

**THE MISSION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AMIDST SOCIAL DISRUPTION AND
TRANSITION: A STUDY OF THE ILITHA AND NDEVANA COMMUNITIES IN
THE EASTERN CAPE.**

by

JACOBUS NICOLAAS ODENDAAL

submitted in accordance with the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY

in the subject

MISSIOLOGY

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

PROMOTER: PROFESSOR W.A. SAAYMAN

JANUARY 1996

-----ooOoo-----

Dedicated to

JULY GEDEZANA

and to many others like him who,

in the midst of relentless struggle and suffering,

kept faith

in the liberating presence

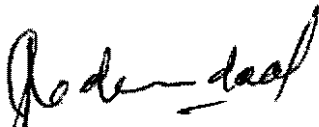
of the living God.

Student number: 497-271-6

I declare that

**THE MISSION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AMIDST SOCIAL DISRUPTION AND
TRANSITION: A study of the Ilitha and Ndevana communities in the Eastern Cape.**

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.


.....
J. N. ODENDAAL

23/01/96
.....
DATE

**THE MISSION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AMIDST SOCIAL DISRUPTION AND
TRANSITION: A Study of the Ilitha and Ndevana Communities in the Eastern Cape.**

C O N T E N T

Summary / Opsomming	ix
Foreword	xi
Abbreviations	xiii
CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Aim and Purpose of the Study.....	1
1.2 The Mission of the Church.....	4
1.3 The Missiological Significance of the Study.....	5
1.4 Thesis.....	6
1.5 Participant Observation as Method of Research.....	6
1.6 Locating a Social Situation.....	8
1.7 Focus of Study.....	9
1.8 Local Faith Community.....	10
1.9 The Contribution of an Outsider.....	13
1.10 Defining Terms.....	16
1.11 Structure of the Study.....	17
CHAPTER TWO : THE CISKEI AREA AND ITS PEOPLE	
2.1 Overview.....	18
2.1.1 The Area.....	18
2.1.2 Ciskei.....	19
2.1.3 Part of Region D.....	19
2.1.4 Comparing Region D with the Rest of South Africa.....	20
2.1.5 Natural Regions.....	21
2.2 The People of the Ciskei Area.....	22
2.2.1 General Statistics.....	22
2.2.2 Towns in Ciskei.....	22
2.2.3 Closer-settlements.....	23

2.2.4	Squatter Settlements	23
2.2.5	Rural Townships.....	24
2.2.6	Workers and the Economy	24
2.3	A Short History preceding the Present Situation	24
2.3.1	The <u>amaMfengu</u> and the <u>amaXhosa</u>	26
2.3.2	The Consolidation of Ciskei in the Twentieth Century.....	30
2.3.3	Political Development	34
2.3.4	Resettlement and Urbanization	37
2.4	Ilitha - Ndevana Complex	44
2.4.1	The Area.....	44
2.4.1.1	Urban Settlements	45
2.4.1.2	Peri-urban Settlements.....	45
2.4.1.3	Squatter Settlements and "Illegal" Occupation	46
2.4.2	The Ilitha-Ndevana Area in Broader Context	47
2.4.2.1	Nodal-corridor Structure.....	48
2.4.3	The People	49
2.4.3.1	Population and Growth	49
2.4.3.1.1	Statistics.....	49
2.4.3.1.2	Composition of the Ilitha-Ndevana Communities.....	49
2.4.3.1.3	Growth Tendencies	52
2.4.3.2	Family Life	53
2.4.3.3	Housing	61
2.4.3.4	Local Government	63
2.4.3.5	Economic Activities.....	63
2.4.3.6	Education and Recreation	67
2.4.3.7	Health Care	69
2.4.3.8	Social Order and Control	71
2.4.4	The Environment and Natural Resources	71
2.5	Conclusion.....	72

CHAPTER THREE : THE DEEP TRENCH OF DESPAIR

3.1	The Burden of the Past.....	74
3.2	People made Redundant and Dispensable.....	79
3.3	Controlled by the System and left with no Alternatives.....	81
3.4	Disempowerment and the Destruction of Human and Physical Resources.....	84
3.5	Every aspect of Life being Criminalised.....	88
3.6	Institutionalised Violence led to Endemic Violence.....	89
3.7	People left Vulnerable.....	90
3.8	Humiliated and Deceived.....	92
3.9	Conclusion.....	93

CHAPTER FOUR : FAITH COMMUNITIES AMID TRANSITION

4.1.	Faith Communities in the Ilitha-Ndevana area.....	95
4.1.1	Variety of Faith Communities.....	95
4.1.2	Church indifference.....	104
4.1.3	Lack of Ecumenical Communication and Co-operation.....	105
4.2	Two Local Congregations of the Uniting Reformed Church.....	105
4.3	Disruptions, Changes and Difficulties faced by Members.....	110
4.3.1	Things were better in the Past.....	110
4.3.2	Types of Daily Problems.....	111
4.3.3	Explanations of Trouble and Problems.....	114
4.3.4	Handling of Hardship and Problems.....	115
4.4	Supportive Structures and Actions operative in the Local Faith Community.....	120
4.4.1	Meaningful Support in the Local Context.....	120
4.4.2	Church Worship Services.....	122
4.4.3	Preaching and the Use of the Bible.....	123
4.4.4	Liturgy.....	124
4.4.5	Supportive Role of the Leadership.....	125
4.4.6	Church Festivals.....	126
4.4.7	Fund Raising.....	128
4.4.8	Support at the Time of Death.....	129

4.4.9	Support through Member Associations	130
4.5.	Conclusion	133

CHAPTER FIVE : ASPECTS OF A MISSION MODEL FOR A LOCAL FAITH COMMUNITY

5.1	From a Message Distorted to a Relevant Model for Mission.....	134
5.2	The God of the Destitute, the Poor, and the Wronged.....	144
5.3	Freed from a colonial consciousness.....	147
5.4	Building Community.....	150
5.5	A New Reading of the Gospel.....	154
5.6	Coram Dei: Living Daily Life before God	160
5.7	The Church as a Site of Empowerment and Reconstruction.....	166
5.8	Appropriate Church Structures	168
5.8.1	Serving Leadership	170
5.8.2	An ongoing Renewal of the Liturgy.....	171
5.8.3	Symbolism.....	179
5.8.4	Encouraging existing Supportive Structures.....	181
5.8.5	Training, Growth and Formation	182
5.9	Ecumenical Involvement.....	184
5.10	A Vision for the Faith Community.....	186

WORKS CONSULTED.....	191
-----------------------------	------------

NEWSPAPERS.....	202
------------------------	------------

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED	203
--	------------

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 : Type of houses in Ilitha and extension.....	61
Table 2 : Type of houses in Ndevana, Maphantsulweni and Nkanini.....	62
Table 3 : Building processes in the Ilitha-Ndevana area	62
Table 4 : Sources of income in Ilitha and Ndevana	65
Table 5 : Schools in Ilitha in 1995	68

Table 6 : Schools in Ndevana in 1995	68
Table 7 : Faith Communities in Ilitha	100
Table 8 : Faith Communities in the Ndevana area	101
Table 9 : Major Problems.....	111

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 : Ethnographic Research Cycle	7
Figure 2 : Nodal-corridor model.....	48
Figure 3 : Vision statement for the Local Faith Community	189

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1 : The Greater Ciskei area.....	18
Map 2 : Eight Development Regions	19
Map 3 : Ciskei territories: 1913 & 1936	31
Map 4 : Ciskei: 1975 Consolidation Plans.....	33
Map 5 : Ilitha-Ndevana complex	44

-----ooOoo-----

SUMMARY

The policy of Separate Development and its forceful implementation by the Nationalist Government from the 1960's and into the 1980's resulted in the resettlement of thousands of Africans in the 'homeland' Ciskei in the Eastern Cape. All these changes had a profound and very often a disruptive influence on the lives of those involved. People's ability to survive amidst these circumstances, was tested to the limit. This study looks at the role of the local Christian faith community in supporting its members during these rapid and disruptive socio-economic and political changes. The study is confined to two congregations of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa in Ilitha and Ndevana in the Eastern Cape.

Following an introductory chapter, Chapter 2 gives a historical outline of developments in the broader Ciskei. Attention is also given to demographic, social and economic conditions. Chapter 3 describes the culture and feeling of despair, powerlessness and mistrust that is deeply entrenched in the minds of many people in the community due to depressive socio-economic situations.

Chapter 4 gives an overview of the churches in the area and describes the supportive structures and actions of two churches in the Ilitha-Ndevana area. No instant solutions are offered to members but through mutual support they find a sense of belonging and encouragement in the midst of their hardship.

In Chapter 5 a model for the mission of the local church in a context of social and economic change and disruption, is presented. It is shown how the image of Christianity and the Gospel have been distorted and misused in the past through the entanglement of mission and colonialism, a negative attitude towards African culture, and by contributing to the subordination of women in society. A vision that people in Africa can have peace and dignity and become self-reliant is proposed. Within the local faith community this vision is built on an understanding of God as the weak and suffering Lord, on fellowship and mutual support, a new reading of the Bible, a practical community based spirituality, and an emphasis on healing.

KEY TERMS: Mission; Eastern Cape, Resettlement; Transition; Disruptive change; Distortion of Christianity; Faith community; Fellowship; Mutual support; Healing; Spirituality; Moral reconstruction.

OPSOMMING

Die daarstelling en kragdadige toepassing van die beleid van Afsonderlike Ontwikkeling vanaf die 1960's tot die 1980's het tot gevolg gehad dat duisende Swart Suid-Afrikaners hervestig is in die Ciskei-tuisland in die Oos-Kaap. Al hierdie veranderinge het verreikende en baie dikwels ontwrigtende gevolge op die betrokkenes gehad. Mense se vermoëns om binne hierdie omstandighede te oorleef, is tot die uiterste beproef. Hierdie studie kyk na die rol van die plaaslike Christelike geloofsgemeenskap in die ondersteuning van sy lede tydens snelle en ontwrigtende sosiale, ekonomiese en politieke veranderinge. Die studie is beperk tot twee gemeentes van die Verenigende Gereformeerde Kerk in Suider-Afrika in Ilitha en Ndevana in die Oos-Kaap.

Na 'n inleidende hoofstuk, gee hoofstuk 2 'n historiese oorsig van ontwikkelinge in die breëre Ciskei-gebied. Aandag word ook gegee aan demografiese, sosiale en ekonomiese toestande. Hoofstuk 3 beskryf 'n kultuur en gevoel van moedeloosheid, magteloosheid en wantroue wat, as gevolg van neerdrukkende sosiaal-ekonomiese toestande, diep in menige mense se gemoedere vasgelê is.

Hoofstuk 4 gee 'n oorsig oor die kerke in die gebied en beskryf die ondersteunende strukture en optrede in twee gemeentes in die Ilitha-Ndevana area. Geen kitsoplossings word aan lede aangebied nie, maar deur onderlinge steun vind hulle geborgenheid en bemoediging te midde van swaarkry.

In hoofstuk 5 word 'n model aangebied vir die missie van die plaaslike kerk te midde van sosiale en ekonomiese veranderinge en ontwrigting. Daar word aangetoon hoe die beeld van die Christendom in die verlede verwring en misbruik is deur: die verstrengeling van sending en kolonialisasie; 'n negatiewe houding teenoor kultuur in Afrika; en deur by te dra tot die ondergeskikte posisie van vroue in die samelewing. 'n Visie dat die mense van Afrika vrede en menswaardigheid kan geniet en self onderhoudend kan raak, word voorgestel. Binne die plaaslike geloofsgemeenskap word aan hierdie visie gebou deur 'n begrip van God as die magtelose en lydende Here, deur onderlinge gemeenskap en ondersteuning, 'n nuwe lees en begrip van die Bybel, 'n praktiese gemeenskaps-gerigte spiritualiteit en 'n beklemtoning van heling en herstel.

FOREWORD

On my arrival in the Xhosa speaking Qonce congregation in 1983, I was confronted by a foreign language and culture, and to add to this, by many members of the congregation, who themselves were new and unsettled in an area where they had recently moved into and were seeing scores of newcomers moving in daily from all parts of the country. The "homeland" was often the only place in the country where they were welcome. I soon discovered that my newly acquired qualifications in theology and limited skills were totally inadequate and that existing practices in the ministry were also not dealing with the situation sufficiently. Nevertheless, as an outsider I experienced warmth, sincerity and acceptance from the members of the congregation as well as from the larger community in which I moved. The greatest discovery I made was the deep wisdom and insight that were part of the people who were often poor and illiterate but who had a childlike faith and trust in God. The theme of this study was actually born from the struggle and search for a way, together with the local lay leaders, to serve the congregation in a meaningful and appropriate way in the context in which they found themselves. This also became part of my own search for identity as an African, born and bred in Africa, and my belonging to the joy and suffering of Africa. It became clear to me that this could not be discovered instantaneously and not in a clearly formulated answer, but that it was found in an honest identification with and commitment to the destiny of local people. For many years, I was privileged to share in the struggle and sorrows of fellow-Africans as well as in their joys. When I was faced with uncertainty of employment and income in 1994, I could identify with many that had been retrenched and that lived under economic uncertainty. I learned the truth of the well known Xhosa saying: ukunyamazela kunomyuzo (to persist brings reward).

The stimulation of studying and staying in Kenya for two months in 1995 broadened my perspective of the church in Africa. The study program at the Maryknoll Institute for African Studies under the enthusiastic leadership of Dr. Michael Kirwen in Nairobi, led to my exposure to the harsh realities of Africa but also to a wonderful feeling of being at home; belonging to the people of greater Africa. My field assistants, Newton Maina and Charles Nyakweba, who facilitated my exposure within the different communities, and my friends at the Langata students residence of the Society of the Divine Word, where I

resided, contributed to a very precious experience. It was unforgettable to be welcomed and accepted as *umzungu* (Swahili: European) in a rural home in Kisii in western-Kenya.

I cannot neglect to mention the inspiration I received from the example of and friendship with the late Prof. Dirk Odendaal, my lecturer in Old Testament at the Theological Seminary at Stellenbosch. His ministry among the Xhosa migrant labourers at Mfuleni near Kuilsrivier taught me that God can be found among the less significant people of society, wherever He is worshipped in simplicity and in truth.

It is only with the help and encouragement of friends that a project like this can be completed. A word of thanks to my friend, Hans Strübing, who knows and shared my everyday struggles, to Neil and Idil Sheard for the pleasant stay at the foot of Compassberg and to Charlie Lagan for his valuable linguistic assistance.

I cannot adequately express my gratitude and respect I have for my promoter, Prof. Willem Saayman. It often felt as if the whole project was drifting out of control, but with his enthusiasm and expert guidance, he convinced me that it was all worthwhile.

Appreciation and acknowledgement are also given to the Human Science Research Council, the David Bosch Theological Memorial Fund, and the Narollah Sendingtrust for their financial assistance. However, opinions expressed in this work, or conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not to be attributed to these institutions.

To my wife, Mariëtte, and our children, Helena, Adriaan and Hendrik, my sincere thanks for the patience, and understanding. Your support and encouragement kept me going.

*"Malaziwe lihlonebwe igama lakho,
malongame ulawulo hwakho,
makwenziwe ukuthanda kwakho,"*

(Matthew 6:9b,10 - New translation Xhosa N.T.)

ABBREVIATIONS

ADM	African Democratic Movement
AICs	African Initiated Churches, African Indigenous Churches or African Independent Churches
a.s.l.	above sea level
ANC	African National Congress
ATR	African Traditional Religion
CNIP	Ciskei National Independence Party
CIS	Central Intelligence Service
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
DRCA	Dutch Reformed Church in Africa
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MIAS	Maryknoll Institute for African Studies, Nairobi, Kenya
MPCs	Missionary Planted Churches
NIV	New International Version
NGKA	Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika
NGK	Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
TBVC	Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei
TLC	Transitional Local Council
URC	Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

*Sometimes when I consider what tremendous
consequences come from little things ...
I am tempted to think ...
there are no little things.*

Bruce Barton

1.1 AIM AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

From the late 1960's and into the 1980's a master plan was set in motion to transform the whole of South African society. The ongoing practice of race discrimination was moulded and fixed into the policy of Apartheid or Separate Development and forcefully implemented by the Nationalist Government. It involved the final consolidation of land in certain areas in South Africa, called homelands. Strategies were designed and implemented to encourage and to force Africans to move to these ethnically based homelands. This caused the disruptive resettlement of more than three million Africans in South Africa over a 23 year period (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:216). It brought about dramatic political, social and economical changes in a relatively short space of time in the lives of millions of South Africans. This process culminated in the political independence of the so-called TBVC states in South Africa, only to be followed after a few years by the total collapse of the system and a return to a unified South Africa. It all meant economical deprivation for a large portion of the African population and a loss of many job opportunities. The dawn of the new democracy in 1994, broadly welcomed, has brought a new set of uncertainties and general disenchantment. All these changes had a profound and often a disruptive influence on the lives of those involved. The ability of people to survive amid these circumstances was tested to the limit.

The questions that are asked are: How is the church, as a sociological institute in a local community, affected by the socio-political conditions and developments of the recent past? What is the role and mission of the church as a faith community during the time of transition? What is the kind of church people need on grass roots level in the post-apartheid South Africa?

It is broadly accepted that local faith communities, representing the Church on ground level, would play an important role in supporting their members during rapidly changing socio-economic and political situations. On the other hand it is also known that, although a majority of the population claims allegiance to a Christian church,¹ only a small percentage is in any way directly involved in church activities.

This study endeavours to look at the assistance and support members who are involved in church activities receive, and the influence that this has towards a meaningful and self sustainable life. With this objective in mind the research has been undertaken in three parts and is limited to an area and community in the Eastern Cape between Bisho and East London.

Firstly the historical background of the area together with the constitutional and political development up to 1995 have been researched. Attention is also given to demographic, social and economic aspects.

Secondly, an ethnographic study is made of the supportive structures and actions of two chosen faith communities in the Ilitha-Ndevana area.

Thirdly a missiological model is presented for the effective supportive functioning of a local faith community in this context.

¹ Some 77% of South Africans would identify themselves as Christians (Nolan 1988:xi).

The objectives of the study have grown out of my involvement with local faith communities for several years. The opinion was often expressed by local church leaders that the events of the day had time and again caught the church off guard and it had been slow to take responsible and appropriate action. It was clear that the Church at the local level would have to take note and study its context. Furthermore the Church would have to delve into the resources of scriptural and church traditions, and responses by the local churches in similar situations in other areas and countries. This should be done in order for the local faith community to arrive at an appropriate and applicable ministry in which members are supported and empowered to handle the challenges of every day.

The first objective is therefore to come to an understanding of the context and of the functioning of members within the local faith community. In order to accomplish this goal, participant observation was applied as research method.

The second important objective of the study is to provide a report to leaders in the local faith community from which a simple method of investigation can be derived. This method can then be used by leaders to identify problem areas, to investigate and explore their context and to find effective strategies based on their own authentic response and insights. The biblical and church traditions will function as useful resources.

In a broader context the study would hope to contribute to an understanding and appreciation for believers who live by their hope in the liberating presence of Christ² amid severe struggle.

² The phrase 'hope or faith in the liberating presence of Christ' is used frequently in this study. It is not meant to indicate a triumphalist existence of a believer. It tries to express an attitude of a believer towards the harsh reality surrounding him or her. It starts with a firm conviction that Christ, through his Spirit, is present even in the most appalling conditions, and can be experienced in the smallest fragments of genuine humanity shown between people, transforming conditions and creating new possibilities for human existence, although often obscured.

1.2 THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH.

In order to give account of the missiological concern of this study, it is essential to briefly define the mission of the Church. In general it can be stated that the Christian mission is a wide and inclusive complex of activities aimed at the realisation of the reign and presence of God in history (Botha et al. 1994:21). But these activities are not without problems. The Christian mission has come under severe criticism and attack in recent years and the situation has been described as a crisis.³ Changed attitudes and opinions on mission cannot be ignored and must be seriously dealt with by the leadership in the local faith community, and care must be taken that it does not lead to indifference and to a paralysis in regard to an essential aspect of the Christian faith. A creative new vision for the mission of the church in the present time and context is needed to inspire members to take up their responsibility and participate in the ongoing coming of the kingdom and reign of God.

A provisional outline of mission will include the following:

1. Mission is God's "yes" to the world (Bosch 1991a:10) and is therefore primarily missio Dei (God's mission), a proclamation that God is a God-for-people.
2. The entire Christian existence in following Jesus Christ is characterised as a missionary existence. Every Christian is therefore an agent of mission (McCoy 1994:45).
3. The church is also missionary by its very nature because it is "earthed" by "... continuously listening to people, analyzing their context and reading the signs of the times" (Botha et al. 1994:21). Mission belongs to the essence of the church.

³ Bosch (1991a:3-6) described the extent of the crisis. He gave a number of factors that had led to the crisis, namely: the advance of science and the world-wide secularisation; the steady dechristianisation of the West; the awareness that we now live in a religiously pluralist society; an acute guilt of the West due to exploitation of people of colour in the past; the enlarging gap between the rich and the poor; and the emergence of Third-World theologies and the move away from Western theology, ecclesial ways and practices. The crisis has manifested itself in three areas, namely: the foundation, the motives and aim, and the nature of mission. In many circles confidence has been replaced by despair and uncertainty about the Christian mission.

4. The Church in its missionary endeavour is not an alternative society but is part and parcel of the reality experienced every day by its members living *in* the world.

5. God's "yes" for the world is revealed in the church's engagement with and commitment to the poor and the marginalised people of society in situations of injustice, oppression, poverty, discrimination and violence.

6. It is the *one* mission which includes different dimensions, as was seen clearly in the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth - who empowered the lowly, healed the sick and saved the lost, in a "one multifaceted" response to their suffering and in that way announced the kingdom and rule of God (Bosch 1989:4). These three dimensions can be distinguished but not separated and "each of these ministries presupposes the other two" (Bosch 1989:4,5). Evangelism is therefore not the only dimension but an essential one. Evangelism is understood to be the proclamation of salvation in Christ, calling people to repentance, faith in Christ and commitment to the community of believers and for service to others, especially the poor, in the power of the Holy Spirit (Bosch 1991a:10).

1.3 THE MISSIOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

From the above description of mission, it is obvious that the whole church is or should be involved in mission. Every aspect of the existence of the local church will therefore have a missiological dimension or concern, although not always intentionally.

For the purpose of this study a missiological thrust is seen as attitudes, actions, activities and structures of a local faith community and its members that have an "outward directedness" (Saayman et al. 1994:1). It shows itself in an interest and care for the weak, the poor, the marginalised and those who are denied basic rights.

Secondly it is concerned with change in order to heal and to empower people. Therefore, efforts that are made to understand the context are aimed at the development of models

and strategies for effective functioning, not only of a faith community but of the society as a whole.

Thirdly, a missiological thrust is part of a process to translate the experience of a local faith community to broader communities, and other parties that can benefit from it. It is concerned with better communication between diverse communities.

A critical reflection on these actions and structures will thus constitute a missiological study. It has a wide scope of activities and covers a variety of areas and disciplines. Missiology has been called the "activist streak in Christianity" (Saayman et al. 1994:5) and involves other social sciences. It is more a field than a single scientific discipline. It has an interdisciplinary approach with many overlaps with sciences like psychology, sociology and anthropology.

1.4 THESIS

The main objective of this study is to show and evaluate the function and meaning of supportive mission activities and structures operative in a local faith community during rapid and disruptive social changes.

1.5 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION AS METHOD OF RESEARCH

The choice of participant observation as the method of research implies that a descriptive approach or a grounded theory approach is used and not a normative approach. It is an open minded approach with the intention to learn from people involved. It goes beyond the mere observation but attempts to acquire the meaning of behaviour, knowledge and artefacts. The participant observer approaches a social situation with a dual purpose: to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and secondly, to observe and to analyse the activities, the people and the physical aspects of the situation (Spradley 1980:54).

Participant observation is understood as a scientific research method that utilises a sequence of tasks to come to qualitative descriptive conclusions resulting in the writing of an ethnography of a specific culture setting. The following sequence of tasks is used namely:

- Locating a social situation;
- Doing Participant observation;
- Making an ethnographic record;
- Making DESCRIPTIVE observations;
- Making a domain analysis;
- Making FOCUSED observations;
- Making a taxonomic analysis;
- Making SELECTED observations;
- Making a componential analysis;
- Discovering cultural themes;
- Taking a cultural inventory;
- Writing an ethnography (Spradley 1980:39-160).

The above mentioned tasks start at a broad (descriptive) observation of a social situation, and narrow down, through focused observations, to end with selected observations. The idea is to draw conclusions while keeping the broader picture in mind.

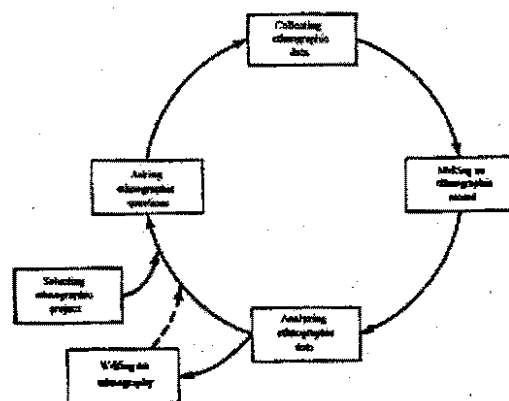


FIGURE 1: Ethnographic Research Cycle (source: Spradley 1980:29)

Throughout this sequence an ongoing research cycle (FIGURE 1) is implemented namely: asking ethnographic questions; collecting data; making a record; and analysing data. The results from this research cycle are the building blocks of a written ethnography. Conclusions are drawn from what people say, from the way they act and from the artefacts they use. The scope of this study is confined to a single social institution and to a limited problem namely the supportive actions and structures within that institution (in this case, the local faith community). It will therefore be classified as a micro-ethnography. Data were collected through observation and participation by the researcher; through free flow interviews with informants; in depth interviews on specific topics and group discussions on relevant issues. Limited use was made of questionnaires to obtain information on the different faith communities and their membership in the area. In the report on the research done, statements and conclusions are regularly motivated by specific examples obtained from interviews and field notes.

1.6 LOCATING A SOCIAL SITUATION

A social situation comprises three basic elements: a place, actors or people and activities, which stand in a triangular relationship (Spradley 1980:40). Each of these elements may be connected to a multitude of the other two elements at the same time and therefore a selection of a specific network of social situations have to be done in order to do observations. For example, at a single place there may be a number of activities with their actors taking place simultaneously, or the same actors or people may be involved in different activities at different venues, or the same type of activity may be performed by different people, while attaching different meanings to them.

In selecting a social situation for this study the following criteria were used: simplicity, accessibility, frequently recurring activities, and the researcher's participation and

involvement in the community. For the purpose of this study a network of social situations was selected where a group of people namely the two congregations of the Uniting Reformed Church in Ilitha and Ndevana share in activities. These two settlements are situated between King William's Town and Berlin, adjacent to the N2 road to East London. Specific aspects of the group's activities were further selected namely those that give meaning and support to members in times of disruptive social change.

1.7 FOCUS OF STUDY

This study is focused on the church at local level. I fully agree with Christopher Duraisingh (1994:4), editor of International Review of Mission that "... the quest for the renewal for mission in the new South Africa is rooted in the day-to-day life and struggle of the local congregations of the churches." It is on this terrain where the study aims to make a contribution.

The study is confined to the supportive actions and structures within the community of faith of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa congregations (formerly the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa) at Ilitha and Ndevana, the so-called amaDatshi of Ilitha and Ndevana. It concentrates on aspects of church life as a sub-culture operating within the broader community.

These two faith communities have been selected because of the researcher's intensive contact with the members over a period of twelve years. Two communities are selected with the aim of contrasting elements within them and to show how different socio-economical situations might influence the supportive structures in these groups.

1.8 LOCAL FAITH COMMUNITY

Different terms may be used to describe the social institution under observation. The commonly used term 'church' conjures up a variety of different and sometimes negative images and connotations of an authoritarian, dominating and conservative institution or an instrument of colonialism or a legitimator of apartheid (De Gruchy 1994:125). The term 'church' may also be linked to a building, clergymen or a denomination.

An important element in understanding the faith community is the dialectical relationship between the church as a sociological and a theological reality (De Gruchy 1994:125). In many aspects the faith community is similar to other institutions in society but on the other hand it is a grouping instituted by God through the continuous work of the Holy Spirit. In this regard there is always an unaccountable element present. Many biblical images and historical models have been used to express the creative tension between God's work and human efforts in establishing the church. Paul Minear (1960:26) indicates that at least eighty images of the church can be found in the Bible, all trying to convey the mystery of eternal life which God shares with his people. In the New Testament all images of the church are centred in Christ. This becomes clear in the use of the term ekklesia in Matthew's gospel (16:18, 18:17), which indicates that the assembly of God's people in the Old Testament is now to be found in those who gather around Jesus. Two prominent images are the 'Body of Christ' and the church being a fellowship or community (koinonia). "Essentially, therefore, the Church must be a meal-fellowship, a koinonia or communio, must be a fellowship with Christ and with Christians, or it is not the Church of Christ" (Küng 1968:223). The 'Body of Christ' image is widely used by Paul in his letters and indicates the intimate relationship between Christ and his church and its manifestation in the world, representing Christ. The church as being a fellowship of believers is

prominent in the Acts of the Apostles and is rooted in the activity of the Holy Spirit as the action of God to bring unity and life to followers (De Gruchy 1994:126,127).

Through history different aspects of the sociological and theological reality of the church were emphasised. Avery Dulles (1976) distinguishes five major ecclesial types or models which operated in the different church traditions over the centuries: the Church as institution, as mystical communion, as sacrament, as herald, and as servant. The first three models are linked with the Roman Catholic tradition while the last two indicate emphases within Protestant ecclesiology and practice. Each model shows a side of the truth but does not exclude the other models.

Another way to characterise the different church traditions is to indicate the difference in emphasis of the same Gospel message. David Bosch (1986:2) uses the six major New Testament salvation events to characterise the different church traditions or types, namely the incarnation of Christ, his death on the cross, his resurrection, his ascension, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and his second coming. He shows that although all denominations and traditions would subscribe to the biblical salvation in Christ, selective emphasis on one of these events of salvation has created different standpoints on the praxis of the church.

So for example, the incarnation is taken seriously in the Theology of Liberation and churches adhering to it show a solidarity with the world and people suffering in a similar way to that of Christ.

Other denominations and individual Christians focus their faith on Christ's act of atonement on the cross. For them the essence of the Christian faith lies in the fact that Christ died for us on the cross. The churches in the West, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, have traditionally placed emphasis on this aspect in their teachings.

In the Eastern Orthodox Churches the resurrection of Christ is the central salvific event with Easter being the most important feast.

The fourth New Testament salvation event, the ascension and enthronement of the crucified and risen Christ, was used by John Calvin as a perspective from which to view theology. Christ reigns as King. It is only recently that Calvinists have developed it into a dynamic perspective of Christ reigning and being actively involved in happenings on earth. Emphasis is then placed on justice and peace in the social realm.

The fifth event is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. It is the Pentecostal, the neo-Pentecostal and renewal movements within the historical churches that see this event as the cornerstone of God's salvation. Through the Spirit they desire absolute sinlessness here and now.

The last event is the second coming or parousia of Christ. Most of the denominations have a focus on the second coming as final event in the history of the world but it is in particular the so-called Adventist churches which have made the parousia the central point of their theology. The Kingdom of God is seen as a future reality with this world fully in the hands of the evil one. The Bible is carefully examined in order to know the time of God's final intervention and the beginning of his Kingdom (Bosch 1986:6). A plurality of models is needed to develop an appropriate ecclesiology for a specific context (Dulles 1976:187).

In addition, different social and economical positions also have a great influence on theological thinking and the reading of the Bible. A Christian living in a ityotyombe (temporary dwelling) made of plastic will read the Bible differently from an affluent person in an upper class suburb. In evaluating the existence and actions of a local faith community it should therefore be taken into account that a multitude of varied expressions of the faith in Christ is possible and valid.

It is also important to recognise that ekklesia is used in the New Testament to describe both the local and the universal Church. The local Church is not merely a section of the real Church nor does it merely belong to the Church, but the local Church is the Church (Küng 1968:85). It has also been said that the local Church is the universal Church in a local manifestation. The local church is therefore the presence⁴ of Christ within the community of Christians in each particular context (De Gruchy 1994:129).

The Church is not equal to the Kingdom of God but is a symbol of the Kingdom, and exists to serve it, proclaiming and demonstrating God's reign to all of creation. Therefore its relevance and truthfulness are derived from its faith praxis (orthopraxis) and not merely from its 'orthodoxy' (De Gruchy 1994:132). It is relevant only when participating in the missio Dei (Bosch 1991a:372), God's liberating mission in this world. God's mission and outreach is marked by a preferential option for the poor and the powerless. In order to be faithful to Jesus Christ, the church is therefore called to be a community for or with the poor and in solidarity with the victims of society (Bosch 1990:44). To a large extent the church in South Africa, due to historical and economical reasons, has become a middle-class church rather than a church for the poor. The church is also often being associated with the rich and powerful in this country (Saayman 1991:104). Reading and living the gospel through the eyes and lives of the poor and marginalised will "restore the weak, crucified Christ as the foundation of our liberation" (Saayman 1991:106).

1.9 THE CONTRIBUTION OF AN OUTSIDER

In the light of the distortions of the Gospel created in Africa by Western mission

⁴ The church is by no means the only presence of Christ in society but, despite its shortcomings and failures, is still a sign and instrument of God's Kingdom and rule in this world.

endeavours in the past and the shameful disregard⁵ for traditional African world-views,⁶ there is truth in the strong statement of Takatso Mofokeng (1983: statement no.15) that "The western-trained pastor is an impediment to the emergence of an African form of worship."

A thorough reorientation, a commitment to, and a fresh reappraisal of African tradition and world-view are therefore necessary in order for a participant to make a meaningful contribution to an authentic and relevant Christian worship in Africa. A truly *Africanist* approach is needed which implies the learned ability to discuss, approach and deal with issues, ideas, events, etc., from within the perspective or context of African cultural knowledge. For Africans this cultural knowledge is held in an unreflected way and they need to conscientise themselves to this knowledge so that they may articulate, celebrate, criticise and elaborate on it. For non-African culture practitioners the process starts with the learning and appropriation of African cultural knowledge as a first step. Once this cultural knowledge is appropriated or articulated, then one can begin to discuss, teach, dialogue and pray from within the perspective of an African world-view.⁷

The success of this reorientation depends largely on one's attitude towards African culture and world-view. One can *reject* African culture as uncivilised and incoherent and therefore seek to destroy it - a not uncommon attitude of earlier missionaries and even educated Africans; or one can *idealise* it as the primal kingdom and seek to appropriate it, oblivious to its concrete dimensions of good and evil, strengths and weaknesses - an attitude

⁵ See the discussion in chapter 5, p.137,138.

⁶ World-view is understood to indicate a person's or a group's system of beliefs, values and practices, a frame of reference by which they try to make sense of reality. "Their world view is their picture of the way things in sheer reality are, their concept of nature, of self, of society. It contains their most comprehensive ideas of order" (Geertz 1973:127).

⁷ These ideas on an Africanist approach were obtained during a study program in June and July 1995 at the Maryknoll Institute for African Studies in Nairobi, Kenya.

sometimes found among African nationalists, naive "go native" missionaries, and Afro-Americans. One can also attempt to *change* it into one's own images and likenesses, i.e. make it a clone of one's own values and customs - the attitude of the colonialists and many missionaries. An Africanist approach would be to *celebrate* African culture for itself, admiring its beauty, wisdom, and strengths and seeking to understand it from within and participate in it as a way of expanding one's own human horizons and way of acting.⁸

Some writers describe this reorientation process as the "conversion of the messenger" to the ritual, values and practices of the host culture.⁹ This means that conversion, in the sense of a complete change, must begin with the messenger and not with the people. It is the bilingual, bi-cultural, bi-religious messenger that has the possibility of communicating with people on the level of their spirituality and that would possibly be able to make a contribution to the worship of Christ in Africa.

I am aware that, although I see myself as an African, born in Africa and committed to the people and future of Africa, I am not a black African and that I am still a stranger to the Xhosa culture, world-view, and life experiences. Nevertheless, for the past twenty years I have been involved in an African church and have striven to be an Africanist in my approach and practices, and I present this study with the awareness of its preliminary value.

⁸ Taken from class notes during the MIAS program of July 1995.

⁹ In a unpublished article of January 1995 by Michael C. Kirwen, Director of MIAS called "Conversion of the Messenger: the answer to inculturation" it is argued that language and culture acquisition is not merely a tool for the messenger to deliver the already set message, but it is part of a lifelong change taking place in the messenger him/herself. Another unpublished article by Jon P. Kirby, missionary-anthropologist of the Society of the Divine Word in Ghana, called "Language and Culture Learning IS Conversion ... IS Ministry", stresses the same point. The subtitle reads: "Towards a theological rationale for language and culture learning as a part of missionary formation in a cross-cultural context."

1.10 DEFINING TERMS

Because different meanings may be attached to some of the terms which are central to my thesis, it is necessary that I explain my own understanding of these terms.

Culture is seen as the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience, and to generate behaviour (Spradley 1980:6). There are many ways to define and approach culture¹⁰, and no single theory or definition can cover the whole spectrum. The semiotic description of culture (Schreier 1985:49-50) seems appropriate for this study. It sees culture as a comprehensive communication network, using verbal and non-verbal messages along interconnected pathways to create the system of meaning. These messages are carried by signs or symbols. The movement of messages is determined and governed by sets of rules which are important for the correct understanding of the messages by the receivers. Knowing these shared rules are essential to understand the signs and the messages they bear in a cultural setting. Many rules are formalised and can be observed, but many stay implicit. Culture provides identity to (a bond of commonality) and helps a community to deal with social change. Culture is not a fixed cognitive map but a set of principles for map making and meaningful navigation through changing circumstances.

