhosa had their God, Qamata, but he was only approached in times of national crisis such as prolonged drought, war or epidemic disease. The ancestors were believed to continue taking an interest in their families on earth, making their wishes known through dreams and illness. It was a world in which no distinction was made between the sacred and the secular. All was divine and man's well-being consisted in maintaining harmonious relationships with his fellow men, living and dead, the spirit world and the natural order.

One point worth commenting on about ancestors is, of course, the notion of the resurrection of the dead. However, the amaXhosa resurrection seems to happen prematurely, before the eschatological second coming of Christ. An important point is the risen ancestral bodies then start behaving like ordinary temporal human beings.

Dwane (1979: 15) explains the need for these rituals and sacrifices for *izinyanya* (ancestors) as follows:

[A]lthough every head of a family enters the company of *izinyanya* at death, yet he cannot function as *isinyanya* until the *imfanelo zakhe* (appropriate rites and ceremonies such as *ukukhapha* at burial, and *ukubuyisa*) some time after his death, have been performed. It is argued that such a spirit cannot play its proper role in tribal religion until it has been formally and ceremonially incorporated into the company of other ancestral spirits.

On why the ancestors should intercede on behalf of the community or an individual instead of those concerned having a direct link with Jesus, Dwane's response (1979: 20) is as follows:

[It] is pointed out that just as any person who is a new arrival in a new environment may approach local authority through the mediation of one of the well-known residents, so also the living who are not familiar with God, ask the ancestral spirits¹⁰ who are closer to him to intercede on their behalf.

¹⁰ Mtuze (2003: 48) and Mbiti (1990:82) prefer to refer to them as the living-dead, and not as spirits.

Invariably, belief in the ancestors goes hand in glove with the performance of a host of rituals that the church is loath to endorse.

Okure (1998:21), in her detailed discussion of the ancestors makes very interesting observations but her warning that ‘African Christians need to take care that undue devotion to ancestral spirits does not become yet another measure to keep them confined to a kind of third world Christianity as happens in other spheres of life’ smacks of devaluation of anything African. There is nothing wrong with being an African Christian because, unlike other relations between Africans and the rest of the world, there are no Super-Christians, as there are Super powers. Her understanding of the ancestors as being spirits is contrary to the view held by most scholars in this field.

First and foremost, the ancestors are human, not spirits, as testified by Setiloane (2000:32):

I suggest that African traditional view is on the same track when it sees ancestors as people, but people charged with Divinity, as indeed every living person is (hence *siriti*). Perhaps because in the case of ancestors the limitations of the flesh are removed, they become more ‘other’.

In African traditional thinking, the role and the nature of the ancestors are not different to that of the saints in Christianity as attested by the following comments by Setiloane (2000:32):

The insights they communicate can, therefore, be relied upon as from the ultimate Reality (*Modimo*) and never misleading.

This may be the reason why many of us have been able to bring our *Badimo* into the church with us. In our experience they do not vie or compete with *Modimo*. *Badimo* are not *Modimo* and yet they are ‘of *Modimo*’ in the same way as *Motho* is of ‘*Modimo*.’ Unlike the humans (in the flesh) *Badimo* are perfectly moral, just, and never partial because of consanguinity (family relations).

3.5.3 Evil spirits

Evil spirits are a bone of contention between Xhosa religion and Christianity. Westernism regards them as baseless superstitions. According to its adherents, they negate whatever credibility could be attached to Xhosa religion. Having believed these things themselves in the olden days, Westerners shudder to imagine any decent and civilised people going back to such dark ages. This attitude is interesting especially if one considers that Westerners are not averse to the idea that there is evil. They accept the existence of demons. The whole Bible is full of references to evil, demons and forces of evil culminating in the Book of Job where we see evil at its worst. This consensus regarding evil is clearly demonstrated in the following statement by Surin (1986:2):

The prevailing consensus among those who operate within theodicy's canonical tradition holds that a long strand in the history of theology – stemming from St Augustine via St Thomas Aquinas and the Reformers to Schleiermacher and modern times – has addressed itself to the task of reconciling God's omnipotence, omniscience and benevolence with the existence and the considerable scale of evil.

African belief in evil spirits stems from the same root – evil. They may not express this sentiment in Western theological terms but the notion is the same. According to Soga (1931:179) 'death and sickness in human beings are never ascribed by the amaXhosa to natural causes, but always to human instrumentality; to some person who is the source of evil influences, who acts malevolently, bringing or sending by direct or occult means sickness and death to families.'

Evil is responsible for bad luck, death, disharmony among communities and many more such aberrations. This is stated as follows by Mbiti (1994:70):

We have seen that, according to African views, the universe is composed of visible and invisible parts. It is commonly believed that, besides God and human beings there are other beings who populate the universe. These are the spirits. There are many types of spirits.

Mbiti, whose research mainly centres around Uganda, argues that all spirits are not evil. They are neither good or bad, according to Mbiti (ibid: 79):

In fact, the majority of the spirits cannot be classified as either good or bad. Whether they are felt as good or bad depends on how people experience the forces of nature (in effect the nature spirits) and how they act towards human beings. The spirits can do both good and evil to people, just as people do both good and evil to their fellow human beings.

To show how widespread this belief is in the existence of spirits (benevolent and malevolent) in Africa, the study will reflect very briefly on comments that researchers from other parts of Africa have made on the topic.

That spirits are by nature good but manipulatable comes out clearly from the Liberian music performance exercises which Stone (Blakely, van Beek and Thomson(1994:392) describes as follows:

The spirits, controlling musicians, create sounds and movements within a shadowy world, very partially shared and known only in bare outline to the audience. Yet such power is the necessary ingredient that turns a pedestrian even into one of aesthetic force. Only when people are emotionally moved to do things they would not otherwise do is an event judged outstanding. Only with the aid of the supernatural can such depth of artistry emerge.

Some spirits are said to be manipulated by people to do wrong. This is how Mbiti (1994:79) expresses this point:

We have mentioned that some spirits help diviners, mediums, oracles and medicine men in their work. These are consulted as the need may arise. They are more or less the tools of their users. On the other hand the spirits that cause misfortune, sickness, and even death may be used to do these things by human beings who have the power to do so, most often by witches, sorcerers or bad magicians. Thus, it is really these people who use these spirits to do harm to their fellow human beings.

Abimbola (1994:102,) from West Africa, clearly points out that “the Yoruba believe that there are two pantheons of supernatural powers who compete for the domination of the universe. They are the *oris* who are benevolent in nature and the *ajogun* who are malevolent to human beings.

It stands to reason, therefore, that the spirits that work against the good of humanity are called malevolent spirits, e.g those associated with witchcraft, and those working for the good of humanity are called benevolent spirits. This is also confirmed by Mbiti (1994:79).

Ancestors are regarded as benevolent although Mbiti and Mtuze prefer to call them ‘beings’ and ‘presences’, respectively, instead of spirits because ancestors are not spirits, as pointed out by Mbiti (1990:82 and Setiloane 2000:30). They assume the same human form they had before death when they allegedly return to dwell among their families, with only one exception - invisibility.

There is no unanimity regarding the origin of evil. Mbiti (1990: 199) offers an interesting, albeit curious, explanation:

Some societies see evil as originating from, or associated with, spiritual beings other than God. Part of this concept is a personification of evil itself. For example, the Vugusu say that there is an evil divinity which God created good, but later on turned against Him and began to do evil. This evil divinity is assisted by evil spirits, and all evil now comes from that lot.

3.5.4 Circumcision

Circumcision is one of the conflict areas in the two religions because the church used to regard this practice as pagan and unacceptable for people who regard themselves as Christians. The missionaries and the Anglican church in particular failed to realize the legal function of circumcision which Ngxamngxa (1967:193) defines as follows:

The legal significance of circumcision is pronounced. Through it the individual concerned abandons his status as child and with it the obligations and rights in the family of orientation associated with childhood. He assumes the status of an adult with a cluster of new rights and duties. These put him into widening social relationships as exemplified in his duties towards and claims from the tribal authorities and in the power he now has of setting up his own family of procreation. By such definition of the individual's rights and duties initiation fulfils the fourth of the functions of law as defined by Hoebel, viz.: 'to redefine relations between individuals and groups as the conditions of life change.'

Ngxamngxa's definition of circumcision encapsulates the total significance of the custom in amaXhosa society. It bestows rights, privileges and obligations on the one concerned. Because amaXhosa society is patriarchal in nature, there are set functions that only circumcised men can, and must, perform. Uncircumcised males cannot deliberate over community matters, family disputes and other community affairs. They cannot marry or raise a family as no woman would marry an uncircumcised male among the amaXhosa.

3.5.5 Izangoma, evil practitioners and other unwanted practices

Perhaps one of the most detested practices among the amaXhosa, from a Western believer's point of view, is the former's belief in so-called 'witchdoctors', now officially called '*izangoma*' or traditional healers and their adversaries the witches (*amagqwirha*). The former wage an endless war against the evil practices of the latter as the latter are bent on bringing pain and suffering to the innocent masses. They are said to operate in various guises but the primary aim is to cause ill-health and disaster, to disturb the equilibrium of a happy community and a happy society. (*Vide* Soga 1931:179).

It is these and other practices in amaXhosa religion or among the amaXhosa at large that cause tension between amaXhosa religion and Christianity. These have been highlighted here, not with the purpose of discussing or even

defending them, but to assess the extent to which the church has tried to understand and to accommodate them, where practicable.

The earliest concerted effort in the Anglican church to accommodate African spirituality was by the Rev. S.J. Wallis and his team of black priests and church members. The book *Inkolo namasiko ABantu* (Bantu Beliefs and Customs) was published by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK), in 1930. In the absence of any formal commission to look into the matter, Wallis's efforts should be commended. This might have been a small step, but that step was in the right direction. It was also remarkable that the book was written by isiXhosa speakers in isiXhosa so as to reach a broad spectrum of the African Christian community.

These black writers, even though they surely wrote under the watchful eye of Father Wallis, got a wonderful opportunity to explain some of the misconceptions regarding African cultural beliefs and practices, in particular, and African religion, at large. They pointed to areas where there was consonance and to those where there was dissonance.

Life after death was one of those few areas where there was some agreement, up to a point, between the two religions. At least the amaXhosa believe that their dead do not just disappear into thin air, perhaps like the souls of animals. They are perceived to go to a world beyond from where they are later invited back to their respective homes as the living-dead.

Nyoka (in Wallis 1930:34) even goes so far as to relate the sacrificial slaughter of a beast and the brewing of beer during such rituals to the Christian sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. The analogy here might be far-fetched. It may even be sacrilegious, but what is of vital importance is that the group had started grappling with these issues. It cannot be doubted that some

of the problems are very vexing. Others have no parallels in either of the two religions.

It is interesting to note that Nyoka acknowledged, as far back as in 1930, the role of the traditional healers in Xhosa society and religion. He went beyond this to include the ancestors about whom there was so much vociferous disagreement in the missionary churches when he said (in Wallis, *ibid*:35):

Xa seleligqirha elipheleleyo, aba bantu bakowabo bangasekhoyo baza kumchazela yonke into emalunga nezifo zabantu, kwanamayeza okuzinyanga ezo zifo, nendawo anokufumaneka kuzo; ngoko kule nto yobugqirha kufike kucace kakuhle ukucinga koNtsundu ngabangasekhoyo bakowabo.

(When he/she becomes an accomplished diviner, the living-dead will tell him/her about everything regarding people's ailments, and about potent medicines with which to cure them, and even where they could be found; thus proving that the blacks were mindful of their departed.)

No doubt, that was not the language of the early church leaders as they condemned everything associated with diviners and ancestors.

James Arthur Calata, another famous Anglican stalwart of the early days, also throws his weight behind these reconciliatory efforts. His tackling of some of the most sensitive issues about African culture was remarkable. One of these was circumcision. He (in Wallis *ibid*: 38) decries the fact that the early missionaries regarded this practice as a hindrance to Christianity as it was pagan.

After retracing the source of this custom to the early Jewish customs, Calata (in Wallis, *ibid*: 44ff) discusses the significance of this custom for the amaXhosa at length. Instead of rejecting it as his counterparts were so quick and prone to do, he suggests several ways by which the practice could be modernised and brought in line with Christian imperatives.

One of these would be the abolition of the practice of smearing the newly circumcised men with white clay. In Calata's view, baptism and confirmation are sufficient. Invoking the presence and the protection of the ancestors was not necessary, he argued. Even though Calata stood for the modernisation or overhauling of some of the customs, and the engagement of priests in some of the rituals, he (in Wallis *ibid*: 46) warned:

Kodwa umfundisi makalumke angayidelisi iTyalike ngokuthi ayenze ukuba ithi ngokufuna ukwalamana namasiko abantu ihle kungangatho wobumoya ibe sisicaka senyama, kodwa mayithi ukwalamana kwayo kufane kanye nokukaKristu owehlayo waba ngumntu, wawathobela amasiko alungileyo obuJuda. Kanti noko ujonge kwenye inkalo, kwinkalo yokubatsalela abantu ebuKrestwini kungekhona ebuJudeni.

(But the priest should be careful not to compromise the church so that, in its attempts to relate with the people's customs, its spiritual status is so devalued that it becomes a servant of the flesh; but its relationship should be just like Christ's who humbled himself and took on a human form, and obeyed all good Jewish customs. In doing that he aimed to draw people to Christianity and not to Judaism.)

Calata (in Wallis *ibid*:46) gives an even stronger warning with regard to the practice even inside what could be an African Church:

Xa kuthethwa ngeTyalike kaNtu, kungenjalo yabaNtsundu, kukho abacinga ukuba kuloo Tyalike oobhishopu bayo baya kuvumela onke amasiko abantu abaNtsundu ukuba enziwe, njengokuba nangoku sibona kukho iibhishopu ezikwangamagqirha avumisayo, axhentsa intlombe, zenze zonke iintlobo-ntlobo zezinto, ze ngeCawe zinxibe ii-“cope” nee-“mitre”, zisithi zona zishumayela iTyalike yesizwe. Hayi khona!

Xa kusithiwa isiko lokwaluka malamkelwe ziiTyalike kuthethwa ukuba yonke into elungileyo kulo mayithatyathwe njengesiko elilungileyo, ze liphakanyiselwe kungangatho wokwalamana neTyalike, ayekwe amasiko amenza umntu agxekeke njengomKristu akuwenza.

(When talking about the African Church there are people who think that in that church its bishops will allow all African customs, just as we see today that there are bishops who are also diviners who hold traditional dances for diviners, and then on Sundays they put on their copes and mitres saying that they advocate or preach a church of the nation. Never!

When it is said that the churches must accept the circumcision rite, what is meant is that all the good things in it must be regarded as a good practice and the custom should be upgraded to a level at which it could be harmonized with the church, and all the customs that degrade a person as a Christian should be dropped.)

Given the context in which these comments were made, one cannot but admire them. At least the church had begun to look seriously into its other side. The inhibitions of being a colonised religion are, however clear. The group would not open cultural floodgates which they could not control or monitor properly as time went on.

Their approach was clearly at variance with the early Roman Catholic's approach in Ireland where they 'baptised' most of the pre-Christian Celtic practices and introduced them in the new religion. Christianity itself had to adopt some non-Christian practices to get where it is today.

Mtuze (2003: 3) comments as follows in this regard:

The misguided notion that Christianity is a pure religion which never took anything from receiving cultures across the globe is shown to be a fallacy in that so much of what we consider to be Christian values, rites festivals etc today could be traced back to pre-Christian or pagan sources.

Calata shook the Anglican church when he proposed the establishment of an African Church within the Anglican Church of which he was a Canon for many years. Goedhals (2003:73) explains this move as follows:

In the 1940s, Calata took up the idea within the Anglican Church, and with Hazael Maimane, a priest in the Pretoria diocese, proposed the inauguration of an African branch of the Catholic Church. Their proposal involved the election of African bishops and creation of parallel structures for blacks and whites within each diocese.

Needless to say the church's powers-that-be could not countenance such a development within the Anglican Church. If allowed, the move would amount to a negotiated schism. Some suspected Calata of aspiring to become one of the church's bishops, which Goedhals (2003:75) counters by saying that 'Calata was looking for a definition that embodied South Africa's diversity.'

Goedhals (2003: 73) reports the historic response of the church to this proposal as follows:

The Anglican bishops took the Calata-Maimane proposal seriously, and gave it careful consideration, but ultimately pointed out that there were no legal obstacles to the election of black bishops and that in principle the Anglican church was committed to racial unity and equality. Their statement concluded:

We are penitent for any failure to live up to our principles, but we believe that our principles are right, that the Church of the Province is developing on the right lines in this matter, and that our duty lies not in any change of direction but in further and less hesitating advance.

The stance of the Anglican Church in this regard is quite understandable but what needed to be borne in mind was that an African has his/her own spiritual home, as described by Callaway, (n.d. 111):

As Dr Gutman says “The African has a spiritual home, the only one he has. If it is taken from him he will be homeless. This home is the indigenous bond which unites him to his fellows in kinship, land, occupation and age class. The girders of this spiritual home are holy to him. He impresses its structure upon his descendants so that they may never lose themselves outside its protective domain.”

Seeking to bring the church into African culture, and thus the incarnation of the Gospel in African life, needed a commitment on the part of the mother church to familiarize itself with the vital institutions of the African congregant, and to ‘enter his/her spiritual home’, as Callaway (ibid:111) once said:

We ought to have wandered quietly through this spiritual home, with the reserve that befits a guest and in harmony with the spirit of reverence which pervades it, before continuing our attempts to remake the world of the African and to bring about sublimation.

Janet Hodgson (in Hulley, Kretzschmar and Pato 1996:106) sums up this rigid enforcement of Western spirituality on African churches as follows:

Until quite recently unity in the Anglican Communion was synonymous with liturgical unity, the Book of Common Prayer providing symbolic focus. This was the liturgical baggage which Anglican missionaries brought with them to Africa. In an era which equated Christianity with

Western ideas of progress and civilisation, denigrated indigenous values and culture, and supported the symbiotic association of cross and crown, the first black Anglicans invariably found their new identity as clones of their mentors within the colonial establishment. The colonisation of consciousness was complete.

Among recent attempts to free black Anglican churches from what is perceived to be liturgical ideological captivity, we could count no less a figure than former Archbishop Tutu who, as cited by Hodgson (ibid:109), contends that ‘you had to be as it were circumcised into a Westerner, if you were an African, before God could hear you.’ In spite of his call for what he termed ‘radical spiritual decolonisation’ and his protestations against making blacks ‘pale imitations of others,’ the church corporate has not seen its way to incorporate African cultural expressions in its liturgy.

Hodgson (in Hulley, Kretzschmar and Pato 1996:11) gives a clear indication of Archbishop Tutu’s contribution to this debate stating that he argued strongly that ‘only when African theology is true to itself will it speak relevantly to contemporary Africa, and that this will enrich our common Christian heritage.’ Hodgson (in Hulley, Kretzschmar and Pato (1996:109) gives a full exposition of Archbishop Tutu’s comments in this regard:

The missionaries were bringing the light of the Gospel to the dark continent. These poor native pagans had to be clothed in Western clothes so that they could speak to the white man’s God, the only God, who was obviously unable to recognise them unless they were decently clad. These poor creatures must be made to sing the white man’s hymns hopelessly badly translated, they had to worship in the white man’s unemotional and individualistic way, they had to think and speak to God and all the wonderful Gospel truths in the white man’s well-proven terms.¹¹

Archbishop Ndungane, in his enthronement charge as Bishop of Kuruman in 1991, is reported as follows by Hodgson (in Hulley, Kretzschmar and Pato ibid:110):

Bishop Winston Njongonkulu Ndungane is another Anglican leader who focuses on this theme. In his enthronement charge to his diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman in 1991, he highlighted the fact that the CPISA is a church rooted in Africa, with 80 per cent of its membership having a background of African culture – “a culture that has been sadly neglected in the life of our church ... while we uphold the content of the gospel as

¹¹ Attributed to Tutu’s essay in Fashole-Luke, 1978, pp.365 – 369.

sacrosanct, nevertheless there is a need for an evaluation of the form, the language and the idiom in which it is to be communicated to us, which has largely been influenced by Western European culture.¹²

Consensus will take some time to achieve on matters relating to culture and religion especially because we come from different backgrounds and hold dissonant views regarding the future, hence Kiernan's assertion (in Prozesky 1990: 25) that 'Christians differ in the degree to which they accommodate features of African religion within their total belief structure, ranging from total rejection to selective acceptance of some parts thereof.'

The Church authorities and its theological stalwarts use one trump card to avoid indigenisation – syncretism. This fear of syncretism is selective in a sense because local culture has always been part of church planting. There is ample evidence to prove that; the most significant of which is to be found in Celtic spirituality where large scale 'baptism' of local culture took place.

Cross-cultural pollination took place for centuries between Christian and non-Christian cultures. According to Douglas (1974:330) the pre-Christian Jewish Passover later translated into the Christian Easter. The revered sacrament of the Holy Eucharist has its roots in the non-Christian Paschal feast (Douglas 1974:749) that predated Christianity, crucifixion (Douglas 1974:279) was an age old Jewish method of dealing with criminals by hanging them from a tree, atonement (Douglas *ibid*:108) through Jesus' life and blood has its source in pre-Christian sacrifices that sought to achieve the same results, the bishop's mitre (Douglas 1974:832) of today was an artefact from pre-Christian times engravings and all. Even the altar (Douglas *ibid*:1233), which occupies such a place of respect among the Christians today, has its roots in pagan worship, the same goes for Christmas (Gunstone 1979:23) which had its roots in Hellenistic paganism. Gunstone (1979:24) explains its origins as follows:

¹² Attributed to the Church Times, 27 September 1991.

When the Christian saw his pagan neighbour looking to the shining light of Sol as a symbol of joy, peace, and eternity, he told him that as a Christian he worshipped another and greater sun – the one foretold by the prophet, ‘the sun of righteous ... with healing in his wings’ (Malachi 4:2).

The list is endless. Suffice it to mention a few so-called ‘baptisms’ of the old order from the Celtic experience. According to Sheldrake (1995:9) the pre-Christian Celtic ritual called *caim* came from the practice whereby pagan Celts drew a circle with their index finger of the right hand when faced with danger. It later translated into crossing oneself with the Cross of Jesus when faced with danger. Sheldrake (ibid:10) states that the Celts had a pagan festival called *Samain* which later translated into the Christian All Saints Day. As shown in Cunliffe (1992:23e) the early Roman Catholic Church found it exciting that the pre-Christian Celts believed in afterlife because this made it easier for them to teach the Celts about the Resurrection.

3.6 The blind eye approach to inculturation

The choice of topic is occasioned by the fact that the Anglican Church has, up to now, as a collective, not produced a cut and dried policy on its attitude towards inculturation in general, and specific aspects of Xhosa culture, in particular. What we know is what we perceive the church to be saying and what individuals in the upper echelons of the church seem to be saying.

The blind eye comment is also found to be substantially fair because the church as a collective does not seem to be worried by individual cultural innovations by some of the black clergy in their parishes. Some bless the boys before they go to the initiation school, bless the beast to be offered for traditional rituals, bless the girls when they go into seclusion (*intonjane*) and when they come out of it, to mention but a few.

Once again, Hodgson (1987:36) gives a very positive indication of what happens in this ritual and how it impacted on Princess Emma, chief Sandile's daughter when she went through it and when she was wrenched from this traditional background to receive Western education:

In her early teens Emma attended female puberty rites known as *intonjane*, which were customary with the onset of menstruation. This was the way in which adolescent girls were prepared for womanhood. Old women past child-bearing age instructed them in sexual matters as well as in the role requirements of a newly married wife in the homestead of her parents-in-law. Emma was taught how to dress, where to walk, what to do, and the formalities of respect to seniors and elders. This education was not rewarded with diplomas or certificates but it provided Emma with everything she needed to know in order to take her proper place in Xhosa society.

The expression, turning a blind eye, is not at variance with 'toning down', the term used by Mills (n.d :20) with reference to the waning of the missionary campaign against traditional customs:

One other factor in toning down the missionary campaign against traditional customs was the emergence of religious separatism. It is difficult to quantify how much influence this had, but it could hardly have been a coincidence that the emergence of religious separatism and the waning of the missionary campaign occurred at the same time. However, I do not think it was the major factor. To turn it the other way round religious separatism was not primary (sic) driven by the urge to continue performing traditional customs because most Xhosa Christians had continued to do so anyway. Missionaries had had inflated ideas about what conversion could mean in terms of cultural and social adaptation. What they had been forced to recognize was that in conversion there were limits on how much could be dictated in adaptation to Christianity.

Perhaps the greatest toning down was when some of the clergy, accompanied by some white colleagues, were involved in a ritual at the Bashee River to appease the living-dead after a series of calamities in that part of the country. There was an outcry from some Anglican quarters but the church did not come out openly to approve or to disapprove the rituals, and neither did it condemn them.

Those clergy who have expressed themselves on inculturation have been unequivocal on the topic. The first of these was none other than the eminent former Archbishop and Metropolitan, Bishop Bill Burnett (1997:130) who once said:

I suggested that it should be possible for the Anglican Church in South Africa to become an indigenous South African church so that all South Africans, whether they be English speaking or Afrikaans speaking or whether they use **one** of the African languages would feel easily at home. I pointed out to the danger of trying to preserve the English tradition and warned –
“We cannot set ourselves that task as a Church without grave danger of being false to our Lord. The church cannot be untouched by cultural and national traditions but it is her task to cleanse and **fructify all culture.**”

The second theologian to address this matter is Canon Suggit (1999: 30) who, with his characteristic wisdom, stresses that Africanization does not presuppose a number of African priests. To him ‘the church should express Africanization in its worship, faith and life, and in some of the insights and traditional customs of Africans.’ To show his commitment to Africanization, Suggit (1999:30) boldly states that ‘the importance of the ancestors may not be disregarded, and perhaps the creeds may need to be re-formulated to give more meaning to African ideas about God.’

When, in 2003, the Anglican Church in the Grahamstown Diocese was celebrating its 150th anniversary, Bishop David Russell (in Mtuze 2003: vii) who was the Diocesan Bishop then, made several crucial observations about the Anglican Church and culture. He welcomed the book, *The Essence of Xhosa spirituality and the Nuisance of Cultural Imperialism* that was designed to coincide with the Diocesan celebrations. One of the striking comments he made in the preface to the book was that “one of the greatest errors of the past 150 years of missionary encounter with black cultures and nations was the refusal to listen “to the other side”, and the failure to appreciate the depths of people’s religious experience and heritage.” He strongly encouraged “the true enculturation of the Christian Faith in ways

which affirm people's roots, and which deepen people, in their rich diversity, in the life of the Gospel.”

The first paragraph of the Statement of Repentance and Affirmation referred to by Bishop Russell (in Mtuze *ibid*: vii), reads:

We give thanks to God for the innumerable blessings poured out upon us as a Diocese over this last century and a half. We celebrate and rejoice in God's many gifts. We give great thanks for the fruits of our ministry, enabled in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life. As we look back and reflect, we are also keenly aware that many of our forebears who “brought the faith”, being people of their time, all too frequently confused the prevailing colonial culture and mind-set with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All too often, in their ignorance and arrogance, the culture, and religious depths of the indigenous people were rejected, despised and trampled upon.

While the church corporate has not expressed itself too vociferously on these matters, it is encouraging to note that its members (dioceses and individuals) encourage a more multiracial and multicultural approach to its mission. Of course to vast numbers of its membership the voice of the church has still not been heard because, until its stand is encapsulated in the laws of the church, the Canons, the Acts and Synod, the church's voice will always be regarded as ambivalent.

All of the church members cannot easily access academic and research papers on the church's policy. We learnt, by bitter experience, during the apartheid era that the most hurtful aspects of apartheid, like saying ‘Baas’ to white men, were those that were unwritten and were merely attitudinal. They left you dangling in the air, not knowing what is right and what is wrong, unless of course, if like Dwane, you establish your own domain and do what you like.

In all fairness to the Church of the Province of Southern African (or better known these days as the Anglican Church in Southern Africa), it has been in the forefront of the fight against racism and oppression, but its stand still

needs to be spelt out as far as inculturation is concerned. This matter has now become imperative in view of the gradually diminishing numbers of white members of the church, and the growing numbers of black congregants and clergy in the ranks of the church.

It is encouraging to the vast number of black Anglicans to hear the voices of some of our church leaders and those of leading academics in theology on some of these issues, not that the black people need any justification for holding onto these practices, but because we need to reach some common understanding within the church body on these matters.

Janet Trisk (Dispatch 2004: 6), then lecturing at The College of Transfiguration, an Anglican theological college in Grahamstown, had this to say about *The Saints and ancestors*:

In the Christian calendar, 1 November is commemorated as the Feast of All Saints. It is the day when those Christians, now dead, who have lived well are commemorated. However, the feast day goes beyond simply commemorating good lives. For the saints are seen as those who surrounded the living in a great cloud (as the letter to the Hebrews puts it), encouraging the living also to live Christ-like lives. (As most of us have experienced, the temptations to live un-Christ-like lives are manifold, and we need all the encouragement we can get!)

In many African traditions, the ancestors play a similar (though quite distinct) role. The ancestors remind us to live according to the traditions of our forebears, to keep strong the bonds of clan and family, to respect the elders and so on. Unlike the saints of Christian understanding, the ancestors also communicate their wishes to the living (either directly or through sangomas).

Trisk's (Dispatch 2004:6) interesting article ends with a call to continue the conversation between Christianity and African culture. She points out that "an understanding of ancestors might help Christians re-evaluate tenets of the Christian faith." It also resonates with the Christian belief that there is life after death. The immediate implication of this belief is that we have to make sure that we keep our relations with others sound and beyond reproach.

Trisk's emphasis on learning from one another's cultures is remarkable as we have seen from the philosophy of *ubuntu* which has spread like wild fire over the country in the past few years and which the church has also been able to appropriate because it resonates with the Christian love (*agape*). *Ubuntu* is based on sharing our fortunes and our misfortunes. Our humanity is not in isolation from other people's humanity. We are what we are, because the other people are what they are. We cannot fold our arms and close our eyes to the other people's plight.

Some people mistakenly think that this philosophy encourages dependence. To the contrary, it encourages independence because the one who is helped in this way today is expected and empowered to do the same to another person tomorrow. *Ubuntu* is not only about receiving. It is also about giving. It is not about material gain but it is about sharing one's life and self with the others so as to empower them to enjoy life.

Greeting and enquiring after the other person's health is as equally *ubuntu* as is giving the person a cow to milk for their children. *Ubuntu* is about relationship, not just about enrichment, as some people think.

Inculturation runs through the whole spectrum of Christianity, from its foundations to the present day. Schineller (1990:9) sketches the inculturation process through three distinct phases, viz. the purely Jewish Christianity, the Pauline gentile Christianity, and the Vatican II church times. This is indicative of the fact that Christianity was never a static monolithic form of religion.