This description can also be applied to the limited cultural setting within a local faith community. Then the social behaviour and activities, cultural knowledge and cultural artefacts belonging specifically to the context of a church or faith community would be the objects of research.

¹⁰ Schreier (1985:42-49) gives a summary of the traditional approaches to culture: the functionalist approach which include the structuralist-functionalism, social anthropology of British anthropologists and the followers of Emile Durkheim and Max Weber; the ecological and materialistic approach with the emphasis on the relationship between society and its physical environment; and the structuralist approach, closely identified with Claude Lévi-Strauss.

Social transition or social change is a natural renewal process and is part and parcel of any cultural setting. It is an important stimulus for innovations and new behaviour within society. Forces that bring about change are things like a growing interdependence in the economy; urbanisation; and the growth of technology and communication. In South Africa, the missionaries and the missionary activities of different churches and mission societies were responsible "for the profound religious, cultural and economic change forced on the Africans, a change that hinged on the loss of political and economic power" (Saayman 1994:16).

Social disruption is a process whereby changes inflicted on, or that are taking place within a society, are stronger than the ability of the culture to deal with it in an orderly manner. The result is an overall breakdown of social institutions, like marriage and family life, and the fibre of society. People are left vulnerable, and anti-social behaviour, like violence and crime, flourishes. For the people of Ilitha and Ndevana, social disruption was caused by factors such as forced removal and resettlement, political control and oppression, accelerated urbanisation, economical recession and secularisation.

1.11 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The study is divided into three parts namely: the broader historic and social background of the area and the specific situation in Ilitha and Ndevana.

Secondly, the research findings are represented and conclusions on the supportive role of the faith community are given.

Thirdly, a model and strategies for a local faith community are given in order to stimulate the process of healing and empowerment in the specific context and in other similar situations.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CISKEI AREA IN THE EASTERN CAPE AND ITS PEOPLE

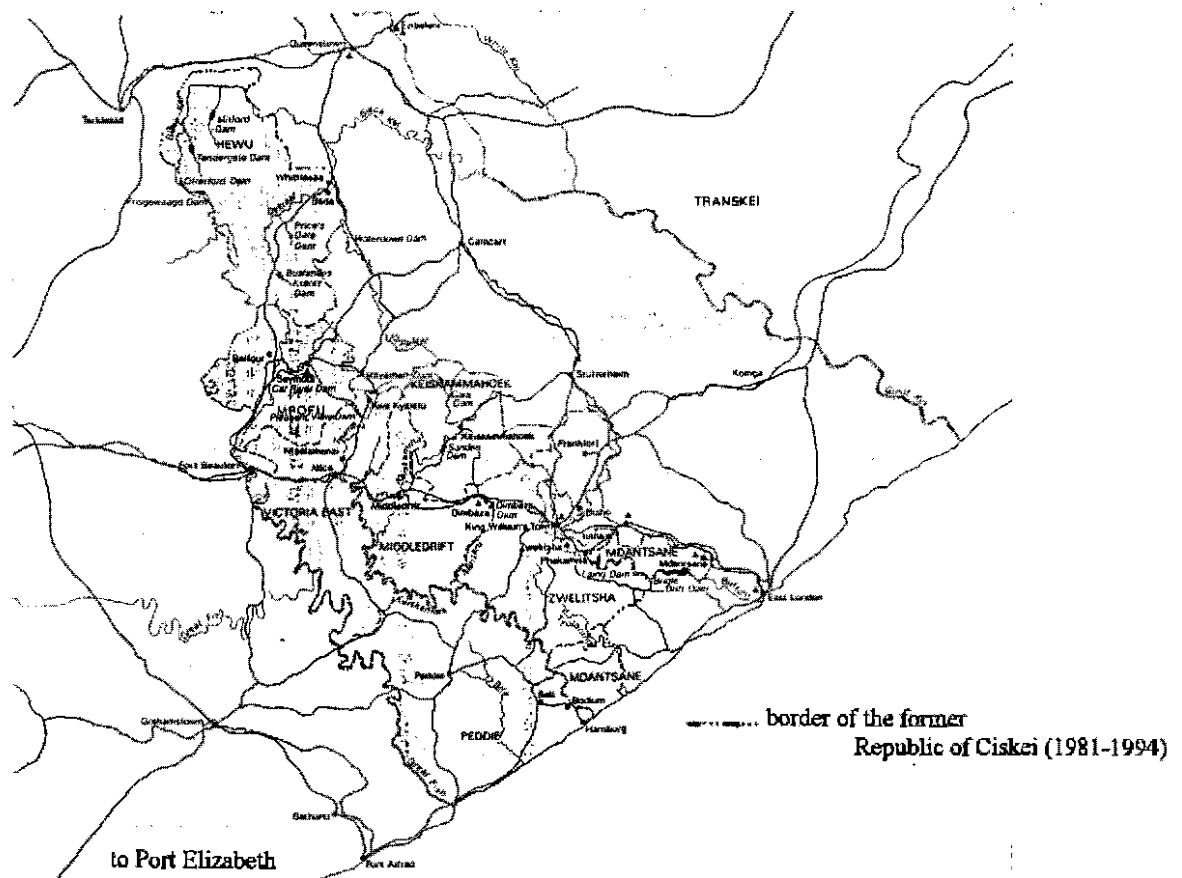
If there is a hemispheric seam to the world, between Occident and Orient, then it must lie along the eastern seaboard of Africa. Nowhere else offers such an amazing confluence of human venture and its frontiers, across time, upon the oceans and between the continents.

In *Frontiers* by Noël Mostert.

2.1 OVERVIEW

2.1.1 THE AREA

The area generally referred to as Greater Ciskei is situated on the eastern seaboard of South Africa between the Great Fish and the Great Kei Rivers extending northwards to the Queenstown district. It is part of the Eastern Cape Province, and includes the former



MAP 1 : The Greater Ciskei area (source: Development Bank S.A. 1990:108)

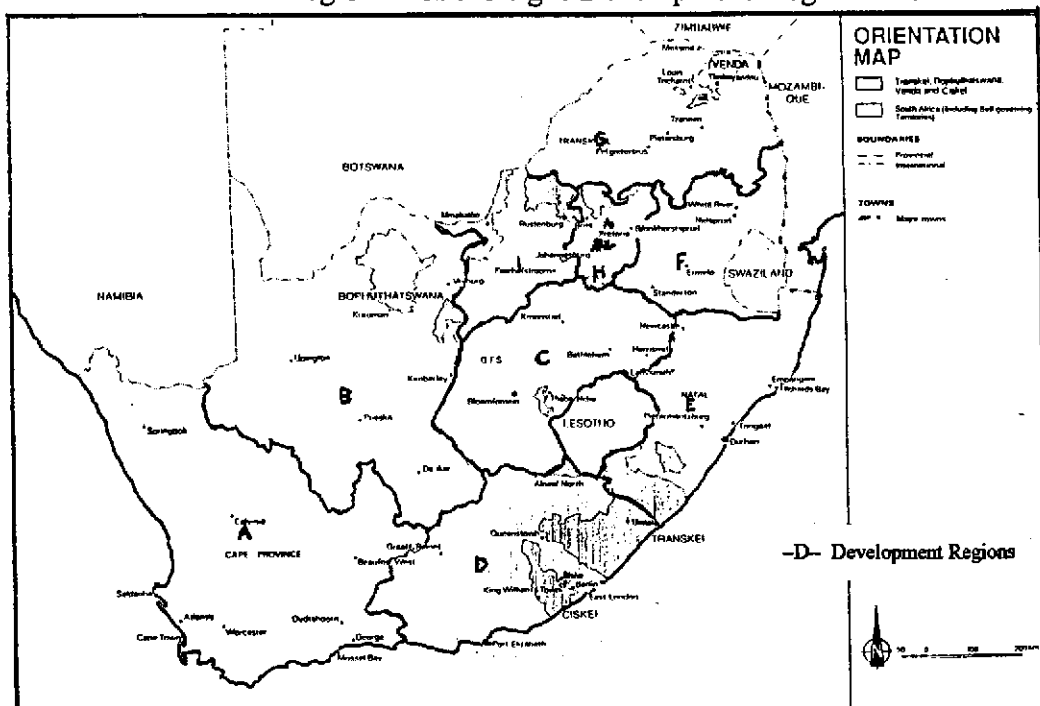
Republic of Ciskei and the Border Corridor, separating the Ciskei and Transkei.

2.1.2 THE CISKEI

The use of the word *Ciskei* in this study refers to the geographic area and includes the area that was previously known as the Republic of Ciskei, with a total area of 8 231 km² (Development Bank S.A. 1990:109). The Ciskei belonged in this respect to a group of four so-called republics which obtained their political independence from the Republic of South Africa during the period 1976 to 1981 under the previous policy of Separate Development. Known as the TBVC states, the group comprised Transkei (1976), Bophuthatswana (1977), Venda (1979) and Ciskei (1981). The TBVC states were recognised only by the RSA. In 1994 their complete re-incorporation into the RSA was part of the national negotiation process and the change to a new democratic South Africa.

2.1.3 PART OF REGION D

The Ciskei also fell within Region D of the eight Development Regions created in terms of



MAP 2 : Eight Development Regions (source: Development Bank S.A. 1990:iv)

a regional development strategy mapped out by the South African government in a White Paper of 1982. Region D essentially consisted of the eastern part of the Cape Province, the Border corridor, Ciskei and southern Transkei, stretching from Uniondale in the west, to Middelburg in the north and Umtata in the east. It corresponded more or less with the present day Eastern Cape Province. This was the natural area of migration for people living in the Ciskei area. In terms of the Interim Constitution of 1994 it is now all part of the Eastern Cape Province. The demographic and socio-economic situation in Ciskei will therefore be looked at against the background of the whole of Region D

2.1.4 COMPARING REGION D WITH THE REST OF SOUTH AFRICA

In the 1980's Region D compared relatively poorly with the rest of South Africa. It housed the third largest concentration of people (almost 4,7 million), and had the second largest percentage (50%) of children under the age of 15 in proportion to the total population. The natural population growth in the region was also high (4%). The formal economy in Region D could provide employment for only about 34% of its potential labour force (Erasmus 1991:S-3,4).

In 1993 it was stated that unemployment was assuming disastrous proportions in the Eastern Cape, with more than 70% of workers in some areas without employment. In Transkei 76% of all workers were unemployed, and the figure stood at 64% in Ciskei. Unemployment had risen by 67% in Port Elizabeth over the previous two years, and by 72% in East London in the same period (Levine 1993).

The region, compared with the other regions in the country, also generated the second largest outflow of migrant workers in 1989, resulting in high male absence. The region also has the second highest dependency ratio in South Africa at 3,1 persons per worker,

although, because of a large number of migrant workers, this figure might be distorted (Erasmus 1991:S-4).

2.1.5 NATURAL REGIONS

The Ciskei area can be divided into four natural regions: the subtropical coastal strip, the coastal plateau where the principal towns are situated, the Amatola escarpment and the dry Hewu highlands to the north. The topography is generally undulating landscape covered by grassland and thorn trees. Natural forests and plantations are found in the Keiskammahoek, Hogsback and Katberg areas of the Amatola escarpment. The Amatola and the Winterberg mountains, rising to above 900m a.s.l., form the watershed of the area's major rivers: the Kat River, a tributary of the Great Fish River, the Keiskamma, the Buffalo, Black Kei and Klipplaat, the latter both tributaries of the Great Kei River.

Rainfall normally occurs during summer and varies from an average of 450 mm in the northern Hewu highlands, and 600 - 800 mm in the coastal regions, to more than 1000 mm in the Amatola mountains. Temperatures vary from moderate along the coast to extreme in the highlands. Average maximum temperatures are above 38°C in January while frost occurs on the higher ground and snow on the mountain ranges in winter (Esterhuysen 1987:1).

The area is poorly endowed with mineral resources while its agricultural land has on average potential for mixed farming. Droughts occur from time to time. The serious drought of 1981 to 1983 caused a 60% decline in the number of beef cattle from an estimated 195 000 in 1980 to 75 000 in 1984 (Esterhuysen 1987:7).

2.2 THE PEOPLE OF THE CISKEI AREA

2.2.1 GENERAL STATISTICS

The population of Ciskei area was estimated to be 974 000 in 1984. Starting with these figures and taking population growth of 4% into consideration, the population could have numbered well over a million by 1991. With more than 127 people per km² in 1984, Ciskei is the most densely populated area in southern Africa (Esterhuysen 1987:1).

Based on the 1980 and 1984 census it appears that Ciskei's population as a whole has grown by some 7,7% per annum, or almost 45% for the period – this growth rate can be ascribed to both natural growth plus resettlement of Ciskeians before and after independence (Africa Insight 1987: 145). The above growth rate is high when considering that the average population growth rate for African people within South Africa amounts to between 3% and 4% annually.

2.2.2 TOWNS IN CISKEI

In 1984 there were 17 proclaimed towns in Ciskei in which 45,8% of the population were living. These towns make up the urban areas in Ciskei and are distinguished by small square plots boxed together. The largest town, Mdantsane, accommodated 250 000 people (65,5% of the total urban population) in 1984. In 1994 it has an estimated population of 800 000. It is adjacent to and serves as dormitory for workers of East London and surroundings. Other big towns are Zwelitsha, Bisho, Ilitha, Ndevana, Phakamisa, Dimbaza, Alice and Sada. Most of these towns are found along a central corridor (see FIGURE 2, p.48) stretching from East London – Mdantsane to Alice (Esterhuysen 1987:1).

2.2.3 CLOSER-SETTLEMENTS

Closer-settlements are semi-urban areas. They were established under the policy of Separate Development as accommodation for the people resettled from the rural Eastern Cape. The plots were bigger than those in urban areas and made provision for gardening and to a limited extent also grazing fields for cattle. Ndevana, 5 km east of Zwelitsha, is a typical example of a closer-settlement.

Communities living in closer-settlements are of recent origin (the past twenty years) and live in rudimentary houses which are either self-built or provided by the authorities.

Closer-settlements comprise the most deprived Ciskeian communities. Unemployment and dependency levels attest to this as does the fact that households have little opportunity to supplement their income from local agricultural or other activities. In this depressing situation older residents tend to develop attitudes of apathy while some younger people are rebelling.

From a reconstruction and developmental perspective, thus, it would seem advisable to place the needs of closer-settlements and rural communities first. These comprise a majority of the population, and a clear majority of poorer citizens of the area.

2.2.4 SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS

Squatter settlements are found around and in towns and closer-settlements. This is a recent development and can be linked to urbanisation, poverty and the unavailability of serviced plots. These are all shacks and temporary shelters built on an existing plot with or without the permission of the owner, and dwellings put up on open areas close to existing townships.

2.2.5 RURAL TOWNSHIPS

Rural communities live in villages most often created as a result of betterment schemes introduced during the fifties and sixties (De Wet 1980:24). Households in these rural villages either have rights to arable land and grazing, or may enter into sharecropping and other co-operative arrangements with land and stock owners. Most households may thus supplement their income through agriculture and stock farming. Due to the thrust of people coming to Ciskei in the past twenty years, these village communities, once small, have experienced enormous population growth.

2.2.6 WORKERS AND THE ECONOMY

Different types of workers can be distinguished in the Ciskei area. Local workers comprise persons who both live and work close to home. Frontier commuters comprise workers resident in former Ciskei townships who commute up to 80 km on a daily basis to work at locations outside their immediate area. Some commute on a weekly basis, renting accommodation or staying in temporary shelter in the city or big towns. Migrants comprise persons - the overwhelming majority of whom are male - who enter into an annual contract to live and work in other parts of the Republic, usually at locations a significant distance from Ciskei. A prominent feature of workers in the area is their high mobility, especially along the corridor from East London to Alice but also to the big cities of Cape Town and Johannesburg.

2.3 A SHORT HISTORY PRECEDING THE PRESENT SITUATION

The history of the amaXhosa and the amaMfengu during the 19th century in the area of the present Ciskei has limited value in the concept of the present situation. Here we deal with limited continuity and greater discontinuity between people and events of the

previous century and events of the past forty years. Unlike Transkei, which was a recognised and proclaimed area inhabited by a majority of Xhosa speaking groups throughout a number of political dispensations in South Africa's history, Ciskei as a consolidated area and political entity was the creation of the National Party over a period of forty years after 1948. All the areas west of the Kei were incorporated in the Cape Colony in 1866, whereas Transkei, after it was annexed by Britain in 1894, was administered as a separate entity (Africa Insight 1987:143).

The limited continuity with the past is seen in the number of amaXhosa and amaMfengu reserves that were spread out between the Kei and the Fish rivers, early in the 20th century (see MAP 3: The Ciskei territories p.32). It was all that remained of the bloody conflict between the amaXhosa, and the British forces and Colonial Settlers moving inland in a north easterly direction. By 1850 the amaXhosa west of the Kei River had lost all their land and their independence. The area was later annexed and became part of the Cape Colony in 1866 as British Kaffraria, its inhabitants, old and young, being used as cheap labour in other areas of the colony (Peires 1981:168).

The discontinuity between early history and recent developments in the area, lies in the fact that Ciskei of the 1960's to 1980's was a direct creation and result of a deliberate political policy. The movement and settlement of the majority of people in the area did not take place naturally. The land available for settlement, the bringing into being of infrastructure, and the creation of work opportunities, were designed and executed to attract people to the area. Laws that made it unbearable for people to continue to live in areas where they had been born and bred, "pushed" people from all over the Cape Province to Ciskei. In most cases there were no historical links whatsoever with the area that would have made them move here for sentimental reasons. The resettlement of 46

families from Riemvasmaak in the Northern Cape at Welcomewood in the 1970's is a tragic example of forced resettlement.¹ These people had no family or social links with the area and were not even speaking Xhosa, but because of Xhosa ancestors, far back in their history, they were removed to Ciskei. Traditionally links could have existed with Transkei more readily than with Ciskei.

This historical situation necessitates a brief discussing of the history of this area and its people.

2.3.1 THE AMAXHOSA AND THE AMAMFENGU

In the beginning of the eighteenth century the territory west of the Kei River was inhabited by Khoisan people, comprising nomadic hunters and pastoralists, organised in large chiefdoms (Hirst 1991:7). East of the Kei River Phalo was the Paramount Chief of the Xhosa nation. He had two sons, Rharhabe, son of the Right Hand, and Gcaleka, his Great Son (Pieres 1981:45-47). A serious dispute between Gcaleka and Rharhabe led to battle between them and subsequently Rharhabe was permitted to cross into the cis-Kei (meaning 'on this side' of the Kei River) with his following. They later settled in the Amabele hills near the present day Stutterheim, sometime in the first half of the eighteenth century (Hirst 1991:8,9). West of the Kei Rharhabe conquered the last independent remnants of the Khoisan people, and those not killed in battle were incorporated into the Xhosa nation as commoners (Pieres 1981:48; Hirst 1991:10). By 1800 the Xhosa nation was expanding, aggressive and self-confident. Its chiefdoms lay on the Sunday River, the Mbashe and the sources of the Kei River. But by 1847 things were very different. The Xhosa kingdom had shrunk and lost vast tracts of its most fertile territory to invading

¹ See chapter 3 p. 80 for an account of this resettlement.

colonial settlers. The Xhosa were driven across the Fish in 1812, out of the Kat River valley in 1829, and right past the Keiskamma in 1847. None of the land which they still held west of the Kei was really secure. Drought and lung sickness among the cattle were followed by the greater land losses of 1850 – 1853. The smaller Xhosa-land was increasingly unable to support its population and many amaXhosa were forced into labouring for settlers in the colony. On the political front the Kingdom was crumbling and many chiefs were defecting to the Colonial powers. The land between the Fish and Keiskamma, known as the new district of Victoria and the territory between the Keiskamma and the Kei, known as British Kaffraria, were both annexed to the Colony. Part of the land was given to the amaMfengu and part was sold off to settlers (Peires 1981:161-166). The final blow to the amaXhosa was the Cattle Killing of 1856-7. The loss of political and economic independence and the lung sickness epidemic pushed the people to the edge of despair and contributed strongly to the acceptance of the prophecies of Nongqawuse. The Xhosa population of British Kaffraria dropped by two thirds between January and December 1857. It was estimated that 40 000 died of starvation, and more than 150 000 people were displaced by the disaster (Pieres 1989:313, 319).

In the meanwhile, with the rise of the Zulu king Tshaka, round about 1820, a large group of refugees fled from Natal and moved southwards. The majority settled in Gcaleka land (east of the present day Butterworth). Impoverished and having suffered much, they sought help with the expression, siyamfenguza (we are hungry, we seek service). Although they were previously known as the abaMbo this expression led to them being named amaMfengu or known as 'Fingos' to the colonists (Mostert 1992:606). The three main groups were the Hlubi, the Zizi, the Bhele together with smaller groups known as the Zotsho and the Khuze. They had previously stayed peacefully in different parts of Natal (Ayliff & Whiteside 1912:2).

As it was Gcaleka custom to accommodate foreign fugitives, the amaMfengu were well accepted. Hintsá, the Gcaleka king, believed the amaMfengu to be both a military and an economic gain and placed them strategically along the boundaries of his area. They were given cattle on loan and where there were recognised chiefs, land was given to them, as well as positions in Hintsá's council (Ayliff & Whiteside 1912:15). Smaller groups of amaMfengu worked as servants and herdsmen in exchange for which they were given milk and grain. Presumably because of the background of insecurity, the amaMfengu, through hard work and diligence, soon became rich. In Natal they had acquired the use of the iron hoe and by using this to work the fields, they produced tobacco and exchanged it for cattle (Maxwell 1971:5).

Their prosperity gave rise to jealousy among some of the Gcaleka and theft as well as ill-treatment of the amaMfengu were increasing. This renewed situation of insecurity created the climate for closer contact with the Wesleyan (Methodist) missionaries at Butterworth, under the leadership of Rev. John Ayliff (Maxwell 1971:5). Ayliff had more success than his predecessor because he co-operated more closely with the amaMfengu. They were converted to Christianity and given education. In consequence they were further estranged from the amaXhosa. From his perspective, Ayliff interpreted the subservient position of the amaMfengu as slavery (Ayliff & Whiteside 1912:12). His acts in defence of the amaMfengu as well as his promises of more land and British protection and education gave rise to more and more amaMfengu moving to the mission station at Butterworth (Maxwell 1971:4,5).

During the Sixth Frontier War (1834) the amaMfengu sided themselves against the amaXhosa and played an important role in the subjection of the amaXhosa (Ayliff & Whiteside 1912:24). In these circumstances a number of amaMfengu chiefs requested

D'Urban to relocate them in the Cape Colony. The amaXhosa regarded this as a treacherous act and disloyal by the amaMfengu. "Before they left Hintsa, they appropriated as many of his cattle as they could, and it was many years before the Gcaleka could forgive and forget the great exodus of cattle that took place when the Fingos moved to the colony" (Maxwell 1971:5).

About 17 000 amaMfengu left Hintsa under the protection of Colonel Somerset, (Methodist Historical Society 1958:22) and arrived in the Cape Colony in May 1835. They were initially settled mainly in the Peddie area (Ayliff & Whiteside 1912:32-34). In 1851 there was a second migration of between 7000 and 9000 people to the Colony (Maxwell 1971:4). Up to the last frontier war in 1879 they sided with the settlers against the amaXhosa. As a reward many tracts of land were granted to the amaMfengu, land that had previously belonged to the amaXhosa. This fact, as well as advantages that the Western training gave the amaMfengu, led to a long standing resentment against the amaMfengu by the amaXhosa. In the beginning of the twentieth century, smaller groups of amaMfengu had moved to the western part of the Cape Colony to districts like Bredasdorp and Ladysmith, and into Namaqualand (Ayliff & Whiteside 1912:76).

Even after 1879 when the amaMfengu no longer received special treatment from the Colonial government, reconciliation with the amaXhosa was still difficult. "The Xhosa bear a substantial burden of grievance against the Mfengu because the latter assisted the colonists in their subjugation. In the process the Xhosa suffered a very great loss of land" (Manona 1980:119). The original ethnic differences subsided after the 1920's, but were revived by the system of Bantu Authorities in the 1950's. During the 1973 elections the historical grievances of the amaXhosa against the amaMfengu were sometimes used as general propaganda. Any ethnic conflict that might have existed, was not based simply on

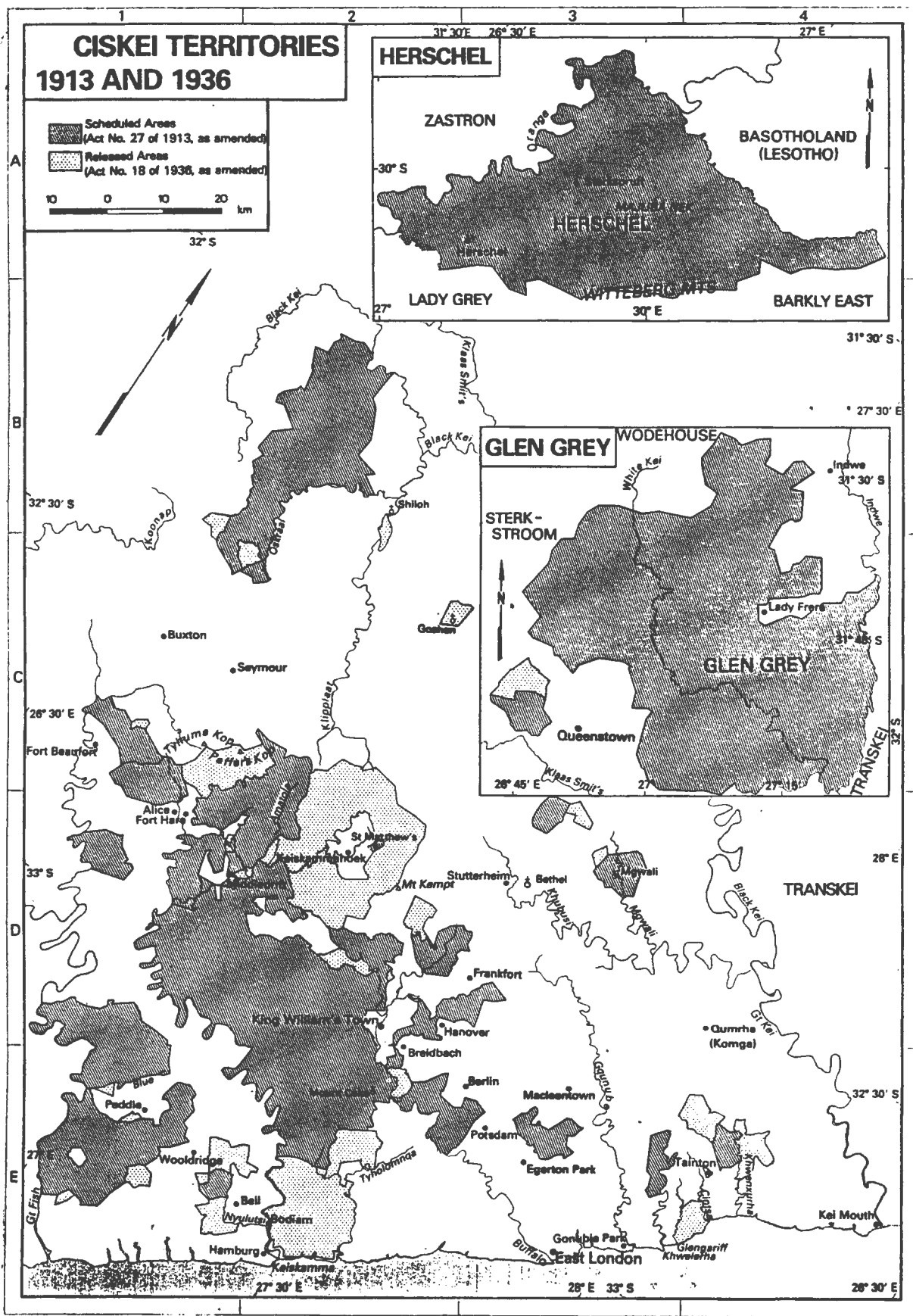
old prejudices but on the competition for insufficient resources. Many Xhosa families from European-owned farms settled in the Ciskei area and had to contend with the problem of being landless. The Mfengu, on the other hand, were doing everything to safeguard the land they already possessed (Manona 1980:119). Ethnic differences seemed to have subsided largely in the 1980's.

2.3.2 THE CONSOLIDATION OF CISKEI IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Since 1910 African-European racial relations have become a national issue in South Africa. In fact, the South Africa Native Affairs Commission (1903-1905) was already an attempt by the various colonies to find a common approach to this issue. Matters such as the apportioning of land to Africans and Europeans in the Eastern Cape and in Transkeian territories in the period following Union, should therefore be seen in the broader national context (Bergh & Visagie 1985:66).

The first significant step on land division after Union was taken in 1913, when the Natives' Land Act (no.27 of 1913) was promulgated. A schedule to the Act defined specific African areas to be known as 'Scheduled Native Areas', in an attempt to implement the principle of territorial segregation (Plaatje s.a.:19).

In respect to the Cape Province, the Scheduled Areas for Transkeian territories and those outside them were described separately. In the case of the latter, parts of the following Eastern Cape divisions were defined as African (Scheduled Areas): East London, Fort Beaufort, Glen Grey, Herschel, King William's Town, Qumrha (Komga), Peddie, Queenstown, Stutterheim, Victoria East and Wodehouse. The list of Scheduled Areas in the King William's Town division was exceptionally long, including the areas (locations) of Siwani, Jali, Thoyise, Tshatshu and Kama, i.e. well-known African areas dating from the

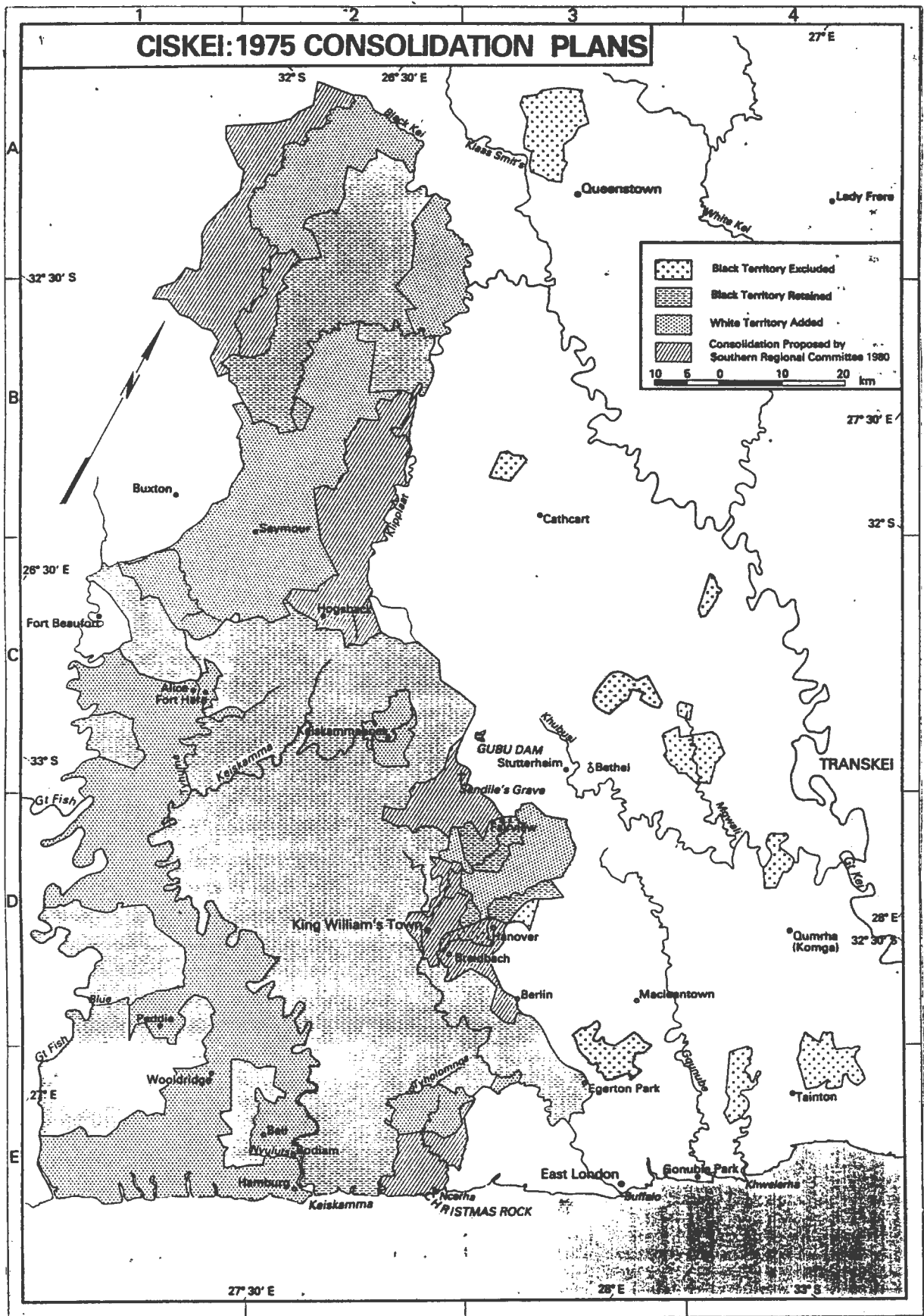


MAP 3 : Ciskei territories: 1913 & 1936 (source: Bergh & Visagie 1985:67)

nineteenth century. By 1913 Transkei formed a fairly unified area, whereas African occupied areas, west of the Kei, consisted of five larger and numerous smaller areas (see MAP 3: Ciskei territories p.31) (Bergh & Visagie 1985:66). The Commission that had to make recommendations on future African areas, in terms of the Natives' Land Act was appointed in August 1913 with Sir William Beaumont as its chairman. After various delays, its report finally appeared in 1916, but its recommendations were not implemented by Parliament. Five local committees were appointed to make further inquiries, but it was only in 1936 that any more land was added to the Scheduled Areas of 1913. In terms of the Bantu Trust and Land Act 1936 (Act 18 of 1936), certain areas, together with future additions provided for in the Act, were defined as Released Areas. By this means a total area of 6,2 million hectare could be added to the Scheduled Areas. Specific quotas of that total were allocated to each province, with the result that such land became known as 'quota land'. The Cape Province, for example, had 1,38 million hectare of quota land. The Released Areas extended the African territories considerably and consolidated them to a greater extent (see MAP 3: Ciskei territories p.31) (Bergh & Visagie 1985:66).

The purchasing of quota land, however, proceeded very slowly. By 1955, 1,63 million hectare were still outstanding for South Africa as a whole. By January 1976 Ciskei comprised 775 575 hectare. As the purchasing of quota land proceeded, African land outside the defined Scheduled Areas and Released Areas (the so-called Black spots) and African areas that were not favourably situated for consolidation, had to be cleared up and people resettled (Charton 1985:254). In such cases the quota land was extended by a corresponding area.

From 1973 to 1975 the South African Parliament approved plans for the partial consolidation of the so-called 'National States' in South Africa. Under these new plans



MAP 4: Ciskei: 1975 Consolidation Plans. (source: Bergh & Visagie 1985:68)

Ciskei was to become a single consolidated area, the various large African areas being joined through the addition of intervening White-owned land. Areas to the east and west of Ciskei and along the coast were also included (see MAP 4: Ciskei: 1975 Consolidation Plans p. 33) (Bergh & Visagie 1985:66).

In 1979 a commission, chaired by Mr. Hennie van der Walt, made recommendations on making additional land available for the homelands. In draft proposals for the further consolidation of Ciskei, announced by the Commission for Co-operation and Development in November 1980, it was recommended that the following areas be incorporated: the Black Kei-Winterberg, Waterdown Dam-Klipplaat-Hogsback, Pirie-Khubusi, Berlin-King William's Town, and Kidd's Beach-Tyholomnqa. These additions were to be over and above those made in terms of the 1975 proposals. After a referendum in which the Whites of King William's Town voted against incorporation into Ciskei however, the South African government announced that the town would not be included in Ciskei. In October 1981 Berlin and Hogsback were also excluded. Ciskei became 'independent' in December 1981, even before all areas contained in the 1975 proposals had finally been incorporated (Bergh & Visagie 1985:66).

2.3.3 POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

The start of political development in an envisaged Xhosa homeland west of the Kei was brought about by the Black Authorities Act of 1951 and the Black Self-government Act of 1959 of the National Party Government. A territorial authority was established in 1961 and a nominated legislature introduced in 1971. Ciskei's first election, in which the majority Rharhabe (amaXhosa) group won 13 of the 20 elected seats, took place on a non-party political basis in February 1973. Consequently the Minister of Agriculture, Lennox Sebe, was elected by the Legislative Assembly to the post of Chief Minister.

The defeated Chief Minister, Chief Mabandla, and his amaMfengu supporters, retaliated by organising themselves into the Ciskei National Party. Subsequently Mr Sebe and his followers founded the Ciskei National Independence Party (CNIP). In 1978 Sebe obtained a landslide victory in the elections and eventually all the opposition members joined the CNIP, thus transforming Ciskei into a one-party state (Esterhuysen 1987:4).

The question of whether Ciskei should follow neighbouring Transkei in becoming politically independent from South Africa, led to the appointment by the Ciskei government of a commission under the chairmanship of Prof. G P Quail. The Quail Commission reported back in February 1980, spelling out the implications of several constitutional alternatives for Ciskei. Despite the commission's advice against independence the Ciskei government consulted the electorate who, as it was claimed, voted in favour of independence in a 90% poll on 4 December 1980. Consequently negotiations with the South African Government resulted in Ciskei obtaining so-called independence on 4 December 1981, only to be recognised by South Africa. Chief Minister Sebe was elected executive president by the National Assembly (formerly Legislative Assembly) (Esterhuysen 1987:4).

Serious political rifts emerged in mid-1983 among the ruling elite, culminating in the arrest on 19 July of Maj.-Gen. Charles Sebe, the head of the Ciskei's Central Intelligence Service (CIS) and brother of Pres. Sebe, amid rumours of an attempted coup. The CIS was subsequently disbanded and Maj.-Gen. Sebe's powers over the army and police were ceded to a newly formed Department of Defence and to the Minister of Justice. In June 1984 Charles Sebe was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment. In a dramatic turn of events in September 1986, Charles Sebe was freed from prison, and Maj.-Gen. Kwane Sebe, Pres. Sebe's son, and Col. Ngwanya, were abducted from Ciskei. Subsequently the two men

were returned to Ciskei from Transkei, in exchange for the release from prison of three sons of Charles and Namba Sebe, the latter also a brother of Lennox Sebe and leader of the banned Iliso Lomzi movement. The events fuelled the Transkei-Ciskei dispute, (due to Transkei's repeated call for Transkei and Ciskei to unite), which was further aggravated when Lennox Sebe accused Transkeian leaders of complicity in the attack on his palace on 19 February 1987 at Bisho. In April 1987 South Africa, Ciskei and Transkei signed a security pact forbidding cross-border violence and terrorism.

At the general elections held in September 1986, all 22 candidates - who were nominated by the ruling CNIP - were declared elected unopposed. A bid to delay nomination day and the election, planned originally for November, by Chief Maqoma's newly formed Ciskei People's Rights Protection Party, was defeated and the possibility of any opposition in the legislative assembly was effectively suppressed. A high turnover of cabinet ministers and senior government officials, an intolerance of any form of opposition, and excessive spending have characterised the workings of the Ciskei government (Esterhuysen 1987:5).

In March 1990 Brigadier Oupa Gqozo took power in a military coup which was followed by looting which caused extensive damage to private property, factories and businesses. Parliament was disbanded and the country run by a state security council under his leadership. Knowledgeable persons were co-opted to run certain departments like health, education and agriculture. Brig. Gqozo then formed his own political party, the African Democratic Movement, in a last abortive attempt to maintain political power in the changed political scene after February 1990. Gqozo became increasingly unpopular among the ANC affiliated organisations. Protest actions and confrontations culminated in the Bisho massacre on 7 September 1992, in which 28 ANC supporters and one Ciskeian soldier were killed.

The unbanning of political organisations, followed by negotiations and agreements paved the way for the first democratic elections held on 27 April 1994 in the whole of South Africa. It also meant the dissolution of the former TBVC states and their re-incorporation into South Africa.

2.3.4 RESETTLEMENT AND URBANISATION

In the 1960's the South African government formulated the homeland policy as a strategy to keep political and demographic control over Africans (SPP 1983:4). In Ciskei nineteen portions of land were consolidated into one (see Map 3, p.32), industries were drawn by subsidies and incentives to industrial growth points (Dimbaza, Fort Jackson and Berlin) in or bordering on the homelands, and plots were made available for people to settle. The policy also included the forced removal and resettlement of an estimate 3,5 million people, almost all of them Africans, between 1960 and 1983 (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:216). Five types of removals or resettlements were directly associated with the policy of Separate Development. Firstly, removals were done in terms of the Group Areas Act, from one part of an urban area to another, in order to segregate so-called ethnic groups from another. In 1963, the decision was taken to phase out East London's urban township, Duncan Village, and to transfer the inhabitants to Mdantsane, some 25 km from the city centre. Over the period 1963-1977, an estimated 82 000 people were moved from Duncan Village to Mdantsane (SPP 1983:65).

Secondly, people were expelled from urban areas, where they had lived for many years, on the grounds that they had become redundant and were no longer needed in the particular economy, and should therefore be sent to their 'homeland'. Pass laws and influx control were strictly applied and people were sent back from urban areas like Cape Town and Johannesburg. The number of urban communities under threat of removal was greatly

increased by the decision of the mid-1960's to extend the Coloured Preference area eastwards to the Kat-Fish line (from Aliwal North to the Fish River). In the late 1960's and the early 1970's thousands of people, many pensioners and others with full residential rights, were removed from the Karoo and the Cape Midlands and resettled in Sada and Dimbaza in Ciskei (SPP 1983:65).

Thirdly, whereas the emphasis in the 1960's had been on urban relocation, the people resettled in the late 1970's were predominantly from rural areas. 'Black spots' in 'White' areas in the Cape Province had to be cleaned up and inhabitants resettled in Ciskei. Places like Mgwali, Wartburg, and Mooiplaas came under the spotlight. People from Kammaskraal and the Klipfontein were moved to Glenmore, from the Komga district to Ndevana, from Riemvasmaak to Welcomewood, from Humansdorp (Tsitsikama) to Keiskammahoek and from the East London district to Tswele-tswele and Potsdam (SPP 1983:66, 97).

The fourth type of removal effected those who were caught between agricultural mechanisation and the government's policy of preventing all African urbanisation. Industrialisation was accompanied by rationalisation in the agricultural sector. Mechanisation took place, resulting in a redundancy among the work force. The size of farms also increased, resulting in an over supply of labour. Both 'squatting' and labour tenancy become economically counterproductive for farmers and was phased out. From the 1950's this process had been promoted by legislation like the Native Trust and Land Amendment Act of 1954 (Helliker 1982:27). By the end of the 1960's the number of jobs on White-owned farms had declined sharply. More and more people were pushed off the land.

In the 1970's and 1980's the Eastern Cape lost some of its White population to the north. Smit & Kok (1981:5,9) showed that only the Transvaal and Natal gained pro rata at the expense of the Cape and the Orange Free State. This White population movement was consistently rural to urban, town and city, and South to North. The decreasing White population in the region was also a fairly reliable economic indicator for the region as a whole. In the same period one would expect the African population working on White-owned farms to follow the same route to the cities and to other regions as Whites did. They were, however, prevented from doing so by influx control legislation. This was operative in small towns as well as in the cities. The path of population shift for Whites and African people were therefore fundamentally different. Whites could review their options and move where they considered their life-chances would be enhanced, while African people had a restricted number of options: they could take an illegal option attempting to break the influx control barriers; thus becoming squatters - for instance at Crossroads in Cape Town; or they could move in with friends or family in a small, less controlled country town; or they could take the legal option and go to a homeland. In the Eastern Cape the overwhelming majority took the last option. Freedom of choice was limited and mobility was channelled in one direction - towards a homeland, to an already overcrowded labour market (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:223). Evicted farm workers from the Grahamstown and Alexandria districts settled at Glenmore (SPP 1983:88), and others from Stutterheim and Komga at Ndevana, Thembeni and Gobityolo (Nompumelelo).

The fifth major group of people moved to Ciskei 'freely'. They were 'pulled' to Ciskei by promises of land, schools for their children and job opportunities.

All these removals resulted in a massive outflow of population from the majority of Eastern Cape districts, and a massive inflow into districts within Ciskei. Immigration to

Ciskei is reflected in the overall increase of 76% in Ciskei population between 1970 and 1980 (Smit & Kok 1981:12). Population movement for African people in the Eastern Cape was from rural to urban areas in the homeland, and from the Eastern Cape region to Ciskei. The normal patterns of urbanisation were therefore distorted (Charton 1985:251).

The patterns of White and African migration also differed in that Whites could move to urban areas, equipped with skills which they could sell on the best available market. Rural African people mostly lack education, even literacy and they had few skills and little experience to commend them to a sophisticated industrial system. What markets existed were hedged about by legislation. Major metropolitan areas in the Cape Province were also unable to generate enough employment for their own resident African population (SPP 1983:32).

These different forms of resettlement had serious detrimental effects on human resources and people's wealth, on infrastructure, on arable land and on the environment. Although huge numbers of people were resettled, sufficient infrastructure was lacking. Both Mdantsane and Zwelitsha were described as poorly developed, in spite of the size of their population (Cook 1980:36). There were no concentrated business centres and little industrial development. Urban settlements were externally oriented to the adjacent industrial areas and were in essence dormitory towns. The development of urban housing and local authority structures could not keep up with resettlement. As a result, a number of communities have sprung up in the tribal authority areas close to urban and industrial areas. These communities were neither urban nor rural, and comprise people with rural farm worker backgrounds who now obtained their main source of income from employment in urban areas.

Resettlement in Ciskei also brought extra expenses on commuters and migrant labourers. The people resettled from Duncan Village to Mdantsane, for example, had to pay much higher transport rates than before in order to reach their places of employment. Families were also fragmented. Mothers and fathers had to leave their children in the care of a family member in order to seek employment in the city, often only to return on weekends. Children were often left without adequate food, care and discipline (Thomas 1980).

Resettlement destroyed informal business and inflicted suffering on people in newly established rural communities. Experience with small community development schemes in the northern Ciskei showed that the local market could not absorb the products made. Small scale peasant farmers who had prospered modestly over the years were destroyed in these removals. Free enterprise was also swept away in movements that impoverished whole communities (Charton 1985:261).

The consolidation of Ciskei has resulted in the expropriation of much productive agricultural land, some of which had yielded rich returns in the past. Where big settlements were established, as at Thornhill near Queenstown, the productive capacity of the land was rapidly destroyed. What was meant to be an economic asset to the Ciskei economy, was negated by the density of the population. The overall density in Ciskei has increased in general terms from 48.1 per km² in 1970 to 118.9 per km² in 1980 (Daniel 1980:16).

African options were so restricted that there was little chance of their enhancing their life-chances whatever move they made, whether to a homeland, to a small country town or illegally to a metropolitan centre (Charton 1985:254). The independence of Ciskei in 1981 also brought other implications. All Xhosa-speakers with any antecedent in Ciskei

lost their South African citizenship. They now had the status of aliens in the rest of the Republic of South Africa (Charton 1985:250).

It was argued that the policy of resettlement was meant to avoid the evils of urbanisation, the growth of slums, and the anguish of urban poverty. Figures for Ciskei revealed the opposite. Urbanisation was indeed taking place at a very rapid rate and under very adverse circumstances. It was oriented mainly to the industries of East London and King William's Town. It was calculated that while the Ciskei rural population increased between 1970 and 1980 by 54%, the increase in the urban population during the same period amounted to 230% (Bekker et al. 1982:4). This process had taken place from within and from without Ciskei, and had occurred together with the removals of people from the White areas of East London. The actual degree of urbanisation of the population had increased from 26.8% to 36.2% of the population between 1970 and 1980. This calculation was based on official census figures and did not take into account the estimated 99 000 living in peri-urban areas around King William's Town and Mdantsane at that time (Charton 1985:259). It is obvious that the government policy did not prevent urbanisation; it had merely channelled it towards the poorest and worst developed of all the industrial regions in the country. As a French economist, Alfred Sauvy, once said "wealth does not flow to where the poor are, the poor flow to where the wealth is" (in Development Bank S.A. 1992:2).

Urbanisation is a sign and instrument of modernisation, with its concomitants of materialism and secularism. Africa is the least urbanised continent, but is the one undergoing the most rapid urbanisation. Towns and cities are seen as centres where wealth and opportunities are created, but African socio-economic realities ensure that the wealth is unevenly distributed and never reaches the poor (Shorter 1991:1). There is

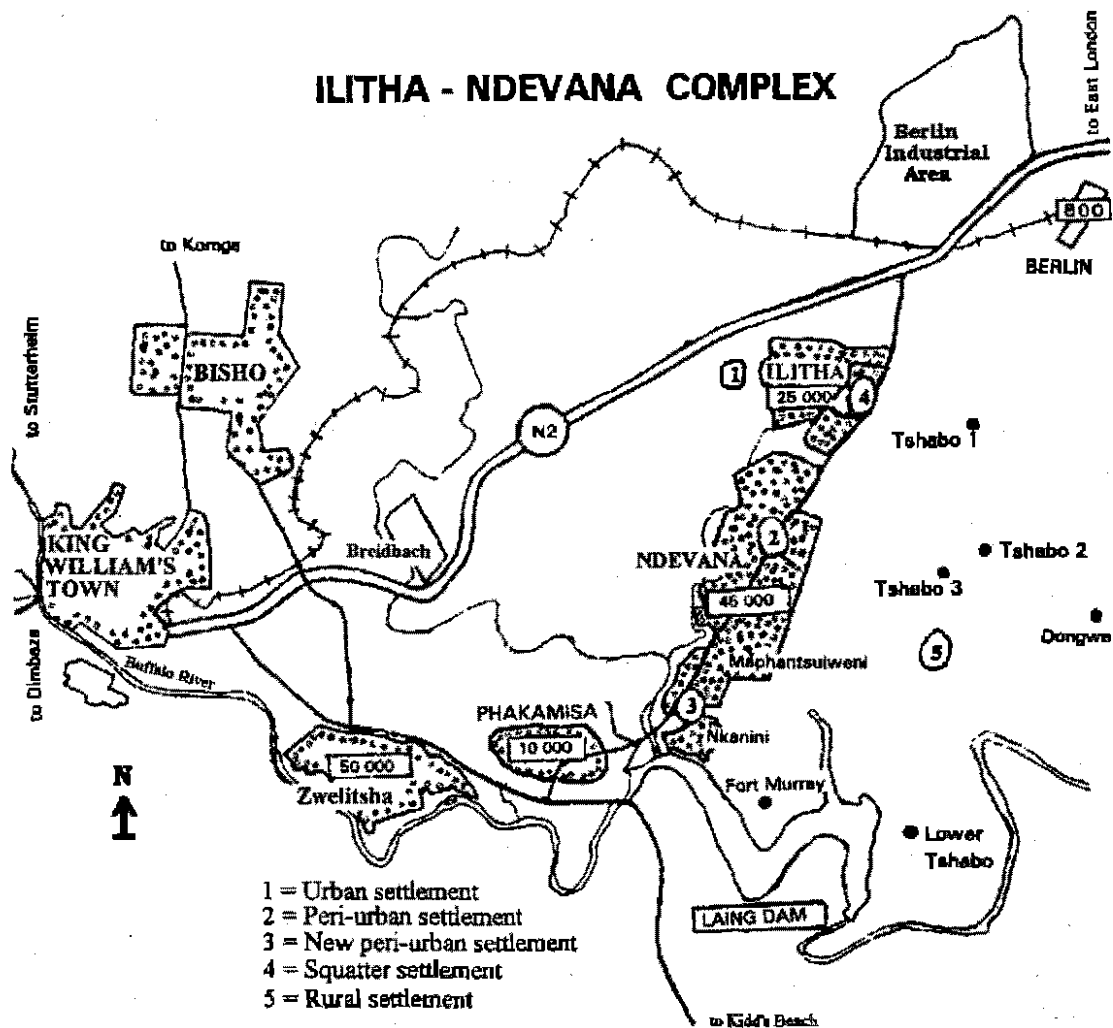
sufficient indication, also in the South African context, that urbanisation has created impoverishment, disorientation in communities and has hindered valid rural development. It does not provide people with a new culture, but gives people the consciousness of an extra cultural dimension which is not easily integrated into existing world-view and traditions (Shorter 1991:26). Urbanisation in Africa has a few unique features. Strong links are kept by people moving to cities with their rural origin, resulting in an ongoing urban-rural interaction and movement. Short term urbanisation is also common. Often double households are kept, one in a rural area where children are left with a family member and another near or in the city for closeness to employment and other urban advantages. Many residents in Mdantsane have rural homes somewhere in Ciskei or Transkei. Cities and urban settlements require a rural hinterland. Often children are sent to the rural home for care and education and young men for circumcision, while financial assistance is coming from family members working in the city. Mutual reinforcement between city and country is continually taking place. In the short term this exchange may be beneficial to both sides, but in the long term this type of urbanisation is to the detriment of the rural areas (Shorter 1991:40). Urban settlements do not create the wealth that is expected and the trickle down effect to the rural areas is insignificant.

Urban areas are known to have an unbalance in sex and age structure - more men than women are found in the cities, and often more than 80% of people are under the age of thirty years (Shorter 1991:12). This is the cause of many problems connected with sexual and family morality. Many youths come to the city looking for education or employment, increasing the number of unemployed and under-employed. Although it is estimated that 70% of African city dwellers are poor (Shorter 1991:9), it is often said that one can earn more from selling recyclable material in the city than from a job in the village.

2.4 ILITHA - NDEVANA COMPLEX

2.4.1 THE AREA

Settlements in the whole of Ciskei were categorised in terms of their size, existing services, infrastructure and influence sphere. With this information a Settlement Hierarchy of Ciskei was set up in February 1988 by the Regional Planning Division of the Directorate of Planning. It was meant to serve as a guideline for future planning and



MAP 5: Ilitha-Ndevana complex

development².

For the Mdantsane-Bisho Region main metropolitan areas were identified surrounded by smaller rural and village centres. The Ilitha-Ndevana complex was identified as a major metropolitan area. The complex consists of an urban part in Ilitha and a peri-urban part that forms the core of Ndevana. Squatter settlements were found around both these areas.

2.4.1.1 URBAN SETTLEMENTS

The term 'urban' indicated a certain type of settlement with a specific infrastructure.³ It comprised plots of between 600 and 800 m², developed streets with electricity provided to households on request. Running water was available to every plot and an integrated sewerage system was operative. Every household was also charged for services rendered. Originally a nucleus of houses were built and provided to residents at a minimal rent. Ilitha had been planned as an urban settlement, although the Squatter settlement on its periphery had overtaken developments.⁴

2.4.1.2 PERI-URBAN SETTLEMENTS

Peri-urban settlements often had more people than an urban area. The size of plots were bigger but with less infrastructure than urban settlements.

² Information was obtained in 1993 from the Director in the office of the Directorate of Planning in Bisho, mainly from unpublished documents.

³ Urban areas are defined as those settlements which: have been surveyed and therefore have General Plans approved by the Surveyor-General; are located on State Land; have a high level of essential services (roads, storm water systems, water, electricity, sewage); and have a concentration of various social and community services (schools, shops, clinics, etc.) (Regional Development Plan 1985:12).

⁴ Observations were verified through interviews with my informants in Ilitha.

In peri-urban settlements only plots were made available with a few entrance roads to the settlement. The sizes of the plots varied between 1200 to 1500 m². Residents were also allowed to keep stock. At most households a vegetable garden was cultivated. It was required of every household to have a pit toilet in the back corner of the plot. A tap in the street provided water to every twenty households on average. Paraffin, fire wood and coal provided energy for cooking and lighting. The houses were all self-built and varied from square brick houses to mud huts and corrugated iron shacks. All over the process of upgrading dwellings could be seen.⁵

2.4.1.3 SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS AND "ILLEGAL" OCCUPATION

In the Ilitha-Ndevana area shack-dwellers were found on the periphery of the urban and peri-urban settlements. They occupied land that was previously allocated for further development or grazing. They decided for themselves the size and borders of plots and were exposed to actions from the authorities. In general there was a negative feeling and attitude towards these people for occupying areas without right. It was sometimes felt that they contributed to the crime and insecurity in the established community.

The main reason for squatting and illegal occupation of land was an urgent need for serviced plots and infrastructure near to the main routes to metropolitan areas. Basic services like water and electricity were lacking and they had to cope with the odds against them..

⁵ Observations were verified through interviews with my informants in Ndevana.

2.4.2 THE ILITHA-NDEVANA AREA IN BROADER CONTEXT

The importance of this area did not lie in its contribution to the economy of the province or the country as a whole, but whether reconstruction and new political priorities could be translated into concrete possibilities for these people to enhance their circumstances.

The main stream of urbanisation was running to four metropolitan areas in South Africa, namely Gauteng, Cape Peninsula, PE-Uitenhage and the broader Durban area. It had been shown that through the policy of Separate Development, economic decentralisation and resettlement in the seventies and eighties, a secondary process of urbanisation to the homelands was created.⁶ The growth in the metropolitan areas in the Bisho-Mdantsane region was an example of this process. Although all restrictions on movement were removed in 1990, the past still had a profound influence on the lives of the people involved. With the change in policy and the recession of the economy, thousands of people, resettled over the past twenty years, find themselves stranded in an area with a fast shrinking economy.

The former Ciskei and Transkei have been described by many as the wasteland of South Africa. It is the area where the failure of Apartheid is most visible and where a new program for reconstruction and development will have to prove itself. The rest of the country will not be able to talk of success if it cannot be seen in the most deprived rural areas.

⁶ See p. 42.

2.4.2.1 NODAL-CORRIDOR STRUCTURE

Development of infrastructure and urban planning in the centre of the former Ciskei was done on a nodal-corridor model (Regional Development Plan 1985:31).

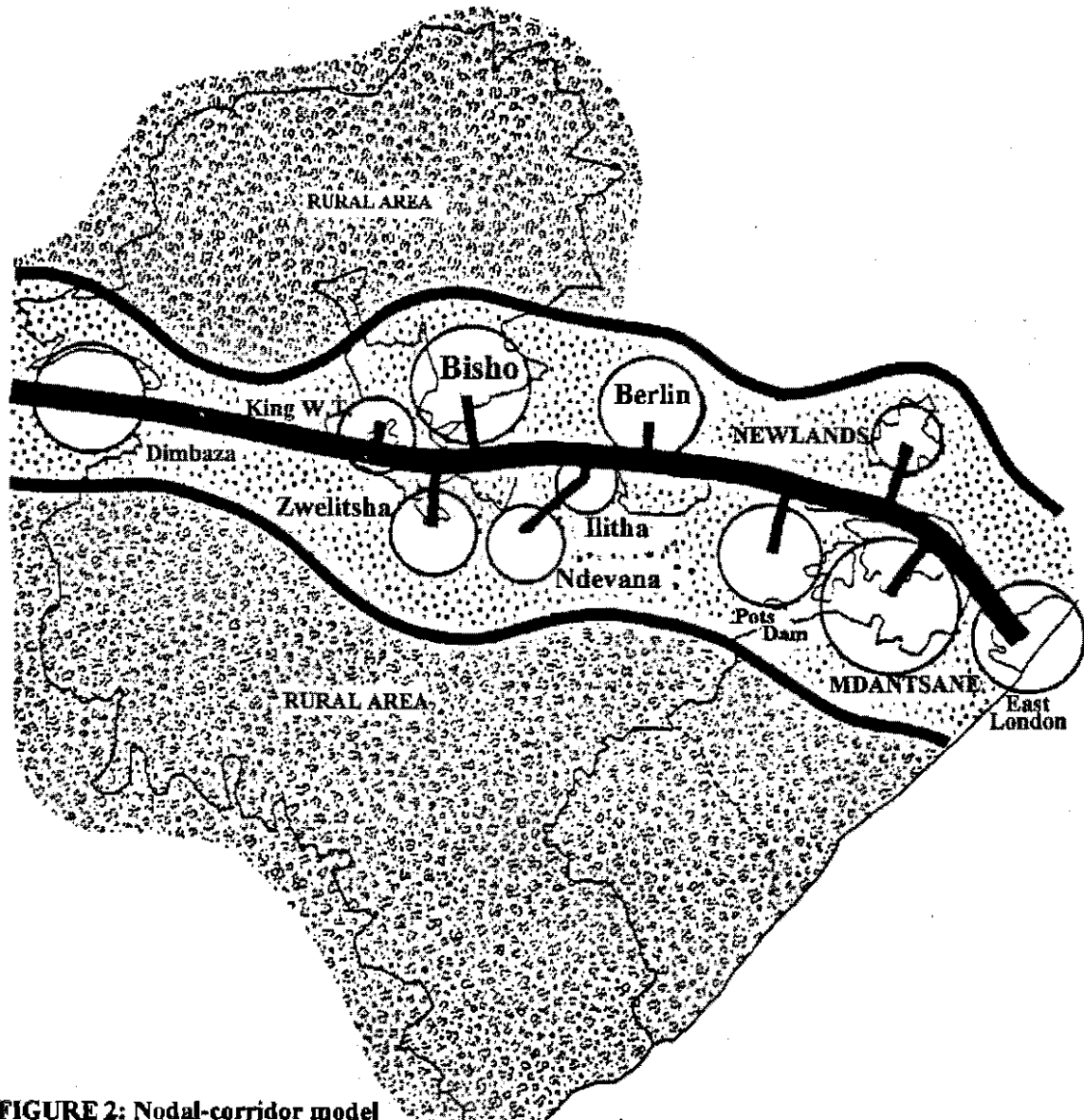


FIGURE 2: Nodal-corridor model

(source: Regional Development Plan 1985:32)

This means that main roads, water and electricity were laid on along a 10 km wide path from Mdantsane to Dimbaza, 70 km long. Along this path areas were identified for urban and peri-urban development, like knots connected to a main line. Plots were made available and a basic infrastructure set up. Three main industrial areas were identified, providing employment for clusters of settlements around it. They were Fort Jackson at

Mdantsane, Berlin in the centre and Dimbaza in the west. From 1970 people moved in or were resettled according to this development model, but the industrial development never provided the employment that was visualised. High levels of unemployment, up to 40%, were reported in the late 1970's (SPP 1983:336).

2.4.3 THE PEOPLE

2.4.3.1 POPULATION AND GROWTH

2.4.3.1.1 STATISTICS

In 1985 Ilitha had a population of 4 800. According to the projections made in the National Health Plan of February 1989 Ilitha would have had 23 833 inhabitants by 1993. This would mean 3 178 families if 7,5 members are taken for an average family.⁷

At Ndevana the population numbered 11 200 in 1985 and projected to be 26 054 in 1993. This would be 3 474 families at 7,5 members per family. It is estimated that the population in the Ilitha-Ndevana area would have grown to 70 000 in 1995.⁸

2.4.3.1.2 COMPOSITION OF THE ILITHA-NDEVANA COMMUNITIES

As was shown earlier, the resettlement of several hundred thousand people in the area took place because of a political and economic system forcefully imposed on them from the 1960's. Certain push and pull factors were deliberately put into place to accelerate the process. The height of the initial immigration to the Ilitha-Ndevana area fell between 1975 and 1980. Through legislation unemployed workers and their families and other people made redundant by law in so-called White South African cities and rural towns,

⁷ Information was obtained from the Directorate of Planning in Bisho in 1993.

⁸ Information was obtained from the Directorate of Planning in Bisho in 1993.

found it extremely difficult to survive there. Although in most cases they were born there, they had no right to property and representation. In the streets of many rural White towns there was even a curfew placed on Africans after 9 p.m. A hostile atmosphere was created towards Africans. All these functioned as push factors. Better prospects, like serviced plots and property rights, promised employment, education and better social services like health care and medical treatment were offered in the homeland.⁹

In Ilitha many families come from Karoo towns like Colesberg, De Aar, Hanover and Richmond. Others come from in and around East London and from so-called White areas up to Queenstown. Mama Peter, 62 years old, had been a domestic worker on a farm near Tilden between Cathcart and Queentown. She moved to Ilitha in 1976 after the death of her husband, looking for work, a home and citizenship of the homeland. Conditions on European farms had become too difficult to stay on. A school for her young children was also a strong attraction.

Mr. Maarman Gqumo worked all his life on a farm in the Colesberg district. In 1976 he realised that he would not be able to get any property of his own at Colesberg. Schooling for his children had also become a problem. Through friends he heard of the new settlement at Ilitha where plots and grazing fields were made available. He paid R42 and later received his title deed. He was helped by the farm owner to have a four room house built by Mr. Maramba, a friend of his, already staying at Zwelitsha. In 1978 he and his family moved to Ilitha. He was followed by many others from the same district like July Gedezana and Hota Booï with their families. Through friends he managed to get employment as a driver at an old age home in East London and later at a construction company in King William's Town. With the years he expanded his house and added an

⁹ Information was obtained from my informants.

extra three rooms. From 1994 construction work declined drastically, with the result that since the beginning of 1995 he was unemployed and was struggling to care for his family.

At Ndevana the majority of the original inhabitants came from White-owned farms and other areas in the corridor between Ciskei and Transkei. Mr. Koboto Gcoyi and his wife Martha came from Dordrecht where they grew up on a farm. After working as farm labourers for a couple of years, they realised that the situation was becoming unfavourable for them and that they would not be able to enhance their living conditions. Employment was becoming scarce and they were not allowed to find housing in the town at Dordrecht. They learnt about plots available at Ndevana with the possibility to keep a few cattle and goats. Through friends already in Ciskei, they managed to secure a plot and erected a shack. Mr. Gcoyi left his family at Dordrecht in 1978 and with help from other family members built his house over weekends. In the meanwhile he also qualified himself as bricklayer.

It is clear that the majority of people in the Ilitha-Ndevana area did not move to Ciskei because of traditional connections with the area but because of problematic circumstances enforced on them and legal restrictions in areas where they had been born and bred.

The younger squatter settlement next to Ilitha comprised people that have moved out of Ilitha and the surrounding rural settlements. Previously most of them stayed in backyard dwellings in Ilitha, paid rent to landlords. They were mostly younger couples with other family in Ilitha.

The younger peri-urban settlements to the south-west end of Ndevana, namely Maphantsulweni and Nkanini, also called Bhongweni, were started by people from the urban areas of Zwelitsha and Phakamisa, the nearby rural settlement of Fort Murray and homeless people from Ndevana itself.

2.4.3.1.3. GROWTH TENDENCIES

Expansion in Ilitha and Ndevana first took place internally. This happened through backyard structures and buildings being erected for rent by family members and newcomers to the township. This has become one of the most lucrative forms of local investment in these communities.

Ilitha was further expanded through so-called illegal occupation of land to the south-east of the established town. This was done with the encouragement of a local civic organisation or umbutho wabahlali (civic society). Against warnings of eviction by the police, people moved in 1991 and erected structures from different types of materials. Bangene ngenkani (they settled by self-will), was said by people from Ilitha. It soon became clear that the government was not going to take any steps against these people. A year later the whole area was fully occupied and a process was started to register the different households. R2,00 was paid for registration and plots were only allocated to married people. Some time passed before the area was surveyed, streets were made, and toilets were put up in 1994.

The new development to the south-west end of Ndevana is called Maphantsulweni. Adjacent to that is the new settlement of Nkanini or Bhongweni. Both of these settlements were expanding rapidly. No formal town development was done and the land was divided and allocated by local civic committees. By the end of 1995 the available land was fully occupied. It was mostly people from Zwelitsha and nearby Phakamisa en Fort Murray that used the opportunity to get their own piece of land.¹⁰

¹⁰ Information was obtained through on site observations and from my informants.

2.4.3.2 FAMILY LIFE

Serious changes had taken place in the institution of marriage and family life in the communities of Ilitha and Ndevana. The situation corresponded to changes in many other societies in sub-Saharan Africa. The character and meaning of marriage in the extended family and in society were rapidly changing. In Nigeria, for example, Karanja (1987:247) put it as follows: It "gives one the distinct impression that marriages in Nigeria are in a state of flux."

Traditional Xhosa society, like most sub-Saharan African societies, had been organised into groups, primarily on the basis of kinship, age and gender (Kilbride & Kilbride 1990:190). The idiom of kinship was the most important of these factors. Large clans or lineage thus exist before and after the death of any individual. The clan controlled property, regulated marriages, and the moral behaviour of members (Kilbride & Kilbride 1990:191). The practical day-by-day concerns of life were the affairs of one's extended family, based on bilateral descent (Kilbride & Kilbride 1990:192). The extended family ties also included obligations to assist related children who were in need of assistance. It functioned as a support network in times of crisis such as sickness, death and food shortages. Resources were shared and the support was both emotional and physical. The extended family also provided ways of conflict resolution.

In these societies, marriage was the focus of their existence. It was the point where all the members of a given community met: the departed; the living; and those yet to be born. All the dimensions of time met here, and the whole drama of history was repeated, renewed and revitalised. Marriage and procreation in African communities constituted a unity: without procreation marriage was incomplete (Mbiti 1969:133). A proper marriage was therefore a religious duty and responsibility for everyone. The concepts of love, affection

and mutual attraction were not of primary importance. A good family and good behaviour were much more important. Traditionally, the question of who and when to marry was not decided by the partners. Marriages were arranged by the representatives of the groom and the bride's family. Girls were highly valued as a potential source of bride-wealth for their families.

Traditional marriages and family life also went through changes from time to time. "Prior to European domination of Africa, the family was not an unchanging unity of loyalty, protection and production dwelling in a timeless, static space that had never undergone radical social change. African families had their own trials and tribulations, and the disruption caused by famine, epidemic and drought, the slave trade, and the extreme political dislocation that some parts of Africa experienced in the nineteenth century amended customary law" (White 1984:54). But in most cases families had the ability to re-organise under their old customs and to return stability to society with a creative vitality.

A number of factors had brought permanent and disruptive changes to the traditional kinship and extended family system and to African marriage and family life in communities like Ilitha and Ndevana.

Firstly, migrant labour, urbanisation and resettlement had a profound influence on the stability of marriage and family life. Labour migration of men placed a heavy burden on African women left behind. In the rural areas women had to take more responsibility for the land and crop production and still perform their traditional tasks of child care and cooking. Young married couples seldom lived together for more than two months. In areas in East and Central Africa 40% to 60% of all males were absent from their villages at any given time (White 1984:60). In Ndevana a high percentage of able men were away

on migrant labour, leaving women behind to take care of households under very difficult social and economical circumstances.

Secondly, the poverty crisis in Africa. The problem of poverty is very extensive and very deep-rooted in sub-Saharan Africa and has a profound influence on all aspects of society including marriage and family life.¹¹ In South Africa poverty amongst Africans had been exacerbated by a long history of oppressive policies.¹²

Thirdly, the work of Western Christian missionaries and churches often had a devastating influence on traditional values and social stability in communities. The Church had looked negatively towards many traditional practices without determining their function and meaning within the culture. In the process it had contributed to instability in society and the disintegration of the traditional value system.¹³

Fourthly, formal school education contributed much to the development in Africa but it also challenged traditional values and customs and led to a liberalisation of ideas, especially amongst the youth.

Indications were that change was taking place towards the replacement of the traditional community based institution of marriage with an individualised and private, often informal, relationship between male and female partners. Extended families made way for nuclear family units and the privatisation of marriage and family life, without the traditional community support, built on a wage economy. People were left with a lack of skills to

¹¹ See the description of poverty in Africa on p.140.

¹² Wilson & Ramphela (1989:204) indicated a couple of these policies namely: shift in policy from incorporation to dispossession; anti-black-urbanisation; forced removals; Bantu education; crushing of organisations; and destabilisation of neighbouring countries.

¹³ See the discussion on the attitudes of missionaries towards culture practices in chapter 5 p.137.

handle the new situation. "The autonomous nuclear household seems to replace the extended family, especially in day-to-day living patterns, although the extended family ties remain important in some financial arrangements and inheritance" (White 1984:66). Marriage had become an expression of personal preference of two individuals and no longer an alliance between kinship groups. The role of the parents in choosing a spouse or giving their consent had declined dramatically. Young men want to decide for themselves when and how to marry. Geographical mobility and urban heterogeneity have meant that marriage partners are more likely to come from different backgrounds, a fact which could weaken extended family links (White 1984:66).

Often young people involve themselves in fixed relationships with opposite sex partners without taking the consequences into consideration or having the skills to handle a family and the responsibility for it. In Ndevana sister Dalasile, from the local clinic, reported a sharp increase in teenage pregnancies. In an interview in 1994, she ascribed the situation to increased unemployment, absence of parents due to difficult working conditions, lack of stable family life and discipline, misuse of alcohol by young people and a lack of recreational facilities. Children given birth to by a daughter before her marriage are taken as children of the grandparents, abantwana basekhaya (children of the home), and usually stay on in the household even after the biological mother has left home. A high percentage of the households in Ilitha and Ndevana have children from unmarried daughters.

Changes have led to a decay in moral standards, resulting in a moral vacuum where almost anything is allowed and no values are forced on people. At an induction of female youth members to their church league at the Easter celebrations in 1995, Mrs. Gcoyi, the chairlady of the women's league, urged the girls to marry, Sifuna imitshato (we want

marriages). She went on by describing the tragic state of the moral life of today's youth. According to her, it is common practice for a young lady to have a child long before she thinks of getting married. Young men may deceive girls by telling them that they want to know whether a lady can bear children before entering into marriage with her, but soon after she becomes pregnant she is left in the cold. Girls should avoid having children before they get married, even if that implies using modern day techniques. The value system has changed but the situation was left with many paradoxes, for example, children are still valued but so many are left on the streets,¹⁴ many others are abused or left forgotten with family members.

The institution of marriage is losing ground and new forms of marital and family arrangements are emerging. While marriage is still held as a strong value, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of women having children out of wedlock, especially in urban areas. Many single mothers want to get married, but the possibility of a suitable husband and a stable relationship seems remote. From general observations and discussions with informants, it is concluded that in Ndevana the majority of households are run by single parents, almost always women. The figure is estimated to be lower, at 30% of households, in Ilitha. Many men have left their families altogether or they are elsewhere on long term migrant employment. The occurrence of migrant labour amongst men in Ndevana is significantly higher than was the case in Ilitha in 1994 and 1995.¹⁵

In many households the maternal grandmother takes care of a number of grandchildren; Mrs. Peter of Ilitha, for example, with four grandchildren, and Mrs. Yonani at Ndevana

¹⁴ A children's shelter in King William's Town, Siyavuka, have a number of children from the Ndevana area.

¹⁵ Conclusions were made from observations in the communities of Ilitha and Ndevana.

with five grandchildren. In some households bigger children look after smaller children while the mother is at work during the week. In the home of Mrs. Bhongo in Ndevana, a 15 year old daughter takes care of the household with three smaller children while their mother earns a living for the week in East London. Children are left extremely vulnerable by this situation.

Co-habitation is also on the increase. Children born from this relationship have often no social lineage or are unwanted or without adequate support and care. Co-habitation often meets with strong opposition from the family of the partners and this puts an extra burden on the relationship.