Schineller (1990:11) blames the blurring of lines between Christianity and colonization for the imperialism that ended up taking centre stage:

[When] Christianity went from Europe to the Americas and to Africa, it often traveled with the colonizers. Armed with the myth of the superiority of Western European culture, they simply transplanted Western Christianity to American and African soil, showing little respect, and often disdain, for traditional local cultures.

Schineller (1990:123) sums up inculturation very succinctly when he says that ‘what inculturation means, in a word, is being fully and truly Christian in a particular cultural context or situation.’ That was precisely what Dwane wanted to achieve by the innovations he brought into his church. He wanted to establish what Schineller (1990:123) regards as a truly catholic church:

In this vision of the church, a church from below, a church truly inculturated into the multiform cultures around the world, we have the basis for a truly catholic church. While retaining ties with the larger church, and for Catholics this means the Roman Church, the local churches will show forth to the larger church their particular way of living and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Specific gifts and talents, specific insights into scripture, will not be stifled or submerged, but rather allowed to flourish and grow; they will be available to the larger church for its edification.

This outlook on the church’s collective mind is both plausible and achievable but it calls for a radical change of mindset, as pointed out by Newbigin (1991:155) who emphasizes that we cannot plead ignorance when it comes to denigrating other cultures. We live in a religiously plural world and therefore we have to respect other cultures and accept that they too have much spiritual vitality. Newbigin (1991:186) states that we should be cautious when making judgements about other cultures, even when we make these judgements and presuppositions from the gospel itself, because “there is no such thing as a gospel which is not culturally shaped.”

Fahy (1988:25) comments as follows about ‘Crossing Racial and Cultural Barriers’:

Another implication of the sacramental notion of the Church for the promotion of a racially integrated Catholic community arises in relation to the question of indigenization. As the prolongation of the Incarnation the Church makes Christ present in and through human history. As head of all humanity, Christ wills to become accessible to every race and class of people throughout time and space. While giving to the church a fixed visible constitution, He willed that His church should clothe herself in a particular human culture. In following the example of St Paul who became “a Jew to the Jews and a Greek to the Greeks” we see the need of the Church to root itself in the culture of the people.

Engagement with local culture as an essential imperative of cross-cultural theologization is also emphasised by Forster (2001: 100):

Building on the example of Fr Bede’s inculturated spirituality is another vital ‘further step’. This is particularly valuable in areas where faith has tended to run alongside, or in opposition to, indigenous culture (such as Christianity in Africa and South America). If the Gospel is truly to have global significance there is an urgency for its proponents to engage honestly with the culture into which it is entering.

3.7 Summary

The chapter dealt with critical issues regarding the church and culture, especially focusing on how the Anglican church viewed African culture and indigenization. Like all Western-oriented missionaries, the Anglicans were very sceptical of African culture, largely because of their fear of syncretism. For that reason they were equally averse to some of the customs and rituals, e.g. circumcision (*ulwaluko*), girls’ puberty rites (*intonjane*), polygamy (*isithembu*), and *ukuthwala* customs, to mention but a few. The interaction between the churches was divided into three eras for convenience – the era of complete rejection of African customs, the era of accommodation, and the era when the church turned a blind eye to these practices without spelling out its stand. This attitude made it difficult to know exactly what the church leaders wanted and how they would react to indigenization. The chapter amply sketched the background against which Bishop Dwane’s efforts in the next chapter should be seen. While firmly anchored in Anglicanism, he strongly reached out to his roots and propagated a re-evaluation of the church’s attitude to African culture. At the same time, he firmly challenged everything that he considered oppressive to humanity.

CHAPTER FOUR:

ANALYSIS OF BISHOP DWANE'S CONTRIBUTION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will be devoted to speeches and addresses made and delivered by Bishop Dwane at different times and places. The idea behind presenting them here is to try and establish his views, convictions and spirituality on a number of diverse issues. These statements and writings will be theologically analysed and critiqued in terms of the precepts of African theology, Black theology and liberation theology, jointly or severally.

4.2 Christianity and culture¹³

That Christianity is culture-based and strongly coloured by its Jewish and Greek traditional origins cannot be doubted, as pointed out by Beckwith (in Jones, Wainright, Yarnold and Bradshaw, 1992: 68):

At its origins, Christianity was a Jewish religion. Jesus Christ was a Jew and his followers were Jews. The Judaism of the first century especially in the dispersion but also in Palastine, had been considerably influenced by Greek thought, culture, and language, but its roots were still in the OT, and its basic languages were still Hebrew and Aramaic. The teaching of Jesus had, of course, great originality, but whatever in it was traditional it owed to Judaism rather than to any other source. Moreover, in their practice, Jesus and his followers conformed to a large extent to Jewish customs.

In his address, Christianity and culture, one of Dwane's favourite topics, he argues very lucidly for the retention of all good customs. He emphasises that the customs were designed to regulate society. In both the African and the Israelite societies, the customs represented the law. In both societies, the law

¹³ Unpublished Dwane collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, no date.

was then fulfilled in Christ, therefore all customs should be seen in light of Christ. We should, therefore, no longer be governed by the law but by Christ himself. This is how Dwane (p.2) comments on this matter:

Ukuba ke ngoko isiko lesiNtu lisesikhundleni somthetho, nalo limelwe ukuba lisondezwe kuKristu ukuze lizuze ukuhlaziywa nguye. Nje ngomthetho isiko liyakumkhonkxa umntu ade azuze inkululeko efezekileyo yabantwana bakaThixo kuKristu.

(If therefore traditional custom is in the place of the law, it should also be brought to Christ to receive renewal. Like the law, custom enshackles one until one receives the perfect freedom of God's children in Christ.)

Dwane divides customs into two main categories. There are good customs and there are bad customs, as could be seen in Dwane (pp.2-3):

(a)Kukho amasiko adyobheke kwaphela kukungcola kwehlabathi kangangokuba ukungena kuwo kukuzenza inqambi. Izifungo zobhaptizo ezimayela nokulahla uMtyholi, ihlabathi, nenyama zibhekisa nqo kula masiko. Yonke into enokubunqambi nebonakalisa imisebenzi namagunya obumnyama, ayifanelwe kungenwa ngamaKristu, koko imelwe ukulahlwa ichaswe nje ngomchasi-Kristu.

(There are customs that have been adversely affected by the profanity of this world, so much so that getting into them would be rendering oneself profane. The baptismal vows regarding the renouncing of the devil, the world, and the flesh refer to those customs. Everything that is profane and that reflects the work and the authority of darkness should not be done by Christians, but should be discarded as being anti-Christ.)

(b)Kukho amasiko amahle athi wona abe ngumthetho wokwakiwa kobuzalwane, nokulondolozwa koluntu. Xa la masiko athe achatshazelwa ligazi leMvana uKristu, enziwa abe kumila kumbi. Singawashwankathela iinjongo zawo ngemithetho emibini yothando kuThixo kuqala, nakubamelwane okwesibini.

(There are good customs that are designed to be precepts for building up good relations and the preservation of humankind. Touched by the blood of Christ, these customs get transformed. We could summarise them into two laws – loving God, first and our neighbours, in the second place.)

Dwane compares good customs with new wine bottles as they contain new life in Christ. Christians should therefore not rely on customs. They should rely on Christ. The customs, according to Dwane, should only be seen as a sacrament of how God works in Christ our High Priest, and a reconciliatory

sacrifice. He (Dwane: *ibid*) continues and touches on something that baffles most non-Xhosa Christians – the role of ancestors in African Christianity:

Ukucamagusha kumanyange lizibuko lokufikisa umntu kwicamagu laseKalvari, intsuba yokukhongozela iwayini yomnqophiso omtsha. Amasiko amahle ukuze abe nokuthabatha indawo efanelekileyo kwintlalo yobuKristu amelwe kukuxelisa uYohane umBhaptizi; amelwe kukuba anciphe ukuze uKrestu ande.

(Propitiating the ancestors is a bridge that leads one to the Greatest Sacrifice, Christ, the wine bottle to collect the wine of the new covenant. Good customs, if they are to take a place of pride in Christian life, should be like John the Baptist; they should diminish as Christ grows.)

Dwane then criticises customs that bedevil good relations among the people. The first of these is inequality between man and woman. He stresses that we are no longer of the flesh, we are of the spirit and therefore ‘we should not resemble those of this world’ (Rom 12:2). All our customs should encourage equality and being co-heirs of the kingdom of God. Vide Dwane (n.d.:4):

AmaKristu ngesizathu sokuba ezindlalifa kunye kuKristu, angabalingane kuba yonke imiqobo eyahlula umntu nomntu ishenxisiwe kuKristu (Gal. 3:38).

(Christians, by virtue of the fact that they are co-heirs in Christ, are equal because all barriers have been removed in Christ (Gal. 3:38).

Dwane’s quest for the retention of all good customs and the dropping of all bad ones feeds into the idea of having continuity between the old and the new practices. Some of the traditions would need to be Christianized by bringing them in line with the Christian gospel instead of rejecting them. Baptising some of the customs and traditions was an old strategy of the Christian church in the Graeco-Roman, Celtic, Germanic cultures, as attested by Wessels (1994:160):

[The] names of the days of the week still recall the old gods. Many Christian festivals go back to pre-Christian feasts: Christmas replaced the Yule Feast, the solstice festival; Easter replaced the feast of the spring goddess Ostara; the summer solstice became Christian saints; Wodan became St Martin (of Tours); Freyr - St Leonard; Balder - St George and Freyja - the Blessed Virgin. But in all these cases they were given a Christian interpretation and raised to a higher level.

After fruitless efforts to uproot Celtic culture, Irish monasticism saw the light and decided to assimilate it as explained by Wessels (1991:94):

The early Christian leaders were prepared to incorporate elements of old paganism into their religious practice and assimilate them, rather than giving rise to a conflict of loyalties among the new converts. The veneration of Celtic holy places, springs and stones was not so much abolished by making them Christian places, springs and stones. The places were associated with Christian saints instead of Celtic gods.

Dwane's position as far as indigenization is concerned resonates with Oduyoye's (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres, 1979:110) comments:

Modernization has had a disruptive and weakening effect on African life and thus African religion. At the same time it is evident that the missionary religions together with modern technology have proved inadequate to our needs. Since the old appears unable to stand on its own and the new by itself is proving inadequate, we should expect some creative syncretism to develop in Africa.

A living Christian faith cannot but interact with African culture. In fact there is being developed an interpretation of Christianity and specifically of Christian theology that one may describe as African.

The word 'syncretism' is enough to repel most purists and fundamentalists. On the contrary, it has been proven that there is no such thing as pure Christianity, as pointed out by Schreier (1997:71):

[The] Gospel never comes to a culture in pure form; it is already embedded in the-less-than-pure culture of the speaker, the treasure carried in vessels of clay. Invocations of pure culture or even pure Gospel are not apposite, since here on earth at least, they do not exist. Introducing such ideas of purity into the syncretism discussion, then, does not really lead to the fidelity to the Gospel which we seek.

In his very illuminating discussion of Christianity and culture Florovsky (1974: 30) makes very valid comments:

Christians are not committed to the denial of culture as such. But they are to be critical of any existing cultural situation and measure it by the measure of Christ. For Christians are also the Sons of Eternity, i.e. prospective citizens of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Yet problems and needs of "this age" in no case and in no sense can be dismissed or disregarded, since Christians are called to work and serve precisely "in this world" and "in this age." And all these needs and problems and aims must be viewed in that new and wider perspective which is disclosed by the Christian Revelation and illumined by its light.

These observations by Florovsky refer to all cultures. All cultures should be mediated through this strainer. No one could deny the need for culture but culture, in the Christian context, must be informed by the Christian Revelation, divested of its cultural baggage. The latter action would ensure that the voice we hear from Scripture is the Word of God and not the voice of European or Western culture, so that we can also respond with our voices as humans in a particular religious context, as pointed out by Ariarajah (1995: ix):

At the heart of the Christian faith lies the affirmation that “the Word became flesh.” This fundamental confession implies that the universal love of God, revealed in Jesus Christ through the power of the Spirit, manifests itself in a particular context and through particular cultures. As the conference on world mission and evangelism in Bangkok (1973) put it, “culture shapes the human voice that answers the voice of Christ.”

One can see from the above that the universal dimension of one’s existence, e.g. religion in general or Christianity in particular, does not negate the particularity, e.g. one’s culture because, as pointed out by the WCC’s Geneva Report (1976) (in Ariarajah 1995:29), “the universality of the Christian faith does not contradict its particularity. Christ has to be responded to in a particular context.”

Ariarajah (1995:32) continues to make a bold and unflinching statement in this regard that “no culture is closer to Jesus Christ than any other.”

African Indigenous Church leaders accuse missionaries of putting masks over the face of their hypocritical black congregants who are Christians by day and practitioners of African customs and rituals by night. Ngada and Mofokeng (2001:1) strongly contend that:

Christian missionaries compassed sea and land to make proselytes or converts amongst the indigenous black people of South Africa. Like the scribes and Pharisees of old, the efforts of the Christian missionaries were hypocritical and the only result was that they produced hypocritical black converts, that is to say black people who wear a convenient mask to look like good Western Christians ...

What these missionaries brought was hardly the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was Western culture, Western "civilization", Western customs, and dress, and Western values. They themselves often said they had come to "civilize" the "uncivilized" pagans of Africa. What this meant in practice was that they taught blacks to think and act and speak and dress like whites. It was a case of black people wearing white masks.

Another black theologian, Makhubu (1988:33) continues this discussion by highlighting the negative impact Westernisation has had on African culture:

The influence western culture has had on African life is devastating. Western culture has always condemned and destroyed other cultures whenever it was introduced. The introducers claimed its superiority and perfection, and associated it with Christianity as the only correct way acceptable to God.

The discussion on culture and the role of the church in bringing about equality and solidarity among the people, cannot be complete without reference to Steve Biko's views. Biko and Dwane belonged to the same kind of fold because Dwane had intimate contact and knowledge of the work of Steve Biko and some of his close confidantes such as Malusi Mpumlwana. Biko's influence on Dwane's writing and outlook can, therefore, not be underestimated. It is strongly contended in this study that Dwane was undoubtedly influenced by Black Consciousness and Ethiopianism.

Biko (2006:51) decries the inroads and the negative impact Westernism has had on African culture, and ascribes the lack of self-awareness among the blacks to this proselytisation:

The advent of the Western Culture has changed our outlook almost dramatically. No more could we run our own affairs. We were required to fit in as people tolerated with great restraint in a western type of society. We were tolerated simply because our cheap labour is needed. Hence we are judged in terms of standards we are not responsible for. Whenever colonization sets in with its dominant culture it devours the native culture and leaves behind a bastardized culture that only thrive at the rate and pace allowed by the dominant culture. It is called a sub-culture purely because the African people in the urban complexes are mimicking the white man rather unashamedly.

Biko (2006:59) strongly opposes the imposition of one culture on other people:

In most cases religion is intricately intertwined with the rest of cultural traits of society. In a sense, this makes the religion part and parcel of the behavioural pattern of that society and makes the people bound by the limits of that religion through a strong identification with it. Where people are subjected to a religion that is removed from their cultural make-up, then elements of disgruntlement begin to be noted and sometimes open defiance is soon displayed.

One could go on *ad infinitum* drawing on the collective wisdom of scholars who have made a thorough study of inculturation. All of them agree at least on one point that, as confirmed by Shorter (1994:28) “individuals must be evangelized within their cultures and not be treated as having no culture at all, which means they become victims of aggression by an alien culture.”

It is obvious from this chapter that Bishop Dwane did not advocate mass incorporation of all African customs into Christianity. He was fully aware that some would be problematic and would have to be avoided. By the same token, he was opposed to mass rejection of African customs.

Dwane was also totally against manipulating certain customs to serve personal agendas, likes and dislikes, e.g. invoking culture for not wanting to allow women full participation in church administration and sacraments. Besides these, he insisted on equality and loyalty to God’s calling to serve others prayerfully and that also applied to priests’ own families who sometimes get neglected in the hurly-burly of serving others.

4.3 Poverty alleviation – the Grahamstown Initiative (1988)¹⁴

Bishop Dwane was very concerned about the plight of his people in the impoverished communities of Grahamstown where large numbers of them lived in abject poverty. What made their plight even more pathetic was that

¹⁴ Unpublished Dwane collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, no date.

across the road, the famous city of Grahamstown was going on as if nothing had happened. To address these imbalances, the Grahamstown Community Association was established, according to Dwane (p.1).

Dwane (p.2) stresses the importance of having the black and the white compatriots see the same reality so that they could talk the same language and find joint solutions to the problems facing the city as a whole. Alienation seemed to be the greatest dividing factor in Grahamstown. Each of these cultural groups was doing its own thing unconcerned about what the other was doing. Poverty in the townships was vying with affluence in the city, creating an awful reality of 'a house divided against itself because Grahamstown was a city with two faces which are totally strangers to each other,' according to Dwane (p.2).

Dwane (p.3) argues that 'the issue of land division and wealth distribution will have to be addressed. Secondly the power relations will have to be looked into as everything revolves around power':

Whatever we try to do therefore is going to be hampered by the fact that we are part of a strange South African phenomenon. For example, there is the assumption that the existence of black people can be wished away, and when that fails, then perhaps they can just be treated as sons who are not legitimate in themselves, but are legitimised by the status conferred upon them by the dominants.

He points to several instances where service provision in the city was inequitable with most of the services provided for the city part of the town, and very little, if any, going to the township. He warns against the 'divide and rule' policy of the former apartheid state which gave Coloureds and Indians crumb-like favours and used them against other black communities. He (p.5) insists that 'black solidarity is required in the new South Africa'.

It is evident from this address that Dwane had the interest of the underdog at heart. He (p.6) championed the cause of the underprivileged, ending with the following prophetic comment:

The cause of Grahamstown residents is very close to my heart. I live here, and I shall continue to live here until I retire or die, which ever comes first. I hope I shall live long enough to see the radical transformation of this city, and that I shall look back to this event with much thanksgiving.

Dwane's stand in this regard is *in tandem* with other African theologians such as Maimela (1987). The debate about whether there is a distinction between gospel and politics has been waged relentlessly over the years. Theologians such as Maimela strongly challenge the view that the church should not involve itself in political matters. In fact Maimela feels that it is the gospel's imperative to fight racial domination. He (Maimela 1987: unpaginated preface) says in this regard:

Over against this misuse of the gospel Black theology of liberation arose to challenge the Church and all Christians by affirming Black humanity and dignity, by calling for the transformation of society so that justice and freedom could at last become the common property of all South Africans. In so doing, Black theology turned the gospel into the instrument of liberation, when Black Christians appealed to the gospel ethos to resist the extreme demands of racial domination and bondage.

For a long time people such as Dwane were criticized for dragging politics into religion or religion into politics. Dwane's venturing into the townships and his calls to the authorities to alleviate the disparities between township and town, ruffled the feathers of many locals, some of them being members of the Christian churches. Be that as it may, this stand has the support of fellow theologians such as Maimela (1987: 1) who says unequivocally "whether we admit it or not, political exercise involves the people of God and it must of necessity have theological dimensions." He (ibid:2) continues to assert that politics and theology cannot be separated:

The cash-value of this claim is that the problems of politics and theology are not as separable as is often assumed. If they were, it would mean that humans who are God's creatures somehow belong to the powers that be, that is, they are at the mercy of political authorities who can do what they please with them without fear of rebuke from God through his/her prophets (ministers). It would mean that as Creator, God is totally indifferent to what happens to and among humans and how they treat and relate to one another.

This resistance to inequity and the undermining of the black people's dignity forms the basis of Black theology as could be seen in the following comments by Motlhabi (1987:111) about Black Consciousness;

Black Consciousness was seen by its proponents as some form of reawakening – a renaissance. It was a reawakening of Black people in South Africa to their value as human beings and their dignity as God's children and creatures.

As someone who was strongly influenced by Black Consciousness, Dwane could not but act in consonance with the views expressed by Motlhabi (1987:112) about Black Consciousness which he terms as “the working philosophy of both SASO and BPC”:

SASO defined Black Consciousness as an attitude of mind - a way of life. In addition to being enabled to re-evaluate his human worth, the Black person had, through the inspiration of Black Consciousness, to reject all value systems that sought to make him a foreigner in his own land. He was to build his own value system, himself as self-defined and not as defined by others.

Dwane's fight for the alleviation of the plight of the impoverished residents of the Grahamstown townships was motivated by his quest for equality. He could not countenance living comfortably in his house when so many people were suffering around him. The Grahamstown black communities live in abject poverty because of a serious lack of job opportunities in the town. There are no industries or other big employers in the area. The efforts of the few shops and institutions in the town to give employment to Blacks are a drop in the ocean.

Black consciousness as can be seen in the following comments by 1990 (1979:151) sought to instill some sense of self-worth in people's minds:

Black South Africans did not have to be told by outsiders that their own rights and dignity had been crushed by racism, nor that their culture was thought to be second-class to that of whites. But they had to be made more aware of what their identity meant, and of their potential for changing the situation in which they lived. Black consciousness aimed at doing precisely this.

The impact of the Black Consciousness Movement was felt far and wide, as 1990 (1979:152) correctly points out that “the churches, especially those associated with the SACC, could not avoid being affected by this black renaissance. Eventually even the DRC, and especially its black “daughter” churches, did not escape its impact.”

An inherent element of this theologizing was, according to 1990 (1979:153), that “a third reason for the church involvement in Black Consciousness was the existence of Black Theology, which gained considerable prominence through the University Christian Movement (UCM) in the late sixties.”

Steve Biko (2006: 52) defines Black Consciousness in an inclusive manner but with clear indications as to who falls within and outside its broad parameters:

We have in our policy manifesto defined blacks as those who are by law or tradition politically, economically and socially discriminated against as a group in the South African society and identifying themselves as a unit in the struggle towards the realization of their aspirations. This definition illustrates to us a number of things:

1. Being black is not a matter of pigmentation – being black is a reflection of a mental attitude.
2. Merely by describing yourself as black you have started on a road towards emancipation, you have committed yourself to fight against all forces that seek to use your blackness as a stamp that marks you as a subversive being.

Transformation lay at the bottom of the philosophy of Black Consciousness as clearly manifested in the following statement by Biko (2006:53):

The interrelationship between the consciousness of the self and the emancipatory programme is of paramount importance. Blacks no longer seek to reform the system because so doing implies acceptance of the major points around which the system revolves.

Blacks are out to completely transform the system and to make of it what they wish. Such a major undertaking can only be realized in an atmosphere where people are convinced of the truth inherent in their stand. Liberation therefore, is of paramount importance in the concept of Black Consciousness, for we cannot be conscious of ourselves and yet remain in bondage. We want to attain the envisioned self which is a free self.

4.4 The ordination of women to the priesthood (1992)¹⁵

The ordination of women was one of Dwane's main areas of interest and the one single issue that soured his relations with some of his conservative detractors. They used the ordination of women to sow strife and division within the church. The matter was aggravated by opportunistic accusations that Mrs Dwane was behind the whole exercise. Of course her views on gender equality were no secret, but the issue itself was not of her making, it was on the agenda of all churches in the country and the world.

The cause of women continues to engage the minds of male and female theologians throughout the continent. It was not something typical of Dwane's spirituality, nor did it originate from Mrs Dwane's influence. Mbuy-Beya (in Africa Faith & Justice Network 1996: 175) articulates the same sentiments as follows:

The position of women in African societies is not a pretty picture. The Circle of African Theologians has already condemned the deplorable situation of women. The group has been working tirelessly so that each woman and each man might be recognized as a child of God, sharing equally in human dignity. Women do not lead this fight alone; more and more men are supporting them. Moreover, what these women are fighting for is not uniformity between themselves and men; rather, they want to be fully women in society as well as in the Church.

In his address Bishop Dwane (p.1) begins his talk by referring to 'some of the arguments put forward by those who are opposed to the ordination of

¹⁵ Unpublished Dwane collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, no date.

women'. Their main arguments come out very clearly in the following discussion.

Regarding his opponents' appeal to Scripture in their stand against women ordination, Dwane (p.1) points out that 'it is argued that since Scripture contains God's revelation in which males are assigned the role of leadership, therefore the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopate would be a movement against revelation.'

His (p.1) response to this is that 'revelation is not a fixed deposit of truths in the Bible or doctrine, but it is the personal encounter between the living God and human beings.'

He (p.1) strongly maintains that 'God's revelation did not cease when Scripture was written, but through the work of the Holy Spirit the mystery of the incarnate Christ continues to unfold, and the relationship with the Father wrought by his work is forever deepening.'

The process of revelation enabled the early Christians to face emerging issues as they encountered them after the establishment of the early church. Dwane (p.1) points out how the early Christians had to deal with such issues as slavery and 'Gentile participation in the apostolic ministry which the church has had to face.'

In facing up to modern challenges, Bishop Dwane (p.1) correctly points out that 'the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopate is the challenge which the mystery of the incarnate Christ continues to unfold.'

On the question of the relationship between Scripture and revelation, Dwane (p.1) argues that 'Scripture is the church's witness to God's revelation,' and

‘scripture points to the present Christ in whom the incarnate life and work continues through the work and ministry of the other Paraclete.’

About the need to listen to the prompting of the Holy Spirit to discern what Scripture is saying to us in the present, Dwane (p. 2) states categorically:

As human circumstances change, so the inner meaning of the particular historical event of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus gradually unfolds, calling the church to new ways of responding to God’s vocation in its present historical circumstances.

Without going into the details of Dwane’s theology on this matter, it is useful to mention some of his (Dwane, pp.4 – 5) views on what he refers to as the ‘New Humanity in Risen Christ’. According to him ‘as a result of the death, resurrection, and the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit, all barriers have come down and we cannot legitimately pull them up again.’ It is clear that Dwane sees the New Humanity in the Risen Christ as transcending race, class and gender. Dwane sees the calling to the priesthood as something above such petty differences as gender, race and class.

Dwane’s appeal to the Holy Spirit in response to those who hide behind Scripture for not wanting to allow women full participation in the church, is in line with Mofokeng’s view in this regard. According to Mofokeng (in Prozesky 1990:45), theologizing about women can only be done through the intervention of the Holy Spirit as guide and revelation:

For those who would fear contemporary textual domination of the biblical text and would want to protect it, I would say that we should emphasise the dynamic character and nature of the Spirit of God in the community of faith. God’s spirit cannot be held hostage or prisoner in the practice or life of the contemporary community just as this spirit could not be imprisoned in the biblical communities.

Dwane’s (1989b: 9) stand on this matter is attested by his comment about the equality of men and women:

[Man] and woman are co-creators with God. Therefore we cannot attain the full liberty of God's children until we recognize that man and woman are equal and complementary. The struggle for women's rights is as important as the struggle for liberation from oppression. As members of God's family we are an extension of God himself.

Ackermann (in de Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio 1994: 198) correctly points out that "centuries of male scholarship, which has quite naturally seen the world through men's eyes and experiences, cannot be accepted unquestioningly as normative for women."

Ackermann is conscious of the discrimination experienced by women in male dominated churches and she calls for "new models of the church that will acknowledge differences and remain inclusive and sensitive to patterns of injustice and discrimination." (*Vide*Ackermann in de Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio 1994:204):

Those conscientised women who have stayed active members of the institutionalized church experience alienation or dissonance in a number of ways when denied participation at every level. Unfortunately, the church all too often merely reflects the patriarchal societal structures and customs within which it functions. Hierarchies of power, a separation of the laity from the clergy, and preaching and teaching based on men's experience and insights of the world, all give rise to a male clericalism which makes it difficult for the church to live out its prophetic calling. Feminist theology suggests that new models for church and ministry are required which, while acknowledging differences, are inclusive and sensitive to patterns of injustice and discrimination.

Ackermann (in de Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio 1994: 208) appeals to female activism and self-liberation if women want to throw the yoke off their shoulders:

Faith and feminism, theology and spirituality, theory and praxis, all come together when aware and committed women become involved in the work of justice and healing. We can choose to claim our power and our capacity to effect good in our society by being willing to risk tension, paradox, uncertainty and even ridicule. To choose to live relationally is to choose to undo evil. As feminist theologians, this is our passion.

Any attempt to deprive women of full and equal participation in the church and all its structures will be met with justifiable resistance from those who believe in equality both inside and outside the church. Not even a

compromise as proposed below by Nasimiyu-Wasike (in Mugambi and Magesa 1990:68) could be tolerated:

Finally, the Church must give women roles in decision-making bodies. Clericalism and patriarchy have denied the Church its full actualization and exercise of ability and responsibility. Since only the ordained men have power to make decisions, the rest of the Church members have remained passive followers. The Church governance and the priesthood could be separated so that one does not have to be a priest in order to participate in the governance of the Church. In this way all women and men of ability will be full members in decision-making bodies like diocesan commissions, chancery offices, parish board, Episcopal conferences consultants and sacred congregations.

The proposition falls short of including women in clerical positions. As Dwane has indicated, nothing should preclude women from pastoral and clerical responsibilities in the church. Any deviation from that principle would seriously compromise their right to equality and their dignity as full members of the body of Christ.

Nasimiyu-Wasike (in Mugambi and Magesa 1990:61) explains the role of women in African religion in the rest of Africa as follows:

There were and still are women priests in African religious tradition. The priestly ministry in this religion is that of a charismatic nature, where persons, women and men, are called and endowed by the divine to carry out the specific duty incumbent on them in promoting the spiritual advancement of their community. Although in most cases divinity was perceived to be masculine, God's manifestations of knowledge, prophecy, gift of healing, working of miracles and discerning of spirits can be revealed to the community through a woman or a man. It is an acknowledged reality that both women and men are 'worthy instruments through whom the divine communicates with humanity and people communicate with the divine'.

To end this discussion by bringing the discourse home to our own traditional turf, it should be pointed out that many males resort to abusing culture in order to gain self-interest. They refuse to allow women full participation because of their personal prejudices even where culture is mutable. Women have been actively involved with major activities in amaXhosa society, e.g. their role as diviners enables them to act as family priests and counselors who

even enter sacred places such as cattle kraals if needs be. They act with full powers as regents during the youth of their male offspring, and are given full respect by all concerned.

It is true, and no one can deny it, that there were practices in African society that were, especially in later years when the context and the rationale for such behaviour changed, perceived as discriminatory. No society is perfect, but to label the whole society as being discriminatory and oppressive to its women, without looking into the contemporary underlying rationale for some of the actions would be folly.

Africa must look into the position and the role of women in the church as pointed out by the Roman Catholic Inter-regional Meeting of the Bishops of South Africa (IMBISA) (in Africa Faith & Justice Network 1996: 48):

Women are the backbone of the church in Africa. Women recognize that Christ in his Church, symbolized by Mary his mother, gives them their full human dignity and they accept this good news with joy, precisely because society at large in many ways fails to accord them proper respect. As a result, the Church must promote the full human dignity of women. As co-workers of Christ and essential agents of evangelization, they seek their proper place in the ministry and leadership of the church. Like the laity as a whole, women need to be given better formation and be offered greater responsibility within the Christian community.