Changes have weakened the position of women and made them vulnerable. Ngubane (1987:179) has shown, for example, that the conversion of lobolo payments among the Nguni of South Africa from cattle to money drastically altered the meaning and character of the whole custom and of marriage itself. It became privatised and individualised in the sense that the participation of the larger kinship group was minimised or even eliminated. The lobolo became commercialised and a money value was put on the education of the daughter. Thirdly, the disappearance of the former ceremonies and rituals had the effect of secularising and trivialising marriage. The rituals previously provided a form of stability to the marriage because a breach of obligations would have aroused the wrath of the ancestors. The lengthy ceremonies of the past emphasised the importance of the event and internalised the obligations of marriage on the parties involved. This change also deprived the woman from productive property, and the continued parental home protection. It also limited women participation and power in marriage affairs. Women will not easily find a new family system in which they will have adequate rights to compensate for the losses they have sustained from the crumbling of the old order (Ngubane 1987:180).

While more women in Africa have access to education and employment opportunities there is a rapidly growing number unable "to overcome the socio-economic constraints which keep women illiterate, poorly paid, or marginally self-employed" (Robertson 1984:35). In Ilitha and Ndevana, most women are still financially dependent on their husbands. It is therefore very difficult for them to think of a divorce and to go out on their own. Many women are victims of poverty, neglect, exploitation, abuse, and a poor education that keeps them in an inferior position.

Violence in the marriage and family is certainly the most severe problem in urban areas. Frustrations and economic hardship often lead to increased conflict and violence in the family. Men often think it is their right to beat and abuse their wives. Children usually also suffer from family violence. Women often do not know their rights or they are told by the authorities and the police to sort out their own problems. The 1995 Health Overview report of UNICEF says violence against women, which is widely accepted, condoned and excused by society in Africa, has hampered their ability to protect themselves and their children against HIV infection (in Daily Nation 15/06/95:20). Children brought up in an environment of violence often take up violence themselves, creating a culture of violence as a way of survival. Often parents take their frustrations out on their children.

Alcohol abuse by men is another acute problem and is on the increase in the Ilitha-Ndevana area. Liquor is freely available at a number of shebeens and two liquor stores in the area. It often leads to conflict in the marriage and the destruction of the family. Men usually deny their problem or blame their wives or employers for their condition.

It is often the women who feel guilty about marriage problems. This is re-enforced by those expectations their husbands and broader family hold because traditionally it is expected from the wife to be submissive and obedient in all matter to her husband.

The authority and influence of parents over children has weakened. The absence of parents negatively effects discipline and the acquisition of moral principles. Youth up to 25 years of age form the majority of the urban population in the area,¹⁶ although many urban parents still send their children to rural homes to attend school. An ideological gap between generations has developed, with children often more educated than their parents. With little contact with the rural homes of their extended family, language, cultural and economic barriers have often develop which separates them from their traditional past. Through television they are also exposed to world-wide influences. They are, to a large extent, urban-orientated, and often morally confused and disorientated (Shorter 1991:117).

From a discussion with my informants, it was clear that different perceptions and expectations of marriage existed between male and female. This often led to misunderstanding and conflict in the marriage. Men tend to have traditional expectations for their marriages, but at the same time want to enjoy the freedom of the urban set up. Men want good mothers for their children and good caring wives for themselves. Men often hold double standards in terms of their marriage partners. The fertility of a potential wife is important to them but at the same time they value pre-marital virginity. With the idea that marriage is easy and divorce an available option, couples often lack basic skills, commitment and fidelity to the relationship.

¹⁶ From a sample population survey, it was concluded that 58% of the urban population in the region are younger than 25 years of age (Regional Development Plan 1985:10).

Changes have brought some advantages for women. In recent years more women are joining the formal labour force in pursuit of economic independence. Women seem to participate more in decision making in matters effecting their future. Many are also attempting to combine marriage, career and motherhood. With the use of contraceptives, women are able to decide on smaller families and when they want children. New forms of 'extended families' are also emerging in the city. Friends and relatives in the city are often incorporated into a new form of extended family, giving support in times of crisis.

In conclusion it can be stated that changes taking place in the African marriage and family life are clearly disruptive, disintegrating and are leaving a moral vacuum, leading to demoralisation and despair in members of society.

2.4.3.3 HOUSING

A continuous process of building dwellings is taking place. Very many hours, energy and money go into building over a long period. Different types of materials are used - mud blocks, corrugated iron, timber and bricks.

Housing in the Ilitha-Ndevana area varies greatly. The following tables give an idea of the type of structures.

TABLE 1: Type of houses in Ilitha and extension:¹⁷

Bricks with corrugated iron or tile roof	40%
Timber structured houses	20%
Temporary structures made of corrugated iron, flattened drums, wooden panels	40%

¹⁷ Information was obtain through a limited survey in Ilitha in 1994.

TABLE 2: Type of houses in Ndevana, Maphantsulweni and Nkanini;¹⁸

Bricks with corrugated iron or tile roof	15%
Square or round structures made of mud bricks or filling	50%
Temporary structures made of corrugated iron, flattened drums, wooden panels	35%

The housing scene is marked by an active process of house building, extending existing structures, or renovating. Much energy and resources are spent on activities aimed at enhancing living conditions. The table indicates the different combination of processes that are taking place:

TABLE 3: Building processes in the Ilitha-Ndevana area.¹⁹

Completed structures	30%
On-going extension of existing structures	25%
Staying in temporary structures, busy extending them	20%
In temporary structures collecting material for permanent structures	25%

A more positive view is needed towards people's own efforts to erect any form of housing whether it is plastic covered or a corrugated iron structure. It represents a human cultural initiative and a form of survival in hostile circumstances. Housing often goes with employment. Those who cannot afford the high cost of rent for permanent housing use the opportunity to erect their own cheaper impermanent dwellings.

These processes can take several years to complete and are always dependent on the sources of income. If the income is steady, liveable structures are erected in a relatively short period. Mr. Gcoyi started his house in Ndevana in 1978. He stayed in a shack on the plot while he was working for a construction company in Zwelitsha. In the meantime he bought building material from his savings. Over weekends he was helped by friends and his wider family to erect a four room-house. This took about six months and after the

¹⁸ Information was obtain through a limited survey done in the Ndevana area in 1994.

¹⁹ Conclusions were drawn from a limited survey done in Ilitha and the Ndevana area.

roof was put on he brought his wife and children from Dordrecht. In the following years he slowly completed and expanded his place as his income and responsibilities allowed him.

2.4.3.4 LOCAL GOVERNMENT

While under the Ciskei government, Ilitha was governed by a town manager and a council. Ndevana, on the other hand, had a headman with a community committee. Both these structures met with strong opposition from civic organisations which led to riots on different occasions. The rent office at Ilitha was burnt down in 1988 while the headman of Ndevana was killed in riots there.

From 1995 the whole Ilitha-Ndevana area was incorporated in the King William's Town-Bisho TLC (Transitional Local Council).

2.4.3.5 ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Ilitha was meant to be the dormitory of the industrial development at Berlin. Only a few workers were accommodated in the industrial area at Berlin. Most of the workers of Ilitha and Ndevana commuted to the East London area for employment.

The Ilitha-Ndevana complex lies adjacent to the Berlin industrial area. These industries were supposed to provide employment to people from Ilitha, Ndevana and the surrounding rural area. It is located on the principal development axis, which extends inland from East London through to Dimbaza.²⁰

Development of the Berlin Industrial Area was initiated in 1970 and the area contains 140 industrial sites of which only 12 were occupied by 1988. Several efforts were made to

²⁰ See FIG.2: the nodal-corridor model on p.48.

have it incorporated into Ciskei, but for political reasons the Municipality of East London held on to it in a hope that they could stimulate industrial development in the Border region (Gidsplan 1991:55, 149). It was part of the policy whereby labour would come from the homeland while the industries and employment would be situated within the Border region and benefit the economy of the region. With bigger financial incentives and tax exemption within Ciskei, most of the industries were drawn to Dimbaza and Fort Jackson near Mdantsane.

In a report on the motivation for the inclusion of the Berlin Industrial Area compiled in March 1988 by the Directorate of Planning in Ciskei, the urgent need for creating employment for the fast growing population of the broader Ilitha Ndevana area was emphasised. It was stated that the Berlin sub-region was providing only 600 jobs to the Ilitha-Ndevana area while an additional 6105 jobs were needed to have 80% employment for the people of the area, as envisaged in the planning in the homeland Ciskei. The Ciskei People's Development Bank had a big demand from industrialists to locate their businesses in the area but was faced with a dire shortage of serviced land.²¹

With such a shortage of employment in the immediate vicinity, workers commuted to East London and King William's Town daily for employment. Unemployment in Ndevana in 1993 was estimated at well above 70% compared to a figure of 64% in the surrounding areas (Levine 1993). Employment and basic income have become major issues for everyday survival. With dependency ratios of as high as 1.9, many households are on the verge of starvation.²² The situation is worse at Ndevana than at Ilitha. Mr. Kalipa is a

²¹ Information was obtained in 1993 from unpublished reports of the Directorate of Planning in Bisho.

²² This figure is an estimate done on a limited number of households in Ilitha and Ndevana.

qualified and diligent bricklayer. Due to deteriorating economic conditions in the area he has been unable to get employment for the past six months. He struggles to take care of his family and relies on occasional temporary jobs. He cannot meet his obligations and the furniture shop threatens to take back his furniture, bought on credit, if he does not pay soon. At school the children also need new uniforms. All this worries him and gives him sleepless nights.

The following tables indicate different sources of income of households in the Ilitha-Ndevana area in 1994.²³ The list is given in sequence of importance.

TABLE 4: Sources of Income in Ilitha and Ndevana

Uphangelo (full employment) of one or more family members locally
Migrant labour of a member of the household
Pension received by a member of the household
Self employment: hawkers, selling groceries, vegetables, firewood.
Temporary work
Children or family elsewhere sending money in support of the household
Renting out backyard shacks or rooms

From observations made and interviews conducted, it became evident that formal employment in Ilitha was higher than in Ndevana, while the percentage of migrant worker is higher in Ndevana. In Ndevana the number of households dependent on state pension is considerably higher than in Ilitha. The number of state pensioners in Ilitha is 2 550 compared to 7 680 in Ndevana.²⁴ More than is the case at Ndevana the people of Ilitha are self employed, selling foodstuffs and making saleable articles. Mr. Gqumo, staying at Ilitha, explained that this might be due to the fact that many of the people staying in Ilitha came from the Karoo and the Cape Midlands, where they were exposed more to a money economy and have developed more practical skills.

²³ Data was obtained from a limited survey of households in Ilitha and Ndevana.

²⁴ Information was obtained from the clinics at Ilitha and Ndevana in 1995.

A quarterly income from pension played a very important role to sustain life in the communities. Mrs. Peter, a widow age 67, received an old age state pension of R780,00 every third month. With that she had to take care of her three children still staying with her and four grandchildren. One daughter was at a teacher's training college, while four of the other children were at school. Her pension had to cover all expenses.

Both Ilitha and Ndevana have a grocery shop and a liquor store. Food prices were on average 15% higher than in chain stores in King William's Town and Bisho, but were well supported by local residents. Liquor sales, especially beer, is a flourishing business, despite high unemployment and scarcity of income. Twelve shebeens in Ilitha and twenty in Ndevana have been counted. Many small house shops, isirhoxo, are also operative in the area. Because transport to the bigger centres is readily available, much of the shopping is done outside the area.

Farming takes place in Ndevana on a limited scale. Approximately 10% of the households in Ndevana has either cattle or goats. Except for milk, the cattle have little other commercial use. From time to time they are used for traditional rituals. The same applies to goats although they were more often also used for their meat.

Gardens are cultivated at 1 out of 3 of households in Ndevana, and the following vegetables are found: mealies, potatoes, pumpkins and wild watermelons. Due to unpredictable rainfall, production and income from this source is unreliable. Interest in gardening is also declining amongst younger people.

Saving clubs (umgalelo) give participants a chance once in a while to make a bigger purchase of goods like furniture or kitchen ware. Mrs. Gcoyi of Ndevana belonged to a saving club together with five other ladies from Phakamisa and Zwelitsha townships nearby. Every second month they came together and every member contributed R200.

On a rotation basis every one got a turn to receive the lump sum. Mrs Gcoyi bought a display cupboard for her sitting room. At the same party she received some smaller presents from the other members of the club.

Urban social networks are another important structure for economic survival. They start on the horizontal level with equals doing favours for one another like finding a job, assisting somebody to find a place to stay or a way of by-passing the red tape of government. This, however, can become the major source of corruption.

The retailing of vegetable and other goods at street markets in King William's Town or Bisho provides an important supplementary income for many households in Ilitha and Ndevana. Vegetables and fruit are bought at wholesalers, divided into small plastic bags or as individual fruit and display on a plastic sheet on the ground or on a old school desk next to the street in busy shopping areas or at taxi ranks. Competition is stiff and profits are small. Nang'umbona, umbona! (here are mealies for sale) are often heard in the streets in King William's Town and Bisho.

In many households different other ways are utilised to supplement income. Mrs. Madonono buys a big plastic bag of orange cheese corns, ama-shwam-shwam, makes it up into small self made newspaper packets and sells them to school children in the neighbourhood. Other types of sweets and home baked foodstuffs are also sold in the same way.

2.4.3.6 EDUCATION AND RECREATION

Literacy levels are estimated at 65% in Ilitha and 40% in Ndevana. A factor contributing to the lower literacy at Ndevana is the fact that many of the residents originated from

farms in the corridor between Ciskei and Transkei, where they were less exposed to formal schooling. Literacy in Ilitha compared favourably with surrounding urban areas.²⁵

The following tables shows the schools operating in the area.

TABLE 5: Schools in Ilitha in 1995

Name and type	Enrolment	Pupils per teacher
Nothembile Pre-primary School	160	53
Unomfuneko Lower Primary School (sub A - std 2)	524	48
Sosebenza Lower Primary School	445	40
Ilitha Higher Primary School (std 3 - std 5)	508	36
Zanempucuko Junior Secondary School (std 6 - std 8)	382	45
Thembalesizwe Senior Secondary School (std 6 - std 10)	742	27

(Source: Mr. Belewa, inspector Dept. Education, Eastern Cape in East London, 1995.)

TABLE 6: Schools in Ndevana in 1995

Name and type	Enrolment	Pupils per teacher
Funeka Lower Primary School (sub A - std 2)	506	39
Nonkqubela Lower Primary School	357	28
Masijongane Lower Primary School	540	42
Nonkundia Lower Primary School	327	36
Nokwanda Lower Primary School	576	52
Gugulethu Lower Primary School	392	39
Siviwe Higher Primary School (std 3 - std 5)	549	42
Ndevana Higher Primary School	422	31
Mfundiso Higher Primary School	477	40
Sizamile Junior Secondary School (std 6 - std 8)	408	45
Mpumelelo Senior Secondary School (std 6 - std 10)	657	30
Enoch Sontonga Senior Secondary School	630	25

(Source: Mr. Belewa, inspector Dept. Education, Eastern Cape in East London, 1995)

²⁵ According to the Development Bank of S.A., the literacy rate in 1991 was 63,6% for the Ciskei area and 61% for the whole of South Africa.

Schools in the Ilitha-Ndevana area are full to capacity and a severe shortage of classrooms is experienced. Double schedules are run at one school in Ndevana to alleviate the need for Secondary Training. Many pupils from Ndevana also commute daily to other areas for school due to the lack of facilities in Ndevana.

At secondary level the majority of pupils take three languages and two social science subjects. No commercial or technical training is done and only a small number take mathematics. The experience had shown that a senior certificate proved to be insufficient for any qualified employment. It is expected that less than 10% of all school-leavers at the end of 1994 will obtain employment in the formal sector of the economy.

Recreation and sport facilities are lacking in the whole area. At Ilitha a self made soccer field and one for rugby are fully utilised. On an open patch of land between Maphantsulweni and Nkanini, rugby and netball are played. Although only a small percentage of young men play soccer or rugby, there was an eager interest in sport activities. There was also a growing interest, although much smaller, amongst young ladies for such activities.

2.4.3.7 HEALTH CARE

According to the National Health Plan (1989) of Ciskei,²⁶ the following four requirements should be met in order to meet the minimum basic level of health in a community, namely:

- safe drinking water;
- sufficient food for human subsistence;
- sewerage and waste disposal;

²⁶ Information was obtained from an unpublished document from the Directorate of Planning in Bisho in 1993.

- adequate housing.

Bearing this in mind, it is clear that the level of health is not at an acceptable level. Although drinking water is provided, it is not adequately distributed in the area. In Ndevana an average of 20 households are served by one tap. In the newer areas of Maphantsulweni and Nkanini the average is 50 households per tap in 1995. Waste removal and disposal services are limited in Ilitha and non-existent in Ndevana.

The clinics in both Ilitha and Ndevana are serving people in a four kilometres radius. Due to limited facilities at these clinics, only the most basic illnesses can be treated. Adequate transport for patients to hospitals is also lacking.

According to sister Dalasile at the clinic in Ndevana, malnutrition is common among young children and is causing great concern. High unemployment, a lack of knowledge, and difficult family conditions are the main reasons for the situation. Due to an increase in alcohol abuse, assaults and violence among young men are common. The abuse of wives and children is also alarmingly high. The occurrence of teenager pregnancies is high due to early initiation to sex, troubled family life and a moral disorientation among young people. AIDS or HIV infection have not been spotted on large scale although a couple of cases are under observation. The AIDS information campaign had not been successful in the area because young people still believe that it is not real. Feeding schemes at various crèches help the smaller children, but with high unemployment malnutrition has reached critical levels.

Two general hospitals, one in King William's Town and another near Bisho provide health care for the people in the area. Services in the hospital consist of patient care, outpatient care and community health services. The Cicilia Makiwane regional hospital in Mdantsane and the Frere Hospital in East London provide specialist services to the broader Border

area. They also serve as academic training hospitals. In terms of the population in the area there were only 2 beds per 1000 available²⁷, indicating an overburdened health service. With the re-incorporation of Ciskei, a totally new health strategy is being developed.

2.4.3.8 SOCIAL ORDER AND CONTROL

Crime and violence are taking on alarming proportions, although the situation is still far from a collapse of social order. A police station in Ndevana serves the whole Ilitha-Ndevana area. Policing and crime prevention are at a low level and often in the past it has been felt that the police and Defence Force acted to the detriment of the community. Many complaints of police harassment and power abuse have surfaced.²⁸

2.4.4 THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Unplanned and uncontrolled urbanisation has led to pollution and the exploitation of the environment in the Ilitha-Ndevana area. Settlement has taken place with little or no prior planning or the erection of infrastructure. This has caused a severe strain on surrounding natural resources. All trees in the immediate vicinity have been felled, household waste is disposed of on the edges of the township and plastic bags and bottles are scattered all over, which poses a danger to livestock. Surrounding grass lands had been overgrazed or burned indiscriminately. Smoke from household fires, especially in Ndevana where no electricity is available, also contributes to air pollution.

²⁷ It is according to the National Health Plan (1989) obtained from the Directorate of Planning in Bisho in 1993.

²⁸ Observations and conclusions were drawn from interviews with my informants.

2.5 CONCLUSION

From the historical and socio-economic overview given in this chapter, it is clear that Africans in the Border region of the Eastern Cape have been exposed to disruptive changes over a period of more than 150 years.

The confrontation between Xhosa speaking tribes and north moving settlers, backed by British colonial forces, resulted in a number of wars in the area in the nineteenth century. It all ended in the destruction of the political and economical independence of the amaXhosa and the loss of most of their land. The 1910 Constitution of the Union and the Natives' Land Act of 1913 deprived the people of the area of most of their remaining rights and their access to land. They had to settle as labourers in the agricultural sector, on the mines, and in industries under strict controlled urbanisation in the rest of South Africa.

Fifty years passed before another wave of disruptive changes hit the area. The implementation of the homeland policy of the Nationalist government resulted in the forced removal and resettlement of thousands of Africans from numerous places in the Cape Province to Ciskei from the 1960's to the 1980's. Through political, economical and demographic control the policy created a number of 'push' and 'pull' factors which exerted force on Africans to take the only legal option and that was to move to the homeland. The communities of Ilitha and Ndevana came into existence with people of diverse backgrounds, living together. Many had expectations that in Ciskei social and economical prosperity would be possible. People gave all they had to build homes and to create community life for themselves and their children.

The expected industrial development at Berlin never took off, and with the continuous inflow of people the unemployment surged to above 70%. Infrastructure became

inadequate and resulted in disrepair; clinics and schools became overcrowded and streets dilapidated. Political instability and violent protest led to social insecurity and a breakdown in the social fibre of society.

Disruptive changes have a profound negative influence on marriage and family life. They have left women and children vulnerable and have created a moral vacuum. They provide the ideal breeding-ground for a culture of despair in the area.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DEEP TRENCH OF DESPAIR

The heart of apartheid is dispossession.

Francis Wilson

3.1 THE BURDEN OF THE PAST

The idea may exist, especially amongst people who enjoyed a privileged position in South African society for the past decades, and who were not negatively effected by the previous political dispensation, that with the dawn of a new democracy in a unified South Africa, a new spirit of hope, co-operation and peace should automatically prevail all over the country. Even in many African townships expectations were high after 1990, with the release of Mr. Mandela, and the arrival of the first democratic elections in April 1994. It was thought that peace and prosperity would swiftly emerge out of the ashes.

On the contrary, the roots of poverty, impoverishment and powerlessness still lie deeply entrenched in the reality of everyday life and in the wake of an oppressive system whose disruptive influence will still be felt far into the future. A serious effect of the historical events, often overlooked, lies at the level of self-image, feelings, emotions and perceptions of reality and of the future, and the inability to alter the course of life. Not all Africans have suffered to the same extent under an oppressive system of race discrimination and the development of bantustans. With the implementation of the homeland policy and the creation of National States within South Africa by the National Party government, certain privileged classes came into existence. They were civil servants in newly established homeland governments, nurses, teachers, a number of farmers, having access to state land, and some businessmen. They benefited from the expansion and decentralising of political power to the homelands, and the allocation of development funds to these areas (SPP

1983:12). The 1980's, especially after independence in 1981, saw the development of a small economical and social middle class in Ciskei.

On the other hand, it was the thousands of unskilled and semi-skilled farm and migrant workers, declared surplus on White-owned farms in the Eastern Cape and in urban areas in South Africa, that had to take the full impact of the system. The majority of residents of Ilitha and Ndevana came from farms or worked as urban migrant labourers and settled in the early 1970's in Ciskei.

Wilson and Ramphela (1989:204) identified six major "lines of attack" in "apartheid's assault on the poor", namely: the shift in policy from incorporation in the beginning of the century (forming the Union and incorporating South West Africa) to dispossession of African people (creating 'homeland' and later independent states); anti-African-urbanisation; forced removal, both rural and urban; Bantu education; crushing of political and civic organisations; and the destabilisation in the 1980's of neighbouring countries in Southern Africa. Apartheid or race discrimination in South Africa did not start with the election victory of the National Party in 1948. The change of government rather meant the intensification and systemisation of a process which had been going on for three hundred years. It also meant the start of a process of massive reconstruction of the South African society, culminating in the forced removal and resettlement of more than 3 million Africans in so-called homelands or ethnic settlements between 1960 and 1983 (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:204, 216).

Going back in history, the long process of conquest and slavery of Africans in South Africa was also linked to the struggle between Afrikaners and British rule and to the perpetuation of White supremacy in the economy and politics. The Treaty of Vereeniging, signed after the Anglo-Boer War in 1902, came as a rude shock to Africans. Instead of

alleviating their position, they were left without any franchise and with the colour bar firmly retained. They were aggrieved that the Afrikaners, who were Britain's enemies, were favourably treated, while the interests of Africans, who had shown their loyalty to the Crown, were ignored (Odendaal 1984:37). Seven years later, in 1909, a National Convention was convened to negotiate unity between the colonies and British protectorates. In order to make Union possible, a compromise was reached between the Cape and the northern colonies. The latter agreed to the continuation of franchise rights for Africans in the Cape, while the Cape Colony approved the continuation of the colour bar in the north and the principle that Africans should be excluded from sitting in parliament. Although the draft South Africa Act received the support of a large majority of White South African colonists, nearly all politically conscious members of the African and coloured communities, who were denied political rights in all the colonies except the Cape, were against the terms, though not the principle of union (Odendaal 1984:134,196). Again Africans were left out and denied basic rights.

Shortly after the formation of the Union of South Africa, Africans had to face another devastating blow when the Natives' Land Act of 1913 was passed through parliament. It stands out as landmark in the deliberate efforts of consecutive governments in South Africa to dispossess and impoverish Africans and to make them aliens and refugees in the country of their birth. In terms of the Land Act, so-called "Scheduled Native Areas" were created for the exclusive use of Africans. Originally these areas comprised only "one-eighteenth of the total area of the Union". The Act also stated that African people were no longer allowed to purchase or lease land, except in reserves and existing African landowners could only sell their land to White people (Plaatje s.a.:19,20). Former relations of landlord and tenants had now been made a criminal offence for which they could be fined. The implementation of the act led to a large expulsion of tenants and

occupants from White owned farms, especially in the colonies of the Transvaal and Free State. "And under severe pains and penalties they were to be deprived of the bare human right of living on the land, except as servants in the employ of the whites.." (Plaatje s.a.:28). The Act and the campaign to eliminate Africans from the farms was not welcomed by all because of huge profits made by landowners out of the renting of their farms to African farmers (Plaatje s.a.:27). Plaatje (s.a.:53) recalled the prophecy of an old Basuto shortly after the act was enforced:

That the Imperial Government, after conquering the Boers, handed back to them their old Republics, and a nice little present in the shape of the Cape Colony and Natal — the two English Colonies. That the Boers are now ousting the Englishmen from the public service, and when they have finished with them, they will make a law declaring it a crime for a Native to live in South Africa, unless he is a servant in the employ of a Boer, and that from this it will be just one step to complete slavery.

At a congress of the South African Native Congress in 1913 a deputation was elected to present the objections of African people against the Land Act to the Union Government. When no positive reaction was received, a delegation¹ was sent to Britain in 1914 to protest against the Land Act and to appeal to the British Parliament. This was also to no avail (Plaatje s.a.:171, 172, 352).

With land added as Released Areas under Act 18 of 1936 to the Reserves, less than 14% of the country was eventually accessible to African people (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:191). The trend in South African colonial policy was towards a restriction of existing African political rights and the permanent exclusion of Africans from South African political systems. Therefore Africans mobilised themselves in opposition to this

¹ The delegation consisted of Thomas M. Mapikela, Dr. W. B. Rubusana, Rev. John L. Dube, Saul Msane and Sol Plaatje (Plaatje s.a.:188).

policy. Numerous organisations emerged against this background. A national conference held on 8 January 1912 in Bloemfontein to discuss the formation of a new national organisation for African people marked an important occasion in the history of South Africa. The South African Native National Congress with John Dube as its first president was established, later to be known as the African National Congress (Odendaal 1984:270, 275, 285).

In the present communities of Ilitha and Ndevana, many people did not have a clear understanding of an overall system of Apartheid and how it developed over the years, but built their perceptions and feelings on the way they were treated by specific laws imposed on them and officials implementing them. Therefore, the process of reconstructing and development should include more than houses, infrastructure, vocational orientated education and the creation of job opportunities. It is important that serious attention should be given to a healing process, restoring people's dignity and creating a positive self-image, encouraging people to develop their full potential. This will have to include the opportunity given to people at grassroots level to remember their struggles, hardship, anger and frustration over things that have happened to them. This is an essential part of the healing and reconciliation process. Interpersonal contact between members of societies, previously from opposing sides of the colour bar, on various levels, will have to take place to create mutual understanding. Local faith communities with ecumenical links in other societies, are ideally situated to facilitate this process.

The communities of Ilitha and Ndevana started in the early 1970's as a direct result of forced removal and resettlement. Coming from different areas in the Eastern Cape, residents brought with them their unique experience of the political system, and together they shared an ongoing struggle for dignity and survival. In general all these events

contributed to the gradual disintegration of the different facets of community life, creating a culture of powerlessness and despair in the communities of Ilitha and Ndevana. Such a culture promoted anomaly, destroyed human relationships, led to a decay in social control and authority, promoted crime and forced the social fibre of society into a state of collapse.

3.2 PEOPLE MADE REDUNDANT AND DISPENSABLE

From 1960 the position of Africans in the rural areas had changed fundamentally. The antipathy towards large urban concentrations had now been extended to the rural areas. The so-called verswarting (Africanising) of the White countryside had become a political danger for the National Party government. The homeland policy was put in full motion and thousands of surplus rural people had to be removed to the bantustans. Over the next two decades the State dealt with the problem through a massive programme of rural resettlement. The Native Trust and Land Act of 1936 specified the terms under which Africans could reside permanently in the White rural areas. Eventually it was only full-time farm workers and their dependants that could stay on. Many workers even settled their families in the homeland while working on White owned farms because there was no future for them in White rural areas and their children had difficulty finding schools (SPP 1983:8,9).

Settlements in the Ilitha-Ndevana area came about as a result of the application of this policy. The plan was to relocate surplus people from so-called black spots near Tsitsikama, the Northern Cape and from White rural areas in the Eastern Cape and Midlands to closer settlement in a newly consolidated area called Ciskei. They were made redundant by restricting their living and movement in those areas where they were born and had lived for generations. No franchise or community representation were allowed

and little was done to upgrade existing facilities for Africans. A hostile atmosphere for Africans in the White rural Eastern Cape served as a strong push factor. Many were elderly people who had spent all their years serving the economical well being and progress in many Eastern Cape agricultural districts and who were then dumped in Ciskei. Mr. Gedezana worked for thirty years on a farm in the Colesberg district. He played an active role in community and church activities and had a good relationship with the farm owner. At retirement he was given a vacant farmhouse and access to grazing for his cattle. Although he sometimes had difficulty to get place for his children in the so-called coloured school in town, he was treated with respect and made a good living. Towards 1972 things started to change. The new owner of the farm was not satisfied with previous arrangements with his cattle and his children were also expelled from school because they were Xhosa, although they spoke fluent Afrikaans. On account of promises of better conditions, he moved to Ilitha in 1975. Resettlement meant that ties with family and known surroundings were broken.

It was those kind of pull and push factors that exerted pressure on people to move and resettle in the so-called homelands. All other alternatives were gradually eliminated. African people were forced in one direction, to the homeland Ciskei although they had hardly any historical or traditional links with the area.

In 1973 Riemvasmaak, a black spot near Kakamas, on the northern bank of the Oranje River at Augrabies in the Northern Cape, was cleared to make way for a military base. A part of the community was resettled in Namibia and the rest, 46 families, were moved to Welcomewood, between King William's Town and Kidd's Beach. The 215 people involved were labelled Ciskeian Xhosa although they had lived on the other side of the country and could not even speak Xhosa – their language was Afrikaans (SPP 1983:97).

Aaron Malgas (67 years of age in 1995) was 45 years old when he and his family arrived at Welcomewood. He had to leave a well established homestead, a big vegetable garden, access to grazing field and a large herd of boerbokke (farm goats). The few livestock that he brought with him did not last long in a area with a high rainfall and new diseases. In January 1995 ten families returned to Riemvasmaak in an effort to re-establish a living on the land of their birth. Oom (uncle) Aaron felt that, after 22 years, his children and grandchildren had made this area their new home and he had little strength left to start all over again. He recalled with nostalgia the harsh but enjoyable days they had at Riemvasmaak and still keep contact with friends and family left there.

3.3 CONTROLLED BY THE SYSTEM AND LEFT WITH NO ALTERNATIVES

The culture of despair was reinforced by the control of the government in every aspect of lives of Africans. Little room for free initiative and creativity was left. The strategy of establishing the homelands was supported by a sophisticated system of control over Africans in this country. It was a control at the political, economic, ideological and demographic levels (SPP 1983:4). Demographic control was a main cornerstone in the strategy and resettlement to prescribed areas. The aim was to have the fewest possible Africans in White rural and urban areas. The majority should reside in the bantustans. By 1980 the bantustans contained well over half of the total African population of South Africa. With migrants included, the figure rose to nearly 60% (SPP 1983:6). Although the African population in White areas did not decline, the population growth was considerably smaller than general growth in the country. The urbanisation process of Africans was controlled through the system of influx control. Section 10 of the Blacks Consolidation Act of 1945 as amended in 1952 specified the conditions under which Africans were allowed to stay and work in White urban areas. It was mostly Africans who

were born and lived continuously in an urban area or somebody that had worked for 10 years for one employer or who had lived and work lawfully for 15 years in the area that qualified for Section 10 rights. A person could also lose his or her rights, if declared undesirable in an White urban area. Those without permission were only allowed 72 hours in the city (SPP 1983:7).

Passes had to be carried by Africans at all times, which contained and specified a person's right to live and work in a specific area. After the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1834, different pass laws were introduced over the next century to control movement of Africans to urban areas in South Africa. After the change in government in 1948, pass laws were strictly applied to prevent and even to try to reverse black urbanisation (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:192, 208).

Constant fear of police raids coupled with the indignity of arrest, was part of daily living of many Africans. Mr Joni, now living in Ilitha, moved with his mother to the West Bank in East London in the early 1960's. Not having a pass, his mother often had to wake up early to hide in the bush while a police raid was in progress. As a young man he started doing odd jobs and garden work. He was often caught by police for not having a pass, put in jail for a few days, released, just to struggle again to avoid arrest. Later he got a pass but then other restrictions were placed on his movement and his efforts to find suitable employment. Now that freedom has come at last, job opportunities are limited and the cost of living has soared.

Political control took the form of repression of any expression of resistance and the creation of local government in the different bantustans. The upsurge in political resistance by Africans in the 1940's and 1950's was forcibly crushed and by the mid-1960's all overt internal resistance had been eliminated and organisations like the ANC

and PAC banned. Through the Black Authorities Act of 1951 political power was decentralised to the traditional elite in the form of revived tribal authorities under chiefs and headmen (SPP 1983:9, 12). Peri-urban resettled communities like Ndevana were also placed under a headman and all activities from development of infrastructure to the applications for grants and pensions had to pass his hand. This system guaranteed stringent control by the government who provided all the funding, but often led to frustration and corruption by some local officials, abusing their authority and power. Protest in the 1980's saw many of these headmen killed or expelled from settlements. Mr. Tutani, headman of Sotho near Komga was killed by angry protesters in 1986 and his family had to flee Ciskei.

Economical control over Africans in South Africa was implemented by a whole range of measures like the system of migrant labour, influx control, pass law, restrictions on housing construction in urban areas, limitations on the formation of unions, forced removal and resettlement of surplus people and the establishment of decentralised industrial areas. Each of these tactics cruelly disrupted the lives of Africans and directly contributed to the process of impoverishment (Wilson & Ramphele 1989:208). Mr. Madonono had vee-reg (the right to own cattle) on the farm he was working on in the Hanover district in the 1960's and 1970's due to continuous good service to the owner of the farm. Through the years he had built up a valuable herd of cattle and a number of sheep. These assets enabled him to provide his children with education and his family with basic necessities. With his farming experience and management skills he was looking for an opportunity to rent land and to start his own farming in the Karoo. He was denied the opportunity, his rights were grossly infringed on, and he was, through circumstances, forced to sell belongings and to resettle in Ilitha. He feels frustrated and deprived of chances in life. Many settled full-time farm labourers left the White rural areas for the

bantustans, either through eviction or by choice. The homeland was the only lawful destination and the only route to other labour markets (SPP 1983:9).

The strict control and the elimination of alternatives imposed on Africans made a profound contribution to the feeling of despair and powerlessness that are presently prevailing in the communities of Ilitha and Ndevana.

3.4 DISEMPOWERMENT AND THE DESTRUCTION OF HUMAN AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Residents in Ilitha and Ndevana, in interviews, expressed the feeling that in their lifetime a deliberate process of disempowering of African people took place in all spheres of life. Many who came from farms and small towns in the Karoo and the Midlands had the knowledge and skills to become farmers or run businesses, but were prohibited by restrictive laws and other measures imposed on them.

Disempowerment started way back with colonisation, through to the conquest of indigenous inhabitants in the nineteenth century and culminated in the notorious Land Act of 1913. It was thereby ensured that conquered Africans would not get land back through the market in the new industrial society that was emerging (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:191). At the introduction of the act in 1913, a question was asked in parliament about the ownership of farms by Africans. The Minister of Land replied that in the previous three years, Africans bought 78 farms of a total of 144 416 morgen, to the value of 94 907 pounds (Plaatje s.a.:29). Many more rented land and provided profitable income to their landlords. In the future Africans would not be allowed on the land, except as servants (Plaatje .s.a.:27, 28).

Many other laws like the Job Reservation Act, the Masters and Servants Act, the Influx Control Act and the Industrial Conciliation Act (excluding Africans from worker's rights) were used to suppress African empowerment and to keep cheap labour available for the South African markets. African miners, even if they were competent to do so, could hold no jobs above a certain level of skill (Wilson & Ramphele 1989:195). Unions and collective bargaining were only allowed in 1979 in South Africa and a few years later in Ciskei.

The link between education, poverty and powerlessness is complex but it can be stated without doubt that Bantu Education did not equip children with the skills needed for a modern technologically advanced economy. The education process was such that Whites had innumerable advantages over Africans in acquiring the skills necessary to fill jobs at the upper end of the economic pyramid (Wilson & Ramphele 1989:226). The implementation of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 meant the end of the church's control over educational institutions like Lovedale, St Matthews and Healdtown. These institutions were known for their high standard of education and for the fact that almost all children in their vicinity were at school while only one-third of African children in the rest of the Union went to school (Wilson & Ramphele 1989:140). It was often said that Bantu Education was designed to keep Africans enslaved and prevent them from advancing beyond the level of ordinary labourers. Lack of quality was obvious if compared with the education given to White pupils. African pupils, in 1983/84, received only 14% each of the subsidy given to White pupils. This resulted in the absence of resources, overcrowding of facilities, high pupil-teacher ratio, inadequate teacher training and a serious lack of morale. In 1984 the average pupil-teacher ratio was 19:1 for Whites and 41:1 for Africans (Wilson & Ramphele 1989:141-144). In a survey done in 1993 among black matriculants in Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown, it was found that school-

leavers were ill-prepared for further study in the technical, natural or management sciences due to the inadequacies in the educational system (Haines and Wood 1995:608). It was an educational system with little emphasis on life skills, technical know-how, science qualifications and economic leadership.