Perhaps the best way out of any difficulties we might experience in our relations with female fellow citizens, family members and comrades, is to allow them to say what is hurting and what is not hurting, instead of always knowing what is good for them; a serious and fatal error that the former white regime committed for centuries until we revolted against oppression.

Rakoczy (in Kourie and Kretzschmar 2000:86) sums up the plight and the role of South African women, even after the coming in of the new dispensation, as follows:

Women in this country live their spirituality with their whole selves as embodiments of living faith: using their gifts for both civil and ecclesial bodies, building and sustaining relationships (in the family and in many other situations), creating new ways of doing what needs to be done, working with others in the wider vision of the New South Africa. Many paradoxes mark the experience of women in South Africa. Women are often outside the structures of male power yet exercise strong and effective leadership in every aspect of their lives. Women who are so often abused are of infinite dignity for they are images of God. Women are told that their role is a private one in the home because “culture” decrees so but know that the personal is political and that no “private” action is unconnected to the whole of human reality.

It is in light of this situation that Bishop Dwane fought for the rights of women to the bitter end, sometimes meeting with disdain and malice from some male members of his church. A quick look at Africa as a whole, and the independent churches in particular, shows how far his detractors were from the truth. Nthamburi (in Mugambi and Magesa 1990: 51) clearly shows that women in most parts of Africa play a leading role:

Where the independent churches are most strong is in the area of the status of women. No barrier is placed on women in the leadership of the church. In fact many women have played a leading role in the founding of some of the churches. Mention should be made of Gaudencia Aoko who is credited with the beginnings of the Legio Maria Church in western Kenya; Alice Lenshina Mulenga the founder of Lumpa Church started among the Yombe of Zambia, Grace Tani who cofounded the Twelve Apostles Church with Papa John Nackabah in Ghana; Prophetess Natholomoa Jehu-Apiah the queen mother of the Musama Disco Christo Church in Ghana. Many women hold prominent church positions. No barrier to spiritual matters is placed on women as they have played key roles in the growth of their churches.

4.5 The consecration of Peter as Bishop of Zululand (1993)¹⁶

Dwane (p.1) certainly ruffled many an episcopal feather in the consecration service when he started his address by comparing a bishop with an *isangoma*. This unusual comparison is repeated here in full for effect as *izangoma* were abhorred in the early church which emulated the negative attitude of the Old Testament in this regard:

¹⁶ Unpublished Dwane collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, no date.

Some of you know that in the Zulu and Xhosa traditions, there is a phenomenon which is known as *ukuthwasa*. This occurs when a person, male or female, is called by the ancestors of the lineage to the work of healing and combating the anti-social forces of *ubuthakathi* or sorcery and witchcraft.

Ukuthwasa refers in the first instance, to the change of seasons or the appearance of the new moon. In the particular, it is the summer with its new foliage and the blossoming of the flowers, which carries the idea of the nature's renewal after the winter season. By way of analogy, a person who has the *ukuthwasa* condition enters a phase of renewal during which, his or her latent talents and energies blossom and come to fruition.

After giving a detailed account of this mystical phenomenon in amaXhosa society, Dwane (p.1), having anticipated the audience's sense of unease, decides to link the two even more plausibly:

It may seem strange to you that I am drawing a parallel between the call and the preparation of a traditional diviner on the one hand, and the calling and anointing of the Bishop of Zululand on the other. What is there in common, you may wonder, between *isangoma* and a Bishop? Bishop Colenso whose remains are buried in these grounds would probably approve of the illustration. And we may in the course of time come to realize that these two worlds are not so far apart, after all.

Dwane (p.1) ended this wake-up call by stating that 'the drift of his message on that occasion was that God was doing a new thing in their midst and that he was calling the people to renew their strength in him.'

Of course, healing as practised in both black societies and in Black Initiated Churches, was an issue that divided the established mainline churches and the Black Initiated Churches into two uncompromising non-catholic Christian camps. The struggle of Archbishop Milingo to be accepted by the Roman Catholic Church, because of this very same reason is informative. He had to fight with the authorities of his church and they even moved him from his Zambian See to Rome to monitor and control him but in the end he won the admiration and support of his whole church.

This change of heart in the Roman Catholic Church is reported as follows by Ter Haar (1992:134):

The established churches today generally recognize the merits of traditional medical systems, in Africa as in other parts of the Western world. It has become quite usual for Churches to acclaim the holistic approach of African traditional medicine, to pay tribute to the way in which it incorporates aspects of social relation and culture, and to acknowledge possible 'supranatural' causes of affliction and healing.

The fusion of Western and African religions has led to the evolution of African Christian spirituality whose main objective is incarnation, as posited by Ter Haar (1992:136):

There is a wide consensus among African theologians that the most significant feature of African spirituality is its incarnation; that is they usually emphasise the belief in the actual experience of God in people's daily lives: Christian spirituality in Africa must be lived, and must be shaped by the experiences of the people. Such a spirituality is defined as an active participation in the life of Christ which brings tangible results, as in the form of healing.

That incarnational view of the African spirituality is strongly supported by the Catholic Church as evidenced by Ter Haar (1992:136):

This African interpretation of Christian spirituality has often proved an obstacle in relations with other Christians. The Church, as a universal institution, has done little enough to incorporate such religious experiences into its fabric, although the call for it has become stronger over the years. The views expressed by the Second Vatican Council have served Milingo and others well in their search for a renewal of the Church in Africa. Vatican II confirmed their opinion about the cultural incarnation of the gospel by emphasizing that Christian spirituality should be lived in a concrete human condition.

Dwane's missionizing of the church and its new Bishop meant that the latter needed to begin to see the church in light of this new revelation. God was calling him to heal the country, to a new divine call to intervene where there is spiritual and physical ill-health. Secondly, as a Bishop in Africa, in the heartland of a predominantly black diocese, his spirituality had to be incarnated so that it took the form of the people he was to minister to as a lived spirituality instead of being a theoretical, imported, alien, spirituality.

It takes courage and determination, as shown by Archbishop Milingo's story, to do this form of theologizing because, as stated by Ter Haar (1992:137) the church itself is divided on the issue. He correctly points out that 'a major obstacle to the acceptance of a distinctive African Christian spirituality is its relationship with African traditional religions.' The early missionaries, as could be expected, rejected African traditional religions outright and without compromise. Bishop Milingo was accused of deliberately taking retrogressive steps to the past instead of looking forward to light.

Given the fighting and the destruction that was happening in Natal at the time, Dwane (p.2) could not help but decry the wanton destruction that took place in that province:

But what of the present climate of faction, hostility and destruction in this very city, and in the Province of Natal? Who can come to Pietermaritzburg and not be reminded of the wounds, the agony, and the turmoil in the lives of so many who have lost so much? What sense can we make of our message of renewal when people are in a desert of despair? Where is God, and for how long must this wanton waste go on? We cry with the saints of the Most High beneath the heavenly altar! O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long?

Dwane, in this moving address, points the audience to Christ who suffered on the Cross so that the world could be freed from pain and sorrow. He died on the Cross in order to establish God's kingdom of love, peace and justice for all. He (p.2) contends strongly that 'He the crucified One is our bewilderment in order to comfort and restore us through his own resurrection life. It is his wounds alone which can heal the wounded, and his victory which can kindle the resurrection fire of love and hope.'

Bishop Dwane's sense of servanthood and humility comes out very clearly when he (p.3) comments as follows about the role of bishops as God's shepherds:

As a shepherd of the flock, a bishop has to lay down his life for the sheep. The dominant picture here is the one of servanthood and this refers back to the Son of Man who came not to be served, but to serve, and give his life as ransom for many.

Besides good apostolic teaching and fostering unity in the church, even admonishing bishops against leading or getting involved in schisms, Dwane challenged the existing Father image of the episcopacy because this excludes female bishops. This is *in tandem* with his commitment to gender equality in the world and in the church of God.

4.6 The President's Charge, St Matthew's Church (1996)¹⁷

Coming shortly after the first democratic elections of the country, this 93rd Session of Conference of the Ethiopian Episcopal Church, gave Bishop Dwane an opportunity to express appreciation for the large numbers of Christians, including members of his own church, who were elected to the first democratic, non-racial, non-sexist parliament. This prompted him (p.1) to comment that 'this is perhaps the right moment for me to remind you about the nature of our Christian calling. In the two significant images of salt and light, our Lord indicates the way Christians are called to be involved in the world's affairs.'

He (p.2) stressed that 'Christians were in the world, and therefore they had a responsibility to be involved in the struggles of life.' This is the role that Christians should play in the world, according to Dwane (p.2):

¹⁷ Unpublished Dwane collection, Corry Library, Rhodes University, no date.

So as Christians come to the world in order to reveal the glory of the Father, likewise Christians are in the world in order that God may reveal himself to the world through them. Our small acts of compassion, justice, and *ubuntu* are rays of light thrown in the paths of other people, and help in some way to coax them towards that greater light which lightens the whole world.

Dwane (p.2) then continues to point out that Christians have, like Nehemiah, to rebuild the broken world, the shattered social fabric, and the broken family lives. The world needs renewal and ‘Christians work towards the renewal of the world, using their gifts, and spending themselves in labour for the kingdom.’

Christians, according to Dwane (p.2) need to restore love, dignity and hope in people’s lives in the face of difficulties where, ‘to a large extent, we have lost any sense of shame we might have had, and when we do terrible things we do not blush.’

Dwane’s stand in this regard accords with Maimela (1987: preface, unpaginated) who strongly contends that:

In proclaiming liberty to the poor, the oppressed and the downtrodden, Black theology of liberation witnesses to the biblical God who has shown special concern for those who are trampled underfoot by the powers that be in any society. It inspires hopes for the oppressed groups who must become partners with God in building up a more humane society that is liberated and free but also Black theology aims at providing guidance for Black and White Christians working for justice for everyone before, during and after liberation from racial bondage so that in the new liberated South Africa rulers are prevented from becoming oppressors themselves and therefore promoters of injustice and unfreedom.

Because African culture ‘sets a high premium on human life and human values, its rituals should be used,’ according to Dwane (p.2) ‘as the means of building up and cementing the communal life which is shared by those in this life with those who are in the next life.’

Christians are exhorted to bring Christ to the world because, according to Dwane (p.4) ‘when a Christian community ceases to digest the good news and to share Christ with the world, then it loses the right to be called Christian, and its activities should really be regarded as a diversion.’

The scourge of divorce, especially among young couples, has to be arrested if a solid social foundation is to be established. This rising feature in the African way of life has shaken the social fabric to its foundations, hence Dwane’s warning (p.4) that ‘we should discourage young people from going into marriage hurriedly and under the pressure to cover up scandal; and observe purity and propriety.’

4.7 The President’s Charge at St Bartholomew’s Church (2002)¹⁸

Bishop Dwane delivered this Presidential Charge to the Second Synod of the Ethiopian Episcopal Church at St Bartholomew’s Church in Queenstown, from 13-18 December 2002.

In this charge Bishop Dwane emphasises educational programmes for all age groups in the church. This would range from ‘faith taught at the breast’ by the parents, Sunday school lessons for different age levels, confirmation classes, and programmes for young adults to be introduced after the ensuing youth conference, and weekly classes for adult parishioners. He extended this call for re-education and further education to pastors as well.

Education and even re-education is of vital importance for a transforming church such as the Ethiopian Episcopal Church as could be seen from the following comments by Mgojo (in Tlhagale and Mosala 1986:113):

¹⁸ Unpublished Dwane collection, Corry Library, Rhodes University, no date.

It is crucial that students not only learn about truth and culture, but be taught to think theologically within a shifting cultural context. The call for a method in local theology cannot be addressed solely to professional theologians; it must become a method practicable for the pastor, to enable a theological conscientization to come about in the community.

The greatest milestone for Dwane in this re-orientation programme was the launching of the Church's new liturgy which he (p.3) explained as follows:

In our worship at this Eucharist, we stand in the presence of God to acknowledge him as the source and sustainer of our lives from whom all good things come. We offer to him some of the gifts of our continent, mingled of course with the worship of the whole church of the past down to our present age. We have to say who we are before God, for we are the work of his hands and he knows us and loves us as we are.

Once again, Bishop Dwane (p.3) emphasises that Christians are the salt and the light of the world and that 'they are called to strive with other people for a better world, and not to isolate themselves from human endeavour.'

He highlights three areas that continue to make life unbearable for God's people. The first of these is HIV/AIDS. He discusses this issue at length and in great depth before he (p.4) ends up calling on the youth to abstain. Dwane decries 'the catastrophe and the pain which this deadly virus brings to families and to the nation.' Its rippling effect spreads to 'small children of young couples who are left alone in the world, wounded and bewildered and vulnerable'. He strongly appeals to young people to curb the spread of this virus by abstaining as a matter of extreme urgency. To other Christians he pleads that they 'embrace the life of chastity and purity for as long as they remain single.'

The second issue brought before Synod was the question of poverty and deprivation which Bishop Dwane (p.4) called ‘a scandal in the face of the wealth and abundance of resources at the disposal of the privileged few.’

He stressed that as Jesus was on the side of the poor and the down-trodden, he was against their exploitation, in the same way that God, through his prophets, condemned the exploitation of the poor. As Dwane (p.5) points out, ‘God loves the poor but hates poverty and want, and condemns those who are responsible for it.’

Bishop Dwane expressed his appreciation to his church’s Women’s Association for their anti-poverty programmes, under the banner of *Ijelo Labafazi*.

The third set of burning issues to receive Synodical attention was the perennial question of crime, corruption and violence. After reminding Synod of the criminal activities perpetrated by police and their surrogates in the apartheid era, Dwane (p.6) makes a pertinent observation that ‘apartheid’s recourse to the law of the jungle brought the entire justice system into disrepute in the eyes of the majority.’ He appealed to all concerned to fight those menaces with the same vigour with which they fought apartheid and its evil forces. He made a clarion call to all to become the eyes and the ears of the police in the fight against crime.

4.8 An overview of Bishop Dwane’s *Ad Clera*

Bishop Dwane’s *Ad Clera*, i.e. the Bishop’s regular circulars or pastoral letters to his clergy, from 1983 to 2001 when he became Presiding Bishop after his election by the Diocesan Bishops, point to someone who was deeply spiritual. He acted throughout as a spiritual guide (*anamchara*) for his clergy and other members of the church. While he never eschewed political, social

and economic matters in his *ad clera* to the clergy, his *ad clera* mainly focused on the spiritual life of the clergy as will be evidenced by the following analysis.

His very first *Ad Clerum* after an installation that saw violent clashes within the service and right inside the church, he could still calmly say the following to his clergy:¹⁹

My dear Brethren

I am writing to you two days after my institution, with the two occasions of consecration and institution still fresh in my mind, to thank you all for attending either of these services, and for encouraging your people to turn out in such big numbers. I trust that God will bring us closer to himself and to one another so that his work is done more effectively. I want to ask you to pray with me that God may heal the divisions which have in the past hindered his work, and especially for the open manifestation of those divisions on Sunday. May God out of that sad incident bring the joy of a new beginning, a resurrection.

After this highly conciliatory message, in which Bishop Dwane showed no bitterness against those who turned a wonderful institutional service into a battlefield, he started pointing out issues and tendencies that, if not nipped in the bud, would exacerbate tensions. The pulpit, he stressed, should not be used to hit at adversaries. Preaching should entail propagating the Good News, and it should not be used to settle scores with opponents.²⁰

Bishop Dwane's warning and admonition was well-timed as the tensions were running very high in the church. The pulpit was being used by some to hit at the opponents that had brought so much stress on them and spoilt what was meant to be the most memorable occasion in the church's history – the institution of Bishop Dwane as the first bishop of the Ethiopian Church, in Grahamstown.

¹⁹ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, *Ad Clerum* 1 May 1983, p.1.

²⁰ *Ibid*

Addressing the bane of schism that seemed to be dogging the church, Bishop Dwane sent the following *Ad Clerum* in July 1983, confronting the issues headlong:²¹

By now you will have heard that a group of people at Uitenhage and at Bernard Mizeki have broken away from the Order to form themselves into a separate body. This is regrettable. All schisms are contrary to the will of Christ who prayed shortly before His trial that His disciples may be one as He and the Father are one. I am grieved especially by the fact that three of our priests, Fathers S. Qengqa, C. Gojela and D. Mquqo have gone with this group. I must, however, emphasize that there is no way in which rebellion against the church's lawful authority can be tolerated. We as Christians are or ought to be children of obedience as Christ Himself in His earthly ministry became obedient to the Father.

In the same *Ad Clerum*, Bishop Dwane addressed another important issue – marriage discipline. He had to stem the tide of divorced people who came forward to be remarried while their spouses were still alive, some of them even wanting to join the ordained priesthood. Bishop Dwane spelt his views out very clearly on the matter:²²

I am concerned about the lack of clarity on the matter of marriage discipline. Christian marriage is both monogamous and life-long. When a couple breaks this second vow, both may retain their communicant status. But when one of them wants to remarry, the matter has to be referred to the Bishop. Under certain conditions divorced persons may be remarried in church, but each case must be brought to my attention. That means that priests may not marry people in those circumstances in a hurry! In fact I must urge you not to marry anyone in a hurry, without preparation. Couples must be carefully instructed about the full meaning of christian marriage.

About divorced persons, Bishop Dwane made the following impassioned plea:²³

Please do not forward to me the names of divorced persons for consideration for the priesthood. Hopes can be raised and then disappointment follows when the Bishop has to point out to the candidate that such persons may be allowed into the ordained ministry if only they intend to remain single while their partner is still alive. I am certain that the clergy should as pastors of the flock be set a higher standard in order that they may be “wholesome examples to the flock of Christ.”

²¹ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, *Ad Clerum* 2 July 1983.

²² Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, *Ad Clerum* 2 July 1983, p.1.

²³ *Ibid*, p.2

Bishop Dwane's spirituality extended very strongly to the youth; no wonder he met his untimely death on his way back from a service with a group of young people at Sikhobeni. He expressly pointed out in the same *Ad Clerum* (2 February 1985, p.2) that:

It is my conviction that ministry to young people is important. For this reason I shall be spending one of my week-ends with young people, mostly students at University and Teacher Training College. I want you to regard ministry to the young as an important part of your ministry. Please give our Youth Association your whole-hearted support. Correct them where you think they are going astray. Be to them a loving and caring father. They need that in order to strengthen their ties with the church of which, we hope, they will be the leaders of tomorrow.

If one were to sum up Bishop Dwane's life one would not be wrong if one were to say his life was always devoted to prayer. He was a very prayerful person and he did everything to ensure that this love for prayer is imparted to his clergy and to other people. This is how he expressed the importance of prayer in his first year as Bishop of the Order of Ethiopia:²⁴

Prayer and the priest's vocation

It worries me a great deal to see priests who seem to have lost the divine fire which kindled the desire to serve God as ministers or servants of his people. The three great traditional enemies of the priest are: too much drink, sexual immorality, and dishonesty in handling money. I am too new as a bishop to know whether any of our clergy have one or several of these tendencies. But I do know from past experience as college principal that once the rot sets in, it is very difficult to stop. The remedy to these misdemeanours is of course faithfulness in prayer, study of the scriptures, and regular nourishment with the blessed sacrament. My desire is that all of you should be sustained by the depth and wonder of God's grace. ...

I urge you to give yourselves to prayer because the Holy Spirit desires to make your life and your prayers the channel by which to reach out to other people and their needs. ...

Its good to have someone with whom you can share your deeply personal things, preferably another priest to whom you can talk honestly about your shortcomings and temptations. We all need to unburden ourselves in this way. This (is) part of our experience of the fellowship of the Gospel. It is the bearing of one another's burdens.

²⁴ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, Ad Clerum 3 Sept. 1983

It is interesting to note that Bishop Dwane kept on coming back to the question of family life in most of his *Ad clera*. This formed one of the pillars of his spirituality as can be noted from the following Ad Clerum:²⁵

Family life

For a married priest or deacon family life is an important aspect of his ministry. At his ordination, he promises to 'frame and fashion' his own life and of his household 'according to the doctrine of Christ' and to make himself and his household, 'wholesome examples and patterns to the flock of Christ'. It is for this reason that clergy should live together with their families. When husband and wife live separately, they often find themselves tempted and exposed to sin. I therefore want to urge you to observe the norm as far as possible, and where, because of lack of job opportunities, the wife has to live away from her husband, obtain my consent. I would hope that this would then be a temporary arrangement.

Having dealt with this issue once more, Bishop Dwane mentions another issue that he held high in his episcopacy – gender equity, hence his comment in the same *Ad Clerum*:²⁶

While on the subject of family life, I would like to comment on the practice of making women and girls receive communion last. St Paul's teaching is that in Christ there is neither male nor female. It is therefore necessary for us to express our equal partnership in the covenant in the way we come forward to receive Christ in the Holy Sacrament. I want to encourage you also to make use of women in the reading of lessons, and girls to serve at the altar as is already happening in some places.

Bishop Dwane addresses one of the most important issues in his May 1985 *Ad Clerum* – the establishment of Care Committees. This is in line with his spirituality that strongly emphasised the link between the vertical and horizontal dimensions of faith. This is clearly set out in the *Ad Clerum* on Care Committees:²⁷

²⁵ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, Ad Clerum 3 (n.d) 1984.

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, Ad Clerum 4 May 1985

I hope that by now these have been formed, and are beginning to function in your Mission Districts. I am expecting you to report to me about them at the end of this month, and again in September. These (*ikomiti zovelwano*) must be seen against our blessed Lord's own 'mandate' in Luke 4:13. His ministry, you will remember, was characterized by works of compassion: healing the sick, feeding the hungry, restoring sight to the blind, making the deaf hear and so on. The Good News is that in Jesus, God has visited his people in love, and deals with them compassionately (*ngenceba novelwano*) (Abridged).

What is interesting in Bishop Dwane's *Ad Clerum*²⁸ on this matter is that he told the priests that they did not have a choice in the matter. Their ministry requires that they 'feed the hungry, care for the sick and the old, to visit those who are in prison etc etc.,' concluding that 'Conference has not asked you to set up Care Committees if you would like that sort of thing, or when there is nothing else to do. But Conference has drawn our attention to the command of the Lord we serve.'

As seen from Bishop Dwane's earlier comments, his respect for traditional religion was very strong. As an Ethiopianist, he always tried to relate Christianity to African religion, no wonder his decision to write to his clergy informing them about a Consultation for Traditional Priest diviners.²⁹

Since I began my episcopal ministry two years ago, several people have spoken to me about their vocation to the ministry of healing. As I have tried to listen, I have heard a plea for understanding and a cry for acceptance. As black Christians I feel we have an obligation to listen and to interpret what we hear in the light of the Gospel. I am asking you therefore to extend to all priest diviners who are members of our church, my invitation to a consultation at Hillandale here in Grahamstown from July 1st at lunch time till the 3rd at lunch time 1986.

Needless to say this was a very bold move, given the opposition of the established Anglican church to anything to do with diviners, misnamed witchdoctors. The problem around diviners was complex and fed so easily into the fears pertaining to syncretism. There were the so-called barbaric

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, *Ad Clerum* 6 Aug. 1985.

healing practices involving evil herbs (*muti*), there were incantations and appeals to the spirits (generally regarded as evil), and there was the notoriety of diviners and herbalists that they can use their magic to kill innocent people. Let me hasten to say, in Dwane's favour, that he had called for a consultation to sit down and talk to the diviners in order to map out the way forward together, or to part in peace, if needs be.

In June 1986, Bishop Dwane repeated his call for a consultation with priest-diviners and called upon all the clergy to attend the consultation. He stressed the importance of the consultation to the church as a whole:³⁰

On Thursday the 16 of October, the day of the Conference, there will be a consultation with members of our church who are priest diviners at Bernard Mizeki, starting at 9.00 a.m. This will be preceded by the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at 7.30 a.m. Please extend my invitation to any apprenticed or qualified diviners in your Mission Districts. I want the clergy to be present because this is an important subject which affects the work of the whole church. We need to inform ourselves about this significant feature of African life, and try to come to a common mind about appropriate forms of ministry to the people who are affected.

Bishop Dwane's opposition to the South African government's regime and its satellite homelands can be seen from the following injunction from his General Purposes Committee to the members of the church:³¹

The General Purposes Committee (G.P.C.) at its last meeting had a long and fruitful discussion on participation in apartheid structures as a result of which I have to ask you to observe the following:

- (1) That no announcements pertaining to the October elections should be made in any of our churches. The Government has silenced all possible opposition to these elections. Since we are not allowed to express opinions at variance with those of the Government's, we regard these elections as undemocratic. As Christians we must therefore ask ourselves whether we can support them.
- (2) No clergyman of the Order may consent to officiate in homeland celebrations without the permission of the Bishop.
- (3) Members of the Order are advised to seek the counsel of their priest, mission district steward, and monthly meeting before they agree to serve on local authorities and Regional Services Council.

³⁰ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, Ad Clerum 3 June 1986.

³¹ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, Ad Clerum 4 July 1988.

One of the pillars of any church, besides faith itself, is, strangely enough, money. No church can survive without money, hence the importance of stewardship or giving in our churches. The Order of Ethiopia felt the pinch even more than the Anglican Church which, especially in earlier years, could rely on white congregants who were well off. As a member of the independent fraternity of churches, the Order had to struggle to make ends meet as could be seen from the following comment and appeal by Bishop Dwane:³²

GIVING (*UMNIKELO*)

At the G.P.C. meeting on Saturday 21, it was reported that our finances are in a bad way. We began the year with an overdraft... That money we owe the bank because we had to borrow money from the bank in order to pay out the December stipends. I know that money is there, but that it has either not been transferred in good time to the General Account, or not been collected.

I want you to teach and urge all our members to give a tenth of their income every month from January to December. We must stop borrowing money from the bank because it gives us a bad name.

The *Ad Clerum* continues to give clear guidelines as to how to make people aware of the need to tithe, and how monies should be channelled to the right funds not later than the tenth of each month. For the purpose of monitoring the situation, the G.P.C. would act as a watchdog, calling on districts who are in default to account. Strong mechanisms were put in place to help those who might not have the necessary skills to handle the task efficiently. As the church grew stronger and stronger in this regard, its members became less and less dependent on outside interventions, hence the perception, if not the reality, that today the Ethiopian Episcopal Church is much more self-sufficient than the black sister churches of the Anglican church where the dependency syndrome is still the order of the day. Tithing is an old Biblically-based manner of giving and stewardship whereby each member of the congregation donates a tenth of their income to the Church. Anglicans rely on what is known as the 'ticket system' which is a nominal amount of money for each category of membership. Its variation, pledging, merely

³² Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, Ad Clerum 1 January 1989.

introduced improved scales of giving for people of disparate income levels, but it still fell far short of tithing which demands a tenth of one's income.

4.9 Summary

The chapter gave an overview of Bishop Dwane's contribution to justice and righteousness both inside and outside the church. The bulk of this evidence came from his speeches and *Ad Clera* to his clergy. His favourite topic, Christianity and culture, is foremost in the list of his addresses as he daily battled with this issue, putting forward insights that clearly paved the way for deeper deliberations in this regard. While he strongly favours the inclusion of African customs in church and worship, he was also acutely aware of the fact that some customs and rituals needed cleansing, if not outright purging. That is why he classified the customs into good and bad customs. His focus on poverty alleviation in the Grahamstown district is also indicative of his concern for the underdog. The participation of women in church activities, and their ordination to priesthood in the church saw him take a stand that made him completely unpopular with some male members of his church, leading to conflict and schism but he stood his ground until the end. In all his addresses, Bishop Dwane stood firmly on his belief that Africans can worship God as Africans and not as imitations of their Western counterparts. This, he stressed, did not mean rejection of the Rule of Life, church discipline, prayerful life, moral integrity and good family relations. Further insights on his spirituality come out very strongly in the following chapter which focuses on how he challenged the authorities on behalf of the victims of apartheid.

CHAPTER FIVE:
BISHOP DWANE'S SPIRITUALITY ON CHURCH AND STATE
RELATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The church's prophetic role consists in fighting for justice and equity for all. It is called upon to be the voice of the voiceless and to intervene whenever and wherever the basic human rights are undermined. Its advocacy role extends beyond its own borders, reaching out to the poor, the deprived and the oppressed, without fear or favour.

Nolan (in Tlhagale and Mosala 1996:131) explains the main tenets of prophetic theology as follows;

It would not be possible to attempt a comprehensive outline of prophetic theology in this brief essay. However, there is a fundamental characteristic of this mode in theology that underlies everything else and that distinguishes it from every other theology or mode of theology. And this is the characteristic of being *timebound*. All prophecy and prophetic theology speaks of, and speaks to, a particular time in a particular place about a particular situation.

It cannot be gainsaid that the church in South Africa has done this with great distinction and integrity over the years, culminating in dire consequences for some of the clergy. The list of these heroes and heroines is too long to attempt here but people such as Frank Chikane, Desmond Tutu, Beyers Naude, Ambrose Reeves, Dennis Hurley, James Calata, Stanley Gawe, Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, French-Beytagh and David Russell come to mind. They fought alongside some of the following heroines – Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Sophia Williams, Rahima Moosa, Adelaide Tambo and many more stalwarts of the struggle.

5.2 Letters of protest to the apartheid Government

Bishop Dwane's contribution in this regard is perhaps not as well known because he was one of the quieter prophets by nature, but he was in no way less effective in his opposition to what he considered a violation of human rights. He championed the cause of those who were incapacitated by the system to fight for their rights and he made his voice heard whenever an injustice took place. His concerns ranged from inhumane and unlawful detention to the treatment of prisoners in the country's jails.

He was present in the 1985 Anglican Synod of Bishops at Faure, where, on 17 April 1985, the following press release was issued :³³

CHURCH OF THE PROVINCE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

PRESS RELEASE

From the SYNOD OF BISHOPS meeting at FAURE, CAPE

The Synod of Bishops of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa, meeting at Faure, Cape, welcomes the news of the intended repeal of the Mixed Marriages Act and Section 16 of the Immorality Act. We are thankful that the Government has listened to representations made by the CPSA and others concerning the unbiblical basis of the legislation and the agony caused to so many through its implementation over several decades.

We urge the Government to proceed from this small beginning to the total dismantling of apartheid laws. The repeal of this particular legislation will affect the lives of comparatively few people. The entire inhumane and unjust socio-political and economic system, which is the ultimate cause of the present unrest and violence, is bringing agony to the vast majority of people in this land. We as Christians condemn violence, whether to maintain or to overthrow an unjust system. We call for real dialogue and speedy change, without which violence is likely to escalate.

³³ Unpublished document in Dwane collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, 17/4/85.

Although this press release expressed the collective view of the Synod of Bishops, it was an embodiment of the feelings of the individual signatories to it of which Bishop Dwane was one. All the Bishops welcomed the intended repeal of two of the most notorious Acts in the old South African statute books – the Mixed Marriages Act which prevented cross-colour marriages between blacks and whites, and the Immorality Act which made it illegal for black and white people to have sexual relations.

As pointed out by the Bishops, few people were likely to benefit from the repeal of these laws because everyone was deeply concerned about cross cultural love and marriage relations. They rightly pointed out that the worst scourge in the country was the apartheid system itself and it had to go.

On 19 April 1985, Synod issued another press release³⁴ to urge government to call ‘a National Convention involving the leaders and representatives freely chosen by the people’ to address the issue of escalating violence in the country. This was prompted by a statement allegedly made by the then Foreign Minister, the Hon. R.F. Botha on SATV that “We are at war”.

Bishop Dwane, in his own quiet diplomatic style, intervened whenever he felt that people’s or individual’s rights were being undermined or were likely to be undermined. He did not hesitate to act on behalf of anyone who was faced with victimisation or the threat of being jailed. When Bishop Tutu’s utterances ruffled Pretoria’s feathers, Bishop Dwane wrote the following letter to the Hon Minister of Constitutional Development, on 23 January 1986:³⁵

³⁴ Unpublished document in Dwane collection in Cory Library, Rhodes University, 19/4/85.

³⁵ Unpublished document in Dwane collection in Cory Library, Rhodes University, 23/1/86.

Dear Honourable Minister

After hearing your reaction to Bishop Tutu's recent American speech, I feel obliged to write to you and bring certain matters to your attention. I have known Bishop Tutu for nearly 20 years, most of which I have been in regular contact with him. I hope that one day you will meet him, and get to know him, and hopefully, that your personal contact with him will enable you to perceive his sincerity, and trust his interpretation of the mood of the black community, and accept his commitment to non-violence as well as to change which will bring about a truly non-racial and democratic South Africa. I want you to know what a privilege it is to be a friend of a man of Bishop Tutu's nobility, stature, and devotion to God and humanity. Against that background perhaps you will understand that the things which he says arise not out of personal ambition or desire to ingratiate himself with any particular group, but out of his concern to make the voice of the voiceless majority in this country audible, and a genuine desire to articulate ways in which your government could begin to search for a common ground in which meaningful dialogue could take place between accepted representatives of the white community and the black.

In today's Eastern Province Herald, you are quoted as saying that "For a man of the cloth, his backing for a terrorist organisation can only be described as deplorable", the reference being to Bishop Tutu's call for Western nations to support the African National Congress. I am sure that you are aware of Bishop Tutu's open condemnation of township violence at the mass funeral of the Uitenhage people in April last year, and on other occasions. I hope you have also heard him state his opposition to the use of violence by the state and by liberatory movements like the A.N.C. I do not therefore believe that his call for the support of the A.N.C. implies that he condones its use of violence as a means of change. Like many Christians in this land the Bishop finds the use of active or reactive violence deplorable. But we are in the midst of conflict which I hope you will one day admit, has been initiated by your government which, since 1948, has persistently and callously pursued a policy of repression in its dealings with the black majority. I hope too that you will one day acknowledge that the black people have for decades borne the yoke of oppression patiently.

It is remarkable, is it not, that for nearly 50 years the A.N.C. steadfastly advocated and used non-violent methods to bring to the attention of your own government and of its predecessors, the plight of the the oppressed. Just think of the humiliation suffered by such Christian gentlemen like Albert Luthuli, Professor Z K Matthews, James Calata, and Stanley Gawe, and many others.

If I did not believe that you are a man of good-will I would not bother to write to you about these matters. But I do, and therefore want you to regard this as an appeal to you to consider seriously the possibility of going about your work of constitutional reform in a different way. I think your efforts would be greatly enhanced if your government made a declaration of intent to abandon apartheid completely, and instead to seek a settlement through negotiation. You cannot reform apartheid, neither can your government on its own work out a constitution that will satisfy all the sections of the South African society. I am convinced that with the best will in the world you as a representative of the white constituency cannot produce and sell to the

black community a constitution in whose making it has not had a hand. If there is to be justice and peace for all in this land, black people must be part of the process to bring this about. Black people are not asking your government to be a little more benevolent towards them, but that it should accord them their God-given status as persons. And this is where movements in exile come. Together they represent I believe, the vast majority of members of the black community. No one in his right senses will at this time come forward to talk to you about constitutional change while liberatory movements are banned, and the much revered leaders of these movements are prisoners in Pollsmoor and Robben Island.

I write to you as a Christian and a leader in the church and in the black community. Like Bishop Tutu, I have no political ambitions. But I am a bishop and my work as a shepherd brings me daily into contact with human misery and broken lives. I know that God has willed that the life of our Society should be ordered differently so that there is enough for all in this land of plenty, equal opportunities for all the peoples of this land, and justice for all in a non-racial and truly democratic Society. I pray that your government may begin to move in this direction. I pray for your government almost daily. I believe that through the many representations made to the government by the churches God is saying something to you. I pray that you may be able to listen to him and that he may grant you the grace to respond positively, generously, for the benefit of us all. I know that if you do, catastrophe will be averted.

God bless as you read this rather lengthy note and ponder over these matters.

Yours sincerely

+Sigqibo Dwane.
The Right Revd S Dwane

It is patently clear from Bishop Dwane's letter to the Minister that he was concerned about the state of affairs in the country. The country was slowly moving towards anarchy and bloodshed, which he could not countenance. His use of such expressions as the Minister being a man of good-will and a Christian and him writing as a Christian bishop, with Bishop Tutu speaking as a concerned Christian leader, was aimed at finding common ground and resolve between him, Bishop Tutu, and the minister.

What is remarkable in this intervention is that he does not end with only trying to save Bishop Tutu from impending reprisals by the government, but he also put his own head on the block by pointing out the evils of apartheid. The Tutu storm had hardly blown over when a fresh one started in Cape Town, demanding Bishop Dwane's immediate attention. One of his up and

coming young priests, Revd M M Mpumlwana, was endorsed out of Cape Town by the government because of his political activities. Reverend Mpumlwana was one of the leading young men in the Black Consciousness Movement with Steve Biko, in the Eastern Cape. The government had obviously had enough of him and ordered him out of the Western Cape. His trauma is revealed as follows in Bishop Dwane's letter, dated 14 April 1986, to the Minister of Home Affairs:³⁶

Dear Honourable Minister

Re: the endorsement of the Revd M. M. Mpumlwana out of Cape Town.

This morning Father Mpumlwana conveyed to me by telephone that he has been served with a notice to leave Cape Town within 7 days. I am writing to appeal to you to reverse this decision for the following reasons:

- (1) Father Mpumlwana is a bona fide priest of the church of God and has been placed by the church in Cape Town to do God's work there. I myself know him personally, and trust his wisdom and sound judgement.
- (2) He is in Cape Town also because he is pursuing his studies with the University of Cape Town. He has obtained the B.A. Hons degree and is now working towards a Masters degree.
- (3) But there is the fundamental principle that the church has the right to send its priests where they are needed, and I am of the opinion a government which professes to be Christian should recognise and respect this. It is because I consider the endorsement of Father Mpumlwana out of Cape Town to be a violation of this principle that I am appealing to you as a matter of urgency to have this decision reversed. As I am in Cape Town this week, I am seeking an interview with the honourable Minister in order that I may be able to discuss this matter more fully with him.

Yours faithfully

+Sigqibo
The Rt Revd S Dwane.
c. Mr E Moorcroft, M.P. Albany

The late eighties were characterised by massive school boycotts throughout the country. Learners refused to go back to school to continue with their education. Various church and political leaders spent hours on end trying to convince the learners to go back to school. Bishop Dwane's church was in the forefront of those agencies that struggled hard to get learning and education

³⁶ Unpublished document in Dwane collection in the Cory Library, Rhodes University, 14/4/86.

back on track as evidenced by an article that appeared in the local press³⁷ in which the Order of Ethiopia appealed to learners country-wide to go back to school. In the same article, the church appealed to the Minister of Law and Order, Mr Adriaan Vlok, to repeal all laws that authorised detention without trial.

Whilst the country was in the grip of turmoil from various quarters with people putting pressure on the government to change its unacceptable course, the Nationalist Party won resoundingly in one of its exclusive elections. Bishop Dwane prepared the following statement for the Evening Post.³⁸

The whites only elections ceased to interest me many years ago because they are not about how best the country should be governed, and how equitably its resources should be shared. This particular election, with its emphasis on how best to protect the interests of South Africa's minorities, especially the white minority, has not even attempted to focus upon the aspirations of black people. Its results were predictable because the party which knows how best to protect white interests, and to put black people in their place, is of course the Nationalist Party. This election has signalled the message that most white people do not want fundamental change. They are happy to let the Nationalist Party tinker with the rickety apartheid machine, but they do not wish to see it removed. During this election campaign, the Nationalists have made it abundantly clear that they are not prepared to negotiate with the liberatory movements for real change. They will instead talk to black people who have no standing in the community and therefore no mandate from it. Such negotiations will in the end produce nothing.

Dwane strongly believed in the establishment of a South Africa in which all would enjoy equal rights and opportunities. The 1987 white elections failed to impress him precisely because they were sectarian as they excluded the large majority of blacks in this country.

The statement clearly shows that Dwane was concerned about the refusal of successive white governments in South Africa to share the country's resources with black people who were by far in the majority. Instead, he argues, the elections were a victory for the protection of white minority

³⁷ Daily Dispatch, January 21, 1987, p.3

³⁸ Unpublished Statement for the Evening Post dated 7/5/87

interests. This left the black majority with no hope of sharing the resources of the country, let alone sharing its governance. Until the ruling party was prepared to negotiate with legitimate liberation movements and their leaders, instead of their preferred lackeys, the homeland leaders, there would be no hope for an egalitarian negotiated settlement for the country.

The government regarded the 1987 election victory as a mandate from its own constituency to push on with its own agenda regardless of its impact on the country's unrepresented majority. It appeared to confirm their conviction that the country could close its eyes to the plight of so many and just turn the screws even tighter in its attempts to suppress any anti-government activities. People were banned, banished, arrested, detained and sentenced for all kinds of activities that did not meet with the approval of the powers-that-be. The following letter from the Office of the Director of Security Legislation to Mr Andile Mbutye (erroneously addressed as Mbutya in the letter), was a clear indication that the government was not prepared to relent from its oppressive style:³⁹

Sir,

ENTERING YOUR NAME IN THE CONSOLIDATED LIST IN TERMS OF SECTION 16 (1) (a) OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY ACT, 1982 (ACT 74 OF 1982)

The liquidator of the Congress of South African Students has in terms of section 14 (10) of the Internal Security Act, 1982 (Act 74 of 1982), compiled a list of persons who were office-bearers or officers of the Congress of South African Students when that organisation was by Government Notice No. R.1977 of 28 August 1985, issued under section 4 (1) of the said Act, declared to be an unlawful organisation.

Your name appears on the said list and in terms of section 16 (1) (a) of the Internal Security Act, 1982, your name must be entered in the consolidated list referred to in that section.

By direction of the Minister of Justice you are hereby, in terms of section 16 (3) (a) of the said Act, afforded the opportunity of showing why your name ought not to be entered in the consolidated list. Should you decide to avail yourself of the opportunity you are requested to submit in writing such representations as you would wish to make for consideration by the

³⁹ Unpublished letter from Director of Security Legislation, Pretoria, dated 05/01/1989.

Minister, to reach me at the above address within thirty days from the date of this letter.

Evidence at the disposal of the Minister shows that you were the chairman of the Grahamstown branch of the Congress of South African Students.

Your attention is directed to section 16 (3) (b) of the said Act, in terms of which your representation may also relate to the fact, the onus of proving which shall rest with you, that you neither knew nor could reasonably have been expected to know that the activities, purposes, control or identity of the organisation referred to above were of such a nature as might render that organisation liable to be declared an unlawful organization under section 4 of the said Act.

Yours faithfully

DIRECTOR OF SECURITY LEGISLATION

Bishop Dwane immediately sent representations to the Minister of Justice to reconsider the action contemplated in the Director of Security Legislation's letter. For Mr Mbutye to be listed would badly infringe his rights, one of which was to continue at the St Paul's Theological Seminary where he was enrolled as a trainee priest in Bishop Dwane's church. In a hurriedly written undated letter, Bishop Dwane wrote as follows:⁴⁰

Dear Honourable Minister

THE ENTERING OF MR ANDILE MBUTYE'S NAME IN THE CONSOLIDATED LIST

In a letter written on January 5 1989, the director of security legislation wrote to Mr Mbutye, advising him that he had been directed by the Minister to take steps to enter Mr Mbutye's name in the consolidated list, in terms of Section 14 (10) of the internal security Act 74 of 1982. He has of course been given a chance to make a submission stating why his name should not be entered in the list. But my understanding is that if the Minister does not find Mr Mbutye's argument convincing, then he will proceed to declare him a listed person in terms of the said act.

I wish to make the following points in response:

- (a) Mr Mbutye left school at the end of 1987, and since then has been out of touch with student politics. If the state were to impose or threaten to impose restrictions on him, it would be punishing or threatening to punish him for an era of his life which has now become almost a dead past. It would be very difficult to see the point of this, and not to interpret it as a malicious act.

⁴⁰ Unpublished undated letter in Dwane collection, Cory Library, Rh University.

- (b) Since the beginning of 1988, this gentleman has been an ordination candidate. During 1988, he and another candidate worked as lay assistants in one of our mission districts. Both of them were commended for the pastoral work done during that period. Mr Mbutye is a responsible person, and would not act in a manner that is likely to endanger the security of other persons or of the State.
- (c) At the present time he is a first year student at St Paul's Theological College, here in Grahamstown. Any threat of restriction would have a psychological effect on him. It would make him feel that he was kept under surveillance all the time. This would then make his personal life difficult, and put pressure on him to curtail his participation in various training programmes at the College. I am sure, you would not, as a Christian, want to subject a fellow christian to such psychological pressure which indirectly is bound to disrupt his preparation for his calling to the ministry.
- (d) During 1986, Mbutye was detained for 6 months. He was subsequently released and not charged for any offence. This is crucial because, had the State had any information about him being a danger to security, it would have brought the evidence against him in a court of law. We must therefore conclude from the fact that no charges have been brought against him, that, as in many other instances, the detention itself was based upon flimsy evidence, which could not stand up to scrutiny. One is therefore led to conclude that he was detained simply because he had been a member of Cosas, a licit organization at the time he was a member. He was, in other words victimised for his political views and nothing else. If the State were to threaten him now with restrictions, it would appear to be hounding him for holding views which some of us have openly expressed.

I trust that you will not proceed with the threat of putting Andile Mbutye's name in the consolidated list. The leader of the National Party, Mr F W de Klerk indicated in a conciliatory speech this week that he wants to move the party in a new direction. I have written to tell him that this is a breath of fresh air. In the light of these new developments, the whole matter of keeping people under surveillance, and threatening them with restrictions, is, in my opinion, retrogressive.

Yours sincerely

THE RT REVD S. DWANE

A great burden of the Security legislation in question was that it placed the onus of proof on the victim to convince the state that he/she was unaware of the unlawfulness of his/her actions. The state itself considered the person guilty of unlawful conduct, unless the person could prove the contrary, contrary to the present constitutional stipulation whereby everyone is deemed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

On 30 August 1989 Mbutye's agonising wait ended when Bishop Dwane received the following letter:⁴¹

Reverend Sir

MR A MBUTYA [sic]

With further reference to your undated letter and by direction of Mr H J Coetzee MP, Minister of Justice, I wish to inform you that the Minister has after consideration of your representations, as well as other representations made on behalf of Mr Mbutya directed the Director of Security Legislation not to include Mr Mbutya's [sic] name in the consolidated list in terms of section 16 (1) (a) of the Internal Security Act, 1982.

Yours faithfully

HEAD: MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Bishop Dwane had hardly had some respite when he was again engaged in another intervention. Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, a prominent Catholic priest in the Pretoria area, had been maltreated while in detention, some years before, prompting Bishop Dwane to write the following letter to the Minister of Law and Order:⁴²

Dear Honourable Minister

Greetings. I wrote to you in September 1987 about the "cruel barbaric and mean" treatment of Fr Smangaliso Mkhathshwa by the security police while he was in detention. Since then, there has been an out of court settlement, an admission surely, by the government, that detainees have a tough time.

I am writing you this time as a Christian pastor who is deeply concerned about the plight of detainees presently on hunger strike. I have been especially moved to write this letter to you by the fact that two members of my own Christian Community here in Grahamstown are in detention at St Alban's prison, near Port Elizabeth. They are Messrs Phila Nkayi and Vuyo Bikitsha. Both of them are known to me, and I testify that they come from families which have deep roots in the church. Their relatives, as are the relatives of the other 103 detained persons in St Alban's and the 119 such persons in Diepkloof, are anguished by the frustration which has led these detained persons to resort to this very courageous but also very desperate action. The detainees have indicated that they will continue to fast until they are released. They are well aware that this is a very costly thing to do because they have come to believe that those who govern this land of ours are not easily moved, even by suffering. So they have chosen a course of action which may lead to severe damage to health, in some cases, even death. People do not make this kind of choice lightly. I plead with you therefore to listen to the cry from the heart which has sparked off this strike. It is a cry for justice.

⁴¹ Unpublished letter from Minister of Justice, Cory Library, Rh U; dated 30/8/89.

⁴² Unpublished letter in Dwane collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 14/2/89

Some of these people, as you know, have been in detention for more than 2 years. Phila Nkayi is well on his way towards the third anniversary of this his second spell in detention. One can bear that sort of punishment when one knows that one has done something wrong, and has had the satisfaction of being proven guilty in a fair trial before a magistrate or judge. But, as I hope you are able to imagine, it must be painful to be made to languish in goal like a criminal, simply because the police suspect that you have been up to something they don't approve of, or that they vaguely suspect that your exercise of certain democratic rights endangers the security of the State. The detention of these persons or any other person without trial is a flagrant violation of human rights. If these persons die, or if their bodies are maimed, or if their brains are damaged, there will be yet another significant contribution to the already great legacy of bitterness caused by the system of apartheid. I plead with you therefore to hear our cry for justice, and to intervene and prevent what could become a national catastrophe. Surely you and your government would not like to bring upon South Africa a stench which the death of so many people in detention would cause.

I write this as a member of the body of Christ of which you also are a member. I appeal to you in other words as one brother to another in the name of Christ whose servants we both are.

Yours in the Service of His Kingdom.

THE RT REVD. S. DWANE.

Given the ruthlessness of the system, especially at the time in which Bishop Dwane wrote this letter, one cannot help admire his courage to face it the way he faced it. His appeal to the minister's sensibilities as a Christian is remarkable given the fact that South Africa boasted of being a Christian country, in spite of the iniquities that were perpetrated on some of God's children, by other God's children.

It is also remarkable that he championed the cause of all detainees, not only that of the members of his own church. In this way he showed that his prophetic role was not parochial. He stood for justice for all. Although his letter is couched in hard hitting terms such as "cruel, barbaric and mean", "the detention of these persons or any other person without trial is a flagrant violation of human rights", it was designed to move the government to stop its high-handed treatment of detainees and its opponents.

The oppressive regime of the old South Africa was bolstered by the equally oppressive satellite homelands that it had created. The leaders of these homelands were aware of the fact that the masses did not regard them as legitimate. They therefore went out of their way to root out any form of opposition to their existence.

Ciskei was one of the more oppressive homelands, following in the footsteps of Transkei where the Matanzima brothers, K.D and George Matanzima, brooked no opposition. To crush all forms of opposition to their regimes, the two amaXhosa homelands enforced their existence by creating and resorting to two draconian security laws – the notorious Proclamation R400 for Transkei and the equally notorious Ciskei Public Safety and Security Act. Both laws allowed the leaders of these homelands to detain at will any person they considered a threat to their existence.

In 1989 Bishop Dwane appealed to the American Ambassador in Cape Town⁴³ to use his influence to ensure that the Ciskei stops detentions:

Dear Mr Perkins

I am writing to you about two matters. The first is the detention of some members of the Order of Ethiopia by Ciskei Security Police. On my return from Cape Town last Thursday, I learnt that one of our priests, Mbulelo Matthew Ngqono, had been visited at his home in Alice early that morning, by Ciskei security police. He was then detained and kept in solidarity [sic] confinement until this last Wednesday afternoon when he was set free. While he was in detention, his telephone was disconnected, making it impossible for myself and other people to talk to his wife. The telephone service was restored yesterday. Yesterday afternoon, Mr Mazondwa, an evangelist at Litha township near Berlin was picked up by Ciskei security police, and is presently in detention.

The second matter is related to the first. It is the matter of Ciskei political rallies and various other Ciskeian events which are often held on a Sunday. On these occasions Christians are instructed to close their churches, and board buses made available by authorities to transport people to Ntaba ka Ndoda, a stadium for such political events. There was one such event on Sunday February 19, and there will be the long week-end of Holy Week, when people living in the Ciskei will be expected to go up the mountain on Good Friday, for the rally, which usually lasts until Easter. On such

⁴³ Unpublished letter in Dwane collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University dated 24/2/89.

occasions the clergy are simply instructed to conduct the Holy Week and Easter services for the faithful at Ntaba ka Ndoda, and are not given a choice in the matter. If they disobey, as some of them have to, in order to obey their own ecclesiastical authority, they get into the bad books of Ciskei authorities, and may be detained. It would appear that Fr Ngqono's detention has something to do with his refusal to comply with the authorities' demands. I do not know about Mr Mazondwa, but I have been told that last Sunday, Mr Sebe, in his speech, made some unpleasant remarks about the Order of Ethiopia, and myself. I am still trying to obtain the actual text of his speech so as to contemplate what appropriate steps to take.

It is clear to me that this infringement of the right to worship God on the Lord's day has to be resisted. The church cannot render to Caesar the things which belong to God. I am asking you therefore to make representations to the South African Government on behalf of many Christians in the Ciskei who are being intimidated and forced to surrender their wills. The Ciskei is a creation of the South African government, and is maintained with funds from the Republic. Our government therefore has a responsibility for the well being of people living in the Ciskei, many of whom are Ciskeians not by choice.

We value your support. Thank you for making time to see us last Thursday.

Regards

Yours sincerely

THE RT REVD S. DWANE.

Bishop Dwane's abhorrence for the authoritative homeland system, headed, in the case of the Ciskei, by someone from his own Tshawe clan, Lennox Sebe, and whose security police were headed by his equally unsympathetic brother, Charles, came out clearly in his appeal to the American Ambassador. That the Ambassador could probably not interfere with South Africa's internal policies or practices, did not occur to Bishop Dwane. If America was genuinely the egalitarian country it professed to be, then it could use its influence (its constructive engagement) to stop the widespread oppression perpetuated by both South Africa and her satellite homelands.

The crisis of forcing clergy and their congregations to hold services away from their own churches, during political rally days, went against the grain of many faithful believers. Those who refused to tow the line exposed themselves to the wrath of the homeland leaders. Homeland vindictiveness

was as widespread as their hatred of political change that would surely lead to their leaders' losing their privileged positions. The holy Christian weekend was one of the best times for them to draw as many people, bolstered by the large numbers of Christians who would have gone to church on those days, to their political rallies. Churches stood empty in most places because the congregants were forced to go to Ntaba ka Ndoda, hence this appeal by Bishop Dwane and other clergy.

Of course, there were those who willingly supported the move because it gave them an opportunity to present themselves as Sebe supporters with all the attendant perks. They acted as foils to those who refused to come to the Ntaba ka Ndoda rallies, showing them up as what they were considered to be by the Sebes and the Matanzimas – communist agitators and non-patriots.

Like many other church leaders in the country, Bishop Dwane was constantly monitoring government and putting pressure on them to see the light and call for a national referendum or other forum to discuss the future of this country. When Mr F W de Klerk started making relevant noises in this regard, Bishop Dwane wrote him the following letter in which he urged him to take courage and move forward with his reported objectives:⁴⁴

Dear Honourable Minister

Greetings. I am writing to you in response to some of the remarks you apparently made in your Nigel speech yesterday. I hope the things which have been highlighted by this morning's T.V. report, and the local newspapers, have not been quoted out of context. If you have been reported accurately, it would appear that the gist of your message is that the time has come for South Africans of all races and different persuasions, to meet in conference, and seek together a peaceful solution to the problems that are tearing the country apart at this critical time. You were quoted as saying that you believed that things could not continue as they are, and that there have to be drastic changes. In fact, you seemed to have expressed yourself openly in favour of a new constitution, offering full participation to people

⁴⁴ Unpublished letter in Dwane collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 2/3/89.

of all races. I personally find your remarks encouraging, and welcome your desire, to steer your party in a new direction, and to work through it to bring about a new atmosphere, which is conducive to genuine negotiation. I believe it is an obligation for Christians to work for justice for all people, so that we can live together side by side in harmony and peace. This new venture to which God is calling us at this time is both a daunting and an exciting one, and one to which we must all devote our attention and energy.

But I just want to point out that your invitation to black leaders to cooperate in this new venture will be warmly received if you can indicate that negotiations will and must include the ANC and the PAC., and that to facilitate this, the government intends to restore to these organizations their democratic right to exist legally within the country, and to propagate their views unhindered. In other words, your commitment to seek a genuine, negotiated, and democratic solution, will be taken much more seriously when you show willingness, and even readiness, to release detained persons, to put an end to the state of emergency, and to release all political prisoners, and unban their organizations. This would create such an atmosphere of hope and goodwill that I believe certain members of our community would be in a position to call for a moratorium on all forms of violence, so that genuine negotiations could take place. We have seen something like this already in Zimbabwe, and I believe that the lesson is about to be repeated in the ensuing months in neighbouring Namibia. I trust and pray that as the new leader of the National Party you will accept this God-given challenge with courage and faith. We can no longer afford to fritter away, as has happened so many times in the past, the golden opportunities made available to us to make South Africa a truly non-racial society. I pray that the day may come soon. You have now been placed in a position from which you can hasten its advent. If you do this, you will become one of South Africa's illustrious sons.

I give my very best wishe[s] to you in all you[r] endeavours. Many of us will be watching your progress with a very keen interest, and praying that you may be given much wisdom, courage, and true patriotism.
Yours sincerely

THE RT REVD S. DWANE.

Before Mr Perkins replied, Bishop Dwane received a letter from the M.P. Mr Lorimer's office in parliament stating that Mr Moocroft, another Member of Parliament, had passed on to him Bishop Dwane's letter relating to the treatment of Christians by the Ciskei homeland authorities. Mr Lorimer's response was: "obviously the Ciskei, which is now an "independent" country is supposedly out of our jurisdiction but I will talk to our Department of Foreign Affairs and see if anything can be done."⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 22/3/1989.

Bishop Dwane replied immediately acknowledging receipt of the letter and added: "I am glad Mr Moorcroft made contact with you. The point is, that Ciskei and other homelands are creations of the South African Government, and are propped up by it. It must therefore take a measure of responsibility for their violations of human rights."⁴⁶

One of Bishop Dwane's prospective candidates for ordained ministry, Mr Yalezo, was sentenced to 15 years in Transkei during the times of General Bantu Holomisa, prompting Bishop Dwane to intervene and plead on his behalf:⁴⁷

The Major General
Botha Sigcau Building
UMTATA
TRANSKEI

Dear Mr Holomisa

MR LIVO S. YALEZO

I am writing to you on behalf of Mr Yalezo who is presently serving sentence in Wellington Prison, Umtata. He was sentenced in March 1988 to 15 years, but was granted in October last year, a remission of 3 years. So, already, your government has exercised clemency towards him, for this we are truly grateful. I believe that while in prison, he has been co-operative and helpful to the prison staff. I understand that he is actively engaged in various educational programmes, and that he is exercising an important ministry to his fellow prisoners. It would appear from the reports I have of him from his priest that he has undergone a fundamental change. He will be seeking to enter ordained ministry when he is released from prison. In the light of all this, I thought I should ask you to consider the possibility of a further reduction of sentence, or of suspending the whole of what he still has to serve. I am conscious of the fact that he was found guilty of dishonourable conduct which I do not wish to condone. But I want to point out that he, and many other young people in positions of trust, had to operate in an atmosphere in which corruption was rife even in high places, a situation in which lesser officials were bound to find it difficult to resist temptation. To some extent it is true that he and others of his rank were victims of a situation that was not of their own making.

Mr Yalezo is married and they have 5 children, mostly at a tender age. His wife is struggling to make ends meet, and to bring up the children. If he were to be released soon, they would be in a position to make a fresh start as a family, and the mid thirties is quite a good time to do this.

⁴⁶ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 29/3/1989.

⁴⁷ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 17/11/1989.

I trust that you will give this matter your urgent attention, and that you will see your way clear to giving a positive response to my request.

God bless you

Yours sincerely

THE RT REVD S. DWANE

Towards the end of the apartheid regime, communities were riddled and torn apart by violence and hit squads. Once more, Bishop Dwane wrote the then State President, Mr F W de Klerk, apprising him of the following resolutions taken at a recent conference of the Ethiopian Church:

Dear Mr de Klerk

I am writing to convey to you the text of two resolutions passed by our Conference last week.

Resolution 39 reads as follows:

This Conference noting that

- (a) the South African government talks of ending apartheid
- (b) the same government continues to apply apartheid policies by stealth

It therefore expresses disquiet at the way in which the South African government continues to incorporate communities into homelands against their wishes.

Resolution 40 On hit squads:

This conference is shocked, and dismayed at the revelations of death squads that are perpetrating political assassinations. We thank God that the truth is coming out, and urgently call on the State President to set up a judicial commission of Enquiry without delay, and to make the results of such an enquiry known to the public. Conference requests the Bishop to convey the text of this resolution to the President..

My very best wishes to you as you prepare for the opening of Parliament.

Yours sincerely in Christ.

THE RT REVD S. DWANE

When the Sebe regime collapsed there was celebration and jubilation because the military coup brought the hope of a better life for all especially as it seemed to be on the side of the masses. However, no sooner had Brigadier Oupa Gqozo taken over government than he clung to power and changed allegiance and sided with his South African masters, against the masses. One of the first victims was Chief Lent Maqoma, a prominent and respectable chief from the Alice area who had clashed with Sebe and went into exile in Transkei. When he was later detained in Ciskei Bishop Dwane wrote the following petition to Gqozo:⁴⁸

The Chairman of the Military Council
CISKEI
BISHO

Dear Brigadier Gqozo

I am writing to you in connection with Chief Lent Maqoma who is one of our church members in the Alice Mission District. As you know, he has been a fugitive from Mr Sebe's repressive regime since 1987, and has had to live in separation from his family all that time. As a married person with family responsibilities, you will no doubt understand his predicament. On hearing that the old regime had collapsed, I was much encouraged by your sharing a platform with Mr George of U.D.F. and the sentiments you expressed concerning your intention to work for the restoration of human rights in Ciskei; particularly your promise to release political prisoners and detainees drew much hope and expectancy. I must confess to you that I assumed that a new climate had been created for people like Chief Maqoma and Mr Ben Nomoyi to return home.