High illiteracy among adults in areas like Transkei and Ciskei is another indication of lack of empowerment that has taken place over decades. In 1982 66% of adults in Transkei were illiterate, compared to 2% of Whites (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:138). In Ndevana adult illiteracy is estimated also to be above 50%.² Public expenditure in education, agricultural support, job-creation has been used over the years to support Whites far more than Africans by investing in them as people and by providing them with infrastructural resources, in both rural and urban areas, to boost their economic well-being (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:196).

In the political sphere a person's rights depended on his or her classification in terms of the Population Registration Act of 1950. According to this act, the people of South Africa were divided into a number of so-called 'racial' and 'ethnic' groups. These divisions were essentially political and can better be described as 'colour-castes' (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:23), with Whites being the most privileged of the castes. The colour bar was a constant reminder to Africans that they were third grade citizens and may be discriminated against. Although the colour bar was not everywhere applied rigidly, a combination of law, custom and discriminatory policies ensured that Whites were protected and gained preferential access to the more highly skilled, better-paid jobs in the upper levels of the economy, while Africans, by and large, were held down in unskilled and semi-skilled occupations (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:196). The Population Registration Act was also

² See chapter 2 p. 67.

used as basis for the 1970 Citizenship Act which made all Africans foreigners in the land of their birth. This meant that they lost their South African citizenship and the little franchise they still had and became citizens of so-called National States of which Ciskei was one.

From 1960 to 1983 forced removals, resettlement and the anti-urbanisation program of the government led to the destruction of thousands of houses and infrastructure, while a backlog for housing was already building up. In Cape Town all house-building for Africans was stopped in 1966 in an attempt to reverse the flow of people to the western Cape. In the following twenty years dwellings along Modderdam Road, at Unibel, Crossroads, Werkgenot in Bellville South and at numerous other places were bulldozed from time to time and people had to start all over again (Cole 1981:35). The policy of clearing all Africans from the western Cape was abandoned in 1986 with the lifting of Influx Control. But the damage to people's lives was enormous. Whole communities with their houses were also destroyed in places like Riemvasmaak, with the removal of the people to Welcomewood and in the Tsitisikama, with families removed to Elukhanyeni in Keiskammahoek.

Industrial development in and around Ciskei did provide jobs but could not stem the escalating increase in the rate of unemployment, which was recorded to be more than 70% in areas in the Eastern Cape.³ With the phasing out of subsidies, many of these industries have closed down or left. Of the 87 industries at Dimbaza in 1985, only 54 were still operating in 1995, according to information obtained from Ciskei People's Development Bank in Bisho. At the industrial area at Berlin, adjacent to Ilitha and Ndevana, 14% of plots were developed and utilised by 1987, providing only 933 persons with employment

³ See chapter 2 p. 20.

(Gidsplan 1991:80, 82). None of the companies at Dimbaza and Berlin belonged to or were run by Africans. The majority were from the Far East and Europe. In interviews with workers staying in Ilitha, it was clear that little effort was made to develop skills or to promote ownership of the production process. Often workers did not even know what product was finally produced by the factory. The perception existed that owners made big profits while workers had to be satisfied with meagre wages. It helped them to survive but brought no empowerment.

3.5 EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE BEING CRIMINALISED

A factor that contributed strongly to the culture of despair among residents of Ilitha and Ndevana was the numerous discriminatory laws that restricted and criminalised almost every aspect of life for African people. Acts like Pass Laws, Separate Amenities Act, Group Areas Act, Mixed Marriages Act, Influx Control, Internal Security Act and numerous others left Africans almost totally powerless before the law. Without a Bill of Rights the National Party government had a free hand to make as many discriminatory laws against Africans as they wished to.

The notorious Pass laws and Influx Control criminalised and humiliated law-abiding citizens of South Africa. "Over the seventy years from 1916 when the first statistics were recorded until 1986 when the pass laws were formally abolished, the total number of people prosecuted in South Africa for being in some place (generally an urban area) without official permission was well over 17 000 000. All of them were Africans" (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:208). Church elders of the URC in Ilitha recalled how, on numerous occasions, they were arrested for transgressing Pass Law regulations and how they used different strategies to avoid the police or to obtain passes, often illegally. Women and children were often hidden to avoid eviction to the homeland.

3.6 INSTITUTIONALISED VIOLENCE LED TO ENDEMIC VIOLENCE

From the 1960's the National Party Government had to apply more and more force to keep the political system going and to suppress resistance. In March 1960 69 people were killed in Sharpeville while protesting against carrying passes. This was followed by the forceful banning of resistance movements like the ANC and PAC. Thousands of African were jailed and forcefully evicted under Pass Laws and Influx Control. Police and armed forces were used to remove and resettle thousands in the 1970's and 1980's in bantustans. The same apparatus was implemented to suppress youth protest actions in 1976 and 1985, leaving hundreds dead. The police and state officials used force to demolish and bulldoze so-called illegal settlements around urban areas. Popular internal resistance movements like the UDF were forcefully suppressed and their leaders imprisoned. The states of emergency declared late in the 1970's and in the 1980's by the State, saw extreme force applied and a total disregard for the dignity of Africans opposing the system. The counter attack by the liberation movements included smuggling weaponry into the country, training youths in exile, executing attacks on government and soft targets.

In Ciskei similar tactics were used to suppress opposition. In both Transkei and Ciskei military forces took over the government in the 1980's, followed by serious looting and violence. After the unbanning of the ANC in 1990 and the establishment of an opposing party, the African Democratic Movement, by Brig. Oupa Gqozo in Ciskei, a new wave of political intolerance and violence started. Many houses of ADM members in Zwelitsha, Phakamisa and Mdantsane were burnt down. Other violent protest action against the Ciskei government took place, culminating in the well known Bisho Massacre in September 1992 in which 28 people were killed by Ciskei troops during a protest march to the Bisho stadium.

The perception was created that violence had become the only effective means to solve problems. At the same time all authority was challenged and parents were incapable of controlling their children. This also led to an upsurge in violence in households and in the communities in general. This has created a generation that easily resort to violence to settle even minor differences.

With the economic recession and high unemployment, fewer people use public transport daily. This caused a serious oversupply of taxi transport and greater competition between operators. With profit margins cut to the limit, ownership of routes became important for survival. When new or existing operators infringed on routes of their opposition, conflict occurred which often ended in violence, arson and the killing of people. Taxi violence between rival associations from Mdantsane and Zwelitsha has claimed several lives on the route passing Ilitha and Ndevana. The son of Mr. Gcoyi is a taxi driver on the route to King William's Town. In May 1995 he survived an armed attack on the corrugated iron dwelling he was sleeping in. It was alleged that he had trespassed on opposition ground. The lack of police protection and alleged police involvement in crime, did nothing to alleviate crime and violence in the community.

The tragic consequence of endemic violence is that life becomes cheap and dispensable. Sifana neentaka (We are like birds, worthless), was often heard in people's commentary on senseless killings.

3.7 PEOPLE LEFT VULNERABLE

The essence of vulnerability is the risk of destitution, starvation, and death. In the communities of Ilitha and Ndevana a large number of people finds themselves 'on the edge of survival'. It is estimated that in rural and peri-urban areas of former homelands, four-

fifths of the people are living below the poverty datum level (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:173). In Ilitha and Ndevana it is the loss of jobs, the breakdown of supportive structures of the extended family, and the lack of security that have created this crisis. In many households male breadwinners had abandoned their family and wives had to struggle to keep the family alive.

In these circumstances certain people can be described as most vulnerable, namely smaller children; women; and elderly people. According to sister Dalasile at the clinic in Ndevana the majority of children in the community under the age of 12 suffered from malnutrition, infant mortality was high and diarrhoea rampant. This can be attributed to a lack of income of families, and to inadequate caring in households where mothers are forced to seek employment. It is often found that small children are left in the care of elder children or of a grandparent.

Women are also at risk. In Ndevana, a majority of households are run by women. In many cases the men are away on migrant work and return either once a month or at the end of the year. In other households the husband has abandoned his family or has died. A recent phenomenon is women that are not formally married and decide to stay alone with their children. It is found that the degree of poverty is far higher amongst female-headed households than in those houses where a man is at the head (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:179). This can be attributed to the fact that women are still exploited in the labour market and are paid less than their male counterparts. The lack of the support of the extended family makes it also difficult for many of them to survive. They are also exposed to the many forms of violence – criminal, sexual or political (Van Schalkwyk 1994:112).

Elderly people also found themselves vulnerable. For those who received an old age pension, a steady income is guaranteed, but not without a lot of difficulties. Sometimes

they have to wait for days to get their money or are informed that a shortage has occurred. In Ndevana it was estimated that a single pension supported, on average, 10 family members ranging from grandchildren to students and members without employment. Adults in the age group 55 to 65 are often in a difficult position. They are often laid off first when retrenchments are made and it is almost impossible for them to obtain new employment in a saturated market. Mr. Mkafuli from Ndevana is 63 years old. He lost his job 5 years ago during a strike at the company he was working for. Since then he has tried in vain to get other employment and was told that he is too old. He has another two years before he is eligible for old age pension. In the meanwhile he struggles to make ends meet by doing odd jobs for people in the community.

3.8 HUMILIATED AND DECEIVED

Characteristic of the suffering experienced by most Africans in South Africa was the suffering of humiliation. Anyone who was not legally classified as White was treated as inferior. It was legalised humiliation and seen and accepted as normal for officials to treat Africans like animals or like dirt, "something that will contaminate a White person who gets too close" (Nolan 1988:51). Mr. Madonono recalled an incident on the farm in the Hanover district on which he was working. He was working near the garden of the farm homestead when the wife of the farmer saw him and started a conversation on conditions at a local farm school. After a while the farmer approached them and rebuked his wife for having discussion with a 'worker'. He demanded Mr. Madonono to go to work and not waste his time chatting around. Different offensive names were also used to depict Africans in South Africa, all emphasising their non-person status.

The way people were treated during forced resettlement was often extremely humiliating. Mr. Ngada of Nompumelelo remembered how they were loaded on trucks, old and young,

with their belongings and even their pigs. They were dropped in the open veld and had to endure the weather for days before they could erect temporary shelters for themselves.

Attractive promises were made to lure people to Ciskei. Both Mr. Gedezana and Mr. Gqumo remembered the promises of free plots and grazing-land for their cattle, schools for their children and ample employment. Once they arrived, they came to the rude awakening that it was all lies. The expected industrial development at Berlin never got off the ground and the farms nearby, around Blainey, were rented to state officials. The people felt deceived.

Many residents of Ilitha and Ndevana felt that they had been economically exploited by the system over the years. Many worked all their lives on White-owned farms, just to be shifted out to the homeland and to suffer poverty in old age. All their life they had been an important element in the production line, but were alienated from the goods produced and benefited very little from it. They were not empowered and never advanced to any meaningful ownership.

3.9 CONCLUSION

It is clear that the culture and feeling of despair, powerlessness and mistrust is deeply entrenched in the minds of many people in Ilitha and Ndevana and that it will have a serious negative influence on any efforts to introduce programs for the development of human resources and reconstruction within the communities. Programs will have to take this into consideration and go beyond mere infrastructure and facilities. It should be aimed at the real basic needs in the community and restoring human dignity and value. "Strategies against poverty involve not only pulling up the roots of processes that

impoverish people but also planting (and nurturing) those seeds that will produce good fruit" (Wilson & Ramphela 1989:5).

Graham Greene, writing of Latin America in The honorary consul, said: "Hunger drives a man to fight. Malnutrition makes him too tired to raise a fist" (in SPP 1983:3). It is this tiredness that should seriously be addressed by the church but also by NGO and governmental programs interested in the prosperity of the communities of Ilitha and Ndevana.

CHAPTER FOUR

FAITH COMMUNITIES AMID TRANSITION

*We are jobless
and homeless,
but not hopeless*
(anonymous)

4.1. FAITH COMMUNITIES IN THE ILITHA-NDEVANA AREA

Amid the situation of devastation described in chapter 2, and despite the culture of hopelessness described in chapter 3, people survive, especially through their faith and mutual support.

4.1.1 VARIETY OF FAITH COMMUNITIES

Church activities in the Ilitha-Ndevana area are characterised by numerous and various Christian faith communities. The majority of inhabitants claim to have Christian church affiliation, although active involvement in church matters is much less, especially among the MPCs members.¹

Various reasons are given by church members for belonging to specific denominations. Though the decision is not always a rational one, practical circumstances, experiences and social ties play a dominant role. The following factors were identified as general influences on a person's decision to join a group, in no sequence of importance:²

1. The involvement of parents or family members in a specific denomination;

¹ Through general observation and contact with people in the two townships, it is concluded that few people claim not to have any church alliance. On the other hand almost all the denominations complain of unsatisfactory church attendance and participation by members.

² Information was obtained from contact with members from different denominations.

2. Married into a church;
3. The traditions, practices and teaching of a specific church;
4. Active evangelisation by a specific denomination in an area, for example, crusades;
5. An inspiring and charismatic leader;
6. A physical healing experience;
7. Practical aid given by a particular group to people in need;
8. Dreams.

Among the MPCs the greater majority of members are born and have grown up in the church³ while members of the AICs join the church more in seeking health⁴ and strength or in following a charismatic leader.

Breakaways and the formation of new church groups are common, mostly caused by internal conflict about leadership, administration or finances. Informants share the impression that pastors of the Zionist-type AICs prefer to be sole leaders in their churches. Pastor Mazomba broke away, with his congregation, from the St John's Apostolic Church, after disagreement with the leadership on local matters. In Ilitha there are two Methodist congregations, one under the auspices of Mdantsane and another under Zwelitsha. The split occurred after some members coming to Ilitha from Zwelitsha, did not want to subject themselves to the already established group, which originated from Mdantsane. Schism is common and only a few churches have not experienced serious divisions. This

³ According to Rev. Hans-J Strübing, most Lutheran members in King William's Town and Stutterheim are related to one or more other members. Anderson (1992:155), in a study done in Soshanguve, indicated that 70,8% of members of mission churches were born in the church.

⁴ It is often heard that somebody has left a MPC to join a Zionist-type church because ndifuna impilo (I am looking for health).

proliferation of faith groups contributes to the fragmentation of the church as the body of Christ in the community, leading to a waning of its influence and legitimacy.

Faith communities in the area consist of a wide range of groups and movements. Classification is problematic and only provides limited clarity:

1. Missionary Planted Churches (MPCs), also known as mission, historical or main line churches of Western origin are in the minority;
2. The abbreviation AICs is used to describe a second broad group of churches with their roots in African soil. It stands for, either African Independent, or Indigenous/ Initiated Churches. Being independent or indigenous may indicate a vast difference in origin, control, belief and practice among local faith communities. Anderson (1992:6,7) and Oosthuizen (1995:25) use the term 'independent' to indicate churches which 'split-off' from the mainline mission churches, which have exclusive Black leadership and are free from White control, while 'indigenous' points to churches with their origin in Africa, those with a greater openness to cultural influences, and accommodating traditional beliefs and practices. This distinction is problematic because Independent Churches also show strong cultural influences and Indigenous Churches are known to be independent from outside control and support. Nevertheless, it is a useful category but needs future distinctions.⁵

⁵ Bengt Sundkler was the first, in his book, Bantu prophets in South Africa, published in 1948, to talk about two main types of indigenous churches namely 'Ethiopian' type and 'Zionist' type (Sundkler 1961:53). Other scholars have mainly kept to this distinction with small adjustments to terms used within the groups. Pauw (1975:33) allowed for a third group namely Sabbatarian-Baptists and mentioned a more recent phenomenon of prayer and healing movements. Daneel (1987:34-42) used the term 'Spirit-type' in place of 'Zionist' because the Zimbabwean churches of this type called themselves 'churches of the Spirit' and some had objected to be called 'Zionist'. Anderson (1992:59) had difficulties with the term 'Spirit-type' because, according to him, "these churches seldom call themselves by this name." He preferred the term 'Pentecostal-type' because "it reflects the links with the Pentecostal movement ... and it does not make the third Person of the Trinity part of a double-barrelled name for a church type!" Informants locally did refer to Zionist-type churches as iinkonzo zomoya (spirit churches). Some authors added a third type namely 'Messianic movements' to the existing two main types (Sprunger 1972:164), while others preferred to reserve the term 'messianic' to indicate a leadership pattern that could occur in any of the types (Pauw 1975:33).

The following subdivisions are therefore used:

- a. Zionist/ Spirit-type/ Prophetic/ Pentecostal-type Churches.
- b. Ethiopian-type Churches;
- c. Messianic Movements;
- d. Prayer and Healing movements;

Due to ongoing changes, some groups switch from one subdivision to another or fit none of the categories (Daneel 1987:35). The differences between Zionist-type and Ethiopian-type churches are not always clear. Broad distinctions can be drawn. Zionist-type churches baptise adults by immersion in water, usually in a running stream, whereas Ethiopian-type churches have infant baptism by sprinkling or pouring. The dominant colours of their uniforms also differ. Zionist-type churches prefer white, the colour of purity, combined with other colours, in their uniform, whereas Ethiopian-type have more black. The Zionist churches are also characterised by the use of the 'gifts of the Spirit' and prophetic and healing practices, which are not generally found in Ethiopian-type churches (Anderson 1992:58). The majority of Zionist-type AICs add the name 'Zion'⁶ to their name, keeping the continuity with the early Zionist movement and with the broader Pentecostal movement.

The AIC movement has mushroomed in the past three decades, especially the Zionist-type churches. Anderson (1992:58) estimated the number of AICs in South Africa in 1990 to be 6 000. This is double the figure given by West (1975:2) for 1970.⁷ Growth in these

⁶ According to Anderson (1992:95), the word 'Zion' as a church name originated in Zion City in the USA and the movement of John Alexander Dowie, called the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion. In South Africa, in 1903, some 400 Africans, under the leadership of Pieter L le Roux joined the movement and was later supported by workers coming from this church in the USA. Eventually a whole series of Zionist Churches emerged from this movement (Anderson 1992:21).

⁷ Different reasons have been given for the rapid increase in AICs, especially in South Africa, since the turn of the century. It was said that church members defected to AICs in response to

churches also represents a move away from the traditional or MPCs to the AICs in terms of church membership. In 1960 the figure for Mission Planted Church membership was 70% of black South African. It declined to 33% in 1991 while membership of AICs increased to 46% of black South Africans (Anderson 1993:7,8). The conclusion thus made is that if "the trend continues, the mission churches could be an even less significant proportion (possibly about 20%) of the black population by the turn of this century" (Anderson 1993:9). Oosthuizen (1995:26-36) gives a number of reasons for the growing support of the AICs. They provide fellowship and mutual support, caring and sharing, as understood in the traditional African context, they bring the traditional and modern worlds together, they accommodate some dynamic features of ATR, and reconciliation and healing are actively promoted. From observations made and interviews conducted in the Ilitha-Ndevana area, there is good reason to believe that the same trend is taking place here. If compared with the more rural settlements, the AICs seem to be more dominant in urban areas.

It also appears that indigenous churches grow more rapidly in an urban environment than they do in a rural one. The insecurities that are inherent in rapid urbanisation provide strong incentives for people, separated from their roots, to seek new,

colonial domination or political oppression (Sundkler 1961:38) and that White-controlled mission churches were unable to provide a faith atmosphere in which Africans could feel at home and express themselves freely. Another reason given is that it is a reaction against the inability of mission churches to cater for the way people understood their everyday problems, dealing with matters "at the intellectual and ethical levels of man's consciousness, without touching the deeper emotional levels - through myth and ritual, rhythm and music" (Hayward 1963:9). The above mentioned reasons may account for a number of members coming from MPCs, but the majority of members are recruited from people with no former connections with Christianity. In the Zionist-type churches in Soshanguve, 35,3% of members came from mission churches (Anderson 1992:149). A convincing reason for the huge support of AICs seems to be the fact that they provide a means of changing and adapting consciously to a new environment while ties are kept with traditional values and customs. The AICs usually pay attention to dreams as signs and messages from God or the living-dead. This aspect is often being neglected or ignored by the MPCs. Leaders come from the same cultural setting and cater for the immediate needs of their followers, quenching the need for healing and harmony with their surrounding spiritual world. They help to provide their followers with a new self-image and a new identity (Bourdillon 1990:274).

culturally and socially meaningful religious expression, a 'place to feel at home' (Anderson 1993:9).

The following tables do not claim to be complete but give an overall view of faith communities operative in the area.

TABLE 7 : FAITH COMMUNITIES IN ILITHA

	Building: +/-	Adult membership		
		-50	-100	+100
MPCs				
Baptist Church (<u>amaBhaptizi</u>)	+		x	
Lutheran Church (<u>amaRute</u>)	+		x	
Methodist Church (<u>amaWesile</u>) (under Makhelani)	+			x
Methodist Church (2nd group under Maqhagi)	-	x		
Reformed Presbyterian Church in S.A. (<u>amaRhabe</u>)	-	x		
St Cyprian's Anglican Church (<u>amaTshetshi</u>)	-	x		
Uniting Reformed Church (<u>amaDatsji</u>)	+		x	
AICs				
iTopiya (Ethiopian Order)	+	x		
<u>AmaZivone</u> (under Gcoyi)	-	x		
<u>AmaZivone</u> (under Gebe)	-	x		
<u>AmaZivone</u> (under Mpukwana)	-	x		
<u>AmaZivone</u> (under Nane)	-	x		
<u>AmaZivone</u> (under Shushu)	-	x		
<u>AmaZivone</u> (under Sonxi)	-	x		
Apostolic Church Office in Zion of S.A. (Bishop Hili)	-	x		
Assembly Christ of God	-	x		
Bengu Church (under Meraani)	-	x		
Church of Christ	-	x		
Church of God	-	x		
Conquerors Through Christ Ministries	-	x		
Jerusalem in Zion (John Jedana)	-	x		
New Apostolic General Church in Zion of S.A. (Pelisile)	-	x		
Old Apostolic Church	-	x		
St Johns Spiritual Apostolic Church in S.A. (Mazomba)	-	x		
UNCLASSIFIED FAITH GROUPS				
Watchtower (Jehovah Witnesses)	-	x		
Seventh Day Adventists	-	x		

TABLE 8 : FAITH COMMUNITIES IN THE NDEVANA AREA

	Building: +/-	Adult membership		
		-50	-100	+100
MPCs				
Anglican Church (<i>amaTshetshi</i>)	+		x	
Bantu Presbyterian Church (<i>amaRhabe</i>)	+		x	
Baptist Church (<i>amaBhaptizi</i>)	+	x		
Methodist Church (<i>amaWesile</i>)	+			x
New Congregational Church	-	x		
Roman Catholic Church (<i>amaRoma</i>)	+		x	
Uniting Reformed Church (<i>amaDatshi</i>)	+	x		
AICs				
Antioch Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion	-	x		
Assembly of Christ Federal	-	x		
Assembly of God	+	x		
Babylon Apostolic Church in Zion	-	x		
Bethel Apostolic Church of Christ mission in S.A.	-	x		
Catholic Church of Christ in Zion	-	x		
Christian Faith Temple	-	x		
Church of Christ	-	x		
Corner Stone of Apostolic Church	-	x		
Faith Mission	-	x		
Filipu Reformed Church in Zion	-	x		
Galilee Apostolic Church of Christ in Zion in S.A.	-	x		
Holy fire Apostolic Church in Zion	-	x		
Iintiliziyo in Zion	-	x		
International Assembly of God	+	x		
Jordan in Zion	-	x		
New Apostolic Church	+		x	
New Baptist in Zion	-	x		
New General Methodist Church in Zion of S.A.	+	x		
Old Apostolic Church of Africa	+	x		
Pentecostal Christian Fellowship	-	x		
St Engenas Zion Christian Church	-	x		
St Johns Apostolic Faith Church	-	x		
St Stephen's Church	+	x		
The Apostolic Stranger Church in Zion	-	x		
The Blue Christian Catholic Church in Zion	-	x		
The disciples of God in Zion Church	-	x		
The Foundation Cornerstone Church of Church mission	-	x		
The Medium Apostolic Church in Zion	-	x		
Twelve Apostolic Church	-	x		
Zion Christian Church (ZCC)	-	x		
Zionist Church of Jesus Christ	-	x		
UNCLASSIFIED FAITH GROUPS				
Watchtower (Jehovah Witnesses)	-	x		

From the data given in tables 8 and 9 it can be seen that the AICs have far outnumbered the MPCs in Ilitha and Ndevana as the dominant church movement in the area. The majority of MPCs, with support from their broader church community, were able to erect church buildings. Almost all the AICs gathered in homes, classrooms or self made iipozi

(structures made of corrugated iron and timber). The majority of faith groups have between 30 and 50 members while groups with church buildings have on average 60-80 people involved in church activities. Many of the AIC groups have expressed their need for their own church building, but they also value the close personal relationships of a small house group. It is often seen that once a AIC group grows beyond 40 to 50 members, it splits up and forms a new group around an emerging leader. It seems as if local lay leadership finds it difficult to handle contesting leadership or to deal with group dynamics in groups with larger membership.

In general MPCs have experienced little or no significant increase in membership in the past five years in the Ilitha-Ndevana area,⁸ while AICs groups have increased further,⁹ although, according to informants, membership of individual groups tend to stay constant at between 30 and 50. There is also considerable movement of members between different AIC groups. According to the Rev. John Jedana of a Zionist-type church, Jerusalem in Zion, most of his members have made at least three changes in church affiliation in the past two years.

For many the less structured and informal church services and activities of the AICs are attractive. They usually gather in a school classroom, in the house of a member or in an ipozi (self-erected structure made from timber and corrugated iron). A dynamic spiritual leader is the binding factor. Mr Ntlokwana, a member of a Zionist-type church, explained that they have services every second day with no fixed liturgy. Hymns are repetitive,

⁸ In the period 1990 and 1995, membership of the URC at Ilitha kept at between 50 and 60. According to the pastor, the Lutheran Church in Ilitha showed an increase in membership of 10, from 45 to 55. In terms of the increase in the population and the rapid expansion of the township, membership of MPCs has actually decreased.

⁹ In Ilitha the Zionist-type churches have increased to 10 while in Ndevana to more than 24.

rhythmic and usually sung to the accompaniment of a drum. Full membership is given to everyone that joins and they participate fully in the activities of the group. No Eucharist is held and the rite of baptism is performed repeatedly according to a member's need for renewal. In other Zionist-type churches the Eucharist is served once a quarter and is combined with the practice of washing feet following the example of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples.

A group that needs special attention and has gained strong following in the past five years, is a Pentecostal-type group called Conquerors Through Christ Ministries. They enjoy the support of many students, young teachers and officials in the civil service and prosper among the new social and economical middle class. They seem to be strongly influenced by a North American-type Pentecostal preaching where prosperity for those that believe play a big role. The broadcasting of the television station at Bisho of TBN (Trinity Broadcasting Network of the USA) has a profound influence on the style and content of their activities. A Zwelithsa based group, Ambassadors for Christ, falls in the same category.

In many ways AICs are more successful than the MPCs in acting as adaptive social mechanisms for the urban newcomer. Evangelist Niklaas Willem of the Filipu Reformed Church in Zion of Maphantsulweni in Ndevana related how many newcomers to the area were taken care of by his church group before they got their way back to their own denomination. Their strength lay especially in their reinterpretation of ethnic culture, their community experience and the support they give newcomers faced with a potentially threatening situation. In other parts of Africa they were also more successful in attracting members from the poorer and the more marginalised sections of the population (Shorter 1991:126,127).

4.1.2 CHURCH INDIFFERENCE

In the national census done in 1980, 80% of the population of the area indicated affiliation to a Christian church (Kritzinger 1985:43), while much less took an active part in church activities (Odendaal 1987:79), even as low as between 15% and 20% of those claiming to be Christians. It seems that resettlement and urban inflow contributes to religious and church indifference. It also happened in other areas in Africa. In Nairobi it was shown that while 73% of the Kenyan population claimed to be Christians and 40% actually attended church regularly in rural areas, only 12% of the city's population attended church every week and only 4% were also involved in other church activities (Shorter 1991:74). In the late seventies a group of more than thirty families, affiliated to the Lutheran Church, moved from church farms at Bethel and Wartburg, near Stutterheim to Ndevana. According to their pastor, Rev. Strübing, fewer than ten members of this group kept their involvement in church activities.

It is not clear whether this indifference is already a form of secularism or whether it represents a temporary phase due to disorientation in an unsettled environment. Very often, if non-active church members are asked for reasons for not attending services, they say: sixakekile (we are busy and occupied with a lot of trouble), or ndiyagula (I am not healthy, meaning being hampered by a physical or mental problem). In these cases, members often either stay at home and do not participate at all or seek help from healing and prayer groups or from the traditional healer (igqirha). From observations made, it seems that church indifference is not age-related, although young men show even less interest in church activities in the city than in rural areas. Another reason contributing to the state of affairs is that many churches are unable to cope with the huge movement of

members. It is especially the MPCs or mainline churches that are falling behind. The AICs have shown more adaptability to re-group in new settlements and to trace their members.

4.1.3 LACK OF ECUMENICAL COMMUNICATION AND CO-OPERATION

Although faith communities in Ilitha and Ndevana claim to be part of the Church of Christ and encourage their members to have fellowship, very little ecumenical contact and co-operation takes place between denominations in the area. On only a few occasions, for example, at funerals, Christians from different faith groups co-operate and support one another. Support at imijikelo (fund raising) occasionally takes place. In Ndevana youth groups from different faith communities have formed an ecumenical association that encouraged youth activities, especially choirs. Reverend Mazomba of the St. John's Spiritual Apostolic Church in Ilitha, deplored the absence of co-operation between churches and blamed pastors for indifference in this matter. According to him, churches were mostly interested in their own welfare and how they could maintain their membership. Pastor Jedana of the Jerusalem in Zion congregation admits that even amongst the ten Zionist groups in Ilitha very little co-operation exists. He blamed differences in rituals and practices and attitudes towards traditional customs for the lack of unity. They did start a association called, Ubunye bobuzalwane (Unity of Brotherhood), in 1994 in an effort to get co-operation among Zionist-type churches, but it still lacks support.

4.2 TWO LOCAL CONGREGATIONS OF THE UNITING REFORMED CHURCH

As was indicated in chapter 1,¹⁰ focus is placed on two congregations of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa in the Ilitha and Ndevana communities.

¹⁰ See p. 9.

Until 1994 the URC was known as the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika (NGKA), a member church of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk group of churches. After five years of negotiations and much internal struggle, unification between the NGKA and the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, the church amongst the so-called coloured people, was reached in April 1994. It was decided to call it the *Uniting Reformed Church* in Southern Africa, with the explicit aim to work towards structural unity with the other two sections of the Dutch Reformed Church, namely the Reformed Church in the Indian community and the all White NGK.

The origin of the URC congregations in Ilitha and Ndevana is related to mission work which started early in the previous century on the eastern borders of the Cape Colony.¹¹ The NGK, at its Cape Synod in 1924, realised that, after 100 years of mission work in the Transkei and Ciskei territories, 70% of the people still did not belong to any Christian denomination. It was decided to encourage mission work from existing congregations of the NGK in the area and to appoint three missionaries to the Transkei (Gerdener 1958:149). The Rev. J.C. Oosthuysen Sr. was sent as first missionary to the Transkei and

¹¹ Sustained mission work was initiated shortly after the arrival of the 1820 British Settlers. A Methodist minister, the Rev. William Shaw, who accompanied the settlers, eagerly started mission work amongst the Xhosa and by the end of 1830 six stations were established with Buntingville seventy miles north of the Umtata River (Du Plessis 1911:173-175). This mission zeal accounts, among other reasons, for the present day dominance of the Methodist Church among the Xhosa, approximately 25% of the church support in 1980 (Odendaal 1987:78). The next thirty years saw missionaries from various denominations and mission societies entering the area and claiming converts among the conflict stricken and war torn Xhosa tribes on the eastern border. The Glasgow Missionary Society founded Lovedale in 1824 (Du Plessis 1911:184), in 1826 the Rev. John Brownlee established a station of the London Mission Society on the Buffalo River, at the present King William's Town, and the Moravians founded Shiloh in 1828, near the present Queenstown, followed by missionaries of the Berlin Missionary Society in 1836. The Anglican Church founded a station, St. Luke, near East London, in 1854 and enjoyed the support of the Governor of the Cape Colony, Sir George Grey (Pauw 1975:20). The first African initiated church made its appearance in 1882 and was founded by a Methodist minister, the Rev. Nehemiah Tile. It was followed by numerous other independent churches. The beginning of the twentieth century saw a further multiplication of church groups and missionary agencies among the Xhosa on the eastern border (Pauw 1975:25,26).

a mission station, Isilimela, was founded in Pondoland near Port St Johns in 1932 (Oosthuysen 1972:11). Progress was slow for the next twenty year until after the Tomlinson report of the government, which emphasised the large proportion of non-Christians amongst black people in the Transkei and Ciskei, and an easing of the five-mile rule, restricting different churches in one area. Since 1956 huge expansion of work took place and nine mission stations with hospitals were established (Pauw 1975:28). At the same time missionary work was started in the East London, King William's Town, and Komga districts under the auspices of the Ciskeian Missionary Council of the NGK. In Ciskei emphasis was placed on education by establishing schools on White owned farms and in rural areas (Crafford 1982:253, 256).

The NGK expanded its mission work from East London to the King William's Town area under the leadership of the Rev. Piet Jonas and three Black evangelists. In 1962 a congregation, Qonce, of the former Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika (NGKA) was established in King William's Town. It served only Black Christians, while Whites had an exclusive White NGK congregation in King William's Town, already in existence since 1912. Because of the mission and racial policy of the church, Black converts were not accepted as members in the NGK (Kinghorn 1986a:86-116) and could only attend services with special permission. A separate church, the NG Bantoekekerk van Kaapland, was founded for them in 1951. In 1963 the first General Synod of the NGKA was constituted to unite the different Black churches born out of the mission work of the NGK in South Africa (Crafford 1982:244). In most Eastern Cape towns three different Dutch Reformed Churches were found, one for Whites, one for Blacks and a third for so-called coloured Afrikaans speaking people, with little or no contact between them.

From the start the Qonce congregation was decentralised with a church in Zwelitsha and a number of 'outposts' in the surrounding townships. In the period 1962 to 1995, it was served by six missionaries seconded by the NGK. Membership grew, the work expanded and consequently the congregation was subdivided into three autonomous congregations namely: Qonce, Zwelitsha (1974) and Dimbaza (1985).

The Qonce congregation of the present Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URC) covers an area 30 kilometres east and north of King William's Town and consists of 10 smaller congregations, each with its church building, lay leaders, member's leagues and various church activities. Ilitha and Ndevana are two of these smaller congregations. The townships of Ilitha (in 1975) and Ndevana (in 1977) originated due to the massive resettlement of people in the seventies.¹² Many people in Ilitha came from the Karoo and the Cape Midlands area while at Ndevana a significant group came from farms in the Border Corridor, the area between Ciskei en Transkei. Many church members with Dutch Reformed Church (NGKA) affiliation were part of this immigration. In 1977 regular services were started in a garage in Ilitha and by 1979 membership numbered 47 with a full time Black evangelist serving the area. In 1978 a couple of NGKA members started to meet in Ndevana and by 1979 their numbers had grown to 19 full members with about 30 children and other attendants. With financial support from donors both congregations erected appropriate church buildings. In both congregations membership growth was slow in the past 15 years and fluctuated between 50 and 70 for Ilitha and between 30 and 50 for Ndevana, with other attendants and children doubling the figure. Between 10 and 15 new members were accepted in each of the two congregations annually, but many of the

¹² See p. 49

younger members left again to find employment in urban areas.¹³ Even in other places in Africa town dwellers are notorious for changing their domicile and for moving from one congregation to another or from the city to the rural areas and back (Shorter 1991:69). Compared with the population growth in the Ilitha-Ndevana area, the membership figures indicate a gradual decrease in the support for the church. For the period 1985 to 1995 Sunday service attendance also kept on the same level. In the URC in Ilitha on average 35-40 adults attended Sunday services with 35 to 40 children. In the congregation at Ndevana the adults were 20 to 25 on average and the children 20 at Sunday services.¹⁴ The ratio of church attendance of men compared to women on average is 1:5 for Ilitha and 1:7 for Ndevana. Young girls also participate more in church activities than young men to the ratio of 8:1.¹⁵

Local lay leadership in the URC is non-hierarchical and rotates with time. The local church is governed by a church council (iqumrhu labaphathi) consisting of elders (abadala) and deacons (abadikoni), elected for a three year period which can be extended to another three years. Although women were allowed to be elected for some time, either as elders or deacons on the council, they were still far in the minority. The subordinate role of women traditionally, still seems to influence men's decision to elect women on the council.¹⁶ According to the church constitution, deacons are responsible for handling the members' gifts and taking care of the physical needs and problems of members, while elders take care

¹³ Information was obtained from personal interviews, and annual progress reports of the two congregations.

¹⁴ Information was obtained from the Sunday service registers kept in the two congregations.

¹⁵ Estimates were made from personal observations during services and interviews with members.

¹⁶ In interviews with council members none was against the idea of women serving on the council, although they felt that, where men are available, they will rather vote for them.

of their spiritual well-being. With time this distinction has disappeared and in practice deacons are seen as junior elders and upcoming leaders. In the local faith community lay leaders take responsibility for Sunday services, house visits, organising activities, motivating members to support one another and to live Christ-like lives.

4.3 DISRUPTIONS, CHANGES AND DIFFICULTIES FACED BY MEMBERS

4.3.1 THINGS WERE BETTER IN THE PAST

The process of resettlement, urbanisation and political transition, as illustrated in chapter 2,¹⁷ brought insecurity and a measure of cultural disorientation. Existing cultural perceptions and many practices had to make way for new ideas and new styles of co-existence in the townships of Ilitha and Ndevana. Due to socio-economical and political hardship in the past and a lack of signs of improvement in the present, a culture of hopelessness and a desperate struggle for survival have become reality for many in these two settlements.¹⁸ Although transition often leads to disenchantment, negative attitudes are enforced by the lack of improvement in socio-economical conditions. In the communities of Ilitha and Ndevana, especially among older members of society, their disillusionment with the present state of affairs is expressed freely. During interviews the opinion was often expressed that things were better in the past. According to Mr. Lidziya, a church member in Ilitha, during Pres. Lennox Sebe's government, there was at least work for everyone that wanted to work. Crime was less and peace prevailed. Other informants referred to buildings and schools which were erected and agricultural projects that were functioning during Sebe's time. There is a perception that uhuntu (humanity and

¹⁷ See p. 37-43.

¹⁸ See chapter 3.

compassion) generally has decreased, people are becoming more individualistic and selfish. Burglaries and car theft, unknown in the past to the community, are now taking place in Ilitha and Ndevana. Pastor Mazomba summed it up by saying: iRhawuti ingene apha eNdevana (the spirit of Johannesburg has entered Ndevana). A strong feature of the culture of despair, is that the past, although it had extreme negative effects on people's lives, is being romanticised and praised. Many older members even see present developments and the breakdown in social ties amongst people as signs of the time before the Second coming of the Lord.

4.3.2 TYPES OF DAILY PROBLEMS

The following table summarises the major problems in order of priority. Information was obtained through in-depth interviews with church members of the URC in Ilitha and Ndevana.

TABLE 9 : MAJOR PROBLEMS

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unemployment or lack of sustainable income; - insufficient financial support for children or family; - debt; - lack of proper housing; - illness and death; - problems with children - lack of discipline, rebelliousness, teenager pregnancies, shortage of school facilities; - abuse of women and children by husbands indulging in excessive drinking; - violence and the lack of safety and security; - irregular weather patterns; |
|--|

The single worst problem is unemployment. Due to the lack of industrial development at Berlin,¹⁹ job opportunities for residents of Ilitha and Ndevana have been extremely scarce. The perception is that unemployment is well above the average for the region²⁰ and that it

¹⁹ See p. 64 for the discussion on industrial development in the region.

²⁰ As was described on p. 64, Prof. Levine of Vista University in Port Elizabeth estimated unemployment to be 64% in the Ciskei region in 1993 and still rising.

could be as high as 70%. The expression, umsebenzi awukho (there is no work available), was often heard in desperation during interviews. It is also clear that once people have moved away from subsistence income like farming, everything becomes dependent on income from paid labour or pensions. Yonke into ixhomekeka eluphangelweni (everything depends on paid labour) is a central theme. Without a fixed income the family cannot be fed, debts cannot be paid, participation in church and community activities is limited, and little or no travelling can be done. Mr. Kalipa, a skilled mason, has been looking for work for weeks. He says he cannot sleep at night as a result of worrying about how he will support his family. The school demands new uniforms for his children and he fears that his newly bought furniture will be repossessed because he cannot pay his debts.

Many people have employment but work under difficult conditions and for a meagre income which aggravates stress. Mrs. Vuso works for three days in the week as a domestic worker in Breidbach near King William's Town. Her income is a mere R40 per week and she has to take care of her three children and her elderly mother. Her husband has left her long ago.

Even pensioners, with a regular income every second month, suffer hardship. It is estimated that up to ten family members are supported or benefit from a single pension pay out. Mrs. Peter receives an old age pension of R780,00 every second month. With this she has to care for her two children and three grandchildren who live with her. Her one daughter is at present studying at the teachers' training college Rubusana in Mdantsane and relies on her mother for financial support.

The economical situation is exacerbated by a dramatic change taking place in the institution of marriage and family life.²¹

It often occurs that husbands, who are not church members, try to prevent their wives from participating in church activities. It is argued that her participation is in conflict with her responsibilities at home and that the church unnecessarily interferes with marriage and family matters. They do not like their behaviour to be exposed to other church members. Mrs. Zukiso from Ndevana experienced strong opposition to her participation in church matters from her husband, especially after she sought the support of church members after being battered by him.

Often young teenagers are left in charge of the household and of other smaller children, including taking care of sick or dying family members, situations for which they are not physically and emotionally ready. This leaves children vulnerable and under psychological stress. Mrs. Yepuza Bhongo of Ndevana is a single parent and works in Cambridge in East London. She has four children of whom the eldest are twins of 15 years. They take care of the household while their mother only returns twice a month for weekends.

Many young children are left in the care of a relative or a maternal grandparent while the mothers are employed or away with studies. Mrs. Ennie Yonani is 77 and has five grandchildren to take care of, while Nowanisi Kalipa (75) has health problems and takes care of three grandchildren. Both are solely dependent on government pension for an income.

Changes taking place in the communities of Ilitha and Ndevana are clearly disruptive, leaving a moral vacuum, and leading to the demoralisation of members of society. They

²¹ See the discussion on Family life in chapter 2, p.53-61.

also contribute to a feeling of hopelessness and pessimism. The perception exists that there are more problems emerging than they can cope with. lingxaki azipheli tu! (problems never end).

4.3.3 EXPLANATIONS OF TROUBLE AND PROBLEMS

A variety of explanations are offered by members of the URC congregations in Ilitha and Ndevana for trouble and hardship. Many members' first response is that problems and struggle are part of normal life and that we will always have them with us. A distinction is made between general socio-economical conditions and personal or family difficulties. The majority of youth and other politically active members blame apartheid, resettlement and race discrimination for the general state of affairs, discrepancies and the suffering of the poor. A substantial number of older members see a spiritual dimension in the present strenuous socio-economical situations. It is either God who is unhappy with people's behaviour or it is evil spirits that have taken over. Mr. July Gedezana (89) is convinced that the hardship is punishment by God for the disobedience of people, the fact that people do not care for God and his commandments. The Lord would then use the suffering to turn people from their sinful ways. According to him the prophecies on the Second Coming of the Lord as described in Matthew 24 can be read in present day events. "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me" (Matt.24:7-9 NIV).

Personal and family hardship are also explained in many ways. Mr. Gcoyi of Ndevana feels that the whole situation will change completely if employment was available. "It is simple and needs no complex explanation. If you have a job, everything else falls into place."

Prolonged illness or stomach pains and headaches without explainable reasons, or lack in progress by children are often interpreted as signs that the living-dead or ancestors are unhappy or hungry or need attention. It is especially among members with strong traditional family and custom ties. According to Mr. Gedezana, a number of active members at Ilitha are involved in ancestral practices from time to time.

There are also church members who believe that some of the evil and disasters in their lives is the work of malevolent people and that they need the special protection of a diviner or traditional healer. Mrs. Martha Gcoyi at Ndevana recalls the incidence where a church minister visited Mr. Mgcina, the traditional healer, to seek help to exorcise the powers that prevented his church from growing.

Mr. Madonono, an elder at Ilitha, does not deny the existence of the ancestors and other spirits, but feels that they have no real power to alter the course of life. He finds it difficult to give explanations for trouble and hardship but trusts that God is aware of his circumstances and is helping him to cope.

4.3.4 HANDLING OF HARDSHIP AND PROBLEMS

Efforts to deal with hardship and day to day problems varies from practical endeavours to different kinds of spiritual involvement. It is an ongoing struggle to obtain power to persevere and to keep hoping for a better tomorrow. Even among church members, cases occur of people being overwhelmed by the severity of their problems. They then often withdraw from church activities, amongst others. Mrs. Vuso was not seen at churches services for a month. After the chairlady of the Women's league visited and asked her for the reasons for her absence, she explained that her problems had become too much to bear. She was responsible for her children and her elderly mother. Her mother had become sick

and she had lost her job at the same time. She had no strength left to participate in the church activities.

Much trouble is taken to seek formal employment, but with high unemployment even temporary or part time jobs are extremely scarce. Mr. Kiboto Gcoyi is a skilled and fully qualified bricklayer, and although he is actively looking for employment, he was only able to get a few short term jobs during 1994 and 1995. Women often try to combine employment with their household duties. Mrs. Lidziya supplements her pension with work as a domestic servant in East London. In many households a variety of foodstuff is sold to neighbours and surrounding households. Mrs. Madonono buys sweets in bulk, divides them in small packages and sells them to children in the neighbourhood. Pensions are the most important stable income in the communities of Ilitha and Ndevana,²² and huge attempts are made to get old age pension, even before the qualifying age is reached, or disability pension or a maintenance grant. Fraud and corruption in the system are known, but if a mistake exists, it is the responsibility of the authorities to rectify it. The conviction exists that the government owes pensions to the aged and the poor. A member of the congregation at Ndevana received an Identity Document with an erroneous date of birth. According to the new date he was already 65 years old. Without hesitance he applied for an old age pension, although he was still working full time. In the Daily Despatch of November 16, 1995 it was reported that the "Eastern Cape government is taking urgent steps to combat 'rampant fraud' in the payment of pensions, welfare and maintenance grants. ... The most common of these irregularities was the falsifying of death and disability certificates, and the collection of pensions or grants in the names of people who had died."

²² See p. 65.

Farming activities play a lesser role in relieving the economic situation. From observations it is estimated that 20% of households grow vegetables in the back yard. In Ndevana, which is a peri-urban settlement, about 10% of households keep livestock, either a few goats or one or more cows. Mr. Gcoyi has 10 cattle which utilise the grass patches between the houses and the main road. Milk obtained from two cows is an important source of food for his children.

Political and community involvement and industrial action have become important methods for residents to enhance their position. Withholding payment for services, taking actions to pressurise authorities to provide better services and to scrap arrears on payment were done through civic associations. Church members at Ilitha and Ndevana have sympathetically supported these actions, although not always through active participation. Industrial strikes had resulted in many people losing their jobs, nevertheless members are generally convinced that it is an effective way to force employers to pay better wages. Mr. Cwaba had to suffer a loss of income for several months in 1994, due to a strike at the factory he was working at. Although it was difficult, he felt that it had a positive outcome and that his income has moved closer to a liveable wage for his family.

Traditionally the support from the extended family and clan was an important insurance in times of severe hardship. Due to resettlement, urbanisation and high mobility of people social and families ties had been broken. This leaves people vulnerable in times of crisis. Wide spread poverty has also diminished support that can be expected from one's extended family. After the death and funeral of Mr. Maseti in 1995, the elderly Mrs. Maseti was left with a debt of R750 at the local dealer. The support expected from the family did not materialise.

For most people in the communities of Ilitha and Ndevana, hardship and suffering have also a spiritual dimension. Those that keep strong traditional beliefs, often interpret personal and family trouble as a message or sign from the living-dead to indicate their unhappiness or need for attention. From interviews conducted, it is concluded that a considerable number of church members find no inconsistency with their Christian faith, in going to traditional healers and taking part in rituals with other family members to cope with sickness and other troubles, notwithstanding formal rules against such practices in many MPCs. Two elders of the URC at Ndevana made no secret of the fact that they, with other family members and the traditional healer, Mgcina, conducted a ritual by slaughtering a goat and an ox to pacify the living-dead (ukulalisa iminyanya). Christians may continue to honour their ancestors or visit traditional healers when threatened by illness or other crises while overtly adhering to an established Christian denomination. In some cases they may temporarily abstain from attending church service.

On the other hand, there are local church leaders and members who strongly oppose any attention given to the ancestors. Even remembering at a special service, members of the local congregation that have passed away, had met with strong opposition. Mr. Gedezana described any veneration of the ancestors as idolatry and Mr. Madonono said that he and his family as Christians had overcome the temptation to adhere to any of those practices. They only appeal to God for help and seek the support of fellow believers in times of difficulty.

The faith communities of the URC in Ilitha and Ndevana provided significant support to members in times of trouble. Through contact between members and house visits by leaders, hardship and difficulties became known. Other members are asked to intercede on behalf of the troubled member, and prayer meetings are arranged at the specific house.

Sickness and death are the main reason for this action. The Thursday gatherings of the Women's League (Umanyano lwamaKhosikazi) plays an important role in this regard. There is a perception in Ilitha that the MPCs, of which the URC is one, do not pay enough attention to healing and that their mutual support is rather weak. During interviews reference was often made to the personal and mutual support among members of Zionist-type churches.

There is also a tendency to try and effect rapid involvement of the supernatural where problems seem insurmountable. A growing number of church members visit 'powerful' faith and prayer healers (abathandazeli) who promise miracles through their prayers with problems such as unemployment, debts, family strife and chronic or other serious diseases. These healers either practice their gift individually or with some following. Similarities can be seen between this practice and the role of the traditional healer or diviner, claiming supernatural powers to intercede with the divine on behalf of the subjects. In Mdantsane a number of these abathandazeli are operating and several church members of the URC in the Ilitha and Ndevana area have already tried this means.

Good health and prosperity are seen as having strength and power to handle everyday challenges and to provide in the most basic needs of one's dependants. Not being able to handle problems means to lose power. The following expressions were heard in this regard: andinamandla (I have no power), ndibuthathaka (I am weak), ehlile amandla am (my strength is down), and ndityafile (I am in despair). Problems are often not dealt with individually but seen in a holistic context, meaning that if strength would increase in one area, problems in another area of existence will subside.

4.4 SUPPORTIVE STRUCTURES AND ACTIONS OPERATIVE IN THE LOCAL FAITH COMMUNITY

4.4.1 MEANINGFUL SUPPORT IN THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The general perception in Ilitha and Ndevana is that the practical support of the church is a insignificant part of support mechanisms in the community. The Church as an organisation is seen by many to be divided, weak and powerless to address the greater socio-economic problems in the community. This not only applies to material assistance, but also to many other matters like political strife and marriage and family problems. For many followers the church is there to baptise, to issue the necessary documents and to bury the dead (Odendaal 1987:82). The government is seen to be the only external party to really make an impact on the socio-economical situation of the settlement.

Yet, it is at grassroots level, among active members, with the message of the Gospel in hand and the hope of the liberating presence of the living God, that meaning is created and mutual support of members experienced. This often encourages members to participate in much needed and sustainable social upliftment programs in their own communities. In Ilitha a number of ladies from the URC are involved in organised day-care for smaller children. In the past the social involvement of the church was often organised on synodical level and brought to communities without proper consultation and participation of members in that community. These projects seldom survived without ongoing external financial support and management. In 1980 a Youth training centre was built on the bank of the Laing Dam, at the lower end of Ndevana. Ownership and management were never

in the hands of the local URC congregation and after five years the whole project was still under utilised and became a financial burden for the congregation.²³

Supportive structures and actions play a dual role. On the one hand participation of members in these actions creates fellowship and provides an opportunity to serve other members and the broader community, and to put into practice the things that have been taught and believed.

On the other hand members gain strength, meaning and life direction through their active involvement in the faith community. Members acquire the necessary explanations for things beyond their control and are motivated to handle matters to the best of their ability, using Biblical moral guidelines. The fellowship in the faith community is established through a long time network of social relationships built on common experience and commitment, mutual trust and basic equality. People are accepted as they are and that includes their whole being, from birth to death.

The communities of Ilitha and Ndevana were adversely affected by resettlement, migration, urbanisation and job mobility. The traditional small-scale family based community had to make place for larger scale relationships of a new settlement or city. The social fibre and cohesion of society were put under tremendous strain. It is here that the local faith community functions as effective adaptive mechanisms, substituting lost family and social ties, although on a limited scale.

²³ The basic maintenance is costing the URC Qonce on average R1000 per annum while no income is generated and facilities have in some instances dilapidated beyond repair.

4.4.2 CHURCH WORSHIP SERVICES

Church worship services are the most obvious church activity in the community and usually the first experience for a person who shows an interest in joining a faith group.

In both the congregations of the URC in Ilitha and Ndevana members greet each other heartily and are genuinely interested in the well being of fellow members. After the service a deacon will approach strangers and visitors and get personal information from them, after which they are introduced to the congregation. Members are expected to attend services regularly. If a member is unable to attend, he/she is expected to send a message or letter to give a reason which is made known to the congregation.

Trouble is taken to create a family atmosphere within the faith community. Before the service, members of the church council get together and particular needs and problems of members of the congregation are mentioned, which will be made known to the congregation. Decisions are taken regarding action and help. Here the Women's League (uManyano lwamaKhosikazi) plays a special role and takes responsibility for arranging prayer meetings or giving practical aid where needed most.

Through the singing of hymns and with prayers the members participate in the services. Although the hymn book of the URC, Hosana, contains 450 hymns, it is estimated that only 10% of them are sung regularly. The majority of the hymns in the Hosana were taken over from the Afrikaans DRC and translated into Xhosa. They were supplemented by hymns from other church traditions which are commonly used in the Xhosa-speaking churches. The hymns that are sung are well loved and sung from the heart. Parts of hymns are often repeated in prayer. The Our Father prayer is sung during every service and binds the congregation together in its worship of God. Several other shorter hymns and

choruses are sung rhythmically and with hand clapping after services and at less formal occasions. During interviews the opinion was often expressed that singing is the most powerful element in a member's experience of the worship occasion, and creates a spirit of unity.

The service also gives members the opportunity to pray and to confirm their faith in the active presence and control of God. It is an occasion for members to air their personal struggle and needs in the presence, and with the sympathy, of fellow members. Emotional outbursts and cries during prayers are common among women.

4.4.3 PREACHING AND THE USE OF THE BIBLE

Taken over a two year period, 1993-1994, 50% of sermons in the Ilitha and Ndevana congregations were taken from the Gospels, 30% from the Old Testament and 20% from the rest of the New Testament.²⁴ The life and teachings of Jesus form a central part of preachers' sermons, with application to everyday situations. When preaching from the Old Testament, the Psalms are frequently used to express a variety of feelings and attitudes towards life. The sermon forms the climax of the Sunday service and it is often said at Ilitha that some people will only attend service if a certain preacher delivers the sermon.

Preaching is done primarily by serving elders and deacons and once a quarter by the minister of the broader Qonce congregation of the URC. At special occasions youth members may also be given opportunity to preach. Although, according to the church constitution, women are also allowed to preach, this has not taken place in either congregations of the URC in Ilitha and Ndevana. It is an indication of the male dominance

²⁴ Information was obtained from the Sunday service registers of the URC Ilitha and the URC Ndevana

at formal church activities, although men are far in the minority. Preachers in general are inclined to use and elaborate only on a few key words from a Scripture reading and not pay much attention to the wider context. A phrase will be selected and repeated time and again during the sermon. This central phrase binds the whole sermon together. Sermons are usually rich in images and anecdotes.

On other occasions mutual support takes place through Bible sharing. For example, it was decided by the congregation of Ilitha to meet on a specific Wednesday evening at six at the house of Mrs. Stofile after she was discharged from hospital with a leg injury. Deacon Joni read from the Psalms and emphasised the trustworthiness and closeness of the Lord. He pointed out that God is involved in all events in our lives. After about ten minutes, he invited other attendants to add their views on the reading. A hymn followed and an elder, Mr. Lidziya, gave his interpretation of the Scripture reading. Those present were invited to pray. Two women prayed and committed the circumstances in that home to the Lord. There was intercession for the sick and those that suffer in the congregation. A hymn and the blessing followed at the conclusion. Mrs. Stofile voiced her gratitude and saw God's closeness through the presence of the members.

4.4.4 LITURGY

The purpose of a liturgical framework in the service is to give structure to and facilitate the dialogue between God and his people, and to encourage fellowship between members, relevant to the context of their daily lives. The liturgies presently being used in the congregations of URC in Ilitha and Ndevana are those that have been taken over from the Afrikaans NGK, with a euro-centric church tradition and a totally different context, and translated into the Xhosa language by early missionaries. In the decades that followed very little or no inculturation took place and these liturgies are still rigidly used. Thereby 'form'

has been imposed on the church, often leading to meaningless imitation or filling in with meanings not intended originally. This has led to liturgies been used without facilitating adequately the crucial convergence of the living Christ with the members of the local faith community within their context. On the contrary, it has often led to a mechanical execution of rituals which have obtained magical value over time. A serious distortions of the meaning of activities has taken place. Holy Communion and Baptism are often seen as magical actions by which godly power and strength can be obtained. As the Gospel of Christ is meant to be a message of meaning and not of form, it is obvious that the liturgies and formularies presently used do not fully contribute to real meaningful dialogue and participation of members during formal church services.

4.4.5 SUPPORTIVE ROLE OF THE LEADERSHIP

Members of the church council, elders and deacons, as leaders of the faith communities of Ilitha and Ndevana, play an important part in encouraging and facilitating mutual support and aid. The leaders of the different member leagues, at their own functional level in the congregation, also play a pivotal role in this regard. They act in a co-ordinating and activating capacity to create a spirit of fellowship, to make members more aware of the needs of fellow members and lead in giving support. In their contact with members they become aware of the needs and sufferings of members and they bring this to the attention of the faith group for their assistance. At Ndevana Mrs. Gcoyi is the chairlady of the Women's League. She takes interest in each member of the league, visits them regularly and, with her committee, is frequently involved in solving family problems. Both Ilitha and Ndevana congregations are divided into wards which are the specific responsibility of one or more of the members of the church council. For example, on Sundays, directly after the

church service, deacon Tostile of the Ndevana congregation, would mention problems at some of the homes in his ward to the congregation and would ask for their support.

4.4.6 CHURCH FESTIVALS

The purpose of church festivals is, amongst other things, to strengthen the unity and involvement in a congregation. Easter stands out as the most important church festival in most Black churches. Although Christmas is not given special attention, the three weeks before Christmas are used to arrange festive occasions for the children and the aged in the congregations of Ilitha and Ndevana.

Celebrating Mother's Day in May, which is traditionally not a church festival, is a new tendency, especially in more urban areas. On this occasion appreciation is shown for mothers and wives in different ways. On this specific Sunday the services in Ilitha and Ndevana are devoted to women; they take active part in the service and voice their hardship, frustrations and pleasures of being wives and mothers. Their circumstances are brought to the attention of the congregation and intercession take place on their behalf. This is an important development, addressing a specific need in the congregation and the community.

Pasika (Easter) forms the climax of celebrations in the church. In every denomination pasika is arranged and celebrated either in the local congregation or on regional or national level. This is one occasion which will not be missed on any account by active members. The congregations of Ilitha and Ndevana celebrate pasika annually with the rest of the combined congregation of the URC Qonce. Every member is expected to make a substantial financial contribution to the preparations.

On the days preceding Easter, members greet one another with the question: Ipasika noyitya phi na? (Where are you celebrating Easter?). It is a crucial time and occasion for the revitalisation of faith in Christ and the gaining of strength and health. The celebrations start in full force on Good Friday and end on Easter Sunday. The words Christ uttered on the cross, the Seven Cross Words (Amazwi asixhenxe), form the central theme on Friday and at least seven preachers will elaborate on them and explain every utterance in broad detail. In between, a lot of singing takes place and women are given opportunity to pray about the events and its application for the present. The service usually carries on for four or more hours. The crucifixion of Christ is described and dramatised in vivid intensity and imagery.

On Friday evening there is another service, called inkonzo yokuxoxa ityala (service to discuss guilt), and an appropriate portion of scripture, for example, Isaiah 53 is selected and under the leadership of a chairperson, different preachers will spontaneously expound on the scripture reading. This goes on until late in the night.

On Saturday the Women's League have their conference followed by an afternoon conference for the whole congregation. An appropriate subject is discussed in depth. The subject discussed during the pasika of 1995 was icawe igala endlwini, ekhaya (church starts at home). The proceedings on Saturday evening started with a fund raising occasion (umjikelo) of the Women's League followed by a night watch (umlindo) that went on through the night. This emulates the trouble the disciples took with the caring for the body of Christ before his Resurrection. The essence and enormity of the sacrificial death of Christ are emphasised by a number of preachers. Especially at these late night services new members will be inspired to come forward to join the church.

On the Sunday of the Resurrection, some denominations have the custom to have a service at the cemetery to celebrate the victory over death. This is followed by a communion service later in the morning.

Pasika is pre-eminently an occasion where fellowship is built and strengthened. People get to know one another and the church develops its own identity. It is often observed that speakers at this occasion address the audience as maDatshi amahle! (honourable URC members!). The intense way in which the Crucifixion and Resurrection are discussed and experienced have a profound influence on every participant.

4.4.7 FUND RAISING

In both congregations different ways are used to raise funds. During Sunday services a collection is held that brings in between R5 and R10. At Ilitha, with more members earning a fixed salary, monthly contributions are made and written on membership cards (amatikiti). A modest income is obtained from this. A third method which is highly effective and popular is a fund raising activity combined with singing, dancing and mutual competition (umjikelo). First the purpose, a date and venue are set for the occasion. Then the different groups that are going to participate are identified. It could be different wards within Ilitha or Ndevana, or it could be the different districts of the congregation of Qonce. Often other denominations are also invited to come and bring their bags and contribute to the occasion.

At the event the chairperson with his or her aides will take their places behind a big table. All will be welcomed and the purpose of the fund raising explained. The sequence for the representation of the money bag will be made known to the gathering. Then the first group is invited to bring forward their contribution (ingxowa). From the back of the hall

they will slowly move forward, with the leader in front, singing a rhythmic chorus and dancing in step. The leader will place their bag on the table followed by the rest of the group, standing in a group of five or six at the table and simultaneously hitting small coins rhythmically on the table. The whole congregation participate in the singing of the chorus. After a while the singing is stopped by the chairperson, after which he or she announces the content of the bag and the additional amount contributed while bringing the bag. Now the whole congregation is invited to come forward, while they sing and dance, to contribute in appreciation for the first group's efforts (masibulele!, let's be thankful!). Depending on the spirit and enthusiasm, a couple of additional rounds may take place, each with its own rhythmic chorus.

This process is repeated with every group's contribution and with friendly rivalry building up amongst the groups, everyone is motivated to make a substantial contribution. The whole event may take a couple of hours, after which members leave, satisfied and encouraged by their combined effort. At the Easter of 1995, the congregation of Qonce held such an event and managed to raise R720,00. Everyone, however poor they may be, feels that they can participate, even with a few one and two cent coins. This is a very important way for people to maintain their dignity in a poor community.

4.4.8 SUPPORT AT THE TIME OF DEATH

The assistance given by the faith group to a member or the family when there is a death of one of the members, forms the climax of the support provided by the faith community. Soon after the event, trouble is taken to ensure that the arrangements for the funeral will be in responsible hands and the women assist with the running of the house before and during the funeral. Members involved in the funeral arrangements also contribute substantially towards the costs. Funeral societies and insurance schemes are playing an

increasingly important role and sometimes diminish the supportive role of the local faith community.

Funerals are usually carried out on Saturdays or Sundays, at least a full week after the person's death. The time is needed to inform all people who knew the deceased. During the week before the funeral, prayer meetings are held during daytime and during the evenings conducted by leaders of various church groups. In the preaching and prayers there is great emphasis on the comfort and presence of God. The shattering experience and mystery of death are discussed in depth, while the message of the resurrection of Christ and His victory over death are brought as the ultimate hope for Christians.

Since the notion that the deceased is entering a new phase of life with the living-dead, is still generally upheld, it is important that relatives carry out the formalities properly and fully. This assures the deceased's peaceful arrival in the new realm and a positive attitude towards family members that were left behind. No expense seems to be too great in these circumstances and therefore the family is left exposed and vulnerable during the funeral proceedings. Fellow members thus play an important part in supporting the family, strengthening relationships and restoring the equilibrium. With the death of elder Maseti in 1995, the whole congregation of Ilitha gave their support. The men took active part in the prayer meetings, the women gave practical support and help with refreshments for the guests while the youth choir took an active part in all the services held.

4.4.9 SUPPORT THROUGH MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

The different member associations (iimanyano) in the congregations of Ilitha and Ndevana play an important part in providing support and dignity to members of the faith

communities. The Women's League (uManyano lwamaKosikhazi) plays a key role in all the activities of the local church.

Meetings of the Women's League take place on Thursdays and women of the different denominations can be seen in their identifiable uniforms. The uniform of the URC is a black blouse and skirt with a wide white collar. The badge of the church is pinned to the collar. The head covering is also black. The uniform of the Methodists is predominantly red and that of the Anglicans and Roman Catholics purple. The different Zionist-type churches are recognised by their white and green or blue outfits.

The Thursday meetings are predominantly a time of Bible sharing and concerted prayer. Another name often used for these women is oomama bomthandazo (prayer mothers). In their meetings trust is built among members, they open up to one another and get relief from emotional suffering. It often happens on these occasions that women cry and pray loudly. The women learn to talk freely and to express their ideas on God's presence in their midst and the application of Scripture to their situation. Many women in Ilitha and Ndevana expressed their appreciation for the dignity and worthiness they had experienced through their participation in the Women's League. The mutual bond and close knit unity of the women offer strong support to the participants. The uniform they wear and formal structure of the association create a sense of belonging, equality and identity. Sometimes the attachment to the uniform and procedures are so strong that a member may refuse to participate if she cannot comply with the stipulations for a proper uniform. Mrs. Ngada's black league hat was accidentally ravaged by a dog and in the time it took her to get a replacement, she avoided meetings of the league and even Holy Communion, where the proper uniform is required.

The association also reaches out to meet the needs and suffering of the women and families in the faith community and to women in society in general. On occasion Mrs. Gcoyi of Ndevana and a small group of women members visited the home of a member, Mrs. Zukiso, and had a serious talk with her husband about his alcohol abuse and his behaviour. It did help to relieve the situation. Because women carry greater responsibility for the daily existence of families and are confronted with extreme poverty and a struggle for survival, the support given by the women's league is of utmost importance.

The men's association (Umanyano lwamaDoda) of Ilitha and Ndevana functions on a much lower level. They usually gather on Saturday afternoons and concentrate more on the development of preaching skills. The association offers minor support to its members. Mr. Jantjie from Ndevana, the chairman of the League of the Qonce congregation, complained that the men like to talk a lot but never come to action.

Youth league (Ulutsha) activities take place mainly in association with choir singing. Young ladies are far in the majority and play a dominant role in church youth activities. In the URC Ilitha the choir practises once a week and participates in Sunday services. Sometimes they join other church choirs for a farewell of a minister or other combined church activities. The choir does provide identity and general support to participants. In Ndevana an interdenominational youth organisation was formed in 1993 to combine the efforts of the youth groups in the different denominations and to support young members to live according to Christian values at a time of social and moral confusion. Nomthandazo Gcoyi is a member of the URC in Ndevana and the secretary of the combined youth group. She feels encouraged by the way this group has been able to unite Christians in a divided church community.

4.5. CONCLUSION

The local church does not offer instant solutions for the problems of its members but does help them to find a sense of belonging and meaning in life in the midst of their suffering. Yet, it is generally felt that church activities and the presence of faith communities act as an inhibiting factor to stem the process of disintegration of the social fibre of society and create goodwill and tolerance among its members. Active members often act as the conscience of the community in many situations. In many hopeless situations the personal encouragement of members offers new hope and expectation that God is present and will help and strengthen those involved. Especially at prayer meetings at the homes of members where the Bible is read and shared, those members become aware of their potential and new avenues that can be explored. They come to realise that they are not only poor and deprived people, but people with value, initiative and achievements, and with a huge potential to build effective social support structures.

It is evident that the local faith community does little or can do little to address macro socio-economic problems at the source or relieve the real symptoms. Expectations are also low that the church would be able to accomplish visible results in terms of development projects on grassroots level. Inflated expectations did great harm to the image of the church in the past and have obscured the importance of mutual support and encouragement on the most basic level of human existence. However, stronger emphasis must be put on the message of the Gospel and the responsibility that it places on every member to reach out and care for fellow members. In this way God's preferential option for the poor and the marginalised in society can be made visible at grassroots level. The URC in Ilitha and Ndevana will have to come to a more holistic approach to healing and well-being in order to help people to adapt and survive amidst radical changes in their lives.

CHAPTER FIVE

ASPECTS OF A MISSION MODEL FOR A LOCAL FAITH COMMUNITY

Transform these projects and ideas into occasions for the incarnation of hope, and make us, though fragile in our faith and inconsistent in our commitment, signs of that hope. Be with all who have responded to your call for the announcement of your Reign to those who despair and anguish. Sustain us in the loneliness of our heavy responsibilities and in the solidarity of shared participation. In your name, Lord of all hope. Amen.¹

5.1 FROM A MESSAGE DISTORTED TO A RELEVANT MODEL FOR MISSION

The communities of Ilitha and Ndevana have undergone serious changes, and experienced disruptions and hardship.² In 1990 a new transformation of South African society started which also has a direct influence on the communities concern. To stop the wave of pessimism, to achieve peace, unity and an atmosphere conducive to reconstruction, radical social changes are taking place. Yet, social and economic changes are insufficient to bring prosperity to those previously deprived of opportunities. Different beliefs and convictions will also have to contribute to inspire society throughout this transition.³ It seems natural that the Christian faith with its universal character, brotherly unity and encouragement of mutual love and respect, would be ideally suited to provide the stimulus, the spiritual basis for the process of transition towards reconstruction. Based on my study of the churches in the Ilitha-Ndevana area, I wish to indicate how a distorted gospel message can be cleansed

¹ Part of a prayer offered by Jean Zoe of Cameroun at the closing of the San José Encounter on "Theological Education in Abya-Yala" in July 1992 (Kinsler 1992:9).

² See the conclusion of chapter 2, p.72.

³ I agree with Kritzinger (1995:2) that one may say that every religion or religious community aims at making a positive contribution towards society. "... every religious community has some sense of calling and purpose vis-à-vis society, ... some communities have a far more definite sense of calling to do something about (what is wrong with) the world."

to become the inspiration for a relevant contextual model of mission in the "new" South Africa.

Churches in the Ilitha-Ndevana area have not always been able to be effective witnesses. They have not provided sufficient support to members in the changing situation of the past twenty years.⁴ They showed a high level of fragmentation and a lack of ecumenical co-operation between the different faith communities at local level. With emphasis placed on promoting their own internal interests, using borrowed and foreign forms of worship, upholding hierarchical structures and fighting for power amongst leaders, the church is in danger of losing its support and becoming a fringe phenomenon in society. It is a fact that Christianity is growing faster in Africa than on any other continent, but Christianity is clearly not making a significant difference to the socio-economic and political position of African nations (Kinoti 1994:1). The main reason for this, according to Kinoti (1994:2), is that Christians in Africa "failed to apply the gospel to the whole of life, limiting it to spiritual life only." The idea created was that politics was a dirty game and that Christians should stay out of it. Politics, however, is simply the management of human affairs and Christians have a duty to ensure that these affairs are managed properly at every level of society.

In a broader context, Christianity and the Church have been seriously distorted throughout history. The name of Jesus has been used and abused to justify crimes and to inspire people to do things to which He was opposed (Nolan 1976:3).

The problem of the Church being interested only in consolidating, and consequently becoming stagnant and only looking after its own interests, has been apparent from the

⁴ See the conclusion in chapter 4 on the supportive role of churches, p. 133.

time of the establishment of the first congregations. Bosch (1990:13) shows that when Luke wrote his gospel the danger of the Jesus movement becoming institutionalised and stagnant must have been strongly on his mind. Luke then wrote two books to re-interpret the message of Christ in the light of events in the previous half-decade. Christ was still within their midst through his Spirit. Luke presented the ministry of Jesus as one in which those who have been marginalised by society, the poor, women, tax collectors and Samaritans, were receiving his compassion and attention. The Church is then called to follow this pattern of ministry (Bosch 1990:15).

It is known that even the Dark Ages of Europe were characterised by deep religiosity. It was, however, a religiosity which killed all initiative and innovation, deteriorating into pettiness and mediocrity. It took the dramatic expansion of Islam, the Renaissance and the Reformation to wake up the slumbering European religiosity.

The image of Christianity in general in South Africa has been seriously distorted, starting with the entanglement of mission and colonialism.

Christian mission came to South Africa as part of the great western movement of colonial conquest and economic penetration (Saayman 1994:11).

Saayman (1991:25-35) points out some serious effects of this entanglement. For those on the receiving end, missionaries were part and parcel of capitalist economic exploitation. Mission was linked to racism coming from colonialism and superiority given to Western culture. Westerners often believed that they were on a civilising mission to Africa (Bourdillon 1990:226). Mission was also associated with the dispossession of land and the exploitation of cheap Black labour. Numerous examples exist of large tracts of land that were alienated and "given" to missionary societies and churches, after appeals to colonial authorities or traditional leaders. Mission stations were erected on which European-like

settlements were established in order to minimise the degree of adaptation to the African culture and to show Africans how "civilisation" looked like. Missionaries often went even further and supported the colonial forces in their conquest for land in South Africa (Saayman 1994:14,15).

With a negative attitude towards African culture in general, missionaries also actively contributed to the cultural and political conquest, indeed, the deculturation of the African people. Early missionaries often had the perception that the African people were pagans or heathens and without any religion. Idowu Bolaji from Nigeria (in Bediako 1992:269) argues that it was a serious mistake of Christianity not to take African customs and tradition into account. A new God, strange in Africa, was introduced. No bridge was built to the existing perceptions and world-views of the people of Africa. Christian beliefs simply became an attachment to the existing system of belief, creating ambivalence and dual consciences. Followers were expected to simply shake off their own tradition. A deliberate attempt was made by missionaries and colonial governments to strip Africans of their symbols and customs. Strange liturgies, symbols and ritual were imposed on followers (Bujo 1992:41).

Although African Traditional Religion (ATR) is an integral part of the world-view of people in Africa, missionaries often failed to recognise it as such (Thorpe 1991:2) or thought that indigenous African religions were totally without merit (Bourdillon 1990:267). African people had both authentic religious practices and beliefs before the arrival of Western civilisation, and these beliefs were imbued with profound symbolic value (Thorpe 1991:104). Western Christianity and culture were often imposed on the recipients, and it was expected from them to renounce their own culture and beliefs. It often resulted in culture disorientation and dualism.