I was therefore shocked and dismayed when I received a telephone call on Friday morning from Fr Mxolisi Mfazwe, our priest in Alice, informing me about Chief Maqoma's detention since Wednesday last week. On Friday, Fr Mfazwe and Mrs Maqoma spent the whole day at Bisho trying to speak to Chief Mabandla, but to no avail. I tried in vain to contact Mr Ngcuka and Colonel Ngaki on Friday. The police station at Tamarha said he wasn't there, when in fact he'd been seen there since Wednesday. It seemed as though we were back in the old days of the Sebe regime, when people disappeared, and cabinet ministers could not be got on the telephone. I sincerely hope that my fears are ill-founded.

I am happy that Chief Maqoma and Mr Nomoyi were released on Saturday night. But I am extremely unhappy about the fact of their deportation. I am disappointed to hear that Chief Maqoma was fetched from his home by Security Police, and taken to Bisho under false pretences, and that instead of meeting you, he was taken to the cells at Tamarha. Clearly he came

⁴⁸ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 19/3/90

bearing the olive branch, and he received a rebuff from your government. I think this is regrettable. But as the English say, it's never too late to mend. And so I want to put forward two proposals to try and redeem the situation. The first is that I think your administration should apologize to Chief Maqoma for the shabby treatment he has received. If you had received him into your office, explained to him that your administration was still negotiating with the government of South Africa about his return, and then requested him to exercise patience until the matter is resolved, I am sure he would have gone back to Durban hopeful, and thankful for the courtesy shown. I would urge that you should try to set a time limit to your negotiations with our government. After all, our government is itself going to be handling the matter of refugees soon, and so Chief Maqoma's return which is a lesser problem should be resolved in a matter of weeks rather than months, we believe.

Secondly, I believe that he should be allowed to exercise his democratic right to visit his home and family as frequently as it is his wish, while he is awaiting the outcome of your negotiations. I believe that this is a reasonable concession, and would urge that you should make it possible for him to visit home without any form of hindrance or interference.

I am hopeful that you will see your way clear to taking up these two suggestions, and thus take the sting out of this rather unfortunate business. I want to assure you of our prayers as you and your colleagues seek ways of entering the search for an undivided, non-racist, and democratic South Africa. We are confident that God is on the side of all our endeavours for justice and peace in our land.

May God bless you

Yours sincerely

+Sigqibo Dwane

THE RT REVD S. DWANE

5.3 Correspondence with the Post-Apartheid Government

Bishop Dwane's prophetic role did not end with the old apartheid regime and its satellite homelands. When it ultimately surrendered and a new government came into being as from 1994, he devoted his attention to the new dispensation's own peculiar problems one of which was the high rate of crime. As President of the South African Council of Churches (although he used his own church letterhead) he wrote the following letter to the Director General of the Deputy President's office, Reverend Frank Chikane:⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 18/3/97.

Dear Frank

I am happy to let you know that the Central Committee meeting last week enclosed the process of consultation with the government on crime corruption and violence, and has called on the member churches to support the government strategy to combat crime, I think. You will in due course receive a copy of the resolution from the SACC office. But meantime, I thought you would be interested in what I said in my presidential address. The minister of Safety and Security was excellent, and won the hearts of many people. His coming certainly revived interest in dialogue and common action between the government and the churches. So please strike while the iron is still hot!

Best regards

Yours sincerely

+Sigqibo.

It is interesting to note that within three years of the coming into being of the new dispensation the three crucial challenges of the new times – crime, corruption and violence had already started making their presence felt. Add to them the HIV/AIDS pandemic the current picture is complete. Bishop Dwane identified himself with efforts to fight these scourges in our society. He had experienced crime personally when his house was burgled and set alight at one stage, and when fights broke out in his churches including one that took place on one of the most significant days in his life – his installation as first bishop of the Ethiopian Church. Throughout this, he had remained calm and left it to the authorities to deal with the problems.

His sensitivity regarding matters affecting people came to light again when he travelled to Port Elizabeth by public transport and, to his utter dismay, discovered that passengers on these buses were not insured against accidents, injury or damage. He wrote the following letter to the Minister of Transport:⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 18/3/97.

Dear Mr Maharaj

Recently I went to Port Elizabeth by an Intercape Coach, and was amazed to discover that passengers on these vehicles board them at their own risk, and that in the event of damage in respect of property, or bodily injury, the company is not accountable, even if this is caused by the negligence of its own employees. I find this utterly shocking, and wish to know whether it is government policy to allow transport companies to carry passengers, and not to take responsibility for their well being. In the light of the high rate of accidents on our roads, can we afford such a policy?

Yours sincerely

+Sigqibo Dwane

On 19 May 1997, the Managing Director of Intercape responded to the Director General: Transport, copying the letter to Bishop Dwane with a comment that “the public liability insurance is applicable to Intercape since the business started.”⁵¹ The letter included full details of the compensation involved should a passenger suffer loss, injury, or other damage while using the Intercape vehicles.

The Department of Transport, by hand of the Director General: Transport, sent Bishop Dwane a copy of a letter they had written to Intercape after receiving their response:⁵²

Messrs Intercape Ferreira Bus Service
(Pty) Ltd
Bellville 7535

Sir

**INTERCAPE FERREIRA BUS SERVICE:
RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS PASSENGERS**

Thank you for your letter dated 19 May 1997

The Department acknowledges with gratitude the fact that all vehicles are insured and that the current passenger liability applicable to each vehicle is

⁵¹ Letter from Dwane’s collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 19/5/97.

⁵² Letter from Dwane’s collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 20/6/97

R30 million per any one occurrence and that loss of or damage to luggage is also insured.

In view of the above facts the inscription on the rear of the travel ticket issued by your Company seems to be misleading. It would be appreciated if [sic] the reason [s] for this discrepancy could be furnished.

Yours faithfully

P J Geringer
For DIRECTOR-GENERAL: TRANSPORT

Needless to point out, Bishop Dwane's intervention led to the discovery of a serious discrepancy on the matter as the travel tickets appeared not to say the same thing as the explanatory letters of the company. One can only surmise that the Department and the company concerned sorted this out in the best interest of the passengers.

Under the leadership of Bishop Dwane, church-state relations had to be spelt out. In this regard, a letter was written to the Deputy President clearly setting out the areas in which these two parties could co-operate.⁵³

The Deputy President
Brief resume of SACC meeting on Tues.Oct.29

- (a) Three areas in which future discussions with government would take place, were identified. These are:
1. Crime, corruption, violence
 2. Education
 3. Health and social welfare.
- (b) There was discussion in 3 groups each group taking one of the above to investigate what the church could do on its own, and what in collaboration with the government. This proved to be a very fruitful exercise as will be seen from the many practical suggestions when the official report becomes available. But for the present, the following ideas relating to crime need to be highlighted:
1. That on [sic] there should be set up joint forums between the government and the churches at national, provincial, and local levels, the purpose of which should be to work out joint strategies to eliminate crime.
 2. That such forums should include people from the departments of safety and security, correctional services, and justice.
 3. That the church and government should mount a campaign to change the negative image of the police in our communities.

⁵³ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, undated.

- This hopefully would create an atmosphere in which ordinary people can take responsibility for reporting crime witnessed to the police.
4. That there is an urgent need for joint strategies between government and the churches to tackle the socio economic problems which are the breeding ground for much of the crime in our society.
 5. That there should be a national 'Azikhwelwa' campaign against taxi violence.

There was some discussion about the nature of the church's partnership with the government. In this regard, the opinion that seemed to be coming out strongly is that:

- (a) there should be an ongoing as opposed to an *ad hoc* relationship
- (b) the church should co-operate with the government as much as possible, but not allow itself to be co-opted
- (c) that this is a new situation and without precedent in our history, therefore one in which we have opportunities to learn about appropriate church state relations as we go along. But both church and state should be committed to uphold the constitution, and to ensure that the integrity of Christian witness is not compromised.

No problem was too little or too parochial for Bishop Dwane to attend. He was at the service of everyone, members of his own congregation, as well as the public at large. After visiting Chief Maqoma on his way to Queenstown, he was shocked by the impassibility of the roads there after a heavy storm. In his peculiar style of leaving no stone unturned, he wrote the following letter to the then Premier of the Eastern Cape, Revd Makhenkesi Stofile:⁵⁴

The Premier
Eastern Cape
Bisho

Dear Premier

On Friday of March 24, I called on Chief Maqoma at Rwantana on my way to Queenstown. It was raining and I stopped for the night. The next morning I learnt to my great shock as I was getting ready to go my engagement [sic], that the river was in flood, and that I could not continue

⁵⁴ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 05/4/2000.

with my journey. So I spent the weekend there, and was marooned there until Wednesday morning of the 29. On Saturday night a husband had to assist his wife's delivery of a baby, and if there had been a complication, it would have resulted in mortality as no ambulance could make its way there. The telephone at the Chief's place was out of order, and because the electricity supply was also disrupted, other systems dependent on it came to a standstill. If the Chief had had a consultation there with his councillors that weekend, the circumstances would have been quite intolerable. It was fortunate that the schools were on holiday; otherwise school children would have missed school for nearly a week. I am making this report in order to alleviate the hardship which the community has to face when heavy rains fall. I believe the Seymour dam exacerbates the situation when it is filled to capacity.

Sincere Regards
+Sigqibo
Bishop S. Dwane
c.Chief L. Maqoma

On 20 April 2000 the Premier responded as follows:⁵⁵

His Grace
Bishop S Dwane
Ethiopian Episcopal Church

Dear Sir

Thank you very much for your letter of the 5/4/2000. I have read its contents and comprehended the message. The matter will be looked into.

It is, however, important to point out that the situation you saw was one of many like it throughout the Province, especially in the Maluti Region. The extent of the danger in both Maluti and Ngqamakhwe/Tsomo is worse than at Tshokotshela. Unfortunately we are not exposed to the TV coverage. As such Mozambique, Mpumalanga and Northern Province get more prominence. But our people are worse off.

The other thing that our people have to look at is the location of their dwellings. In most cases it is not a product of proper planning for access to services. If our country must cater for all, ALL must take the responsibility to do what they can. The ownership of land does not depend on where the homestead is. Our leaders of rural communities must assist our people to accept that some homesteads will have to be relocated for their lives to improve (in terms of services).

Once more, thank you for your letter. It is helpful to know that we are not alone in agonizing about what needs to be done to improve the lot of our people.

Happy Good Friday and Easter.

REV.M.A.STOFILE
PREMIER: EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

⁵⁵ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 20/4/2000.

Perhaps the global nature of Bishop Dwane's concerns and spirituality could be gauged by the following letter to President Mbeki regarding the volatile situation in Zimbabwe and the gross human rights violations in that country:⁵⁶

The President of South Africa
Union Buildings
Pretoria

Dear Mr President

Greetings and good wishes. I am writing to you about the precarious situation in Zimbabwe, to say I am alarmed by what appears to be gross violations of human rights, and the attendant use of violence and intimidation, by forces allied with the ZANU Patriotic Front in that country. A few days ago, the media conveyed reports of attack upon members of our South African team of observers, by militia groups sympathetic to Mr Mugabe. Surely it is not unreasonable in the light of events such as these, for us to wonder whether anyone is safe in that country. I am for that reason, raising the question whether the time has not come for our government to send the clear signal to Mr Mugabe that this country will accept the outcome of the presidential elections, provided it is satisfied that the climate both now and at the election time, is conducive to free and fair elections. It is possible that this has been done already; indeed that Professor Wiseman Nkulu's sentiments to this effect while on a recent visit to the United States have not been gainsaid, might be indicative of your tacit approval. If that is the case, then I am pleased, but I still think it would be helpful for you to say so publicly. I think this would contribute something towards averting calamity on our borders, as well as improve our image in the eyes of many Zimbabweans who think that SADC countries do not care much about their desperate plight. I believe that the unfortunate perception must be erased in the interests of our future relations with our neighbours.

Sincere regards
Yours truly
+Sigqibo
Presiding Bishop Ethiopian Episcopal Church.

One of the incidents that shook the country's new democracy was the controversy surrounding the resignation of Mr Bulelani Ngcuka, the National Director of Public Prosecutions – the all-powerful anti-corruption busters, popularly known as the Scorpions.⁵⁷ The unit had done sterling work in investigating all kinds of crime, especially corruption, in the country, ruffling

⁵⁶ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 26/2/2002

⁵⁷ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, 6/8/2004.

the feathers of many of the politicians and bureaucrats in high offices. Bishop Dwane entered the fray when things started hotting up:

The President of South Africa
Mahlabandlophu

Dear Mr President

Regarding Mr Ngcuka's resignation

I am sure that you are aware of the perception that there are certain elements within the ANC that are unhappy about the investigation and subsequent prosecution by the Scorpions, of high profile 'heroes' of the struggle, and the rumours that Mr Bulelani Ngcuka has been under considerable pressure from those quarters, which has sadly resulted in his decision to resign. The perception is that it is not just [the] rank and file – although last year's Cosatu conference made itself very vocal on this – but members of Parliament itself. I find this very disturbing. If in fact it is the case that a significant proportion of ANC members of Parliament believes that officers of the law should turn a blind eye to the misdemeanours of certain people, then I think we are approaching the edge of a precipice. Something has to be done to stop the rot.

The Scorpions are in the estimation of many people like myself, who are eager to see our democracy succeed, doing a sterling service to our country. Corruption must be rooted out. We want to be able to say, confidently and proudly, that in our country nobody is above the law, and that our government is committed to the eradication of crime and corruption.

If I had any hesitation about your endeavours to achieve this goal, I would not be expressing these concerns to you now. I do so however in the confidence that what you say in public about these matters is in fact a sincere expression of what lies deep in your heart. We would like to see other people in positions of trust like members of Parliament follow your leadership in this regard.

My regards
+Sigqibo
Bishop S. Dwane

The President of the African National Congress, Thabo Mbeki, responded to Bishop Dwane's letter. In a long but well thought out response, Mbeki, in his characteristic articulate manner, gave a clear exposition of the stand of the African National Congress on both the Zuma and the Ngcuka affairs that had rocked the ANC and its alliances:⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Letter from Dwane's collection, Cory Library, Rhodes University, dated 10/8/2004.

His Grace Bishop Sigqibo Dwane
Motse wa Topia
Goodwood 7459

Your Grace

Many thanks for your letter dated 06 August regarding Bulelani Ngcuka's resignation from the National Directorate of Public Prosecutions (NDPP).

I would like to assure you that there was no pressure whatsoever from the ANC on Bulelani to relinquish his position. Indeed, the opposite has been the case. As the ANC, we have done everything possible to defend both Bulelani, and his duty to carry out his functions without fear or favour.

I am certain that the Movement will maintain these positions with regard to the new person who will succeed Bulelani.

Bulelani's decision to leave his post was entirely his, and, in my view, well thought out. I would suggest that you talk to him. If you do, and he explains his decision as he did to me, I am certain you will understand and accept his reasoning.

The ANC is very serious about the need to maintain a 'zero tolerance' approach to corruption. I would even be so bold as to say that we occupy the first place among all South African organisations, both political and non-political, in the fight against corruption.

It is for the same reason that those who had oppressed and despised our people will not understand the intense revulsion against corruption among our people, and the internalisation of this sentiment by the ANC....

You will recall that the people making the accusations about a "corrupt arms deal", including those in the media, are political opponents of the ANC. It is perfectly obvious that they do this as an integral part of their struggle to defeat the ANC....

From all the foregoing, you will understand why members of the ANC may indeed become "unhappy about the investigation and subsequent prosecution of high profile 'heroes' of the liberation struggle", as you put it.

The point would have to be proved that they entertain and express this sentiment because high profile heroes of the liberation struggle are affected, and not because of other perfectly understandable considerations.

It may indeed be the case that all of us hold the view that the Deputy President is being unjustly persecuted. However, we have taken the position that everybody is innocent until proved guilty, and the law should be allowed to take its course.

To say the law should take its course is also to say that the law enforcement authorities and the justice system should be allowed to do what they believe is correct and are mandated to do, within the parameters set by the constitution and the law.

This translates into the position that whatever our private beliefs and convictions, the truth must be given the possibility to emerge and triumph. I am certain the overwhelming majority of ANC members and supporters would agree with this, despite their firm conviction that the Deputy President is innocent, given what we have said above.

I am equally certain that our members would take this position in all other instances involving leaders of our Movement....

I am certain that in future the criminal justice system will act against other members of the ANC. Once again, this will be interpreted as a reflection of divisions and a struggle within the ANC, regardless of the facts.

In the instance that ANC members, like the rest of society, take one side or the other in such a confrontation between the law enforcement authorities and a citizen who happens to be a member of the ANC, it will be said that this reflects particular political alignments within the ANC.

The NDPP confrontation with the Deputy President has nothing to do with the ANC, regardless of the fact that both the Deputy President and National Director of Public Prosecutions are members of the ANC...

All manner of stories have been put out that the matter of the NDPP vs the Deputy President translates into an internal ANC fight. That is why it has equally been falsely suggested that Bulelani's resignation is an outcome of this fight.

Will we have to deal with these falsehoods each time the law enforcement authorities act against a political personality! The problem we have failed to solve is that those who have been very liberal with their accusations, providing not even a single fact to substantiate these allegations, have been allowed to get away with their dangerous and unprincipled mischief.

Apart from a few among us in the ANC and government, other South African opinion makers seem extremely reluctant to ask the accusers to do the honourable thing and produce the evidence that indicates, at least *prima facie*, that their accusations have some factual basis!

It would seem to me that the bulk of the media in our country is determined consistently to present as negative a view of the ANC as possible. It would also seem to me that many people with access to this media tend, at least over time, to absorb the false images conveyed by this partisan media....

The essential point I am making is that we should not believe everything the media tells us, believing that we are blessed with a neutral, non-partisan and objective media.

I must thank you for writing to me as you did. At least this gives us the possibility to tell our side of the story. I would be very pleased if you continued the practice to raise any and all your concerns directly with us. I promise that I will always respond to you honestly.

With warm regards and best wishes.

THABO MBEKI

[... Indicates my omissions]

5.4 Summary

It is patently clear from this chapter that Bishop Dwane's spirituality was integrative in nature, covering a wide spectrum of issues central to which was his own interest in the particularity of his own people in Christian worship. His sense of African identity dominated his life. Beyond this he had an unwavering commitment to the welfare of other people. He never hesitated to challenge the government when he discerned injustice. Those in public office, Presidents, Ministers, homeland leaders and the like never escaped his call to order whenever anything happened to members of the public. No cause was too menial for him to tackle – the scrapping of unjust laws, state threats to the security of Archbishop Tutu, the victimisation of opponents of the government, and the safety of commuters in public transport – were issues he dealt with and followed up very conscientiously on a daily basis. His endless search for selfhood, equality of all people in an egalitarian society, equalled his commitment to an authentic African spirituality as will be seen from the following chapter in which he starts redirecting his church towards an authentic African Christian spirituality. He ensured that the umbilical cord with the Anglican Communion remained intact although domination by the latter would come to an end..

CHAPTER SIX:

THE EVOLUTION OF AN AUTHENTIC AFRICAN SPIRITUALITY IN THE ETHIOPIAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH

6.1 Introduction

One cannot even begin to think about an authentic African spirituality without first addressing Christianity's greatest fear in this regard – syncretism. This term is sometimes used as a scarecrow to scare African Christians away from their traditional roots and to make them perpetual vassals of the new culturally-bound Western religion. If African Christians have to attain their freedom from denigration and religious enslavement, this matter has to be addressed once and for all. We cannot worship God with a Damocles' sword hanging over our heads.

As pointed out earlier on, detractors of African Christianity cry out 'syncretism' whenever Africans seek to incarnate Christ in our religion. Of late they have even gone to the extent of locking African Christianity into historical periodization by referring to it as either "post-Christian" or "nativism", as pointed out by Pato (1990:2):

Students of the African indigenous church movement such as Oosthuizen, especially in his earlier works, operated with the concepts of "post-Christian" and "nativism" in respect of the AICs. He maintained that the ethnocentric features of the AICs made them forfeit any claim to be the Church of Christ. The chief characteristic of these post-Christian groups, he wrote, is the maintenance of traditional religion instead of the Word of God as normative. Whilst Oosthuizen dismissed the ethnocentrism of the AICs, he did not go further to articulate explicitly the authentic features of "the church of Christ" in the African context.

Overwhelming evidence regarding the culture-based-ness of Christianity defeats the attempts by some scholars to taint the struggle to free African Christianity from religio-cultural oppression by playing the syncretism card which is sometimes used as a smokescreen to perpetuate cultural imperialism. A serious flaw with that kind of argumentation is that it willfully presupposes that Christianity is absolutely culture-free whilst it is not. It has the distinctive cultural hallmarks of the various contexts – Jewish, Greek Roman, etc – through which it travelled to Africa and hopefully to the whole world, over the ages.

If one applied the concepts “post-Christian” and “nativism” consistently, then one would have to label anything post-Jewish as “nativism”. This arrested conception of Christianity is certainly at variance with its catholicity and it makes it even more imperative for Christianity to be missionized.

Pato (1990:2) explicates the syncretism theory very articulately in the following extract:

Theoretically this paper claims that focusing on syncretism as the dominant motif of the AICs evades the issue, and does not provide an adequate understanding of the AICs. The suggestion here is twofold: firstly this kind of explanation of the nature of the AICs does not provide an account of the socio-cultural and religious conflict and thus the struggle for liberation of the AICs. Secondly, it does not clear up the puzzlement as to why the AICs exist and continue to grow in just the fashion they do.

Pato (1990:2) challenges this view at four levels which I will summarize very briefly. Firstly, he challenges the ‘ideological assumption that Christianity is a unified consistent phenomenon against which deviations may be checked and balanced’; secondly, it ‘dismisses the validity and power of the traditional African religious symbols’, thirdly, ‘this explanatory motif evades critical self-examination of the missionary methods of evangelization’, and finally, ‘this approach does not take seriously the context in which African conversions have taken place.’

6.2 Contextualising the Anglican liturgy

African Christians have long been yearning for an African church that would address not only their aspirations and frustrations, but that will also give them identity, dignity and particularity as could be seen from the following comments by the World Student Christian Federation (*Vide* Mugambi and Magesa, 1990:30):

Africa is on the threshold of a new era. Expensive Western structures of inherited institutionalized religion will not remain (in Africa) for ever. As the old dies, the new must emerge. This is the point at which the churches in Africa need theoretical and practical help. Genuine African aspirations must come to the fore; imaginative and creative experiments should be carried out regardless of cost; innovation should be witnessed in all spheres of life, including services of worship. Schools of theology should not be patterned after their European and American counterparts. Rather the teaching should be tuned to the demands of present day Africa in order to adequately respond to the beating pulses of these changing times. (*Presence*, Vol.no. 3, 1973, p.1)

Dwane persistently emphasised that the church should give expression to the black members' situational context as African Christians and that it should not be an ill-fitting borrowed garment for its adherents. Liturgy, therefore, should not be at variance with the context of the worshippers.

This view is articulated succinctly in the following comment by Dwane (1989b:29):

We have been made to look European in outward appearance by our manner of dress, but more seriously, to think, speak, and behave European. But we are beginning to realise that we are in captivity, and that we need to be liberated in order that we may be ourselves, the people whom God has made, and wants us to be. We are learning in this process of re-orienting and re-educating ourselves how to become African, and what it is that makes us African. And as we 'decolonise' ourselves, we are rediscovering that there are riches in our own heritage, and learning to appreciate them. The riches have been bypassed in previous attempts to bring the gospel to Africa. But they are still available and ready to welcome it, and give it a home and a new character. Christianity must have a truly African character if it is to remain in Africa, and be the religion of Africa.

Allen (2006:136) cites very insightful comments by Archbishop Emeritus Tutu on this matter:

Drawing on the exponents of African theology, Tutu said that African Christians were suffering from a kind of schizophrenia. Missionaries had expected them to become westerners before they could become Christians: "They had to deny their African-ness to become genuine Christians Virtually all things African were condemned as pagan and to be destroyed root and branch. They even had to adopt so-called Christian names at baptism because their beautiful African names were considered heathen." Most African Christians accepted this cerebrally, he said, but their psyche had been damaged by it: "African Christians ...were shuttling back and forth between two worlds, during the day being respectable western-type Christians and at night consulting traditional doctors and slaughtering to the ancestors under the euphemisms of a 'party'"

This view, resonates with the comment of the Third International Anglican Liturgical Consultation (1989) held in New York that, 'Liturgy to serve the contemporary church should be truly inculturated.' The Consultation, reported by Mathew (in Stevenson and Spinks, 1991:145), reaffirmed two of the Lambeth Resolutions (1988), i.e. 'Christ and Culture', and 'Liturgical freedom':

This Conference (a) recognises that culture is the context in which people find their identity; (b) affirms that ... the gospel judges every culture ... challenging some aspect of the culture while endorsing others for the benefit of the church and society; (c) urges the church everywhere to work at expressing the unchanging gospel of Christ in words, actions, names, customs, liturgies which communicate relevantly in each society.

This Conference resolves that each Province should be free subject to essential Anglican norms of worship, and a valuing of traditional materials, to seek that expression of worship which is appropriate to Christian people in their cultural context.

Africa has been marching on with this idea of indigenization as can be seen from the proliferation of so-called Indigenous African Christian Churches in many parts of the continent as observed by Appiah-Kubi (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres, 1979:117). Referring to African Christian churches in general and the Ghanaian Akan churches in particular, Appiah-Kubi (1979:118) highlights the following as the most important features of these churches:

The most important and unique aspect of these churches is that they seek to fulfill that which is lacking in the Euro-American missionary churches, that is, to provide forms of worship that satisfy both spiritually and emotionally and to enable Christianity to cover every area of human life and fulfill all human needs. These churches maintain that to satisfy Akan needs, Christianity should not only integrate all the good elements found in Akan culture, but also find means to unite Christianity and daily life in such a way that the first inspires the second.

If Ethiopianism had brought anything to the African Church, it is that the received faith would never be viable in Africa unless it was rooted there and not in Europe. It drew people away from a faith that sought to raise them to equality by denying them the same equality, a faith that purported to raise them from the so-called 'state of savagery' to perfect humanity but ensured that they remain at the lowest rung of the human ladder, hence the beginning of a movement that made blacks look away into the horizons of their own faith, searching for a form of religion that would meet their expectations as shown by Gray (1990: 64):

Almost simultaneously with this white triumphalism, African reactions began to be marked by disappointment and delusions. The new men, those who, often at considerable cost, had acquired the new skills and had even successfully acquired the same academic qualifications as their White teachers and rulers, discovered that this long, laborious apprenticeship had not opened them the way into the charmed circle of power and influence. The Gospel might proclaim that God was no respecter of persons, but His European servants were deeply conscious of racial and class differentials. The whole structure of colonial rule rested on the seemingly inviolable prestige of the Whites.

Gray (1990:1) in what he terms 'African Cosmologies and First Appropriation of Christianity' depicts the incoming faith as a phenomenon that outpaced the expectations and the understanding of its very carriers. According to him (ibid) 'the tensions inherent in the contrast between European and African Christianity have disturbed, alarmed and depressed those who carried the faith to Africa.' He finds this odd as Christianity is striving to be a universal religion. It is therefore clear that the implications of this aspiration have outpaced those who brought the faith to Africa. Faith across borders and cultures cannot but manifest startling difficulties and differences. These have to be expected and respected.

This could be compared to a parent who gave birth to a baby but found it baffling and difficult to countenance the baby becoming something different from her. She consequently spends time and energy trying to change the child to something different from its own environmental and biological make-up. This resonates with the importance Mathew attaches to context. Mathew touches on an issue that has been a raw nerve in the praxis of the church in South Africa – the extent to which the church should acknowledge people’s context. For centuries the missionaries acted as though there was only one culture, the church’s tradition and nothing else. Contrary to this, Mathew (in Stevenson and Spinks 1991:145) clearly points out that there are two cultures to be considered:

The Prayer Book tradition which determined the norm of the Anglican Communion is largely shaped by British and European ideas and culture. In following this culture, the Churches in non-European countries had to live in two cultures; first the culture of their religion and second that of their own society. In the early stages of missionary expansion the success of the missionary task depended on how far they were Westernized.

It is interesting to note that Shepherd (1955:184), one of the staunch reactionaries of the missionary era, once made the following pertinent comments in defence of indigenization:

It is the experience of the Christian Church in many lands that in process of time, as the Faith becomes woven into the life of any people, new and original worship forms spring into use. An early day revealed the possibilities of this among the Xhosa people. Ntsikana, although illiterate, taught his people a hymn which has been rightly described as one of the great hymns of the Christian Church. Even in translation it is strikingly original. It is to be regretted that later days did not see this high promise revealed in others and that in consequence, in Southern Africa, so much religious expression is mere imitation of European forms. This, it is to be hoped, time will modify and Bantu modes come into their own. When these are embodied in worship literature, the heritage of the universal Church will be enriched by tribute from Africa.

Dwane faced many challenges as he journeyed towards self-realisation. The new Ethiopian Prayer Book, *Incwadi yonqulo yomzi wase Tiyopiya* (2004)

was a culmination of years of prayer and preparation, characterised by trial liturgical leaflets from 1999 when the church received its full autonomy. I have taken the liberty to reintroduce Mtuze's preliminary findings as contained in *The Essence of Xhosa Spirituality and the Nuisance of Cultural Imperialism* (2003) on the earlier liturgical developments in the church. This will be followed by observations on the full-fledged liturgy that followed in 2004.

Having gained ecclesial emancipation from the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, the Ethiopians immediately set about ensuring religious emancipation and theological re-education which Khabela (in Khabela and Mzoneli (1998:19) articulates as follows:

The ideal for the Church in South Africa may be put in these terms: How can theological education utilize the history, culture and experience of the oppressed to enhance the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the manifestation of his kingdom to reconcile a racially, ethnically and tribally polarized community? Such theological education must stress the importance of culture because, as experience has taught us, the ideals of political liberation alone, no matter how noble, lack the spiritual and emotional depth necessary to grasp the totality of our being that turns us to faith without which it is impossible to experience integrity and peace.

It cannot be doubted that theological education in the Anglican Church as in all other mainline churches was an unmitigated heavy dose of Western religious thought, based on Western Christian culture and tradition that eschewed anything black or African as either pagan or idolatrous. That is why after so many years of existence, their black Christian mainline counterparts are mere poor imitations of the mother-churches.

Anglicanism has not been immutable when it came to worship. Several changes have gone into its liturgy since 1549, the time of the Book of Common Prayer. While the early Anglican Church liturgy, according to Davies (1978: 18) "was to be loyal to scripture and loyal to tradition – it was to contain nothing repugnant to the word of God and was to be expressive of

the mind and purpose of the early fathers.” Davies clearly points out that ‘with the passage of time these basic principles have been modified. Strict uniformity is no longer recognized as tenable.’ The aim today according to Davies (ibid) is ‘to move away from rigid and universal adherence to a single ‘use’ towards a conformity to a general pattern only.’

Several Anglican Communion or Lambeth Conferences deliberated over this matter as time went by, ending up by recommending a very flexible approach to the forms of worship in overseas Anglican churches, according to Davies (1978: 18). This has remained the stand of the Anglican Communion over the years although not much adaptation or even indigenization has taken place especially with regard to the black Anglican churches in Southern Africa according to Davies (1978:19).

Dwane’s decision to change his church’s liturgy was not unheard of in church circles. The only extraneous element in his decision was Africanisation. The Anglican Church itself has not been immutable and rigid in so far as liturgy is concerned. It has been quick to make adjustments where necessary and when it suits them. A classic example of this change heppened when Desmond Tutu was appointed Dean of St Mary’s Cathedral. No sooner did he assume this position than he made drastic liturgical changes that Allen (2006: 149) explains as follows:

Tutu’s principal overt struggle with his congregation concerned not politics but updating the services. Prescribed forms of worship, published in a Book of Common Prayer originating in the sixteenth century, are central to Anglican tradition; and the cathedral was proud of its high standards in liturgy and in formal western church music. The South African church had just supplemented its South African Prayer Book of 1954 with an experimental update of important services under the title Liturgy 75. At a superficial level, this involved changes such as addressing God using “you” and “your” instead of “Thou” and “Thee,” and “They.” The cathedral had adopted Liturgy 75 for smaller services but continued to use the old prayer book for high mass on Sundays.

Liturgical changes in themselves are surmountable and tolerable. The problem always comes with regard to innovations and their implications as can be seen from the following discussion of cultural elements that tend to cause tension among Christians from different cultural backgrounds.

6.3 The incorporation of traditional healers into the church

The first liturgical moves introduced by Bishop Dwane were quite radical in that the liturgy aimed at incorporating diviners into the church, a move that raised eyebrows in many people. Needless to say, fundamentalists could not countenance diviners entering the church in their full regalia with the baggage of being seen as ‘idol worshippers.’

The new liturgy ushered in a number of extrinsic elements into the style of worship in the Order of Ethiopia. No sooner had the CPSA Provincial Synod granted the Order full autonomy than it took the first steps to affirm its determination to unshackle itself from the Eurocentric nature of the CPSA with regard to *Qamata*, the ancestors and the role of malevolent spirits (Vide Dwane 1999b). This radical change of outlook comes out clearly in their newly evolved liturgy for the incorporation into the church of diviners or those who feel themselves called to divinership.

This move on the part of the Order of Ethiopia contrasts, radically, with the outright rejection of divinership by the established churches which led to alienation as Pauw (1975: 168) observes:

If the cases reveal the attitude that the institution of the doctor-diviner is incompatible with church membership, the obverse is found in those church members or baptized Christians who lapsed from the Church altogether when they became doctors. Whether they made a conscious choice or gradually drifted away from the Church, they rejected their church ties for the traditional institution.

Let me hasten to emphasise that shunning the church was not caused, as could be erroneously inferred from the above statement, by any inherent incompatibility with church membership of the diviners but it was, undeniably, because of the fact that the institutional churches rejected divinership as one of the many manifestations of the dreaded ‘paganism monster’ that diviners and neophytes decided to break ties with the church.

Needless to say, the central role of the *amagqirha* (diviners) was not only misconstrued, but completely undermined by the authorities. Before the Order of Ethiopia is, once again, accused of dragging paganism into the church, it is important to give a clear exposition of the role of diviners in African society. Perhaps Broster (1982: 15) gives one of the most lucid descriptions of the *amagqirha* in broad outline:

Before the arrival of the missionaries, the amaXhosa adhered to the ancestral cult. Although the members of this cult believe in a Supreme Being and other spirits, they direct their prayers and worship, in the form of sacrifices, to God via the spirits of their ancestors.

As in other religions, the “priests” of the ancestral cult experience a vocation and undergo training. As *amagqirha*, they are called upon to interpret or divine ancestral behests, and for this reason they are often referred to as “diviners”.

In actual fact the *amagqirha* serve a threefold function of religion, magic and medicine. In the first place they keep in contact with the spirits of the ancestors, and ascertain the causes of misfortune and the required propitiation. Secondly they expose evil-doers and identify witches and sorcerers. In the old days this practice was referred to as “smelling out” and probably gave rise to the colloquial but incorrect name of “witch-doctors”. Furthermore, to ward off evil, the *amagqirha* provide charms and magic medicine. Finally, through a knowledge and study of the healing properties of plants, they administer herbal extracts in the treatment of disease.

Ngada and Mofokeng (2001:35) counter the attitude of the mainline churches as follows:

The demonization of the whole African way of life including health and healing was brutal. The missionary church spent its time and energy denouncing the traditional doctors instead of preaching Jesus Christ’s gospel of healing. Western style medical doctors, nurses, hospitals, clinics and chemists were introduced.

The change of attitude towards traditional doctors (a term that includes both the diviners and the herbalists, *amagqirha* and *amaxhwele* respectively) is happening throughout the continent both in the secular and the sacred realms according to Campbell (1998:1) who decries the deliberate misconceptions that are propagated about the practices of healers.

The Roman Catholics seem to be several steps ahead of the Anglicans on this matter, judging from the discourse generated in their publications and in their synods. Some of the Roman Catholic African scholars have been commenting steadily on this vexing matter. This comes out very clearly in the following discussions.

Skhakhane (1999:4) starts the debate by dispelling popular misconceptions regarding the being and role of ancestors in African religion when he says:

Ancestors are human beings. They are men and women who share the same blood relationship and who have passed to the next world. They are not dead but have only undergone a transition into another sphere of life. It is not a place of spirits but that of persons. An ancestor has a connotation of human personality. In English they are sometimes referred to as “ancestral spirits” but in African tradition they are merely called ancestors and not spirits.

It is remarkable to note that Skhakhane makes a distinction between pseudo-diviners, semi-diviners and genuine diviners because not all diviners are genuine diviners. Some are chance takers and charlatans as in any profession where there is financial benefit. We are talking about genuine diviners. After fully explaining the role of genuine diviners in African society, Skhakhane (1999:10) makes a very pertinent comment:

The Church’s condemnation of *izangoma* was based on two things namely superstitious abuse and lack of full knowledge of their profession and practices. Time has proved that a negative attitude towards *izangoma* got us nowhere. If anything it presents us with serious pastoral problems.

Decock (1999:37) advances the discussion plausibly by suggesting a more positive look at the efficacy of consulting *izangoma*:

The consulting of *izangoma* also needs to be looked at from a pastoral point of view: Does it help people? What kind of help do people get? In what way would this kind of help be compatible with the Christian tradition? In what way can it offer something new and valuable to the Christian pastoral practice? Does the consulting of *izangoma* enrich the Christian practice as every culture is called to contribute to the richness of the “Catholic” understanding of the Christian life?”

6.4 Analysis of the Order of Ethiopian liturgy

Having tried to address some of the misconceptions and attitudes towards traditional healers, it is now incumbent on me to venture a critical analysis of the Order of Ethiopian liturgy as it relates to the incorporation into the church of traditional healers.

The crux of the liturgy is its blending of Western religious concepts and African traditional religious concepts. The Trinity, involving *Qamata*, Jesus and the ancestors is recognised throughout. *Qamata* is said to be the Creator while Jesus is described as the Young Sacrificial Ox. Traditional images abound because *Qamata* is also described as the Perennial Fountain, the Waterfall with a foamy mouth and the Bottomless Sea. Reference to a foamy mouth resonates with the “*ubulawu*” (charm) that diviners and heads of families partake of when celebrating important rituals. The eucharistic bread is referred to as “the home baked wheat bread” and the chalice translates into the “beaker containing beer made from corn”.

The preamble to the service boldly makes use of terminology that the institutional churches, including the CPSA, have eschewed hitherto. Secondly, the service includes references to the cattle kraal and family rituals besides employing heavy traditional terminology such as *ukunqula*, (to worship or to invoke), *intsonyama* (meat from inside the sacrificial animal’s shoulder), *ukushwama* (to partake of the special family portion), *ukucamagusha* (to propitiate, to pray for peace) and *camagu* (let there be

peace), terms which resonate with those normally used in traditional celebrations and rituals. Given the context, their use is perfectly justified.

The ancestors are referred to as those who have wrapped all people in *Qamata*'s love, a statement which elicits a response from the audience that calls for peace from the hosts of the One-who-is-above. This clearly indicates that the ancestors are seen as part of the heavenly hosts consisting of saints, angels, archangels and other heavenly bodies.

It is interesting to note that after the supplications and intercessions the centrality of Christ is affirmed. The priest gives the diviner (or neophyte) the Light of Christ who is regarded as the Proto-Ancestor. That Christ takes precedence over the ancestors comes out clearly in the following prayer:

Ukhanyo lukaKrestu malubakhanyisele abo bandibizela kolu bizo lobugqirha, ukuze bandikhokele ngalo kolu hambo lunemingcipheko bandifikise esiphelweni esihle.

(May the light of Christ shine upon those who have called me to the calling of traditional healer so that they may lead me in this hazardous journey and bring me to a happy ending).

Once again, Christianity and African spirituality are blended perfectly when the traditional healer renews his/her vows in the Christian faith and his/her belief in *Qamata*, the Creator of life, and the One who owns all. Christ is once again referred to as “*icamagu lokusixolelanisa*” (reconciliatory sacrifice, or better still, atonement) and “*nomthombo wobomi nempilo*” (the source or fountain of life and health). The Holy Spirit is described in such a way that it is not brought into conflict with the ancestral presences because it is said that God's heavenly bodies and the hosts of ancestral beings are all like a stream in people's lives that is strongly sustained by water whose source is a particular fountain.

The use of the holy chrism once again affirms the religious nature of the incorporation. Maybe in time to come the Bishop might even include the use

of the family charm (*ubulawu bekhaya*) before the next phase of the ceremony, that of handing the healer over to the family “*izihlwele*” (hosts of ancestral presences) in the courtyard.

The interface between *Qamata*, Jesus, the ancestral presences and the malevolent spirits comes out very clearly in the following concluding prayer by the priest after the head of family has addressed the family ancestors:

Njengoko nina zihlwele nihleli eNkosini thina bakweli phakade sikholiwe ukuba konke enikwenzayo kukholisa yona. Ngaloo nkolo ke siyamnikela uN...kuni ukuba nimkhokelele kuYesu igqirha lasenyameni nasemoyeni, aphile kwizinto ezimgulisayo, aze axhotyiswe ngezixhobo zokuchasa amandla obumnyama, nokuphilisa abanye abantu. Simnikezela sisithi makube camagu, indlela yakhe ibe mhlophe.

(As you the family hosts are seated with the Lord we in this world believe that all you do pleases him. In that belief we then hand N...over to you so that you may lead him to Christ the healer of flesh and spirit, so that he/she may be healed of all affliction, and be equipped with the weaponry with which to repel the forces of darkness and with which he/she would be able to heal other people. We hand him/her over to you saying may there be peace, and may his/her way henceforth be bright).

The traditional nature of the ceremony is enhanced by the singing of Ntsikana’s Great Hymn and the beating of the cow-hide as the congregation returns to the church where Mass is said. The presence of the ancestors is ensured, once more, by the use of the “*umnikandiba*” leaves as incense instead of the conventional incense. One wonders, though, whether there is a correlation between the “*umnikandiba*” plant and the “*umnuka-mbiba*” plant which is used when swinging a baby through its smoke to ward off evil spirits. My suspicion is that the former is a corruption of the latter were it not for the difference in smell as I believe the “*umnikandiba*” has a pleasant smell whereas the “*umnuka-mbiba*” plant has an acrid smell. Both plants are used to drive away evil spirits.

Once more the incense, according to what the priest says as he blesses it, is equated with the smell of Jesus Christ which drives away all evil spirits. The ensuing prayers clearly indicate that the family rituals have an important role

to play in ensuring reconciliation among people and that the role of the ancestral presences in safeguarding members of their families should not be undermined.

How far this development will go in influencing other churches remains to be seen but it does represent a strong departure, both in practice and in attitude, from conventional wisdom in the institutional churches. Besides, it is an important milestone and a commendable response to the challenge posed in 1994 by the New People Media Centre (in Faith and Justice Network 1996:18) in one of twelve 'Concrete Proposals for the Synod' in Rome:

Africa is very much in need of its own liturgical rites that can enable it to celebrate in truth its faith and to build truly African Christian communities through worship. The challenge of the African church is to exploit fully Africa's cultural heritage, its symbols and symbolism, its history and actual context, and its theological thinking and reflection. Such African rites will serve as one of the pillars of truly local churches, especially in the celebrations of the vital sacramental moments in life. Such rites will assist in eliminating dualism and at the same time give the legitimate opportunity to the African church to enrich the universal church and all the communities that belong to it.

Embracing African culture has had an unexpected response from some of the African Independent or Initiated Churches. Ngada and Mofokeng (2001:17) have clearly exposed a fact about inculturation about which we have always been in the dark. Independent Churches are not different, in essence, from the mainline churches regarding the incorporation of cultural elements in their church life. After accusing black mainline churches of hypocrisy, Ngada and Mofokeng point out that the very churches that criticised the incorporation of culture by the independents, are now falling over themselves to do the same through inculturation and Africanisation.

6.5 The new Ethiopian Episcopal Church Prayer Book

For many years the Order of Ethiopia used the Anglican Book of Prayer up to and including Liturgy 1989. In his introduction to the new Ethiopian

Episcopal Church Prayer Book, Dwane (2004: introduction) makes the following pertinent comments in *Incwadi yoNqulo yoMzi wase Tiyopiya* (2004):

Olu shicilelo lokuqala lwale ncwadi yonqulo yoMzi wase Tiyopiya sisivuno, ukususela kunyaka ka 1999, unyaka eyangena ngawo le tyalike kwinqanaba lokuzilawula, samalinge aliqela okuyila iinkonzo zonqulo lwabase Afrika. Kwisi Bhengezo sokhohlo lwale tyalike esamkelwa sagunyaziswa yiKomfa ka Agasti 1999, kukho isithembiso esithi 'siyazinikezela kuxanduva lokubambisana namanye amakristu ezinye izindlu namaziko azo, ngenjongo yokuba sisebenzele ityalike eyakuthi ibe ngumdiliya wenene wesithiya se Afrika, osivuno sayo sityetyiswe ngumngquba wobutyebi base Afrika nezinongo zobukristu, sivuno eso sizakuba yinxaxheba yomzimba kaKristu.'

(This first edition of the Ethiopian Church's Book of Prayer is a culmination, since the year 1999, when the church attained its autonomy, of several attempts to establish liturgical rites designed for the people of Africa. In the church's Declaration of Faith that was adopted and authorised by the 1999 Conference, there is a pledge that 'we commit ourselves to the responsibility of co-operating with Christians from other denominations and faiths, with the aim of working towards establishing a church that will be a true African vine whose harvest is enriched by the rich African fertilizer (manure), spiced with Christian precepts, that harvest being an integral part of the body of Christ.'

Historical tradition and the rich context of the lives and languages of the black people form the corner-stone of this new liturgy, as clearly expressed by Dwane (in *Incwadi yoNqulo yoMzi wase Tiyopiya* 2004, introduction):

Iinkonzo zonqulo ezikule ncwadi lilinge ngoko lokwenza unqulo lwetyalike katolika oluvela kwimihla yamandulo, lwanikezelwa kwintlaninge yezizukulwana, kusetyenziswa kulo imibono yenguquko yabantu baseAfrika, nobutyebi beentetho zabo. Kulithemba kuthi ukuba ngale nkqubo yolu nqulo, abantu baseAfrika nabo bayakuzolulela kuThixo ezabo izandla.

(The liturgical rites contained in this book are an attempt to establish a catholic liturgical rite rooted in tradition and passed on from generation to generation, using African people's visions of conversion and the riches of their languages. We sincerely hope that through this liturgical rite, the people of Africa will also raise their hands to God.)

The word '*unqulo*' used to be taboo to the missionaries as they wrongly associated it with what they wrongly called 'ancestor worship'. That is why in many churches you will only find the coinage *umbhedesho* (derived from Afrikaans *bid*) instead of *unqulo*. We, on the contrary, all know that the

amaXhosa never worshipped the ancestors. They venerate them and hold them in high regard as they do their fathers and grandfathers and women.

Ngada and Mofokeng (2001: 29) clarify this misconception very remarkably when they say:

Some Christians have the completely mistaken idea that in our African churches we continue the “pagan” practice of “worshipping” the spirits of our ancestors. In the first place we do not **worship** our ancestors, we **respect** our ancestors in the same way as we respect, honour and revere our living parents. And we are protected by the spirit of our ancestors in the same way as we are protected by our parents. Worship is reserved for God alone.

6.5.1 Morning and Evening Prayers

The first crucial innovation in the liturgy is the inclusion of Qamata (God). Historically, the missionaries were opposed to the use of the term Qamata for God because they regarded Qamata as a pagan god. They preferred and enforced the use of the borrowed term, Thixo, which is the only name found in the standard isiXhosa Christian Bible and in the Anglican Prayer Book.

The introduction ends with another interesting traditional expression: ‘*Makube Camagu*’ which means ‘May there be peace’. *Camagu* was also eschewed because it was associated with ‘ancestor worship’. Ancestors were condemned, with anything that was associated with them. This original unacceptable meaning is explained as follows by Kropf (1915:286):

Call on the departed ancestors; to utter incantations for help as is done by doctors for their patients.

As with all churches, the first service in the new prayer book is the Morning Prayer. This starts with what are called Sentences/Proclamations. Traditional flavour is found right from the beginning in the following expressions:

IPasika

Eyethu iPasika enguKristu yenziwe idini lethu

Ngoko masenze umgidi sigcobe.

(Our Easter which is Christ has been sacrificed for us. Therefore we must hold a celebration on it.)

This departs slightly from the extant Anglican version which runs:

Eyethu iPasika enguKristu siyibingelelwe

Ngoko ke masiwenze uMthendeleko.

(Our Easter which is Christ has been sacrificed for us

Therefore we have to say Mass.)

Semantically, the two versions are not exactly the same in that the old Anglican version is not as culture-bound as the Ethiopian version. It refers to a sacrifice having been made and the celebration that normally goes with rituals in amaXhosa society. Mass or Holy Communion would not have the same connotation or effect.

Under *Ngenyanga ka Agasti* we find another interesting expression – the visual presentation of Ethiopians with outstretched arms before the Lord. Once again, this symbolism links the worshippers directly with God instead of doing this guised in Western forms of worship. They are presented as standing before God worshipping him as black Christians.

From Rubric 4 the popular expression *Camagu* is reintroduced and it runs through the whole of the new liturgy:

Bhotani, sinibulisa egameni le Nkosi

(Greetings, we greet you in the name of the Lord)

Camagu, nathi siyabulisa, sinikezelana ngalo mbuliso woxolo nobunye.

(Let there be peace, we also greet you and exchange with you this greeting of peace and unity.)

The service is neatly couched in traditional veneration terms. *Camagu* is followed by several indigenous expressions associated with traditional veneration in the courtyard.

The one who leads the service continues:

*Camagu sihlwele soPhezulu nimi njalo phambi kwesihlalo ninqula
nidumisa imini nobusuku lowo wayekho noyakusoloko ekho nanini.*
(Let there be peace to you *sihlwele* (hosts) of the One in the highest, as you
stand before his Seat worshipping and praising the One who was there and
who will always be there all the time.)

The word '*sihlwele*' has traditional ritual connotations. Although the general meaning of the term could be hosts, as translated above, its contextual meaning is deeper than that because it refers to a host of departed souls of members of the paternal and maternal genealogies that now stand around the Seat of the Highest praising him. The English 'heavenly hosts' connotes angels and such beings.

The response, '*Camagu nathi siyanqula*' is appropriate in the amaXhosa context sketched above because it is the normal response uttered when a family seeks favour with its own '*izihlwele*'.

Rubric 13, the confessional prayer, touches on several issues around sin and doing wrong. The confessional prayer is said to oPhezukonke (the One above all) who 'sees our consciences and the consciences of those in fellowship with us.'

According to the prayer, the wrongdoings for which the penitents seek forgiveness are clear and concrete, and their consciences bear witness to this:

- (i) *Ngenene siphambukile kwindlela yobulungisa nenyano*
- (ii) *Sabunikela umva ubuntu*
(We have departed from the way of righteousness and the truth
and we have turned our back on *ubuntu*.)

Righteousness and the truth are the pillars of every balanced community. Love, tolerance, and good relations cannot survive without these two strong

pillars that are, in turn, direct by-products of love and *ubuntu*. If they are not there, there can be no *ubuntu* because *ubuntu* emanates from righteousness and the truth.

The centrality of Christ and his atonement for the sins of the world is emphasised in Rubric 14 – the absolution that refers to Christ as a sacrifice that reconciles the world with the Creator of all things. Only He can redeem humankind from the bondage of the Evil One, give people peace, good health and luck, and finally keep them in communion with God, the Holy Spirit and the ancestors.

The Triune God is duly acknowledged, but the parental cosmos cannot be complete without the inclusion of the ancestors, hence the end of the absolution:

*... aningenise kubudlelwane bakhe noYise, noNyana noMoya Ongcwele,
naseluxolweni nookhokho bethu.*
(... and keep you in his fellowship with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and in peace with our forebears.)

It is interesting to note that Amen is retained at the end of conventional psalms and songs with *Camagu* replacing it in the case of all responses to cultural incantations. In this way, the liturgy points to its mother-source as well as its father-source, Africanism.

Dwane did not jettison everything Anglican when he adopted a new liturgy. Instead, he kept a substantial number of psalms, songs etc from the source liturgy, eg. The *Te Deum Laudamus* (*Siyakubonga Thixo*). It is also remarkable that while Qamata abounds in the new liturgy, this God-name is used interchangeably with Thixo.

The Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds as well as the Lord's Prayer, have been retained unchanged, in order to keep the received pillars of faith intact. This

applies to the Baptismal Creed as reflected in Rubric 22. This strengthens the bond between the Ethiopian Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Southern African.

The liturgy is a combination of Anglican and new Ethiopian prayers, moving gently from the historical to contextual and back. Anglicanism is gently interspersed with Ethiopianism , eg. Rubric 32: 12:

Khokela Nkosi ngoMoya wakho uMzi waseTiyopiya. Velisa kuwo izipho namagugu ase Afrika, ubaphe bonke abantu bawo ukukhuthala nokunyaniseka kuwe, wandise inani labasebenzi kwesi sidiliya sakho.

(Guide, O Lord, with your Spirit the Ethiopian Church. Bring forth in it the African gifts and heritages, and give their custodians diligence and faithfulness to you, and increase the number of workers in your vineyard.)

Besides the prayer for the workers which stresses the need for good wages, perserverence and faithfulness at work, accountability to God is also emphasised. The home base is not forgotten as it forms an integral part of the totality of a person's life:

Velela, Nkosi amakhaya ethu, sikelela iinkundla zawo, wenze ukuba zibe zindawo zonqulo lwakho nohlaziyo lobudlelwane nobuntu (p.12).

(Watch over our homes, O Lord; bless their courtyards and make them places of your worship, the renewal of relationship, and humaneness.)

The Evening Prayer has not revealed any extraordinary traditional innovations as compared to the Morning Prayer discussed above, except for the invocation of angels and the departed ancestors under Rubric 57:

Bawo onenceba siyakubongoza thumela izithunywa zakho zisilondoloz; zithi nezizalwana zethu kwelemimoya zisindwendwele ngoku kuhlwa ngamaphupha amnandi...

(Merciful Father, we humbly ask you to send us your angels to protect us; and our departed relatives now in the world of the spirits to visit us tonight in happy dreams...)

6.5.2 The Eucharistic service

The order and the expressions set out and used in the offices are continued in the Holy Communion service and in the rest of the services, e.g. baptism, funeral, wedding and ordination services. *Camagu* features prominently in the responses, followed by reference to ‘heavenly hosts’ and other names and expressions for God.

The *Gloria in excelsis* is sung to Qamata, instead of the normal God-name Thixo. Rubric 7 introduces a moving penitential hymn composed by James Matta Dwane. The hymn humbly begs for forgiveness. Coming in the penitence section of the service, the hymn is suitably located in the liturgy. Only the last verse will be reflected here with a loose translation:

*Ndiza emnqamlezweni;
Ndiyini' ephelweyo;
Ndithemb' igazi lakho;
Ndixolele, Mkhululi.
(I come to the Cross
Tired and powerless
Trusting only in your blood
Forgive me, Redeemer.)* p.24

Rubric 10 refers to censuring and asperging. Both are normal practices in the Anglican Church but the EEC has made some subtle changes to them. The incense has been replaced by either *umnikandiba* or the more common *impepho*. Both are traditional herbs used to drive away evil spirits. The audience is also sprinkled with holy water. This is no longer common in the Anglican Church.

Rubric 11 clearly refers to the warding off of evil spirits in this context as evidenced by the following prayer said to bless the incense:

Sikelela Nkosi esi siphumiso, wenze ukuba ivumba laso lifikelele kuwe njengomthandazo wethu. Gxotha ngalo imimoya engendawo, wenze imbalasane yevumba lika Kristu nomtsalane kumanyange.

(Bless, O Lord, this incense, make its smell reach up to you as our prayer. Ward-off by it all the evil spirits, and fill us with the gracious smell of Christ and make us attractive to our forebears.)

Rubric 21 is an interesting conflation of the Nicene Creed with input from the congregation. This breaks the monotony of one long sung or spoken Creed. The responses from the congregation add life to the Creed. It immediately becomes something they participate in and relate to instead of something that is imposed on them.

It is interesting to note that no reference is made to Qamata in the Creed although *camagu* is mentioned alongside ‘the heavenly hosts.’ The only inference one can draw from this choice is that Dwane’s loyalty to his Anglican background had the upperhand of him on this issue. There has always been tension between Qamata and Thixo and the use of Thixo would be more in line with Anglo-Christian doctrine. Retaining the Creed in its universal catholic form would affirm the commitment to remain within the Anglican Communion and Catholicism.

Rubric 23, the closing prayers, re-emphasises statements and visions dearly held by Bishop Dwane. One of these statements is that God has revealed himself in a special way to the black people, in Jesus Christ, therefore God is thanked:

Ngenxa yokuzazisa kwakho kuthi ngoNyana woMntu, noMoya wakho oNgcwele.

(Because of revealing yourself to us through the Son of Man, and your Holy Spirit.)

This revelation is that God revealed himself in Jesus Christ as the Second Adam, and through incarnation, Christ became our Proto-Ancestor.

The prayers also stress the role of women in salvation because Dwane was very committed to gender equity. These women range from the Virgin Mary to Mary Magdelene and other women who were the first to see the risen Christ.

Typical of Dwane, the church founders (the ancestors of the EEC), feature prominently in the closing prayers. The Provincials are listed by name from the founder, James Matta Dwane to the penultimate one, Xela Dakada, stopping short of the last one, Hopa, who defected and formed the Orthodox Ethiopian Church when Bishop Dwane was inaugurated First Bishop of the Order of Ethiopia. One can only hope that collective wisdom within the church will one day see the need to acknowledge clergy wives' roles in the lives and works of the church fathers by having their names mentioned beside their husbands' names.

Life and natural phenomena feature very strongly in the prayers. They refer to springs, rivers, fields – all symbolic of life and growth. The poor, the destitute, widows, orphans and the suffering also feature strongly in the closing petitions. This love for nature and prayer for its protection comes out clearly in the following prayer:

Yamkela, Nkosi, umbulelo wethu ngendalo yakho, ubomi nempilo yethu, nobomi bovuko kuKristu.

(Accept, O Lord, our thanks for your nature, life and health, and the life of resurrection in Christ.) (p.31)

The offertory prayer is couched in typical amaXhosa religious and ritualistic terms:

Kulo mbhoyozo sixhamla elo lifa, singcamle kobo buncwane bomsitho weMvana. Sisondele kweso sithebe ukuze sondliwe nguQamata ngesonka sezithunywa, siqabule unxano kumanzi elo liwa lisentlango ...

(In this celebration we enjoy that heritage, we taste of the joy of the Lamb's ceremony. We approach this traditional dishing mat so that we may be fed with the bread of angels; and quench our thirst with water from the desert rock...)

Having said the offertory prayer to God (Qamata) and thanked him for the sacrifice, the congregation appropriately responds:

Makube chosi, uQamata namanyange asiphe impilo, uxolo nolonwabo. Camagu!

(Let there be peace; may God and our forebears give us peace and joy. Let there be peace!)

The invitation to receive the body and blood of Christ, in Rubric 36, is couched in African religious and social terms:

Bantu beNkosi, niyamenywa nisondele kwesi sithembe sobudlelana noSoninani, amanyange, nebandla lonke lika Kristu. Yamkelani le nsonyama nishwame, nirhabule kule ndebe yobudlelwane niphile.

(People of the Lord, you are invited to draw near to this fellowship feast with the Everlasting One, our forebears, and the whole congregation of Christ. Please accept this special ritual preserved for the chosen ones and enjoy it, and drink from this cup of fellowship, and be healed.)

The traditional elements in this invitation get lost in translation. First of all, the people are invited to *isithembe* which is a traditional mat used to dish out meat instead of using Western dishes. The forebears refer to ancestors as an integral part of any major ritual or sacrifice, and to *ukurhabula* (simply translated as to drink) has the wider connotation of drinking from a traditional vessel containing sacrificial beer, during rituals. It signifies taking a sip and passing the beaker to the next person.

Rubric 39 closes with benediction, exhorting the ancestors to play their characteristic role of interceding for the people. The interplay between Western and African thought patterns and images is clearly visible in the following prayer:

Zanga izithunywa zezulu zinganikhusela ngamaphiko azo. Anga amanyange angazolulela kuQamata izandla zawo, anamkelele iintsikikelelo zakhe. Ize intsikelelo yoPhezu konke uMdali, uMxolelanisi, noMngcwalisi ibe soloko inani maxa onke kude kuse ekupheleni kweli phakade.

(May the angels of heaven protect you with their wings. May the forebears stretch their arms to God and receive blessings on your behalf. May the blessings of the Almighty, the Creator, the Conciliator, and Blessor, abide with you until eternity.)

The popularity of these new liturgical rites among members of the Ethiopian Episcopal Church and the interest they have drawn from other denominations show that they are there to stay and, if anything, they are bound to grow. They are making great strides in winning themselves a place in the church, thus complying with what Gray (in Stevenson and Spinks 1991: 142) says about liturgy:

Liturgy, at least Christian liturgy, rather than the rituals of modern society, has to win its place in that society, without ever cheapening and distorting its message or debasing the coinage ...