In recent decades in South Africa, Christianity itself has become an integral part of the problem and the mechanism of entrenching a divided society and stripping the majority of the citizens of this country of basic rights and freedom. The church has conformed, to a large extent, to social patterns and structures of the racially divided society of South Africa (Saayman 1990). Diversity which was meant to bring an enrichment to life, has been turned into a source of dissension and enmity. Some churches went even as far as providing active support for segregation policies, oppressive to a large proportion of the population (Kinghorn 1986b:167-193) and often leading to violence against such communities.

The church, through structures and practices, has also contributed substantially to the subordinate position of women in society. The Church in South Africa is still characterised by a male-dominated theology, church structures and practices in which women are limited "to a subordinate role of serving in the male church hierarchy's interests" while being excluded from full and equal participation in the church's ministry and mission (Van Schaikwyk 1994:106).

The Kairos document, published in 1985 by a group of concerned theologians in South Africa, was a forceful effort to expose "the total failure of the South African Churches, especially the so-called 'multi-racial' churches to understand and accommodate Black aspirations to justice and liberty" (Saayman 1991:91). It called for the conversion of the Church as it was severely obstructing people from reaching the message of the Gospel. This crisis brought the very credibility and existence of the Christian faith and message in question, and was therefore "a *crisis of mission* as much as a political crisis" (Botha et al. 1994:28).

De Santa Ana (1977:120) describes the elements in the Church's own struggle for liberation in order that it may be free to proclaim the gospel of liberation. The Church should repent for its part in perpetuating oppressive policies, attitudes and structures, depending on its situation and heritage and should learn to know powerlessness. It should make a deliberate choice for the poor and become the voice of the voiceless, confronting powers and risking its own security and comfort. Its prophetic criticism should be more than verbal. It should become a community of the faithful where the poor and the marginalised can find hospitality, support, empowerment and active participation. It should also be a priestly community continually praying and interceding for those who suffer.

The only viable perspective for the Church is to be found in the urgent reality of our present historical situation (Nolan 1976:4). The inadequacy of the existing theology together with the pain and hardship of the present situation may also be the stimulus for a new reflection on God and reality within the local faith community. Within this community a process of re-evangelisation should take place which involves conscientisation in regard to the distortions that have taken place, empowerment to overcome inhuman conditions and liberation to full humanity (Saayman 1991:108-117). According to Schreiter (1985:25,26) different situations can provoke the development of new ideas. The faith community may be confronted by opposing ideas for which their present tradition does not give adequate answers or they may be overtaken by a crisis for which innovative solutions must be sought, or thirdly, a document or resolution from the larger church tradition which may compel a response from the local church.

At a time of rapid social change and transition several possibilities exist for the church community. The church can try to escape into the mere practice of timeless rituals and

church organisation, aimed at restoration, regulation, closing ranks and keeping up tradition. If it does so, however, it may face the danger of becoming a cosy ghetto of kindred souls which caters for the needs of its members only, developing into clubs for religious folklore.

The possibility I want to propose, is a much more undefined and risky road, taken by the local community of believers in ecumenical liaison and based on the firm belief in the liberating and acting presence of God through the Spirit of Jesus Christ. The starting-point should be a vigorous effort to recover the message and mission of Jesus Christ from a distorted Christianity. It is impossible to approach the Gospel without any presuppositions, but traditional views should be put under scrutiny. The process to decolonise, to rid the theology of the influences of apartheid and sexist attitudes, will need a sincere ecumenical effort and will take time.

The Church in Africa is faced with an enormous challenge to play its part in the struggle to bring dignity, peace and prosperity to its people. Sub-Saharan Africa is facing a severe socio-economic and political crisis. Poverty lies at the heart of all Africa's depressing problems. Poverty has many manifestations and consequences and include the following: hunger;⁵ lack of adequate income;⁶ disease;⁷ dehumanisation; injustice and exploitation;

⁵ One out of every three Africans does not get enough to eat. A study, *Food Nutrition and Agriculture*, published in Rome in 1992, covering the period 1988-90 showed that 168 million Africans were the victims of chronic food shortages. This was an increase of 40 million people in just one decade (in Kinoti 1994:16).

⁶ Gross Domestic Product GDP of sub-Saharan countries is the lowest in the world (in Kinoti 1994:16).

⁷ Africa is plagued by numerous diseases. The 1995 Health Overview report of UNICEF said that of the estimated 300-500 million people world-wide that suffer from malaria, 90% were in Africa (in Daily Nation 22/06/95:19). Other diseases rampant in Africa are respiratory infections, river blindness, lymphatic filariasis, bilharzia, leprosy, sleeping sickness and kalazar. Poor living conditions and the high cost of necessary drugs and vaccines aggravate the situation (Kinoti 1994:17). In total more than 13,5 million children die in Africa each year due to poor economic and social conditions (Daily Nation 17/06/95:14). AIDS and HIV

being displaced,⁸ rapid population growth,⁹ and a degradation of the environment.¹⁰ Africa's condition in general is deteriorating, not improving.

The Church will have to foster the vision and hope that people in Africa can have peace and dignity and become self-reliant. It will have to create and develop a model for its mission or theology relevant to the context of Africa and coming forth from Africa. Such a theology will have to be "truly biblical and truly African - truly African in expression and relevance" (Kinoti 1994:95). Its aim is not only "to enhance its own understanding" (Schreiter 1985:16) but to serve and motivate the faith community for its mission involvement in society (Kritzinger & Saayman 1990:22). African Christians will have to take charge and responsibility for this challenge. A variety of resources are available for the church to utilise.

1. The main source and subjects in the creation of a relevant and authentic contextual model for its mission are the members of the local faith community, sharing actively the Gospel and who are guided by the Holy Spirit to reflect on God's liberating presence in their context. Members must be encouraged to come forward and tell their stories of

is taking on epidemic proportions in Africa. In Kenya as a whole, more than 12 000 cases are reported annually (Daily Nation 10/06/95:1).

⁸ In 1995 Zaire hosted the highest number of refugees with 1,8 million displaced people within its borders. Half of the world's refugee population is in Africa (Eastern African Standard 16/06/95:6).

⁹ Africa's population doubles every 20 years compared with 40 years globally. In the last three decades Africa's population has grown rapidly. It has more than doubled from 210 million in 1960 to 490 million in 1991. In the same period the growth rate has increased from 2,4% to 3,1% on average. The fertility rate is high at 6,5 children per woman (Kinoti 1994:61).

¹⁰ In Kenya, it has been found that the five leading causes of death are closely related to environmental degradation. Malaria, respiratory infections, skin diseases, intestinal worms and diarrhoea, which accounts for 67% of new cases reported, are environmental related, according to Dr Kaendi Munguti of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Nairobi (in Daily Nation 05/07/95:18)

God's active involvement in their lives. Relevant theology cannot be produced by theologians in isolation, but "the theology emerging in local contexts is a communal enterprise" (Schreiter 1985:20). Yes, the trained theologians may provide guidelines, encourage, train and support but at the end of the day, it is something that is born in and through fellowship at grass roots level. It is the followers in the faith community that will have to utilise the other resources and come up with an appropriate theology. They will have to be trained and empowered to discern important issues.

The task of incarnating the Gospel in the minds and hearts of a people, in allowing Christ to be born here and now, lies principally with the local Christian community ... and not with the "outsiders", however helpful, and indeed necessary, they may be (Luzbetak 1988:xviii).

2. The contextual African situation of people, having been marginalised and impoverished by different forces, must always be in focus and is an essential resource in the creation of a relevant theology. Christ must be discovered amongst the people, even in the poorest of the poor. Church development and evangelisation should therefore be done by "finding Christ in the situation rather than concentrating on bringing Christ into the situation" (Schreiter 1985:39). Christ must be at home amongst them and bring hope for these exploited and marginalised.

3. The African world-view and religious perceptions are an essential vehicle and source for an authentic African Christian Theology. Theology starts with a "long and careful listening to a culture to discover its principal values, interests, directions, and symbols" (Schreiter 1985:28). The Gospel must be freed from Greek-Western world-view and be moulded in an existing religious framework known to the people of Africa. God was in Africa long before the first missionaries came. A balance between the old and the new in

Africa's tradition will have to be struck by the local faith communities, without romanticising African past.

A fresh appreciation of ATR and its stabilising effect on society is necessary. Also the awareness of the spiritual quality of the physical environment which sadly has been totally neglected must be stressed. This led to the Western nations' exploitation of natural resources for the supposed benefit of humankind. As Thorpe (1991:7) puts it: "Perhaps African sacralisation of nature was, after all, a more accurate image of reality than was initially acknowledged." An appreciation of ATR will include the awareness that everything is imbued with religious significance. The community is the focal point of ATR and therefore the belief in the all-pervasive well-being of individuals in their relationship with their society is customary. The ancestors or living-dead are the custodians of the community and guardians of its continued well-being. They function to permit the desirable equilibrium to be maintained. Their visible representatives are the traditional leaders, diviners and healers who mediate between the spiritual and the physical world. Ritual and other practices are a means by which harmonious relationship between the visible and invisible African community is maintained (Thorpe 1991:107). Life-in-community begins even before birth and extends beyond death. Different initiation rituals mark the process of gaining full membership of this community. Although ATR has been severely threatened by Western orientated Christianity and culture, it is still practised by millions in Africa and its adaptability and influence can still be seen in many AICs.

4. Another important source is the African Initiated Church movement. The MPCs will have to listen closely to the questions and issues being addressed by this broad group of churches. There will have to be dialogue, co-operation and close ecumenical ties at local level.

5. The last resource for the creation of an relevant model is the Christian Tradition. The local faith community in its own reflection must always listen to how God was known and experienced in other contexts in the past and in other areas in the world. Here, the long Christian tradition of the Western Church is important but also more recent traditions like Liberation Theology in Southern Africa and Latin America. A dialogue with other traditions should be kept up by the local faith community in order to "to test, affirm, and challenge its own understanding of the gospel" (Schreiter 1985:75).

In the following pages I provide a broad outline of the dimensions of such a relevant model for mission in the local faith community.

5.2 THE GOD OF THE DESTITUTE, THE POOR, AND THE WRONGED

What image of God has been presented to people in South Africa over the past centuries? He has been pictured generally as the neutral, timeless, clean, powerful god, not touched by the daily sufferings in Africa, a god made happy by progress in civilisation, development and wealth, the success driven god, often even the 'White' god. This image has to be corrected, and God must be rediscovered in the heritage, the culture and traditions of Africa, his crucifixion in their tragedy and the appalling living conditions of the people of Africa, and the resurrection of his son, Jesus Christ in their struggle for humanity and better living conditions.

The question of "who is God?" or the question of Jesus himself "Who do you say that I am?" is closely related to the anthropological question of "Who does Jesus Christ say that we are and how shall we become ourselves as Africans?" (Mofokeng 1983:228). It is in God's option for humankind and its renewal, through the suffering and resurrection of Jesus Christ, that an image of God is formed. But the inhuman manner in which the

majority of people were treated in a so-called Christian civilisation in South Africa, also makes the answers to the above questions extremely difficult. These questions always have to be answered within a concrete situation.

Within the South African context and the struggle of people in Ilitha and Ndevana, it is important to understand God in the first place, not as almighty and omniscient, but as the weak and suffering God. The second letter to the Corinthians is an acknowledgement of this dimension (Bosch 1990:53). It is not by power display but by powerless compassion that God shows his involvement. God is not neutral. He remains constantly preoccupied with the poor and the sick, those who are mistreated by others (Nolan 1988:xii). Because of God's overwhelming preoccupation with the poor, the task of the Messiah is to free the poor who call for help (Psalm 72: 12-14).

The Confession of Belhar of the *NG Sendingkerk* in South Africa captures the essence of the biblical and Christian conviction that God is "the God of the destitute, the poor, and the wronged" (see Cloete & Smit 1984). The biblical message¹¹ that has always been

¹¹ "...the Old Testament legislation, which protected in diverse ways the interests of the poor and wronged or powerless (the sabbatical and jubilee years, the donation of tithes, the prohibition of interest, etc.); the repeated saving actions by God throughout the history of salvation to deliver individuals as well as his people from distress and misery; the numerous ways in which the rights of the orphan, the widow, the foreigner, and the squatter were defended; the doxological descriptions of God in the Psalms as the help of the helpless; the protection of the poor in the wisdom literature; the meaning of the "justice" of God as an active intervention to save and to restore justice; the cutting prophetic criticism of social injustice, exploitation, and the gaping fissure between rich and poor; the fact of the incarnation and humiliating self-surrender of Christ; the special role of the poor, especially in the Gospel of Luke (frequently called "the Gospel of the poor"), but also in the other Gospels; the (for his contemporaries inconceivable!) solidarity of Jesus with social outcasts, the destitute, and the forsaken; the messianic meaning of his miracles, including the multiplication of the bread and his healings; the moving doctrine of Matthew 25:31-46 that he who has done good to one of the least of the brethren did it to Jesus himself; the charity and the striving for "equality" in the congregations according to Acts, Corinthians, and the Pastoral Epistles; the role of wealth and poverty in James; and the warning call for an active showing of love in I John" (Smit 1984:58,59).

obvious to the Christian Church but very often ignored in practice or spiritualised for the sake of convenience.

God's justice does not in the least mean that he is neutral, unconcerned and uninvolved with regard to human misery, distress and suffering or with regard to relationships and structures of injustice, exploitation and oppression. He is the god of justice precisely because He defends and protects those without any rights (Smit 1984:59) and shows his compassion in the radical choice Jesus Christ made in favour of those considered to be the dregs of society. It is this God who has to be incarnated in Ilitha-Ndevana.

According to Luke Jesus announces the good news by taking his place among the poor and exploited. The centre of Jesus' preaching and acting is a Kingdom of God for the sake of the poor and those on the periphery of society. His whole ministry is directed to those who suffer due to economics, politics, physical conditions, spiritual suffering or other causes in society (Bosch 1990: 18). Poverty, due to these causes, can never be seen as a virtue, considered a good thing or a normal part of our existence. It was seen by biblical writers and the early Church as the expression of evil (De Santa Ana 1977:97). It has to be dealt with in its roots and its consequences.

Today Jesus' ongoing suffering is visible. It is expressed in each marginalised and suffering person and community. The Church is called to follow Him in this. The resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth is the basis, the motivation for the praxis of those who are following his ministry and are searching for God's liberating presence and their true human dignity. This is done in the understanding that human life is an ongoing cross-bearing experience. The African church needs to find a way to live the gospel in the midst of violence and misery, standing on this firm conviction that God identifies with her situation.

The local church, as well as the universal church are faced with an urgent challenge to be of one body with all those being marginalised by powers operating in society. The Church must be directed at them, always having them in her vision - if it is indeed the body of the Crucified One of Golgotha. Julius Nyerere reminded the church that if it wishes to stand for salvation, given the actual conditions of people in Africa:

It has to be consistently and actively on the side of the poor and unprivileged. It has to lead men towards godliness by joining with them in the attack against the injustices and deprivation from which they suffer (in Éla 1988:133).

5.3 FREED FROM A COLONIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

High on the agenda of the local faith community should be a deliberate and systematic effort to contribute to the eradication, especially in the minds of its members, of the destructive consequences of colonialism and its later derivative, generally known as apartheid. The White Church also need to be emancipated from colonial attitudes in order to make a meaningful contribution to the Kingdom of God and the country. According to Kritzinger (1991:110) "...we as South African whites will have to free ourselves from our colonial and racist 'European' identity in order to become white Africans or *European Africans*." For the purpose of this study the emphasis is put on Africans and the contribution of the local faith community.

In South Africa British colonial rule changed in 1910 and a Union of South African colonies was formed which excluded Africans from any meaningful franchise and political power. Soon after this, further legislation, the Natives' Land Act of 1913, deprived Africans from their already limited access to land. They were restricted to a number of reserves.¹² Thousands were forced to seek employment in the growing cities and in the

¹² See the discussion on the Natives' Land Act of 1913 on p.76.

mining industries. In the next forty years White minority rule was entrenched with the sanction of British governments. All of this was part of the colonial occupation of the whole of Africa. After the National Party came to power in 1948 minority rule was refined into a comprehensive system of oppression and White supremacy. Ongoing colonialism was driven by a capitalist economic system aimed at exploiting mineral and human resources mainly to the benefit, first, of the colonial motherland and, later, the White minority in South Africa.

The Christian mission and church was closely involved and even sanctioned the conquering of African land and the subjection of Africans.¹³ Colonisation and the Christian mission's entanglement with it, had severe consequences on Africans in South Africa; to name a few: economic exploitation, dispossession of land, deculturation of Africans and White racism (Saayman 1991:25-33). It also succeeded in entrenching a colonised mentality in many Africans in South Africa. Many have simply accepted White baasskap (supremacy) and the inferior and subordinate position allocated to them. It was accepted by many that Africans will never reach the social, educational and economic position of Whites and that Africans were created to be servants and subordinates in the country of their birth. This perception was reinforced by the inferior Bantu Education system of the National Party.

The long liberation struggle in South Africa was not only fought with arms but included the struggle of many African organisations to liberate the mind and abilities of Africans in South Africa from colonialism. Acknowledgement must be given to the significant contribution of many AICs towards a positive self esteem of their members and the society at large in many local communities. Women's organisations and women's prayer

¹³ See the discussion on p.136,137.

leagues,¹⁴ amongst others also played a significant role. They confirmed the fact that “Whatever black Christians were in the eyes of whites, in God’s eyes they were human and had an inalienable dignity” (Bosch 1991b:130).

On the national level the legacy of colonialism and apartheid are being addressed by democratic and legitimate governing, a new constitution, programs of land reform and restitution, affirmative action, economic empowerment and higher education of Africans. On grassroots level it will have to go beyond these issues and “...unless these material circumstances change, the colonial consciousness will continue to exist” (Saayman 1991:96). On the local level access to basic necessities like fresh water, electricity, health services and employment or a sustainable income are prerequisites for the emancipation of a colonially enslaved consciousness.

Even after the 1994 first democratic election and the establishment of a government of national unity, colonialism is still part of daily living, as the old order resists its own demise. The church should consciously work towards the total eradication of colonialism and apartheid from the minds of Africans. The local faith community will have to engage in efforts and programs to participate in the process and to encourage its members to be creative and innovative, to participate in capacity building, to build pride and appreciation for their own cultural values and achievements and to build community life and co-operation. Although apartheid can be blamed for most of the existing discrepancies, the time has come for people to take full responsibility and control of their circumstances. Within the local church the process of renewal and re-conversion will include, amongst others, building fellowship, a new reading of the Gospel, a practical spirituality, serving leadership, renewal of the liturgy and the strengthening of supportive structures. Local

¹⁴ See p. 130 on the supportive role of the women’s league.

leaders of faith communities, with the vision and determination of Moses leading his people out of captivity, and with the trust that God can change the hearts and minds of people and restore the dignity of Africans, are in an ideal position to make a meaningful contribution towards the full emancipation of the minds of Africans in South Africa.

5.4 BUILDING COMMUNITY

Building community or fellowship, cohesion and mutual support within the local faith group should be an important step towards enhancing the mission role of the Church as an effective social support structure.

Encouraging small Christian communities as a pastoral priority entails a measure of decentralisation and declericalisation (Shorter 1991:101). It does not mean that these local faith communities are the whole church. They are the real Church found at local level and building blocks for an effective context related Church. Basic ecclesial communities have been associated with Liberation Theology of Latin America with emphasis on God's preferential option for the poor, first expressed by the bishops at Medellin in 1968. These communities reflect a new, evangelical and prophetic way of understanding social realities and represents a trend away from a paternalistic centralised church structure towards full grass roots lay participation (Shorter 1991:102). Features of this movement have been a practice of their faith by Christians where they live and work; a greater lay participation and leadership; an active use and sharing of the Gospel among Christians; and a more authentic inculturation in the daily lifestyle and world-view of Christians. True fellowship in the local congregation can only grow where committed local leaders emerge and take initiative. These leaders must be identified, their role acknowledged, and they must be trained and supported in their efforts by the church structures.

Affluence has very often a detrimental influence on people's willingness to participate in fellowship. When Christians move from squatter settlements to higher-income areas they are often less open to fellowship. Educated and affluent people find it difficult to submit to the leadership and the demanding activities of the faith community amongst the poorer. The preferential option for the poor demands co-operation across the barriers of economic class and schooling (Shorter 1991:105). The rich should accept to be evangelised by the poor themselves.

The main task of the faith community is to intensify authentic Christian living by focusing on the life context, God's liberating presence and practical mutual support amongst members. Pastoral and witnessing tasks of the faith community will flow forth from this central focus. Pastoral care and celebration will be aimed at making God's liberating presence a reality within a specific context, relating the Bible to life. Witnessing will be a spontaneous reaction, resulting in members supporting one another, actively reaching out to other people in the society, working for better social conditions and justice.

Cohesion and unity within the faith community are essential in order to mobilise members. The term fellowship, or community, is often used to describe the dynamics within the group and refers to ways for people to be together. Many different things are meant by the term community and it is very often an indistinct ideal. Whitehead & Whitehead (1982:22-23) point out that when some people speak about community they have in mind the small village or neighbourhood. Others think of small groups of people developing close interpersonal ties in an atmosphere of emotional honesty and mutual support. Often the example of a family is taken. The model of the family is only partially applicable for an understanding of community. Whitehead & Whitehead (1982:23) give the following reasons. Firstly, the relationships in the family are not likely to represent patterns that will

be appropriate in an adult community of faith. Secondly, the model of the family may suggest that the community is like a haven from the pressures of public responsibilities, a context for intimate self disclosure and emotional support. One can add that the family has been devastated to such an extent in the South African context that it can hardly serve as ideal image.

Community or fellowship is more than private life. It points to the possibility of a shared vision that can move people to action in a public sphere, undertaken in a context of mutual concern (Whitehead & Whitehead 1982:23). Community should therefore rather be seen as an intermediate group form situated between the primary group like the family and the task orientated organisation like a business company. Community integrates in a variety of ways the elements of personal support, and commitment, to a common task in society. It should have both characteristics of the intimacy and supportive relationships of the family and the motivation to move the group beyond itself into the public world.

The term community or fellowship will therefore refer to many different intermediate social forms, either closer to the primary group or nearer to the formal task orientated association. Mutual faith and religious concern move members of a congregation or parish to come together in various ways – to worship, to share their hopes and doubts about God's acting presence, to plan for Christian education and to act together for justice and peace. As a task orientated organisation it is structured and has a mission.

However it is also more than a formal organisation. It expects personal involvement and commitment from its members beyond the line of duty. It fosters close supportive relationships and friendship among its members. It therefore shows clear elements of a primary social group.

To the congregation as a whole, the internal focus of mutual encouragement and support and the external focus of a mission of witness and action in the world are both important. Within the congregation fellowship may take different shapes where the balance between internal and external focus may differ. Community or fellowship therefore does not only point to one particular structure of group life but to a variety of social forms (Whitehead & Whitehead 1982:32), all of whom can be mobilised in terms of the mutual mission for empowerment and reconstruction.

The following preconditions are important in creating sustainable fellowship in the local faith community:

1. Members should have a common life orientation, namely their faith in Jesus Christ and faith in the acting presence of God.
2. Derived from their faith and their knowledge of the Gospel, there should be a broad agreement on life values.
3. There should also be enough opportunities provided for personal exchange and mutual support.
4. As faith community, they should also have a vision beyond themselves as being God's sign and instrument in the world. At all times they should be aware of their calling to respond to human need in all its dimensions. Community is stimulated by the discovery of concrete ways of responding to human needs and is held together by commitment to these (Decock 1991:58).
5. Members should know what is expected from them, which tasks are their responsibility and where they fit in the structure of the community. This is where serving and shared leadership is important in order to enable members to make use of their gifts and to develop to their full potential. The faith community should be free from any domination of

the clergy. The ideal is to have tasks widely spread and as many members as possible involved in decision making.

5.5 A NEW READING OF THE GOSPEL

The commitment of the faith community to an all-embracing liberation and reconstruction will only be possible through a different reading of some basic gospel themes. A paradigm for the struggle towards empowerment and reconstruction will have to be created.

In the light of the high rate of illiteracy¹⁵ in the communities of Ilitha and Ndevana,¹⁶ the reading of the text is complicated. The biblical text and message is caught up in a "Gutenberg captivity" in the pages of a printed book and for those who cannot read or who are not motivated to read, it "remains among them a foreign and ineffective medium" (Weber 1981:10). The biblical message and tradition in its variety, settled over centuries into a written script and was handed over from generation to generation. It found its way to the four corners of the earth in local vernaculars, but still bound to a book. It has to be liberated and brought alive again in the oral tradition of the local faith community. It has to take on the effective communication paths used locally. This process takes place in the belief that the Holy Spirit, who inspired the message originally, uses the biblical text to reveal afresh God's message of new life in Christ, within a specific context. This also applies to the current theological works and debate on the church among the poor. Other methods like communal reading and reflection, plays, and story telling should therefore be

¹⁵ A general estimation, according to a SABC broadcast on 2 September 1995, is that 15 million South Africans are illiterate or semi-literate. On Literacy day, 8 September 1995, it was reported on SABC radio that, according to a survey done by the University of Cape Town, 80% of Black South Africans' reading ability is on a standard five level or below.

¹⁶ It is estimated that almost 50% of people in these two communities are illiterate or semi-literate. See p. 67.

utilised in order to have the text heard in the local faith community among "ordinary" members.

A serious reflection on the priorities of the local faith communities is necessary. Discussions rarely refer to what is actually happening in the township, in order to determine the outline of the church's practices. The traditional fixed answers and solutions to many social problems have to be re-examined within the present African context. Christianity is in crisis, both in the rural areas and in the expanding African cities. Africa is no longer "incurably religious", and societies are not sheltered against secularisation, atheism, or religious indifference (Shorter 1991:74).

How do we prepare ourselves to rethink our faith, to reread the Gospel and to arouse in ourselves a new understanding of human problems in Africa? It starts by being part of a faith community that lives with the firm conviction that God through the risen Christ is present and actively working, and speaks to his people through his Living Word.

Believers, although unsophisticated in their reading and interpretation of the Bible, will have to realise that all biblical interpretation are determined by the socio-political and ideological perspective of the reader.

There is no such thing as a value-free biblical hermeneutics which exists in some abstract, absolute or autonomous realm far removed from the biases and blind spots to which we are all susceptible as fallible, 'fallen' human beings (Yorke 1995:153).

The faith community will have to come to an understanding of the hermeneutical perspective or key they have subjected to over many years or have been taught as being the only 'right' way. If a new perspective is adopted, it does not necessarily mean that everything that was taught and believed will change. It is a genuine African perspective

that is added and that will guide believers to retell the Gospel from within an African experience and context. It starts off by a fresh appreciation of the African presence in the Old Testament and New Testament.¹⁷ After a long denial, the roots of the Bible in Africa are rediscovered and appreciated by Africans.

In the Old Testament a central theme is that through struggle the Hebrew people came to associate the liberating events of their history with a reality which they came to know as God. God was experienced and acknowledged within history, rather than metaphysically or abstractly defined (Villa-Vicencio 1992:25). This implies that the important task of the church is to see that the act and the reality of God's liberating presence is acknowledged, experienced and celebrated by as many as possible rather than to try to name and promote it in terms of ecclesial symbols and traditions. Within this framework, event precedes word and interpretation (Villa-Vicencio 1992:26).

Biblical and church tradition need to be weighed time and again against each new experience of God's acting and liberating presence. These experiences create fertile ground for biblical texts to acquire new meaning in new situations. It is this realisation that motivates Christians today, using the Gospel to struggle and to search to understand who and where God is at this time in history. It also makes them attentive to the needs, problems and challenges of the community and the marginalised.

¹⁷ Yorke (1995:150-153) has convincingly argued that African presence in the Old and New Testament is anything but superficial. Eden might be best situated in Africa with the origin of two of its rivers, the Pishon and Gihon, in Ethiopia. Mesopotamia has to be seen as an extension of Africa and was artificially separated from Africa by modern day history. Ethiopia and Egypt are mentioned forty and over hundred times respectively in the Bible, often as terms indicating the whole African continent. Prominent biblical leaders come from Africa or spent their forming years in Africa, for example, Moses, Nimrod, Zephaniah, the prophet and even Jesus, after his parents fled Herod. The New Testament is, like Augustine, the African said, incomplete without an understanding of the Old Testament and therefore, also of its African presence.

Here we deal with the source of inspiration and faith in the local community of believers. Through reading and sharing the Gospel in the language and communicative patterns of the people, it becomes the living Word of God in our midst for our time. Talking about God and listening to God begins where God becomes present and tangible in the faith community. This process takes place by using a hermeneutical key to give direction to the understanding of God's involvement in the present context. This key provides the local faith community with a reasonable statement which becomes its base for changing the situation rather than explaining it away.

During the liberation struggle in South Africa it was common to use the exodus theme as biblical metaphor or paradigm for reading the whole message of the Bible. In the post-apartheid era, other biblical metaphors must be looked at. These include the wilderness experience before entering the promised land, the exile prior to rebuilding Jerusalem, and the return of the Babylonian exiles in the post-exilic period (Villa-Vicencio 1992:6). The covenant concept is also important in this context. It is a profound theological concept, linking eternity to sinners, opening a new possibility to humanity. God takes the initiative and people act; God speaks and people respond; God commands and people obey. This concept can inspire action and break the inertia that prevails (Chipenda 1990:11).

The post-exilic metaphor has different advantages as paradigm for the struggle towards empowerment and reconstruction. It is built on the different Old Testament traditions but not trapped within them. The long experience of exilic and post-exilic discontent contains within it the promise and hope of something new that will be brought about by Yahweh (Villa-Vicencio 1992:28). Isaiah 43:18-19 is then seen as the turning point or start of a living expectation that something new is about to emerge:

"Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing!" (NIV).

In the book Jeremiah, judgement is a central theme and it apparently seems as if God had rejected his chosen people and that "all the ancient promises and covenants had come to nothing". But beyond the judgement would come the restoration and renewal. Israel would be restored and God would make a new covenant with his people, writing his law in their hearts and consecrate them to his service (Barker 1985:1117). The promise in Jeremiah 16:14,15, also repeated in 23:7,8, served as a condensed assurance of God's renewal and restoration of his people.

"However, the days are coming," declares the Lord, "when men will no longer say, 'As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the Israelites up out of Egypt,' but they will say, 'As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the Israelites up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them.' For I will restore them to the land I gave their forefathers (NIV).

This may serve as paradigm for the faith community in motivating itself for its contribution towards empowerment and reconstruction. It is a much more uncertain and difficult process but every effort as part of God's plan and acting presence is worthwhile.

Although no longer so prominent, the memory of the exodus from Egypt will still remain important as motivation for the faith community. Through acts, symbols, liturgical gatherings, prayer, and festivals, believers within the faith community must reactivate the experience of that God who brings humanity out of servitude into freedom and service (Deut. 11:2-4). The memory of this basic experience engenders hope in the believers. Strong emphasis has to be placed on service to the world. They are here on behalf of the world (*pars pro toto*). Because God cares for the 'little ones', he can care for the whole world. Exemplary lives are expected from the believers (Exod. 22:20).

The reading of the Gospel will have to take place through the eyes of the poor and by the poor themselves. It should be aimed at restoring the weak, crucified Christ as the foundation of their liberation (Saayman 1991:106). With such a perspective, the Gospel becomes a source of inspiration and the Holy Spirit pushes people forward to erect signs of his Kingdom, carrying his cross and following in his footsteps. The involvement of people at all levels are necessary.

Such an approach constitutes a reading of the Gospel in the light of real life experience. It sees what God sees; it experiences the situation of the poor, unemployed and despondent as illustrated in God's dealings with the Hebrew people and in the life of Jesus. Like Jesus it calls people to analyse the situation and to understand the root causes of what brings pain to the poor. Reflections based on the Good News of the Gospel comes from judging these experiences against the Word of God. What does God do when people are hungry, thirsty, without hope, what does Christ do when ordinary people are forgotten by those in power? It leads further to action that starts to transform the situation so that it conforms to what we learn of the Kingdom of God in the Gospels.

The local church will have to take the risk of doing its own interpreting and reflection. But it must always be kept in mind that a theology in context must also be a theology in dialogue, open to exchange, to questioning and to challenging.

Biblical reflection also requires a deepening of the methods used in the faith community for reading and sharing the Gospel. Gospel sharing methods, like those developed by the Lumko Institute, can fruitfully be utilised. They are, amongst others, the following: 7-step-method; Group Response method; Look-Listen-Love method; Life-Bible-Notes method; and the Amos Programmes (Hirmer 1991:3-5). Gospel sharing deepens and strengthens members' relationship with the risen Lord and with others in the small

Christian community. It helps the members to face their daily responsibilities and to respond to the needs of people around them and to become involved in social action (Prior 1994:61). This way of reading the Bible has not the aim to them, in the first place, to interpret and to study the Bible, but to interpret their lives and circumstances with the help of the Bible. It is the free sharing and the realisation that the Word of God is present in the lives of the believers. Mesters described the role of the "popular interpretation" of the Bible in the base communities in Brazil: "The Bible awakens people, reveals and confirms to them that our God is God-with-us, today" (in Prior 1994:62). Interpretations may occur that differ from the "right" exegetical meaning of the text, but Gospel sharing

... becomes a means of "first-hand" encounter with Christ. Even if the actual text is "wrongly" understood in the strict exegetical sense, it may be right in the context of the whole Bible with its basic message: I am your God. I am with you. I love you (Hirmer 1991:9).

Other members in the group and other occasions like sermons, catechism classes and Bible study group may provide corrective influence, if needed, to Bible sharing interpretations

Ongoing discussion is needed to determine the challenges the church should accept in order to be credible, for their message to be seen as more than just folklore by the community and especially the youth and to avoid being considered obsolete.

Reflection and discussion within the local faith community must be directed to the mobilisation of all members. It must be done around relevant and clearly defined goals, strategies and priorities.

5.6 CORAM DEI: LIVING DAILY LIFE BEFORE GOD

A practical and relevant spirituality among the believers in the local faith community "provides the essential context within which the local theology" can develop. Over time

this "way to God", created by the movement of the Spirit, leads to deeper faith and commitment in the faith community and to a tradition which gives stability to its decisions (Schreiter 1985:24).

For many, spirituality has meant an avoiding or evading of the harsh reality of the South African context and an escape into religious practices. But the matter of the fact is that the spiritual and the secular are indivisible. "Spirituality, social justice, prayer, worship and Eucharist are integral elements of the life of faith" (Ackermann 1994:123). Spirituality is also not the property of an elite minority, those that have reached a certain state of perfection. Members of the faith community are directly related to Christ through faith in him and not via a spiritual leader. A practical spirituality has also to be freed from an individualistic bent with the emphasis on an inner life. "There is no such thing as "private" spirituality" (Ackermann 1994:123). "Spirituality is a corporate discipline, a corporate experience" (Kenneth Leech in Ackermann 1994:123). All these misconceptions can result in a dangerous privatisation of spirituality and an evasion of everyday challenges.

Spirituality is the everyday following of Christ, walking the way with Christ. It is the encounter with Christ, the Saviour, walking daily in the company of the Spirit and participating in the believers' search for the presence of the liberating God, the Father. It is a process of formation towards maturity in Christ, a maturity that is expressed in terms of relationships with the self, with others, with God and with creation. In this sense it is a community enterprise (Gutierrez 1983:137, Schreiter 1985:20).

A practical spirituality is an experience of faith together with others and by participating with other Christians in search of the meaning and purpose of our existence. The Xhosa proverb, as in many other African languages, Umntu ngumntu ngabanye (a person is somebody through other people), emphasises the fact that life exists in community. An

equivalent expression would be: I *belong*, therefore I *am*. Gutierrez (1983:42) is emphatic on this point by saying that the following of Jesus is not, purely or primarily, an individual matter but a collective adventure. "The journey of the people of God is set in motion by a direct encounter with the Lord but an encounter in community: 'We have found the Messiah.'" The journey is therefore a community journey and it is also all-embracing, including all facets of life. It is a collective ecclesial spirituality with a universal perspective but marked by the daily experience of people.

A distinct spirituality for the local context and time is necessary. For the broader South African context, Ackermann (1994:125,126) suggests a "spirituality of risk" which entails "... making oneself vulnerable in every aspect of one's life." Justice and truth form the core of such a "spirituality of risk" with the constant element of hope supporting it.

The real question is: How can we thank and praise God for life when the reality around us is death-stricken through poverty, injustice and a lack of hope and opportunities? Death due to hunger and sickness, but also death of the spirit of the community due to hopelessness and the lack of means and opportunities to stand up against the repressing forces? People who feel themselves to be strangers in their own country, living in a land that is hostile to them, marginalised to almost non-existence? Poverty and apathy are not only caused by a lack of physical means but imply a loss of control over the situation, being bound to hopelessness, being excluded from production and other life sustaining processes.

It is in this poverty and death-stricken context, in which God is not absent, that a new spirituality can germinate. It is built on the belief that we are living in a special time of God's saving actions, a kairos, a time in which a new route is being carved out for the following of Jesus. Such a vision does not automatically ensure a better future, but it draws strength from a present that is full of possibilities (Gutierrez 1983:21). Each

context and time slot in history poses an unique opportunity, a favourable time (kairos) for the faith community for recognising the presence of the God of life and for proclaiming the kingdom of God and its justice (Gutierrez 1983:3).

Amidst a culture of despair, frustrations and hopelessness, hope in God's active and liberating presence and the renewal power of the Spirit should form the key element of a relevant spirituality. Hope encourages resistance and motivates new efforts and action. This hope must find its roots in sharing - in joys and in sorrows. A spirituality of sharing is strengthened where believers sing together, praise God, share the Gospel and pray together for empowerment and discipleship that endures suffering and that strives for humanity.

A practical spirituality is a choice for life. Jesus is not to be sought among the dead: he is alive (Luke 24:5). Faith and hope in the God of life provide strength in the situation of poverty and struggle for survival (Gutierrez 1983:32).