The change from a purely Eurocentric approach to an African approach to liturgy may take time to accomplish in full, but it is in process. It might take time to define, very concretely, Dwane's contribution to the movement, but what is clear is that 'the new child Africa has been waiting for has been born', to use Bujo's expression, as cited by du Toit (1998:37):

There is a new estimation of the influence of African primal religion, and its influence on African Christianity. The process of indigenising African Christianity still has a long way to go. In the words of Bujo '[t]his means that the church in black Africa cannot refrain from becoming black African. Africa is expecting a child, i.e. the local church, which will certainly be given us, and it will be a black child.'

This, to paraphrase the American astronauts when they set foot on the moon, is a small step for the Ethiopians but a giant step for the black church. If we were to cast our eyes beyond our own comfort zones, we could easily discern that Dwane's move was far from being an ego-driven isolated desire to transform his church. In the Vatican, the Roman Catholic Church was faced with the same kind of move from Archbishop Milingo who fought to introduce inculturation so vehemently that the church moved him from Zambia to Rome to enable it to monitor his activities. Ter Haar (1992:177) explains Milingo's quest for inculturation within the Roman Catholic Church as follows:

Milingo formed the opinion early in his career that the Africans had a right to experience their faith as Christians in their own way. Initially his aspirations took the form of adapting the liturgy and introducing African music and musical instruments, as he had done at the seminary at Kachebere. In the course of time, and particularly during his years as Archbishop, he came to see the cultural incarnation of the gospel as a much more fundamental task.

Like Dwane, Milingo saw identity and full knowledge of one's culture as cornerstones of incarnation as attested by Ter Haar (1992:178):

Incarnation became a key concept in Milingo's thinking, encouraged by the views of the Second Vatican Council. The word 'incarnation' in relation to the gospel, meant to him 'preserving one's identity, though taking something from another, both parties losing nothing. But to preserve one's values and traditions it was first necessary to know them very well. Milingo had not forgotten how easily he himself had condemned certain African practices because he lacked insight and knowledge.

Mbiti adds one vital proviso to the growing Africanisation that is happening in our churches – it should be biblically based. He (Mbiti in Appiah-Kubi and Torres 1979:91) articulates this as follows:

I discern remarkable signs in the development of African theology. In this development the Bible is playing a crucial role, even if not in every case. African Christianity has the Bible at its forefront, and the Bible is shaping most of its development both explicitly and implicitly ... As long as African theology keeps close to the Scriptures, it will remain relevant to the life of the church in Africa and will have lasting links with the theology of the church universal.

To conclude this chapter, it should be stressed that Dwane's spirituality went far beyond amaXhosa culture although the focus in this study is on amaXhosa culture. His liturgical reforms also included innovations in isiZulu, seSotho and other cultural groups whose members belong to the Ethiopian Episcopal Church. It is understood that the church is frantically putting together a liturgy for the solemnization of weddings and related ceremonies to be done in a manner that takes cognizance of African culture.

His quest for the indigenization of the African Christian church was in line with Appiah-Kubi's (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres 1979:122) call:

If the churches in Africa are to grow and develop, they must be allowed to take root in the soil of Africa where they have been planted. In this Africanization process the Indigenous African churches have made a breakthrough and have a great deal to teach the missionary churches.

The indigenous African churches, through careful and concrete adaptation of certain cultural elements into their worship, have made Christianity real and meaningful to their African adherents.

During the frantic discussions and hot debates in the corridors of the Anglican Church, Goodwin once said in *The South African Church Quarterly Review* (n.d.: 306) about the establishment of the Order of Ethiopia within the Anglican Church:

Now there is no religious body which has a better chance than the English Church of studying what natives will do with their autonomy. We have created the Order of Ethiopia, with a conference entrusted with vast powers, and it is actually a working thing, to be seen and studied. Can we not wait and see? And when we are satisfied, can we not give our own Conferences similar power, without creating the grave dangers of a Mixed Synod?

It took many decades for the Anglican Church to see the end results of their decision to establish or accept the Order of Ethiopia. Some, of course, have still not seen anything different besides the emergence of a black bishop with limited Episcopal authority. Now is the time for the whole church to see the emergence of a truly black or indigenous Anglo-Afro-Catholic church, not just with an independent conference to avoid the mixing of the races within the church as was the reason then, but with full autonomy to run its own Synods and to determine its own liturgy and ecclesiastical integrity.

Father Stubbs C.R. (in Biko, 2006:216) suggests a much more radical approach to the issue when he says quite categorically:

But the Church in South Africa – and here I refer to all the ‘historic’ churches imported into Africa from the West - these white -dominated institutions would have to be completely broken up and re-fashioned by true blacks on true black lines. Not that whites should be excluded – God forbid! But we must first be humbled to the dust.

African theologians strongly support inculturation which manifested itself in the day of Pentecost, as affirmed by the Statement of the Catholic Theological Association of Nigeria (CATHAN) (in Africa Faith & Justice Network, 1996: 49):

The miracle of Pentecost is very illustrative of the goal of inculturation: “We hear them preaching in our own languages about the marvels of God” (Acts 2:11). In this light, we see inculturation as dialectical process, involving an interpenetration of the Gospel message and a culture that leads to the appropriation of the Gospel message by the people of that culture. What is inculturated is not Christianity as received and expressed in another culture, but rather the Gospel message itself: the Christ event – Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection as interpreted by a living faith community.

It has not been very easy to slot Dwane’s Ethiopian Episcopal Church into any of the four categories postulated by Waruta (in Mugambi and Magesa, 1990:33-38) briefly cited as the following four major types – the dominant types which refer to ‘those churches with strong links to their metropolitan origins, eg. Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians and Lutherans’; the popular types, which are ‘those churches which break from or modify certain forms of the dominant types but maintain basic orthodox beliefs of historical Christianity’; the distinctive types which refers to those ‘usually smaller churches which quietly but effectively carry out their mission in ways that are almost wholly distinct to them, for example, the Mennonites, the Quakers, the Salvation Army and the Seventh Day Adventists,’ and the fourth type which ‘is the indigenous, otherwise called independent churches.’

While the Ethiopian Episcopal Church has its roots in the Ethiopian Movement, it is not in the same league as the separatist churches of the time as it remained anchored in the Catholic doctrines and the Anglican ethos whilst reclaiming its roots as an African Christian church.

I wish to point out, in conclusion, that what the Ethiopians have done is not at variance with the developments in Sri Lanka which Mathew (in Stevenson and Spinks, 1991:149) describes as follows:

In 1988, an experimental liturgy for Sri Lanka was authorized and published by the two bishops of Colombo and Kurunegala to use along with the BCP of 1662 and the Ceylon Liturgy (1938).

In the Liturgy of Sri Lanka, various adaptations and more flexibility have been introduced. Some Buddhist ideas and terms are used in the Liturgy (Sri Lanka is a country where the majority of the people are Buddhists).

6.6 Summary

The chapter forms the apex of this study in that what went before it was empirical evidence to show how and why Bishop Dwane developed this amazing interest and commitment to African Christianity in which African culture plays a very significant role in its liturgy. This question is particularly important because Bishop Dwane, with degrees from King's College, London, would have, under normal circumstances, shunned African culture like some of his colleagues who would have nothing to do with it especially in church.

It is of course quite obvious that given his doctoral studies in the field and his background with a grandfather who led the Ethiopian Movement, Dwane could not but follow the family trend. The culmination of this interest is visible in the liturgy of the Ethiopian Episcopal Church that he led until his death. It cannot be denied that the changes he brought about in his church were not out of step with the thinking of many scholars, both black and white, on these matters but to advocate them and to implement them took the courage of someone with his resilience and background.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

THEOLOGICAL APPRAISAL OF DWANE'S SPIRITUALITY

7.1 Introduction

This closing chapter highlights the points made hitherto about Bishop Dwane, his spirituality, and the tension between Christianity and African culture. Bishop Dwane's search for an authentic African spirituality challenges many Anglican attitudes and traditions that have been accepted uncritically over the years. His stance is one of 'constructive engagement' in that he tries to influence Anglicanism from within because although his church was granted autonomy from the Anglican Church, it retained relations with it.

7.2 Critique

7.2.1 Three Pillars

The study has demonstrated that Bishop Dwane's spirituality was mainly anchored on three pillars, the three R's, viz. relation with God, responsibility for humanity's well-being, and the relevance of culture in addressing these basic spiritual tenets and standing before God with outstretched arms to serve him as one **is**, and not as what others want you **to be**. In other words, his spirituality was three-dimensional with the vertical (God), horizontal (humanity) and central (culture or context) dimensions interfacing all the time.

7.2.2 Dwane's apologetic stance

A fundamental element that is discernible in Dwane's spirituality is that it was essentially apologetic, in the technical sense of the word, in that he always stood up for the much misunderstood and maligned amaXhosa religion and culture. He always handled this aspect of his spirituality very sensitively but never failed to advance his point of view when needs be. It was this constant quest for identity that propelled him not only to espouse amaXhosa religion in all or most of his writings, but also to introduce and practise aspects of it in his church, thus blazing the trail for many who stood by watching the developments from a safe distance.

In spite of his African traditional inclinations, Dwane never failed to uphold the high principles of the Christian faith, blending them with his traditional religious inclinations, where possible. He maintained the balance right up to his death. It is for that reason that this conclusion focuses on his integrative approach by highlighting all three dimensions of his spirituality, equitably.

His strict adherence to the founding Christian faith makes his spirituality remarkably different from what Gaybba (2004:40) describes here:

It was this lack that led certain Christian groups in various places to break away and 'do their own thing'. A massive example of this is to be found in the still rapidly expanding AICs (African Independent/Indigenous/Initiated Churches), where the Gospel has become so inculturated that its Africanised form would appear alien to westerners. Part of the tragedy is that this has occurred in isolation from mainstream Christianity. But they do provide an example to us here in South Africa of a Christianity incarnated in a culture quite different from our familiar western one.

It cannot be said that Dwane decided 'to break away and do his own thing', nor could it be said that he operates in isolation from mainstream Christianity. He operated fully within mainstream Christianity albeit with the aim of reincarnating the Gospel in African religion. 'Reincarnating' is used

advisedly precisely because the Gospel had already been incarnated in Western culture.

7.2.3 Anglo-Catholic doctrines and Africanism

Of course, the Christian vertical dimension formed the basis of his spirituality as a Christian, a priest, and a bishop. He strongly and unconditionally subscribed to the major Anglo-Catholic doctrines and precepts and used Africanism to bolster, instead of diminishing, the importance of these principles. In fact he strove to show that African religion was, basically, not at variance with these principles. Of course, like all religions, it had aspects that could not be comfortably accommodated in Christianity although in most instances, it was not a question of incongruence, but a question of ignorance that led to conflict between African and Christian religions. It was for that reason that Dwane made it his lifelong commitment to explain these misconceptions and to find a happy medium between African and Christian religion.

His extensive study of, and special predilection for, African religion helped him create a strong platform from which he could propagate the Word to a cultural group manifestly different from the one that brought the Word to the indigenous peoples of the country. It is also interesting to note that the religion of this receiving community resonated to a very large extent with the religion of the original religion from whom the Christian faith took root – the Jewish faith.

There are very many overlappings in the cultures of these two groups. Some of the major examples are the communal nature of their societies, social systems such as polygamy, the *levirate* practice and circumcision, to mention but a few.

As was demonstrated in Chapter One, Dwane's strength lay in the fact that he had strong historical links with Ethiopianism, Africanism and Anglicanism. His forebears also had had strong affinity with these three pillars. This gave him and them a strong sense of identity. They were African Christians. They could not follow slavishly, and without question, everything that was done in the Anglo-Catholic world. The Anglo-Catholic trimmings, and not the essential doctrines, entrapped them instead of allowing them to operate freely as legitimate children of God, not as stepchildren.

7.2.4 Dwane against White domination

One could, of course, not be oblivious to the fact that Dwane's decision to opt for the cultural-religious equity stance was to perpetuate the struggle started by Matta Dwane and his group against white domination in the church. For this kind of revolution, Ethiopianism was probably one of the best weapons. He could ward off the onslaught of white theological domination by appealing to Black theology. Blacks would then be able to position themselves within the church as equal partners with whites. They would stand their ground and fight for religious freedom. Ethiopianism and Black Consciousness gave them the psychological boost they so badly needed to withstand the degrading attitudes of the missionaries and some of their successors.

7.2.5 Dwane's spirituality grounded in praxis

It cannot be gainsaid that Dwane's spirituality and the thrust of the whole Ethiopian Church was, until his death, firmly Christ-centred. Christ was unequivocally the Redeemer, and the doctrines of the Anglican Christian Church were completely respected. There was nothing in his beliefs and praxis that pointed to syncretism as defined by Barrett (1968:47):

A *syncretistic* movement is one which amalgamates the Christian religion with traditional beliefs and concepts, and often with other non-Christian religious systems such as astrology, to such an extent that the revelation in Jesus Christ, and the Lordship of Christ over all gods, is obscured, challenged or denied, leaving only an outwardly Christian appearance with pre-Christian content.

Dwane's stand on matters of equity and freedom was uncompromising. He used the Scriptures to convince even the hardest of his Christian oppressors that they were, in terms of their Christian affiliation, expected to treat everyone humanely. Many times when he addressed government officials about inhumane treatment and deprivation among the black oppressed masses he reminded them of their Christian responsibilities towards fellow citizens and God's people at large. He made full use of Scriptural precepts to warn against injustice, unfair treatment, hunger and violence against those who were trying to stand up for their rights. On several occasions, using culture as his central base, he moved freely from the vertical dimension to the horizontal, demanding that love for God has to start with love for one's fellow persons as envisaged in *ubuntu*.

His standing up for the underdog, done quietly and subtly, bears witness to a person who did not waste time whenever someone was deprived of their rights as a citizen and as God's child in this country. No case was too minor for him. His sense of justice was infectious and contagious at the same time, as no one would escape his determined quest for redress and amelioration. His appeals went far and wide in the country, from the old apartheid bureaucrats, to the recalcitrant homeland leaders, ranging from Sebe to Gqozo and others.

7.2.6 Centrality of prayer in Dwane's life

Dwane's pillar of strength was always his Christian faith. He was a deeply prayerful person who encouraged his clergy and congregations to keep on praying as they went on fighting the iniquities of the day. His insistence that

they pray for one another is another indicator of his unwavering faith in prayer – communicating with God, for good or for worse.

To show his deep belief in the power of prayer, Bishop Dwane also insisted that all his clergy have spiritual directors. This is one of the strong pillars of faith that Ignatian and Benedictine spiritualities take as *sine qua non* for Christian life. Priests encounter all kinds of stressful situations in their lives. In most cases they are not even in a position to share their parochial experiences with their spouses because of the confidentiality of some of them.

He tried very hard to inculcate this prayerfulness in his clergy by demanding that they say their offices daily and get into the habit of saying regular prayers, as individuals and as families, not forgetting to pray for one another. Prayer was to be their rule of life.

He always found solace in the knowledge that God was always listening to every human cry, provided the one who was praying was obedient to God's will. One cannot doubt that only this outlook in life, this prayerful life, sustained him during some of the worst schisms that ravaged his church. One could perhaps understand the first huge schism when Rev. Hopa's group broke away and formed the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (*Umzi waseTiyopiya*), but the second, even larger group, with sixteen close confidantes led by Canon Mike Mjekula, must have been very distressing to him, but through prayer he survived it too.

Good family life was next to prayerfulness in Dwane's mind. At the top of his list was the need for prayer followed by good family relations. He insisted that those who called themselves servants of God and leaders of the Church had to live exemplary lives. That was why he wanted to ensure that each clergy person and spouse lived together. They had to tender evidence that

they lived together and, where this was not so, they had to indicate by giving clear time-frames why and when they hoped to comply with this golden rule.

7.2.7 Dwane's *Ad Clera*

An overview of Bishop Dwane's *ad clera* clearly reveals the following key interest areas – confirmation, thanks giving, prayer, ministry to the young and to professionals, tithing, preaching and family life. These issues appear time and again in his *ad clera*.

His prophetic ministry, viz. his role in the fight against injustice and oppression, attests to someone who faced the perpetrators of injustice without fear or flinching. He wrote numerous letters to the authorities that petitioned them about various issues, ranging from detained citizens, the deprived, those that were removed by force from their places of abode to other remote areas, to the plight of Christians in the homelands who were forced to attend political rallies at Ntaba kaNdoda during the Easter Weekend, one of the holiest weekends in the church calendar.

His bravery comes out very clearly in his correspondence to the government officers who seemed to have unlimited powers to ban, detain or banish those who fell foul of the law. He spoke out for many of his church people when they ran into trouble with the state machinery, but his interventions were not parochial as he stood up for anyone who was victimised by the powers that be. This made him unpopular in both Pretoria and its apartheid homelands.

Even though Bishop Dwane strongly favoured forgiveness and conciliation, he also believed in disciplining those who deliberately flouted the church's orders. Those who defied his authority soon came face to face with the full might of the man who was so soft spoken and kind that no one would imagine him taking action against dissidents. Some of his detractors even contended

that Bishop Dwane himself was a very kind and forgiving person, depending on whether or not Mrs Dwane agreed with his plan of action. The source of this perception was, of course, Mrs Dwane's strong personality and the great supportive role she played in the church. It threatened most of the faint-hearted. She was a real power beside the throne, and would never accept that she was power 'behind' the throne.

Dwane's detractors misinterpreted his commitment to gender equality as petticoat government yet Bishop Dwane's actions in this regard were never meant to benefit Mrs Dwane in any way. Instead the women in the church got their due right to participate in the church's administration and in the liturgical proceedings. When conflict broke out in the church because some conservative male members would not countenance women preachers, Bishop Dwane insisted that they allow the women full participation and if they needed more teaching and education on this matter, they could attend special orientation classes. By the time of his death, women had gone up the church ladder as preachers, priests and, coincidentally, the Vicar General at the time of his death was a woman priest.

As mentioned above, culture was central in Bishop Dwane's spirituality. His mission in this regard was clearly to missionize mission and to contextualise the Gospel so that it could relate to the particularity of his people. His bearings were very strong because he received from his forebears the heritage of a church that was strongly founded on Ethiopianism-cum –Africanism. He made a thorough study of this movement and found it to offer a better hope for a church that would give expression to his people's quest for identity as African Christians, not as second class members of what adamantly manifested itself as a White church tolerating black people. Commenting on the role of Ethiopianism in the quest for identity, President Mbeki, in an article entitled 'Mbeki Pays Centenary Visit to PE', by B.Msebe, p.9, was reported as follows in the Evening Post of January 12, 2000:

[E]thiopianism constituted the assertion of the dignity of the African. It was a revolt against the arrogance of others who came from outside our continent and pretended that, as Africans, we were devoid of any sense of spirituality, who claimed that their sense of God was superior to our own sense of God.

[E]thiopianism was a struggle to to reassert the truth of the Holy Scriptures that 'all humanity is created in the image of God.'

7.2.8 Missionary enterprise and African context

Several people have remarked that the missionaries did not bring God to Africa, instead God brought them to Africa because he was here long before them. Certainly, if the Word was there from the beginning, then he must have been in Africa long before creation.

What is remarkable about Dwane's advocacy of African culture is precisely that through incarnation Jesus works in and through our culture to uplift it, keeping out all those elements that cannot be reconciled with him and Christianity. His willingness to purge African culture of unacceptable elements, instead of blindly pouring everything into a melting pot, accords with Mosala's 1986:99) apt comment:

The point must be made unequivocally, therefore, without creating the impression that all elements of African traditional culture and religion are progressive and relevant for contemporary society, that without a creative reappropriation of traditional African religions and societies both African and black theologies will build their houses on sand.

By defending the major tenets of African religion and by emphasising the good elements in African culture, Bishop Dwane succeeded in mapping out the course to be followed by his church when it received full autonomy from the Anglican Church. African theology to him was not different from Steve Biko's philosophy of Black Consciousness. It defined him as an African, as a person who had the birthright to stand up as 'he was' before God and raise his arms to heaven and not as someone else's imitation, in the same way that

SASO through its Black Consciousness Movement, sought to instill a feeling of self-worth and self-awareness in black people, as articulated by Maimela (1987: 67):

In order to change all these things, SASO propounded a philosophy of Black Consciousness with the aim to liberate Blacks from their self-incurred mental and psychological bondage, to make Blacks aware whom they are as a people and what their position is in society.

Bishop Dwane (1979:1) confirms the connection between his spirituality and Black Consciousness:

Resistance by Xhosa Christians against the inroads made by the teaching of the church into their traditional way of life, has been given a fresh impetus in recent years, by the reappearance of 'Black Consciousness'. This movement has led to a coherent articulation of Black people's opposition to those tendencies in the church, and in the culture of Western people, which have the effect of undermining the Black community's cultural and religious heritage.

Having laid a solid theological-cultural foundation for the need to stand with one's own face and complexion before God, Bishop Dwane consummated his marriage to his traditional roots, Ethiopianism, by inviting traditional healers to a consultation to discuss their reincorporation into the church. He introduced liturgical forms that gave credence to their rituals, traditions and beliefs that had hitherto been regarded as taboo and syncretistic.

7.2.9 Culture and liturgy

Later on, Bishop Dwane introduced a liturgical form in his church that fully embraced African culture, warts and all. Cries of '*camagu*' (let there be peace) evoked the presence of ancestral presences that were previously associated with paganism and could not be brought into Christian worship. The very God-name Qamata that the missionaries eschewed and regarded as pagan became the primary reference to God Almighty. The replacement of the church incense with '*impepho*' a herb that the traditional healers

conventionally used to drive away evil spirits clearly indicated radical change from the old to the new.

The uniqueness of Dwane's spirituality is, of course, that he married the two traditions – Christian and Traditional – so well to produce a truly African Christian religion. He is one of the few black theologians who regard Christ as the Proto-Ancestor of African Christians. In this way Christ becomes one of the family (*umntu wegazi lethu*) instead of being foreign to African religion. His incarnation brought under his rule and his sphere of influence all the good tenets of the traditional religion.

In this way, Bishop Dwane used culture to reunite people instead of alienating them as the early missionaries did. With *ubuntu* saying each person **is** because the other **is**, there is unity of being and purpose – to share ourselves and our endowments with others. That is the essence of *ubuntu*.

Dwane's movement in this direction blazed the trail for thousands of so-called Black Initiated Churches that broke away from the established churches but failed to come out with anything manifestly different from the originating churches. Many of these churches were African in name only in that they were essentially not different from the white churches they seceded from. They may dance, sing exuberantly, and pray animatedly, but they still remain chips off the old rock from which they had been hewn. That is the difference brought by Dwane when he established his own Ethiopian Episcopal Church and introduced a truly African liturgy in his worship and rituals.

What is striking in Bishop Dwane's spirituality is that he has tried to keep the balance between gospel and culture, strictly in accordance with what Hunsberger and van Gelder (1996:xvi) say:

Every church everywhere will embody a local, particular expression of the gospel. God intends this to be so to give variegated witness to the salvation given in Christ. But each local experience is valid as an incarnation of the gospel only as it is faithful to the gospel's version of what is good, true, and beautiful. If there is too little identification with the culture, the church becomes a subcultural ghetto. If it assumes too much of the culture's perspectives and values, it domesticates and tames the gospel.

He has demonstrated the need to vigorously uphold committed scholarship and praxis in the field of African culture *in tandem* with the following suggestions by Maluleke (1996:38):

Black and African theologies are uniquely equipped to help the Christian theology of Africa avoid both the Scylla of viewing African culture as an expired 'ephemeral set of behavioural attitudes and values' and the Charybdis of viewing it in exclusive structural, materialist terms. Black theology must consistently refuse, as it has done in the past, to regard (African) culture as a set of detached, somewhat exotic attitudes and rituals (cf Buthelezi 1972). Black theology must continue to insist that African culture is structural, material, contextual and contemporary. Similarly, African theology must continue to insist, as it has so eloquently done before, that Africans have valid and respectable religions and cultures - cultures and religions which are not only independent of Western Christianities but are seldom comfortable and therefore often in combat with many versions of Western Christianity.

Viewed in this way, Dwane's rescuing of African culture from the doldrums into which it had been cast by the colonizers and their satellites and bringing it on centre stage as we seek to enjoy our freedom as God's legitimate children, can only be a step in the right direction. There are many challenges to be faced, and these need deep respect and theologizing from both Christianity and amaXhosa culture, but at least the cards have been laid on the table.

It cannot be doubted that all issues will not harmonise in the pursuit of Africanisation or indigenisation as pointed out by Hastings (1976:59):

If some of the cultural nationalist forms advocated may be gravely destructive of Christian authenticity, this is not the first time, nor the first continent, in which that would have happened. There are forms of cultural nationalist authenticity essentially opposed to the Catholicity of Christianity. Indeed the 'Christian nationalism' of Afrikaner South Africa already presents a warning of which black Africa could well take note.

Throughout his priesthood and episcopacy Bishop Dwane embraced the commitment to the “Comradeship of Christ” as espoused by Khabela (in Khabela and Mzoneli 1998:145):

Christ has been present in the black struggle as “a comrade in arms”; detained in prison alongside with the detainees; dying in the hands of the security police alongside with the slaughtered and forced into exile with the multitudes who were forced out of this country into exile. The struggle is not so much something that we did but something that “Comrade Christ” was doing in which we were given to participate.

Like de Gruchy (in Regan and Torrance 1993:141) Dwane’s spirituality recognised the Pauline confession in which ‘Jew and Gentile, slave and free, men and women can be united in one body, a confession that challenges the prevailing competing cultures and is always in conflict with those dominant cultures which lead to the oppression of others.’

7.2.10 Culture and Scripture

It is remarkable to note that Dwane uses Scripture to assess amaXhosa religion, but he does not end there. He also uses Scripture to affirm amaXhosa culture. His use of the concept of revelation is a useful theological strategy to show how God is revealed to different people at different times, in different ways. God pre-exists everything and all nations so that he remains Abba (Father) to those who were untouched by Christianity and those who were lucky to be touched. It does not seem plausible, therefore, to think of God as being the Father of only those people who came across the Christian faith.

While Dwane was strongly defensive and apologetic of African culture, he was not dogmatic. He was willing to forego anything in African culture that could not stand the test of rigorous Christian scrutiny, thus adopting the principle of Christ above culture that McGrath (1992:22) encapsulates as follows:

The third approach to be discussed is related to the the second, but recognises the need to appreciate that culture is far from perfect. Indeed, it could be argued that this third model is grounded in the recognition that culture is neither perfect nor evil, but is something which can be elevated and transformed through the Christian faith. Wainright argues that this approach “emphasizes the positive elements in human nature and culture, while recognizing that even these need to be purified and lifted.”

To sum up, it can be said without fear of contradiction that Dwane’s commitment to matters African-cultural was beyond reproach. He satisfied many of the obligations of African theologians laid out by Tshibangu (in Appiah-Kubi and Torres 1979:74):

African theologians must be fully aware of the fact that their Catholic work calls for real spiritual commitment. There can be no theological effort without commitment. One must raise questions about one’s own life and about the spiritual destiny of the people with whom one is associated. This presumes a real ability to ask fundamental questions. The theologian must be a person of deep faith and a solidly metaphysical life. The theologian cannot do any useful, worthwhile or relevant work unless he or she accepts personal involvement in the theory and practice of life while making every effort to maintain intellectual and moral sincerity and scientific objectivity.

If there was any error or shortfall in Dwane’s convictions and praxis, one can only say to err is human. Even in such circumstances it is strongly maintained that his error would be for good instead of it being for worse. One instance of such error is pointed out by Mosala (1989: 17) in relation to Dwane and others’ wholesome and gullible acceptance of the notion of the Word as their unquestioned hermeneutical starting point.

Dwane had made the following statement, as cited by Mosala (1989: 17):

Liberation theology as an aspect of Christian theology cannot play to the gallery of secular expectations. It seeks to understand and to articulate what in the light of this revelation in the past, God is doing now for the redemption of his people. Liberation theology is theocentric and soundly biblical insofar as it points out that God does not luxuriate in his eternal bliss, but reaches out to man and to the world. To say that liberation theology is not a Gospel of liberation is to state the obvious. The Gospel, it is true, is good news for all men. And no theology, Western or African, has the right to equate itself with the Gospel. The entire theological enterprise is concerned with the interpretation of the one Gospel for all sorts and conditions.

Mosala (1989:17 -18) reacted very strongly to this statement:

It is clear that South African black theologians are not free from enslavement to the wider neo-orthodox theological problematic that regards the notion of the Word of God as a hermeneutical starting point. Sigqibo Dwane displays this exegetical bondage

The attempt to claim the *whole* of the Bible in support of black theology is misdirected because it ignores the results of biblical scholarship over the last century and has its roots in ruling-class ideology. By ruling-class ideology I mean the desire and attempts by the dominant classes of society to establish hegemonic control over other classes through a rationalizing universalization of what are in effect sectional class interests.

Dwane, by Mosala's own admission, was expressing the view of many African theologians who found themselves in the dilemma of using revelation to fight against cultural and political domination while they themselves are part of the same faith. In such a situation, there is bound to be ambivalence, especially if the discussion is pegged at the level of absolutes.

Mosala (1989:21) has made a point that theologians and scholars need to take cognizance of the following line of action in their dealings with the Bible as the basis of their theologizing in this regard. He (ibid) stresses that 'any exegetical point of departure must be grounded in a materialist epistemology that is characterized by its location within the crucible of historical struggles' and for him the only valid hermeneutical starting point for a Black theology of liberation is the black workers' social, cultural, political and economic world. This means that any theologizing that does not take cognizance of the black experience is not relevant.

Cone (1975:33) articulates the same view regarding the relationship of the Biblical Truth, Jesus, and Black experience. He makes an equally significant statement that 'there is no truth in Jesus Christ independent of the oppressed of the land – their history and culture.' It cannot be doubted that Dwane's theologizing was strictly in line with the views expressed by Mosala and

Cone above. He always took the Black experience into cognizance in his struggle to fight for the rights of the oppressed which included the right to worship God as an African Christian.

7.3 Conclusion

The study is not aimed at being an apologia for Dwane's views, but it is an attempt to unpack what his spirituality, which was strongly based on African theological principles, entailed. He might have had his shortcomings, but he blazed the trail for many Africans, especially local, scholars and students to emulate and improve upon. The morality of the country's black populace is at its lowest ebb – rapes, gang rape of women and infants, murder of innocent people, domestic violence, and so many atrocities - point to a total breakdown, not only of law and order, but also of moral and spiritual integrity. A valueless society is a baseless society and it is bound to devalue life and property. We have lost the old and have not gained the new, and in the vacuum, we are being devoured by opportunistic elements as never before. Dwane's spirituality categorically responds to the following questions raised by Mgojo (in Tlhagale and Mosala, 1986: 113) regarding a local theology:

Thus a local theology becomes very important in Africanization. It has to ask a number of questions: Does the faith expression of a community really grow from the experience of that community, grow in such a way as to be truly its own? Does the community allow its expression of faith to be concrete enough to the situation, to radically challenge the quality of life within that situation? But does this expression of faith also rise above a cultural romanticism and accommodation to allow it to be understood by others who are willing to listen? Does the expression of faith urge the community into concerns wider than its own context?

It is remarkable to note that while Dwane strongly advocated Black theology and a place in the sun for his traditional culture, he fully subscribed to the doctrines of the Anglican Communion and stopped short of agitating for doctrinal development which Baum (1975: 189) articulates as follows:

What I am proposing here is, in traditional theological terms, a theory of doctrinal development. It is of great theological importance to insist that such a development is never simply an adaptation to a new cultural consciousness or to new social conditions of life, but is or ought to be, at the same time, a creative response to the sinful world. Theological dealings with the development of doctrine often neglect this second aspect. For this reason, they either restrict doctrinal development to logical or psychological deductions from previously held doctrinal formulations, or understand it simply as a translation of the Christian message into a new cultural consciousness. To my mind, the first tendency loses sight of the creativity of the gospel and cannot account for the transpositions of doctrine that have taken place in the church from time to time, and the second tendency is in danger of dissolving the cutting edge of the gospel and losing the sense of divine transcendence. To my mind, it is necessary to take into consideration the face of evil, characteristic of an age, to understand the creative process whereby the meaning of the gospel is renewed.

Baum (ibid: 189) clearly demonstrates that changes in the face of evil, and therefore context, have to be met with commensurate changes in theologizing:

I have tried to show that if the face of evil changes in a dramatic way, then there may take place a shift of focus in the understanding of the gospel and this may lead to a radical reinterpretation of traditional teaching.

As Dwane contended, the incarnation of Jesus Christ into the Black milieu is designed to bring about this new relationship, this new understanding of the gospel as good news to all humanity, not only to those from the originating culture and the founding faith. In its struggle to be incarnated in each local context, the church can no longer afford to stand aloof and go on as if nothing is happening around it.

The church is compelled to free itself from its “Babylonian captivity”, to use Bosch’s expression (Bosch 1991:456) and start relating to its new African context. This view is strongly supported by Catholicos Aram, the 1st Moderator of the WCC, as cited by Bishop Makgoba in his Charge to the 66th Session of the Synod of the Diocese of Grahamstown, in East London, on 8 September 2007:

Clearly a self-sufficient and inward-looking church cannot survive in radically changing societies. Only a church that is liberated from its self-captivity, which is a church in creative dialogue with its environment, a church courageously facing the problems of its times, a church with the people and for the people, can become a living source of God's empowering and transforming grace. (*Report of the Moderator to the 9th Assembly of the WCC, Porto Alegre, Brazil, February 2006*)

It is encouraging to note that the so-called holiness of the church does not make it infallible, any more than it does its human agents and adherents. While it is recognised by some of the great theologians that the church is both 'sinful and yet holy' (Kung 1995:319), it is remarkable to note that it stands subject to continual redefinition by the Holy Spirit, and eschatological perfection as it journeys towards interculturalisation, a step beyond inculturation, which Bosch (1991:455) explains as follows:

In the nature of the case inculturation can never be a *fait accompli*. One may never use the term "inculturated". Inculturation remains a tentative and continuing process, not only because cultures are not static but also because the church may be led to discover previously unknown mysteries of the faith. The relationship between the Christian message and culture is a creative and dynamic one, and full of surprises. There is no eternal theology, no *theologia perenni*, which may play the referee over "local theologies". In the past, Western theology arrogated itself the right to be such an arbitrator in respect of the Third-World theologies. It implicitly viewed itself as fully indigenized, inculturated, a finished product. We are beginning to realize that this was inappropriate, that Western theologies (plural!) – just as much as all the others – were theologies in the making, theologies in the *process* of being contextualized and indigenized.

It is contended without any fear of contradiction that Dwane has made his contribution in the Ethiopian Episcopal Church and in his writings on African theology. He has blazed the way for many students of African Christianity to continue grappling with these issues until the Holy Spirit gives them a sign that the Catholicism that we boast about has been truly achieved when African religion can sit comfortably in Christianity, and Christianity can find a home in African religion.

Bibliography

- Abimbola, Wande 1994 'A West African Cosmological System,' in: Religion in Africa, Blakely, T.D., van Beek, W.E.A., and Thomson, D.L. (eds.), London: James Curry, pp. 101 -106.
- Ackermann, Denise M. 1994 'Faith and Feminism: Women Doing Theology,' in: Doing Theology: South African Perspectives, J.de Gruchy and C.Villa-Vicencio (eds.), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp.197-211.
- Africa Faith and Justicer Network, 1996 African Synod: Documents, Reflections, Perspectives, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
- Allen, J. 2006 Rabble-Rouser for peace; The authorised biography of Desmond Tutu, London: Rider Books.
- Appiah-Kubi, K. 1979 'Indigenous African Christian Churches: Signs of Authenticity,' in: African Theology en route, Appiah-Kubi, K. and Torres, S. (eds.) Maryknoll, NY.: Orbis Books, pp.117-125.
- Appiah-Kubi, K.& Torres, S. 1979 African Theology en route, Maryknoll, NY.: Orbis Books.
- Ariarajah, S.W. 1995 Gospel and Culture: an ongoing discussion within the ecumenical movement, Geneva: WCC Publications.
- Ayisi, E.O. 1988 An Introduction to the Study of African Culture, Portsmouth, N.H. : Heinemann.
- Barr, J. 1984 Escaping from Fundamentalism, London: SCM Press Ltd.
- Barrett, D.B. 1968 Schism and Renewal in Africa, Nairobi: Oxford University Press.
- Baum, G. 1975 Religion and Alienation, New York: Paulist Press.

- Beattie, J. 1985 Other Cultures, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Beckwith, R.T. 1992 'The Jewish Background to Christian Worship,' in: The Study of Liturgy, Jones, C., Wainright, G., Yarnold, E. and Bradshaw, P (eds.), New York: Oxford University Press, pp.68 -80.
- Bediako, K. 1988 New Dictionary of Theology, Ferguson, S.B., Wright, D.F.& Packer, J.L (eds.), Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, pp.8-10.
- Bent, van der, A.J. 1981 Voices of Unity, WCC, Geneva: Oikoumene.
- Biko, S. 2006 I write what I like, Craighall: Picador Africa.
- Blakely, T.D. 1994 Religion in Afrika, London: James Curry.
Van Beek, W.E.A.& Thomson, D.L. (eds.)
- Bosch, D.J. 1991 Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
- Brooke, R. 1947 Robert Gray, First Bishop of Cape Town, Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Broster, Joan A. 1982 Amagqirha: Religion, Magic and Medicine in Transkei, Goodwood: Via Afrika.
- Burnett, A & 1997 The Rock that is Higher than I, Grahamstown, Mrs Burnett, Barbara (eds.) Sheila Burnett.
- Calata, J.A. 1930 'Ukudlelana kobu-Kristu namasiko olwaluko abaNtsundu,' in: Inkolo namasiko aBantu (Bantu Beliefs and Customs), Wallis, S.J. (ed), London: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, pp. 38-49.
- Callaway, G. n.d. Pioneers in Pondoland, Lovedale: Lovedale Press.
- Campbell, Susan S. 1998 Called to Heal: Traditional healing meets Medicine in Southern Africa Today, Halfway House: Zebra Press.
- Carrick, I. 1993 Creative Spirituality: Remedy for a world in crisis, Fish Hoek: Ian R. Carrick.

- Chipenda, J.B. 1979 'Theological Options in Africa Today,' in: african theology en route, Appiah-Kubi, K. and Torres, S. (eds.), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp. 66-72.
- Cone, J.H. 1975 God of the oppressed, San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Cone, J.H. 1979 'A Black American Perspective on the Future of African Theology,' in: african theology en route, Appiah-Kubi, K. & Torres, S. (eds.) Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp.176-186.
- Crane, T.E. 1979 Patterns in Biblical Spirituality, Denville, New Jersey: Dimension Books.
- Cunliffe, B. 1992 The Celtic World, London: Constable.
- Davies, J.G. 1978 A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship, London: SCM Press.
- De Gruchy, J.W. 1990 The Church Struggle in South Africa, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- De Gruchy, J.W. 1993 'Christian Witness and the Transformation of Culture in a Society in Transit,' in: Christ and Context, Regan, H. and Torrance, A.J. (eds.), Edinburgh: T & T Clarke, pp.131-179.
- De Gruchy, J.W. & Villa-Vicencio, C. 1994 Doing Theology in Context: South African Perspectives, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
- Douglas, J.D. 1974 The New Bible Dictionary, London: InterVarsity Press.
- Dulles, A. 1987 Models of the Church: A critical assessment of the church in all its aspects, Goldenbridge, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan Ltd.
- Dwane, S. 1979 Christianity in relation to Xhosa religion, Unpublished PhD thesis, University of London.
- Dwane, S. 1989a God, Religion and Culture: The idea of Revelation and its consequences, Alice: Lovedale Press.

- Dwane, S. 1989b Issues in the South African Theological Debate, Braamfontein: Skotaville Publishers.
- Dwane, S. 1999a Ethiopianism and the Order of Ethiopia, Glossdery: Ethiopian Episcopal Church.
- Dwane, S. 1999b Ingulo emhlophe (white sickness in Xhosa society), Genadendal: Genadendalse Drukkery.
- Dwane, S. 2000 Christ and our Salvation: Dialogue with the Christian tradition from an African standpoint, Genadendal: Genadendalse Drukkery.
- Dwane, S. 2002 Between Two Stools: Issues of Gospel and Culture, Genadendal: Genadendalse Drukkery.
- Dwane, S. Unpublished collection of various documents held in the Rhodes University Cory Library.
- Ethiopian Episcopal Church 2004 Incwadi yoNqulo yoMzi Wase Tiyopiya, Goodwood: Ethiopian Episcopal Church,
- Ethiopian Episcopal Church 2006 'Order of Liturgical Rights for the Funeral and Burial of Ethiopian Church Presiding Bishop', Unpublished programme dated 8 July 2006.
- Fahy, P. 1988 The promotion of a racially integrated Catholic community at King William's Town: challenges and opportunities. Unpublished M A Div thesis., Rhodes University.
- Florovsky, G. 1974 Christianity and Culture, Vol. Two, Belmont: Nordland Publishing Company.
- Forster, D.A. 2001 Aspects of the cosmic Christ in the spirituality of Dom Bede Griffiths. Unpublished M Th thesis, Rhodes University.
- Gaybba, B. 2004 God is a community: A General Survey of Christian Theology, Pretoria: University of South Africa Press.
- Goedhals, Mary Mandeville, 1982 Nathaniel James Merriman, Archdeacon and Bishop 1849-1882: A Study in Church Life and Government, Unpublished PhD thesis, Rhodes University.

- Goba, B. 1986 'The Black Consciousness Movement: Its Impact on Black Theology,' in: The Unquestionable Right To Be Free, Mosala, I. J. and Tlhagale, B. Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers, pp. 57 – 70.
- Gqubule, T.S.N. 1989 Preface, in: Issues in the South African Theological Debate Dwane, S. Braamfontein: Skotaville Publishers, pp. 1-3.
- Grant, A. 1845 The past and Prospective Extension of the Gospel By Missions to the Heathen, London: Publisher unspecified.
- Gray, D.C. 1991 'Liturgy and society', in: The Identity of Anglican Worship, Stevenson, K, and Spinks, B. (eds.), Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishers, pp.135-143.
- Gray, R. 1990 Black Christians and White Missionaries, London: Yale University Press.
- Gunstone, J. 1979 Commentary on the New Lectionary, London: SPCK, Vol. 1.
- Hardy, D.W. 1993 'The Future of Theology in a Complex World', in: Christ and Context, Regan, H. & Torrance, A.J. (eds.) Edinburgh: T & T Clarke, pp.21-42.
- Hastings, A. 1976 African Christianity, London: Geoffrey Chapman.
- Hinchliff, P. 1963 The Anglican Church in South Africa, London: Darton, Longman & Todd.
- Hinchliff, P. 1968 The Church in South Africa, London: S.P.C.K.
- Hodgson, Janet 1987 Princess Emma, Craighall: AD. DONKER.
- Hodgson, Janet 1996 'African and Anglican Witness', in: Archbishop Tutu: Prophetic Witness in South Africa, Hulley, L, Kretzschmar, Louise, and Pato, L. (eds.), Cape Town: Human and Rousseau, pp. 106-128.
- Hoebel, E.A. 1954 The Law of Primitive Man, Cambridge: Mass.
- Hully, L 1996 Archbishop Tutu: Prophetic Witness in South Africa, Kretzchmar, Louise Cape Town: Human & Rousseau. Pato, L. (eds.)

- Hunsberger, G.R. & 1996 The Church Between Gospel and Culture: The
 Van Gelder, C. (eds.) Emerging Mission in North America, Grand Rapids,
 Michigan: William B. Erdmans Publishing Company.
- Isichei, Elizabeth 1995 A History of Christianity in Africa, London: SPCK.
- Jones, C. 1992 The Study of Liturgy, New York: Oxford University
 Wainright, G. Press.
 Yarnold, E. &
 Bradshaw, P. (eds.)
- Kalilombe, P.A. 1979 'Self-Reliance of the African Church: A Catholic
 Perspective,' in: african theology en route, Appiah-Kubi, K.
 and Torres, S. (eds.), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books,
 pp.36-56.
- Kasenene, P. 1994 'Ethics in African Theology,' in: Doing Ethics in
Context: South African Perspectives, C.Villa-Vicencio and
 J.de Gruchy (eds.), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books,
 pp.138-147.
- Khabela, M.G. 1996 Tiyo Soga: The Struggle of the Gods, Alice:
 Lovedale Press.
- Khabela, M.G.& 1998 Perspectives on Ubuntu, Alice: Lovedale Press.
 Mzoneli, Z.C.
- Kiernan, J. 1990 'African and Christian: From Opposition to Mutual
 Accommodation,' in: Christianity in South Africa, Prozesky,
 M. Bergvlei: Southern Book Publishers, pp.9 – 27.
- Kiernan, J. 1995 'The Impact of White Settlement on Traditional
 Religions,' in: Living Faiths in South Africa, Prozesky, M, and
 De Gruchy, J. (eds.) Claremont: David Philip Publishers, pp.
 72-82.
- Kourie, Celia 2000 'What is Christian Spirituality?' in: Christian
Spirituality in South Africa, Kourie, Celia and Kretzschmar,
 Louise (eds.), Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, pp.9-33.
- Kourie, Celia & 2000 Christian Spirituality in South Africa,
 Kretzschmar, Louise Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.

- Kretzschmar, Louise 2000 'Being and Doing: Towards an Integrated Spirituality,' in: Christian Spirituality in South Africa, Kourie, Celia and Kretzschmar, Louise, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, pp.37-54.
- Kropf, A. 1915 Kafir-English Dictionary, Lovedale: Lovedale Mission Press.
- Kung, H. 1995 The Church, Kent:Burns & Oates.
- Magesa, L 1996 'The Future of the African Synod,' in: African Synod: Documents, Reflections, Perspectives, Africa Faith and Justice Network: Orbis Books, pp. 163-171.
- Maimela, S. 1987 Proclaim freedom for my people, Braamfontein: Skotaville Publishers.
- Maimela, S.S. 1996 'Culture and ethnic diversity as sources of curses and blessing in the promotion of democratic change,' in: Archbishop Tutu: Prophetic Witness in South Africa, Hully, L, Kretzschmar, Louise, and Pato, L.Cape Town: Human & Rosseau, pp. 80-92.
- Makhubu, P. 1988 Who are the independent churches?, Skotaville: Skotaville Publishers.
- Mathew, G. 1991 'Whose culture and why?', in: The Identity of Anglican Worship, Stevenson, K. and Spinks, B. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, p.144-145.
- Mbiti, J.S. 1979 'The Biblical Basis for Present Trends in African Theology,' in: african theology en route, Appiah-Kubi, K. and Torres, S. (eds.), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp.83-94.
- Mbiti, J.S. 1990 African Religions and Philosophy, London: Heinemann.
- Mbiti, J.S. 1994 Introduction to African Religion, Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers Ltd.
- Mbuy-Beya, Bernadette 1996 'Women in the Church in Africa,' in: African Synod: Documents, Reflections, Perspectives, Africa Faith & Justice Network, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp.175-187.

- McGrath, A.E. 1992 Christian Spirituality, Oxford: Blackwell Publications.
- Mgojo, K.E.M. 1986 'Church and Africanization,' in: Hammering swords into ploughshares, B. Tlhagale & I. Mosala (eds.), Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers, pp.111-117.
- Mgojo, K. 1999 'Foreword', in: Ethiopianism and the Order of Ethiopia, Dwane, S. Glosderry: Ethiopian Episcopal Church, p.4
- Mills, W.G. n.d. 'Missionaries, Xhosa Clergy and the Suppression of Traditional Customs,' ms. 18246, Rhodes Cory Library, pp.1-20.
- Mofokeng, T. 1990 'Black Theology in South Africa: Achievements, Problems and Prospects,' in: Christianity in South Africa, Prozesky M. (ed.), Bergvlei: Southern Books Publications, pp.37-54.
- Montefiore, H. (ed.) 1992 The Gospel in Contemporary Culture, London: Mowbray.
- Mosala, I. 1986 'Ethics of the Economic Principles: Church and Secular Investments,' in: Hammering swords into ploughshares, B. Tlhagale and I. Mosala (eds.) Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers, pp.119-129.
- Mosala, I & 1986 The Unquestionable Right To Be Free, Johannesburg: Tlhagale, B. Skotaville Publishers.
- Mosala, I. 1989 Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wiliam B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Motlhabi, M. 1987 The Theory and Practice of Black Resistance to Apartheid, Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers.
- Mtuze, P T. 2003 The Essence of Xhosa Spirituality and the Nuisance of Cultural Imperialism, Florida Hills: Vivlia Publishers.
- Mugambi, J.N.K. 1990 'The Ecumenical Movement and the Future of the Church in Africa,' in: The Church in African Christianity, Mugambi, J.N.K. and Magesa, L. (eds.), Nairobi: Initiatives Ltd, pp. 5-28.

- Mugambi, J.N.K. 1990 The Church in African Christianity, Nairobi: Magesa, Laurenti Initiatives Ltd.
- Mzimba, L.N. 1923 Ubom bomfi Rev. P.J. Mzimba, Lovedale: Lovedale Institution Press.
- Nasimiyu-Wasike, Anne 1990 'African Women's Legitimate Role in Church Ministry,' in: Schism and Renewal in Africa, Mugambi, J.N.K. and Magesa, L. Nairobi: Initiatives, pp.57-70.
- Newbiggin, L. 1991 The Gospel in a Pluralist Society, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- New People Media Centre 1996 'An Analysis of the Church in Africa in: African Synod, Documents, Reflections, Perspectives, Africa by Faith & Justice Network (eds.)Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp.14-19.
- Ngada, N.H. & 2001 African Christian Witness: African Indigenous Mofokeng, K.E. Churches, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.
- Ngubane, J.B. 1986 'Theological Roots of the African Independent Churches and their Challenge to Black Theology,' in The Unquestionable Right To Be Free, Mosala and Tlhagale, Johannesburg; Skotaville Publishers, pp.71 – 90).
- Nolan, A. 1986 'Theology in a Prophetic Mode,' in: Hammering swords into ploughshares, Tlhagale, B. and Mosala, I. (eds.), Braamfontein: Skotaville Publishers, pp. 131 – 140.
- Nolan, A. 1988 God in South Africa: The challenge of the gospel, Claremont: David Philip.
- Nthamburi, Z. J.1990 'Ecclesiology of African Independent Churches,' in: The Church in African Society, Mugambi, J.N.K., and Magesa, L. (eds.), Nairobi, Kenya: Initiatives, pp. 43 – 56.
- Nyamiti, C. 1990 'The Church as Christ's Ancestral Mediation: An Essay on African Ecclesiology,' in: The Church in African Christian Christianity, Mugambi, J.N.K. and Magesa, Laurenti (eds.), Nairobi: Initiatives Ltd., pp.129 -177.

- Nyoka, A.D. 1930 'Ukucinga kwabaNtsundu ngentlalo yompefumlo emva kokufa,' in: Inkolo namasiko aBantu (Bantu Beliefs and Customs), Wallis, S.J. (ed), London: Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, pp.22-37.
- Oduyoye, Mercy A. 1979 "The Value of African Religion Beliefs and Practices for Christian Theology," in: African theology en route, Appiah-Kubi, K. and Torres, S. (eds.), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp. 104-116.
- Oduyoye, Mercy, A. 1981 'A decade and a half of ecumenism in Africa: problems, programmes, hopes,' in: Voices of Unity, van der Bent, A.J. (ed.), WCC, Geneva: Oikoumene, pp.70-77.
- Onaiyekan J.O. 1996 'The Church in Africa Today,' in: African Synod, Documents, Reflections and Perspectives, Africa Faith & Justice Network, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp.211-219.
- Pato, L. 1994 'African Theologies,' in: Doing Theology in Context, J. de Gruchy & C. Villa-Vicencio (eds.), Cape Town: David Philip, pp.152 – 161.
- Pato, L. 2000 'African spirituality and Transformation in South Africa,' in: Christian Spirituality in South Africa, Kourie, Celia and Kretzschmar, Louise (eds.), Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, pp.92-99.
- Pato, L. 2000 Foreword, in: Christ and our salvation, Dwane, S. Genadendal: Genadendalse Drukkery. (unpaginated)
- Pauw, B.A. 1975 Christianity and Xhosa Tradition: Belief and Ritual Among Xhosa-speaking Christians, Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Pityana, B. 1994 'Black Theology,' in: Doing Theology in Context:South African Perspectives, J. de Gruchy & C.Villa-Vicencio (eds.), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 173-183.
- Prozesky, M. 1990 Christianity in South Africa, Bergvlei: Southern Book Publishers.
- Prozesky, M.& De Gruchy 1995 Living Faiths in South Africa, Claremont: Cluster Publications.

- Radin, P. 1957 Primitive Religion: Its Nature and Origin, New York: Dover Publications.
- Rakoczy, Susan 2000 'Living Life to the Full: Reflections on Feminist Spirituality,' in: Christian Spirituality in South African, Celia Kourie and Louise Kretschmar (eds.) Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, pp.69-91.
- Regan, H.A. & 1993 Christ in Context: The Confrontation Between Torrance, A.J. (eds.) Gospel and Culture, Edinburgh: T & T Clarke.
- Torrance, A.J.1993 'Culture Protestantism,' in: Christ in Context: The Confrontation Between Gospel and Culture, Regan, H.D. & Torrance, A.J (eds.), Edinburgh: T & T Clarke, pp. 1-5.
- Rolheiser, R. 1998 Seeking Spirituality, London: Hodder & Stoughton.
- Russell, D. 2003 'Foreword' in: The Essence of Xhosa Spirituality and the Nuisance of Cultural Imperialism, Mtuze, P T. Florida: Vivlia Publishers, pp.v-viii.
- Sanneh, L. 1993 Encountering the West: Christianity and the Global Cultural Process: the African dimension, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
- Schineller, P. 1990 A Handbook on Inculturation, N.Y.: Paulist Press.
- Setiloane, G.M. 1979 'Where Are We in African Theology?' in: african theology en route. Appiah-Kubi, K. and Torres, S. (eds.), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp. 59-65.
- Setiloane, G.M. 2000 African Theology: An Introduction, Cape Town: Lux Verbi. BM
- Schreiter, R.J. 1997: The New Catholicity: Theology Between the Global and the Local, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
- Sheldrake, P. 1995 Living Between Worlds: Place and Journey in Celtic Spirituality, Darton, Longman and Todd.
- Shepherd, R. 1871, in: The Kaffir Express, dated 4 February 1871.
- Shepherd, R. 1955 Bantu Literature and Life, Lovedale: Lovedale Press.
- Shorter, A. 1994 Evangelization and Culture, London: Geoffrey Chapman.

- Soga, J.H. 1931 The Ama-Xosa: Life and Customs, Alice: Lovedale Press.
- Stevenson, K. 1991 The Identity of Anglican Worship, Spinks, B Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing.
- Stone, Ruth 1994 'Bringing the Extraordinary into the Ordinary', in: Religion in Africa, Blakely, T.D., van Beek, W.E.A., and Thomson, L. (eds.), London: James Curry, pp.389-397.
- Stormont, D.D. 1902. 'Ethiopian Movement Among the Native Churches of South Africa,' unpublished ms. 10697, Cory Library, 25pp.
- Stradling, L. 1997 Show Me Your Ways: An Introduction to Spirituality, Mossel Bay: St Peter's Church.
- Stretton, R. 2006 Lecture delivered at Hillingdale, Grahamstown, on 22-25 August 2006.
- Stubbs, A. (ed.) 2006 I wright what I like: Steve Biko, Craighall: Picador Africa.
- Suggit, J. 1999 The Anglican Way: Southern African Perspectives, Claremont: PreText Publications.
- Surin, K. 1986 Theology and the problem of evil, Oxford: Basil Blackwell
- Tate, W.R. 1991 Biblical Interpretation: An Integrated Approach, Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendricks Publishers.
- Ter Haar, G. 1992 The Spirit of Africa: The Healing Ministry of Archbishop Milingo of Zambia, London: Hurst Company.
- The New People Media Centre 1996 'An analysis of the Church in Africa,' in: The African Synod: Documents, Reflections, Perspectives, African Faith & Justice Network. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp.14-19.
- Thlagale, B. & Mosala, I. (eds.) 1986 Hammering swords into ploughshares, Johannesburg: Skotaville
- Thomas, M.M. 'Ecumenism in Asia: an assessment,' in: Voices of Unity, van der Bent, A.J. (ed.), WCC, Geneva: Oikoumene, pp. 93-101).

- Tshibangu, T. 1979 'The task of African Theologians,' in: African theology en route, K.Appiah-Kubi and S. Torres (eds.), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp. pp.73-79.
- Turaki, Y. 1999 Christianity and African Gods: A method in theology, Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education.
- Villa-Vicencio, C. & 1994 Doing Ethics in Context: South African Perspectives, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
De Gruchy, J. (eds.)
- Wakefield, G.S. 1991 'A future for Anglican spirituality: A Methodist view,' in: The Identity of Anglican Worship, Stevenson, K and Spinks, B. (eds.), Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, pp.170-183.
- Wallis, S.J. (ed.) 1930 Inkolo namasiko olwaluko abaNtsundu, London: SPCK.
- Waruta, D.W. 1990 'Towards an African Church: A Critical Assessment of Alternative Forms and Structures,' in: The Church and African Christianity, Mugambi, J.N.K. & Magesa, Laurenti (eds.), Nairobi: Initiatives Ltd., pp.29-42.
- Weinberg, P. 2006 Moving Spirit: Spirituality in Southern Africa, Cape Town: Double Storey Books.
- Wells, J. (n.d.) Stewart of Lovedale: The Life and Times of James Stewart, London: Hodder & Stoughton.
- Wessels, A. 1994 Europe: Was it Ever Christian?: The interaction between gospel and culture, London: SCM Press.

Journals and other articles quoted and/or read:

- Bate, S.C. 1998 'Inculturation in South Africa,' in: *Grace and Truth*, Vol.15 No.3, pp.44-51.
- Bate, S.C. 1999 'Catholics and Traditional Healers in History,' in: *Grace and Truth*, Bate, S.C. (ed.) Vol.16 No.1, pp.51-63.
- Decock, P.B. 1999 'Consulting the Otherworldly Realm in the Judeo-Christian Tradition,' in: *Grace and Truth*, Vol. 6 No.1 1999/1, pp.37 -50.

- Du Toit, C 1998 'African spirituality and the poverty of Western Experience,' in: *Theology for Southern Africa* 100 (March 1998) pp. 36-60.
- Extracts from various editions of the *Kaffir Express/Isigidimi* going back to the Nineteenth Century.
- Gaybba, B. 2000/1 'Ecumenism at the End of the Century: Some Reflections,' in: *Grace and Truth*, (ed. Susan Rakoczy, IHM), Vol. 17 No.1, pp.17 - 24.
- Goedhals, M. 2003 'African Nationalism and Indigenous Christianity: A Study in the Life of James Calata (1895-1983), in: *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 33, 1, pp.64-82.
- Goodwin, W.A. n.d. 'Native Church Organization' in: *The South African Church Quarterly Review*, Vol. II, pp. 305 – 311.
- Heese, H.F. n.d. "Die Berliner am Kap: Cultural Action and Reaction in the South Western Cape", UWC Institute for Historical Research, paper presented at the IHR Conference on "People, Power, and Culture: The History of Christianity in South Africa, 1792-1992", ms 18246 Cory Library, RU. Pp.1-23.
- Interview with Reverend Phindile Baxana in Grahamstown, in 2005.
- Makgoba, T. 2007 'The Bishop's Charge', Delivered at the Sixty-fourth Session of the Diocese of Grahamstown at St Alban's Church, East London, 8 September 2007.
- Maluleke, T.S. 1996 'African culture, African intellectuals and the white academy in South Africa – some implications for Christian theology in Africa,' in: *Religion and Theology*, Vol.3/1 1996, pp.19-42.
- Maluleke, T.S. 2000 'African Christianity at the Dawn of the 21st Century: Five Theses,' in: *Grace and Truth*, Vol. 17 No.1, pp.50-57.
- Mbeki, T. 2002 Speech of President Thabo Mbeki at the Funeral of Sarah Bartmann delivered at Gamtoos on 9 August 2002, pp.1-8.
- Mbuyisa, T. 2000 'My Dream for the Church of the Future,' in: *Grace and Truth*, Vol. 17 No.1, pp.62-63.

- Msebe, B. 'Mbeki Pays Centenary visit to PE,' in: Evening Post dated 12 January 2000.
- Ngxamngxa, A.N.N. 1967 'The function of Circumcision among the Xhosa-speaking Tribes in Historical Perspective,' in: Man: Anthropological Essays, University of Fort Hare, pp.183-204.
- Okure, T. 1998 'Belief in the Holy Spirit,' in: *Grace and Truth*, Vol.15 No.3, pp.5-25.
- Oosthuizen, G.C. 1968 'Causes of Religious Independentism in Africa,' in: *Fort Hare Papers*, Vol. 4, June 1968, No.2, pp.11- 30.
- Pato, L. 1990 'The African Independent Churches: A socio-Cultural Approach,' in: *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, no. 72 (September 1990), 24-35.
- Skhakhane, J. 1999 'Catholics and Southern African Traditional Healers,' in: *Grace and Truth*, Vol.16 No. 1 1999/1, pp.4-11.
- The Kaffir Express, Vol. 2. No.26, 1872, p.2 'On the slow spiritual growth of Native Converts'.
- Trisk, Janet 2004 'The saints and ancestors' in: the Daily Dispatch, Monday, November 1, 2004.
- Unpublished documents from the Dwane Collection in the Cory Library, Rhodes University.
- Wirgman, D.D. n.d. 'The Order of Ethiopia,' in: *The South African Church Quarterly Review*, pp.573-579.