Such a spirituality can also assist the local faith community to reflect on their situation, to understand structures and forces to which they are subjected. It can bring a new self consciousness and a rediscovering of new possibilities through God's saving actions.

An encounter with or conversion to Christ is the point of departure, a decision to set out on a new path. Conversion is not aimed at "securing a place in heaven", but means, according to Orlando Costas, to be able to see the glory of God's grace, and subsequently to be continually transformed in order to make his glory visible in every dimension of communal life of the faith community (in Saayman 1992:171). It is a community of believers that is "fully involved in the life of the society around them, incarnated the gospel in caring service and celebration, in word and deed" that draws people to Christ, and to a commitment for his Kingdom (Newbigin in Saayman 1992:171). Evangelism does not

enjoy primacy in this regard, but is one of the dimensions (see Bosch 1991a:512-518), although important, of the mission of the local church to incarnate and to manifest God's universal shalom in the world (Saayman 1992:168).

In general, the ideal of godliness and biblical values is not attainable in our public culture. It was long said that South Africa is a Christian country and that it is the responsibility of the government to uphold Christian norms and values in public life. Those times have long passed. The church and local faith communities will have to realise that they are minority groupings and that their influence is very limited in public life. Yet it must not lead to a ghetto mentality, but to the true belief that God through Jesus Christ is Lord in all dimensions of life. God's saving and liberating act must be allowed to penetrate all levels of human existence.

True spirituality cannot be isolated from the rest of our existence. On the contrary, it brings an increasing involvement in the world (Bosch 1979:13). Central to this spirituality is the cross. The cross is God's and our total identification with the world (Bosch 1979:15). Bosch (1979:33) shows that in 2 Corinthians Paul argues that true Christian spirituality is not to be found in the superhuman and the miraculous, but in the commonplace. The goal of this spirituality should be the ability, the freedom to serve within the faith community and in society at large.

Spirituality within the context of the local faith community should always be in dialogue with the broader tradition, the tradition of the past and the present ecumenical tradition. Ongoing dialogue with other similar communities, trying to come to grips with God's liberating presence in their midst, is of great importance. Although differences with them may exist, dialogue brings local developments in line with the Christian heritage.

Any local theology that is truly Christian has to be engaged with the tradition... Without that engagement, there is no guarantee of being part of the Christian heritage (Schreier 1985:95).

The dialogue with more affluent Christian communities is also part of the witness within the broader tradition. Theological sectarianism is always a looming danger. We share the same destiny in this country, therefore we must learn from one another.

Close contact with the academic practice of theology must also be kept. Theology and spirituality cannot be separated and practised in isolation. Gutierrez (1983:1) states that both experience and reflection are grounded in a community that under the movement of the Spirit focuses its life on the proclamation of the good news: the Lord is risen! Reflection on the mystery of the acting present God is only possible in the context of the following of Jesus (Gutierrez 1983:136).

The local faith community has to come to terms with its own experience of the presence of God. It will have to draw strength from its own unique and renewing encounter with the living Christ in its efforts to shape its future and to gain control of its destiny. The words of John in his first epistle must also become true for them: "... which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched - this we proclaim concerning the Word of life" (NIV John 1:1). Nouwen describes the spirituality of the poor of Latin America as the Christ-encounter in their struggle to affirm their human dignity and claim their true identity (in Gutierrez 1983:xii). It is a spirituality that is deeply rooted in the lived experience of God's liberating presence in the ongoing history and motivates believers to participate actively in the struggle for full humanity.

5.7 THE CHURCH AS A SITE OF EMPOWERMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION

In the past the local church had been called upon to be the site of struggle against the forces of oppression and dehumanisation. These forces were well defined and known under the broad term, apartheid. In the period of change and transition efforts will have to be made to mobilise the local faith community again to focus on a new struggle - the struggle for empowerment and reconstruction. The local church has to stay the site of struggle (Saayman 1991:118), the struggle for the upliftment of communities. The same zeal and commitment will be necessary. It has to be linked with the past struggle and shown as the inevitable consequence of the struggle against oppression. "... the church must 're-shape' its own activities so that it has 'relevance to the poor and the oppressed'" in its engagement in the new struggle (Botha et al. 1994:30).

The Church has to have a clear vision of what is meant and what is sought with empowerment and reconstruction of its members and society. It will have to have clarity on the abilities, resources, programmes and leadership needed to achieve empowerment and the type of changes it would like to see during reconstruction. There should be consensus amongst members on the ultimate goal of all these developments. Kinoti (1994:55) feels that it should mean

... an improvement in the quality of life such that every human being has their basic needs (food, clothing, shelter, health, education) met adequately, their dignity and self-esteem respected, their freedom honoured, and their potentiality given full scope for realisation.

Terms like transparency, accountability, mutual responsibility and participating decision making will have to be brought home and put in practice in all actions taken. By saying the local church is the site, it does not indicate a physical venue but a common set of social practices (meeting, working, singing, praying, sharing, learning) which brings people

together (Saayman 1991:118). These practices will have to be re-orientated towards the newly defined goal of empowerment and reconstruction. The way this can be brought about is to stimulate initiative among its members, and to mobilise a lay movement in the faith community. Botha, Kritzinger and Maluleke warn that the church should not be too optimistic that, in the time of transition, it can provide "moral guidance' to the nation", and needs " a good dose of humility" (Botha et al. 1994:30).

Like in many other parts of the world, in Africa it must also be acknowledged that the church has gone wrong by overemphasising the role of the clergy at the expense of the ordinary members of the church (Lobinger 1984:5-10). This is particularly obvious when it comes to biblical education and ethical matters. In so doing the church leadership has alienated itself from the new realities of the changing society while keeping members ill-equipped and in an appalling ethical illiteracy. This has paralysed members and made them dependent on the opinions and actions of the clergy. In bringing about change, the lay people will have to be mobilised and trained to realise their *own* power.

De Santa Ana (1992:17) points out that although Latin America and the Caribbean are considered as a region of the globe where Christianity is predominant in the religious field, the majority are only nominal Christians. People attend church for the purpose of negotiating with God for some blessing. The churches did not succeed in creating the conditions for the evangelisation of the Latin American masses in any real depth. Fortunately change came in the sixties with the development of the Base Church Communities (majority Roman Catholics) and the Pentecostal assemblies. Both are manifestations of the church of the poor, rooted among them, accepting the elements of popular culture, trying to embody the Christian faith in the terms used by those sectors of society.

High priority should be given to a much needed healing process. Due to the disruptive changes that have taken place, many members in the faith community sit with anger, frustration and blocked emotions. They need to be given opportunity to work through their feelings. This process is complicated by the continuing violence that has become a stark feature of the transition in the post-apartheid South Africa and the frustration of many who will not receive immediate benefits from the new dispensation. Lack of improvement of basic socio-economic condition hampers efforts to rebuild society and is constant reminder of the oppression under apartheid.

Another important role of the local church is to co-operate and to bring the basic needs of society to the attention of the governmental structures. It cannot provide a blueprint for the government, but it can judge the direction, the way in which things are done. Members will also have to be encouraged and motivated to participate in any practical projects in society like building up infrastructure, buildings of dwellings, schemes to create co-operation and mutual support like stokvels or saving clubs and burial societies.

5.8 APPROPRIATE CHURCH STRUCTURES

In developing a model and appropriate church structures, the changing contexts must be kept in mind.¹⁸ In the case of the Ilitha-Ndevana area, the following will have to be considered:

1. The local faith community *is* the Church of Christ. Structures should enable believers at grassroots level to celebrate together, to care for one another and to proclaim by word and deed, in society, the existence and the coming of the Kingdom of God.

¹⁸ My opinion is that too often in the past the emphasis has been on the Bible and tradition as exclusive sources for the design of church structures, without taking adequate notice of the precise context in which the local faith community operates.

2. In all the local churches in the area, women are by far in the majority.¹⁹ Church structures should therefore promote their participation, especially in decision making.

3. The traditional support of the church has decreased. It is evident in the lack of support of people in the 18 to 35 year age group, especially among men.²⁰ Structures should be directed to the concerns of different group in the local society.

4. Increased pessimism and a feeling of hopelessness. The feeling exists in the community that general living conditions are still deteriorating.²¹ Church structures should therefore be focused on creating meaning, empowering people and equipping them to face realities and to use opportunities.

Organisational structures within the local church should facilitate different ministries and the active participation of all its members. The local faith community, in consultation with its broader structures, should decide on appropriate structures.

... it is not sufficient for a church merely to have the intention to be of service to the world ... The church should develop the necessary structures to convert its intention into a practical commitment (Kritzinger et al. 1994:45).

Existing structures will have to be analysed critically²² and gradually modified to suite the specific context. Often the church has been "a prisoner of its traditional structures which block its efforts to reach the world" (Kritzinger et al. 1994:45). These structures should

¹⁹ See the discussion in chapter 4, p.109.

²⁰ Indifference, secularism and sport and political activities on Sundays have been blamed for this decline. See p.104.

²¹ Increased unemployment is a major contributing factor. Although expectations for an increase in job opportunities are high, the economy of the region is still on the decline and unemployment is increasing. Disillusionment and disenchantment with political changes due to the lack of visible change at grassroots level and unreasonable high expectations also contribute to this feeling.

²² Dons Kritzinger (1979:39-143) have done a thorough analysis of structures of ministry over the centuries and in different church traditions.

serve the various dimensions of the church's existence in the world namely: the kerygmatic dimension, the diaconal dimension, the fellowship dimension and the liturgical dimension (Kritzinger et al. 1994:36-38). The biblical model of the Church as the body of Christ with reference to Paul's letters to the Corinthians and Ephesians, may be used as guideline for such structures (see Küng 1968:203-260).²³ The following aspects will have to be considered:

5.8.1 SERVING LEADERSHIP

A new leadership style is necessary in the faith community in order to contribute to the empowerment of members. It is a Christ-like leadership which inspires, facilitates, enables and serves the members of the faith community. A deliberate effort should be made to have women in serving leadership positions. The danger always exist of leaders doing things alone or seeing their position as a way to gain status and power, "to become our bosses instead of serving us" (Lobinger 1984:9).

Strong and decisive leadership is essential in a period of uncertainty and transition. Leaders are mainly responsible for vision, direction and motivation of members towards their active participation, mutual support and awareness of their role in society.

Training is the key element in the realisation of a new vision for the local faith community. Lobinger (1984:19,20) gives ten reason why training is essential: it enables people to use the gifts of the Spirit; it helps these gifts to grow; it gives all members a chance; it brings equality in the local church; it liberate people; it stimulates their creativity; it contributes

²³ Although one model may have obvious advantages in a specific context, I agree with Avery Dulles (1976:29) that it should be remembered that "no one should be canonised as the measure of all the rest. Instead of searching for some absolutely best image, it would be advisable to recognise that the manifold images given to us by Scripture and Tradition are mutually complementary."

towards evangelisation; it is part of the process of transformation into the image of Christ; it liberates existing leaders to become serving leaders; and it puts the focus squarely on the local parish.

The rediscovery of ordinary members, the laity, as God's primary agents of mission, means a changed role for the clergy, the formally trained personnel in the church. Their role is to train and equip God's people for their different ministries, liberating them for Christian witness (Kritzinger 1979:154, McCoy 1994:48). Training should be carefully designed to cover main areas relevant for the existence of the local faith community. These areas are interrelated and the emphasis will depend on the specific context. These are: building a practical and community based spirituality; develop attitudes, values and awareness; developing skills to lead, communicate and to motivate people; gaining insight by obtaining information about and analysing conditions in society²⁴ and knowledge about the church²⁵ and theological matters (Lobinger 1984:26). Modern methods of Adult Education should be utilised based on the learning cycle of reflection followed by action and active involvement.²⁶

5.8.2 AN ONGOING RENEWAL OF THE LITURGY

For the purpose of this discussion, liturgy is mainly seen as the structured public service rendered to God and gives "expression of the Christian desire to praise and worship God for who he is" (Kritzinger et al. 1994:38). It is closely related to the other dimensions of

²⁴ An analysis, as was done in chapter 2 en 3 can be used in the training process to create insight in the context.

²⁵ A survey on the position of the church in a specific area, as done in chapter 4, can help leaders to plan relevant strategies.

²⁶ Lobinger (1984:47-72) provides a useful guide for the training of local leaders.

Christian mission i.e. the kerygmatic, diaconal and the fellowship dimensions and finds its broader applications through these other dimensions.

In this study attention is given to the aim and meaning of the liturgy and two areas of application namely the Eucharist and the commemoration of the departed.

The liturgy is the focal point in the life of the faith community and integrate symbols, life experience, different methods of communication and the message of the Bible. The essence of liturgy is the celebration of the presence of the liberating God in the context of the local faith community. Faith and life meet in the liturgy.

Believers can better participate in the act of worship once the liturgy is connected with the joys, difficulties, hopes, obligations and life calling. If the proclamation of the reign of God is not related to people's daily concerns, it will remain merely a non-worldly message (Prior 1994:63).

The liturgy is rooted in the following: an ongoing analysis of the context; social involvement and pastoral care of members; evangelisation; growth and formation; ministry and service; and an awareness of God's liberating presence. The liturgy might be seen as the link or point of integration of all these different dimensions in the faith community. On the other hand it should also stimulate involvement and participation in these various aspects.

In the liturgy a dual movement takes place. The liturgy aims to bring the lives of the celebrating community to an encounter with and to integrate their lives with the mystery of salvation. On the other hand, in the liturgy, members of the faith community, through their active involvement, is exposed to the working of the Holy Spirit. In this interaction there is growth in relationships between God and his people and in relationships among members themselves, so that salvation is experienced and worked out within the liturgy as the core

event of the community (Borello 1991:84). Liturgy may never be an excuse for non-involvement in life for the liturgy aims to be a forerunner of God's involvement in every life situation. By experiencing salvation through the liturgy, members are sent to discover God's salvic presence through their greater involvement in all dimensions of life.

Salvation is not magically obtained through mere attendance of the liturgy. It demands an active involvement of believers in order to have an encounter with the living Christ through his Spirit. Since liturgy aims at realising life in Christ in members of the faith community, the following elements should be part of the liturgy:

1. To praise the living God, to have communion with Him, rejoice in his liberating presence every day and in all dimensions of life;
2. To be open minded and to learn from the Word of God, to be taught from Scripture;
3. To have communion with other members of the body of Christ, to experience unity through sharing and caring for one another;
4. To intercede for the world and all the suffering taking place, to pray for the coming of the Kingdom, to be made willing to be instruments in God's hands. This is done in the following of God's preferential option for the poor and their suffering. Those on the margin of society must be brought to the centre through the liturgy.

The sacred and the secular are integrated through the liturgy. As Christ became a human and lived amongst ordinary people, the presence of the living God must be experienced within the reality of grassroots life experiences. Every liturgy needs to be concerned with the reality of its members - their political, social, cultural and economical context (Borello 1991:91).

It is clear that unity and community is not an optional extra for the members of the faith community, but an essential instrument for the realisation of salvation in members' lives.

Members are growing in Christ for the benefit of the community while, on the other hand, the community creates the environment and stimulus for members to become more useful in the service of the Kingdom to God.

The liturgy being used in the URC of Ilitha and Ndevana, is still the borrowed and translated liturgies of the NGK of times long past, with almost no change or adaptation to the culture or context of the specific believers. It is often reduced to mere rubrics and the correct execution of what is specified in different rites, with little celebration and involvement of members or with relevance to the context.²⁷ Lay leaders in the local church, among them men, women and youth, should be encouraged and equipped to be creatively involved in the ongoing renewal of the liturgy. Local cultural symbols, methods of expressing jubilation and other emotions and musical instrument used by society, should all be considered for use in the liturgy. Youth choirs can be encouraged to develop new suitable hymns and to revitalise old ones. Workshops and other training events provide opportunities to convey the aims of the liturgy and to consider implementation of new proposals for renewal. It is essential that the local faith community should keep the initiative in this process. No proposals should be imposed on them.

A crucial component of the liturgy is the celebration of the Eucharist. Unfortunately, in most of the local churches in Ilitha and Ndevana, where the Eucharist is celebrated, it is done with borrowed and foreign forms and rituals.²⁸ Wine or a wine-like drink and wafers or small pieces of bread are usually served as symbols. Much of the communal warmth of a meal has also made way for a formal ritual, conducted by the priest or ordained minister.

²⁷ See the conclusion on liturgical practices in chapter 4, p.124

²⁸ See the discussion on the celebration of the Eucharist in chapter 4, p.125.

The meaning of the Eucharist should be rediscovered by the believers and given form through familiar symbols and common substances.

The Eucharist finds its origin in the Old Testament Passover as remembrance of the liberation of Israel from Egypt by the almighty God, its fulfilment in the expiatory death of Jesus Christ and its celebration in God's continuous liberating presence through his Spirit.

The celebration of the eucharist is the celebration of God's glorious act of liberating his people, that act of which the *missio Dei* is the continuous outworking (Saayman 1985:20).

The inclusive, non-discriminatory nature of the Eucharist symbolises a new social order within the community of believers. Against 'normal' social practices, the poor and the marginalised are welcomed and their struggles are heard. In a study on household and meals versus the Temple purity system in Luke-Acts, Elliot (1991:387) has shown that in the course of these two books, the household gradually replaces the Temple as scene for God's actions and for the community of believers. Therefore

... food and meals, together with their associated domestic relations, are used to depict an inclusive form of social relations which transcends previous Jewish purity regulations and gives concrete social expression to the inclusive character of the gospel, the kingdom of God and the Christian mission.

The spread of the Jesus movement in the first century across the Mediterranean world happened from household to household and the domestic relations of hospitality, sharing, giving without expecting return, caring for the ill and those in need and forgiveness became the model of organisation and ethos of the Christian community (Elliot 1991:390,391). Meals thus served as a strong illustration of the behaviour and beliefs of the new community. It functioned in three ways namely: as physical nourishment for survival; as

codes for social interaction; and as symbols of life according the values and norms of the kingdom of God (Elliot 1991:391). It was all in sharp contrast with the institutionalised purity system of the Temple and embodied a new vision of salvation for all. The celebration of the Eucharist meals should thus reflect and symbolise this new order within a specific context.

The Eucharist is not only a remembrance feast or symbol of a new order, it also intends to nourish and strengthen participants. It echoes the Lords prayer - "give us today our daily bread". Nourished by God's meal, participants are sent out to share their little with the hungry, to care for the sick and to take part in the struggle for justice, peace and an equitable economic system.

In societies like Ilitha and Ndevana, where cultural rules govern social interaction at meals and other festive occasion, it is clear that food and meals are more than simply nourishment, they also have social implications and capacities. The rules determine who may eat with whom, when who may eat, and what may be eaten by whom at what time. It is thus essential that the liturgy of the Eucharist should be designed to communicate the vision of the faith community: all inclusive, caring for one another and giving prominence to the marginalised. Common foodstuff, like tea and porridge, used by people every day, should be considered as symbols of the blood and body of Christ in the Eucharist. God can be experienced, praised and thanked by making use of the ordinary food of the poor. Efforts should also be made to bring back a communal festive atmosphere in the Eucharist.

Another area that need attention in the liturgy, is the commemoration of the departed or living-dead. It was earlier said that the validity of African culture, traditional religion and world-view was often denied and ignored by missionaries and the church.²⁹ It is often said

²⁹ See p.135.

that the Word was not allowed to become flesh in the African environment and Christ could not be existentially apprehended (Imasogie 1983:86). Despite strong opposition by many churches, the existence and the veneration of the living-dead or the ancestors stays a reality for many Christians in Africa and they are sought for their assistance, especially in times of existential crisis (Pauw 1975:170-184). Although in another dimension, ancestors still remain human beings but have become more powerful in their capacity to exert influence, to increase or to diminish people's vital force. In the African hierarchical perception of the universe, the ancestors, belonging to the world of the spirits, take a mediatory position between the Supreme Being and human beings. They are still part of the community of their village or clan and stay among their descendants. In a mysterious way, they retain human needs, which are satisfied through worship rendered to them. They want to be remembered and their words and deeds be honoured (Kabasélé 1991:118,119, Olivier 1976:13-15).

This issue is problematic within the Reformed tradition and any veneration of the deceased has been vigorously opposed in the past, especially by White missionaries. In recent years the need to remember leaders has been voiced at several church meetings. In 1994 the meeting of the Cape Synod of the URC held a remembrance service for its deceased ministers and elders. In the light of its tradition of saints, the Roman Catholic Church has a bigger awareness and willingness to make provision for the remembrance of the departed in an African context (Mpagi 1989:47-55).

If faith and life meet in the liturgy, then believers in the local faith community in Ilitha and Ndevana should seriously consider Christ's position in regard to the living-dead and their role in aspects of everyday life. Christ has come so that believers "may have life, and have it to the full" (NIV John 10:10). On the other hand, the ancestors watch over the life of

their descendants and continuously strengthen it. Again, Christ himself said before his ascension: "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (NIV Matthew 28:20b). It is also believed that ancestors are not dead but alive, not merely memory, but they are interacting in different ways with the living. It is therefore important that the members of the Christian faith community should develop a clear vision of Christ supremacy amongst the spirits, not denying the existence of their ancestors, but to acknowledge and accept Christ's unique mediatorship. Christ, as God's only son, and therefore his 'eldest', has also significant implications in terms of the cultural position of an eldest son. Through his resurrection, the Father had restored and crowned him, made him head of the 'new' family of believers. He is the believers' supreme living ancestor and ultimate mediator. As Kabasélé (1991:126) puts it:

Just as Christ, the one priest, does not abolish human mediations, but fulfills them in himself, so does he consummate in himself the mediation exercised by our Ancestors, a mediation that he does not abolish but which, in him, is revealed to be henceforward a subordinate mediation.

At first glance the above opinion may look irreconcilable with Reformed teachings on the sole mediation of Christ but the whole issue asks for serious consideration and reflection of the local lay leaders in dialogue with their theological tradition.

Not all who die become ancestors,³⁰ and therefore attention should be given to all the departed, including children, those who died young, the childless and others usually not taken as ancestors. A day and a service of remembrance for the departed can be set aside with the emphasis on Jesus Christ being the living and greatest ancestor, and the role that

³⁰ Not all people qualify to become ancestors. General elements which make one to be an ancestor include: old age, offspring and a good exemplary life (Idowu 1973:187, Kabasélé 1991:118, Pobee 1979:46)

the Departed can play on behalf of the living (Mpagi 1989:55-65). It also provides an ideal occasion to strengthen ecumenical ties between churches in a local community.

A community that is drawn together into a dynamic celebration of the liturgy, will be a community that grows and is enabled to find a deep sense of its own identity and purpose in Christ (Borello 1991:99).

5.8.3 SYMBOLISM

The importance of symbolism in the socio-cultural context of Africa is very often ignored in the Church. Symbolism plays a key role in daily life. To deprive Africans of their essential symbols also deprives them of their self-awareness and tears them from the reality that has integrated them into the very system by which, through its symbols, they are striving to overcome the contradiction between life and death (Éla 1988:35).

If Christianity wants to reach Africa, if it wants to speak to its people, and to enter their consciousness, it will have to change. To do so, the Church must break the domination of Western rationality, its captivity in the scholastic and conceptual traditions of Western dogmatism (Éla 1988:41). The Church will have to get rid of foreign forms or end up living a relationship with a Gospel with a borrowed personality.

The search for appropriate symbols should start in the life of the community and the experience of the people, especially their socio-historical reality. African symbolism has been depicted as an effort to dramatise the ongoing struggle and victory of life over death (Éla 1988:40). It is essential for the Church to make full use of this tool to re-actualise the Christian mystery, the mystery of the Cross, within a cultural structure. Both the Gospel and Africa require that of us. Because Africans are accustomed to seeing things with eyes that move from sign to meaning and from the visible to the invisible, the Church within the

African community has an unique opportunity to develop a new symbolic understanding of our relationship with God (Éla 1988:45).

An essential part of African symbolism is the oral tradition and the art of storytelling. This style of communication can play an important role to develop a method of integrating, for example, the narrative of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus into the memory of the people. To some degree, this already takes place at Pasika (Easter festivities).³¹ The Gospel must be acted out through storytelling, mimicry and using the whole body. The story mingles the real with the imaginary, and creates archetypal heroes who are both images and symbols. In particular, the animal world of the African story-teller contains an inexhaustible wealth of symbols pertaining to daily life. In the Xhosa culture the rich variety of iintsomi (fables) could be useful.³²

Initiation into various stages of life is also filled with symbolism. In Xhosa culture it implies both a symbolic dying, corresponding to the phase of marginalisation, and a rebirth. In many African societies initiation into manhood is held in a place where one is said 'to die', and the seclusion in the bush is called a 'burial'. Circumcision, as part of the initiation ritual, is itself a reminder of death. Towards the end of the initiate's seclusion, everything connected with his "putting to death" is destroyed. Then the initiate receives a new set of clothes which reminds him of his stepping into a new life. Initiation sums up both the rituals of birth and burial, repeating the drama of life and death. To undergo initiation is to die and to be reborn (Ngxamngxa 1971:201, Van der Vliet 1974:211-245).

³¹ See p.126.

³² For example, Amabalana neentsomi by H.W. Pahl, D.M. Ntusi & H. Nabe. King William's Town: Educum 1975.

Death and rebirth in Christ belong to the crux of the Gospel message. Therefore much of the tradition and symbolism of initiation can be utilised to convey the message of conversion and entrance into a new life in Christ and participation in his body, the Church.

5.8.4 ENCOURAGING EXISTING SUPPORTIVE STRUCTURES

The responsibility of mutual support among members should be continuously stressed. To be a member in the local faith community means to be connected to other members and to be willing to support the welfare of other members. Support should start in the neighbourhood and the ward where members know one another and have daily contact. It should also be organised within the local faith community as a whole. Ecumenical support between faith communities in Ilitha and Ndevana should follow. Links with the broader church community and relevant NGOs can also be established. At services, the occurrence of problems like violence, hardship and stress due to unemployment, abuse of liquor, marriage problems, violence against women, rape and child abuse, should be brought under the attention of members for action. It is mostly women and children that bear the brunt of socio-economic hardship. Organised support by government or NGOs may exist in dealing with some of these problems, but this will not exclude the personal network support of the faith community. Emphasis must not only be placed on relieving symptoms but on building capacity, and on structural transformation, where necessary.

Women are by far the majority in the local churches,³³ and it is their collective efforts that should enjoy most support. Women in general have shown competence in taking collective action to seek solutions to their various problems - from work groups to lighten farm work in rural areas to trading associations and rotating-credit societies in urban areas (Wipper

³³ See p.109 on membership in the local churches.

1984:85). It is this capacity that needs support from within the local church and from outside.

The Manyano (women's league) is an important support structure in most of the local faith communities in Ilitha and Ndevana.³⁴ It plays an essential role in building up women's capacities and strengthening their self image.

... the *Manyano* gives to the women a coherence in a life as fragmented as a broken jar; a belonging in a world of loneliness; something which is their very own in an existence in which everything seems out of reach. The *Manyano* is a haven where a woman may find friendship, where her innate sense of respectability is reinforced, where her incredible capacity for perseverance and endurance is buttressed, her sense of law and order fostered. The *Manyano* gives her hope and a sense of purpose ... (Brandel-Syrier 1962:231).

The supportive role of the *Manyano* should be extended to the whole congregation and women leaders should use their influence to activate men and to unite the whole congregation in supporting one another. Efforts should be made to co-ordinate different effort for the development and empowerment of the community.

5.8.5 TRAINING, GROWTH AND FORMATION

Training, spiritual formation or catechism is an essential and ongoing process within the faith community to strengthen a vision, to build capacities, to motivate members and to integrate them in the mission and commitments of the church. It is concerned with providing information, working towards members' formation and expanding of their capacities and their transformation to impersonate Christ in their everyday living (Nadal 1991:102). In a period of transition and essential social transformation taking place in the

³⁴ See p.131 on the role of the Manyano.

country, it is important that the local church would play their part to equip and to empower its members, not only with knowledge and skills applicable in the church, but also to compliment their ability to handle challenges and to make full use of new opportunities that may arise. All the activities of the faith community should have a dimension of information, formation and transformation. It is not a process that takes place in isolation or that is restricted to the initial entering of a member into the faith community.

Information or knowledge handed down to members, should be based on the full message of the Scriptures, and integrated in and related to real life situations. Basic socio-economic analysis and a focus on members' life struggles should be combined with the Gospel message of hope and renewal in Christ. It is through this process that spiritual formation takes place and perceptions like the image of God, awareness of God's presence and ongoing liberating involvement on behalf of the poor, and the image and purpose of humankind, are formed. It also contributes to a system of values and meaning emerging from the faith community. This leads to the development of a collective conscience which, to a large extent, can guide the behaviour of believers. Formation is also aimed at contributing to a broader culture of learning and acquiring of life skills and expanding of abilities, which will include the need for adult basic education.

This is where the faith community can play a positive role in society, providing constructive value and meaning to God given life, encouraging a collective conscience and value system that builds new cohesion and ubuntu (humanity and compassion) in society. Ordinary members are God's agents for social transformation in the "new" South Africa. It is often said that the oppressed have to take initiative in bringing about change. The local faith communities in Ilitha and Ndevana are well placed to take up this responsibility.

Training and catechism have as final goal the transformation of members of the faith community, accompanying them to have the highest allegiance to the Kingdom of God and to make this Kingdom visible through their influence in the world.

5.9 ECUMENICAL INVOLVEMENT

The Church in Ilitha-Ndevana is split into many different denominations and numerous smaller groupings.³⁵ Ecumenical co-operation is limited to a few occasions like funerals, imijikelo (fund-raising), and some protest actions. Reluctance for ecumenical co-operation contributes to the growth of secularism, further indifference towards the church and a conviction that religion is irrelevant to today's problems (Shorter 1991:125). Ecumenism is no optional extra for the local church.

In obedience to Christ and for the sake of the world the churches are called to be an effective sign of God's presence and compassion before all the nations. For the churches to come divided to a broken world is to undermine their credibility when they claim to have a ministry of universal unity and reconciliation. The ecumenical imperative must be heard and responded to everywhere (WCC 1993:10).

In his high priestly prayer Jesus prayed for all those who will believe in him, "that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:21 NIV). This ecumenical imperative is an essential part of the mission of the church and is grounded and reflects the communion which exists between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The earliest Christian community in Corinth experienced tensions and divisions,³⁶ while the great break between the East and the West took place in 1054. The Western church was

³⁵ See p.100,101 on the different denominations.

³⁶ I Corinthians 1:10-17.

further divided at the time of the Reformation. Many new divisions, especially within the Protestant tradition, have followed over centuries. In recent decades the AIC movement has mushroomed and created thousands autonomous churches in Africa. Amidst this tragic history of disobedience to the ecumenical imperative of the Lord of the church, there are evidence of renewed ecumenical efforts in the sea of divisions (WCC 1993:4,5). A spirit of ecumenism has to be nurtured in the local faith communities based on the biblical imperative and richness of other Christians and traditions to be discovered. The quest for visible unity at grassroots level does not mean uniformity, but is a communion of rich diversity.

The urban and peri-urban situation presents the Church with opportunities to learn from one another and to build a broad Christian fellowship. The close proximity of the various denominations should make ecumenical understanding and co-operation much easier, although it often leads to rivalry for support. A joint action group can be established in the local township, comprising local church leaders from different denominations. A start could be made by extending existing co-operation to involve more denominations, especially different groupings within the AICs. Combined services on ecclesiastical feast days like Christmas, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost, can strengthen mutual understanding and unity. Although apartheid is formally done away with, the destructive racist legacy prevailing in South Africa will be take many years to overcome. Local church communities will have to combine their effort to work towards the eradication of a negative self-image and a feeling of inferiority amongst disadvantaged communities.

Unless there is a transformation in the self-image of poor and disadvantaged black people, empowering themselves to self-reliance and the building of a human community, the destructive effects of alcohol and drug abuse, violence and the breakdown of family life could make "the new South Africa" an empty dream or even a nightmare. Working for the healing of black persons, families

and communities in the aftermath of legalized white racism is one of the top priorities of the church's mission (Botha et al. 1994:25).

In the process of rectifying the past, churches should seriously guard against any new form of racism (Botha et al. 1994:26).

In a wider perspective the local faith community has a ecumenical responsibility to make contact and to conscientise the so-called mainline churches in the more affluent societies about grassroots African initiatives in mission in order for them to recognise that black Christians will play a determining role in the future of Christianity in South Africa(Botha et al. 1994:24). In the past ecumenical contact between the so-called 'mother' or 'sending' church and the 'daughter', younger church or mission field was done in a patronising way. They were usually on the receiving side in terms of teaching and financial aid. There was little openness on the side of the 'mother' church to learn and to experience God's liberating acts in a new context, often the context of the oppressed, the poor and marginalised. The mainline churches should realise that they have lost the initiative and that the biggest growth in numbers and the majority of Christians in South Africa are found among the AICs. Grass roots faith communities have an important role to play in helping traditionally White mainline churches to be transformed and to eradicate apartheid and racism from church practices and structures.

5.10 A VISION FOR THE FAITH COMMUNITY

In conclusion I wish to focus the model for the mission of the local faith community, described in this chapter, in a vision or condensed statement. A vision is seen as a clear conviction on the purpose and function of the church, derived from the Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, shared by most believers in a faith community and relevant to the time and circumstances in which the group find themselves (Hendriks 1992:184,185).

It implies a decisive shift from maintenance to mission. The local church must see itself as a missional community "that is called to serve and declare the reign of God in its context" (McCoy 1994:53,54).

To develop, to build and to implement a shared vision among believers will take time and will need a deliberate effort of the whole leadership in the local church. It will go through a repetitive process of reflection and action, where reflection comprises of an analysis of the context and the performance of the church, listening to different opinions and planning. Action would then be the practical implementation of plans through the various dimensions of the existence of the local faith community. A basic form of congregational study will have to be undertaken "to see the relationship between the current "mess" and their identity as a people, their location in a particular social context, their program, and the processes that help shape their life" (Carrol et al. 1986:179). The Lumko Institute has developed useful material for training and church renewal.³⁷ In a publication, *Towards a Community Church*, five stages in the growth of a local church towards a "communion of communities" are indicated, where all the believers are actively involved and making a contribution according to their gifts and abilities (Prior 1993:88). Stage one is *the provide-for church*, where the pastor or priest organises everything and provides salvation. The second is *the helping church* - members are encouraged to share in the mission and the activities of the church alongside the pastor. In the next stage - *the awakening church* - members take greater responsibility and start to work as equals alongside the ordained. In the fourth stage - *the church of ministries* - different ministries develop in which members

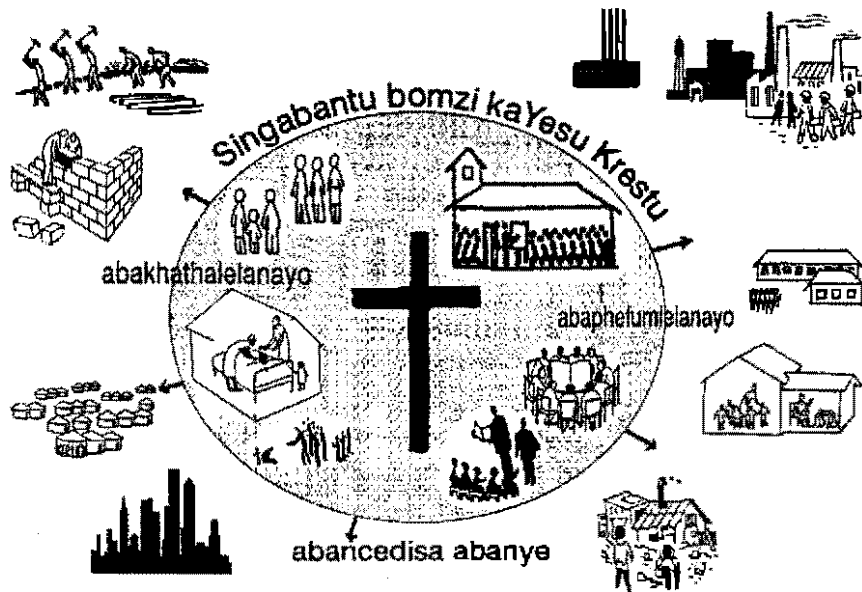
³⁷ The Lumko Institute of the Roman Catholic Church in Germiston has, amongst others, published a pastoral series on the training of community ministries with topics like, Training Parish Councillors (no. 3), Care for the sick (no. 9), Towards Non-dominating Leadership (no. 10), Small Christian Communities (no. 19), Gospel Sharing Methods (no.20), and Towards a Community Church (no. 28).

take full responsibility for all that need to be done inside and outside the congregation.

The final stage - *the communion of communities* - is built on the previous stage, but with every member and believer being part of a small Christian community, which meets regularly in Bible sharing, report back and plan activities on behalf of others, especially those in need and marginalised by society (Prior 1990:7-16). These small communities are linked together and form the local congregation.

The vision is communicated through a process of conscientisation. The pastor should take care not to dominate the process but should encourage and facilitate reflection on the situation and lead people to come to their own discoveries, solutions and actions. This corresponds to what Schreiter (1995:25-36) calls the development of "a local theology", the beginning of new ideas, where exiting theologies and practices come under scrutiny due to changing or crisis circumstances.

FIGURE 3 : VISION STATEMENT FOR THE LOCAL FAITH COMMUNITY



(source of art clips: Lumko Institute, Germiston)

Singabantu bomzi kaYesu Krestu,

(We are members of the household of Christ.)

- Having an encounter with Christ, the head of the household;
- With God the father, he is the source of all life and creation;
 - Christ is our eldest brother and our living ancestor;
- We are engaged in ongoing personal and community transformation;
 - We read and retell the Gospel in the context of life;
- We share ideas and experiences, so to discover God's liberating presence;

abaphefumlelanayo, abakhathalelanayo,

(living in fellowship, who care for one another.)

- We discover our own value and build capacity;
- We support one another and find strength in unity;
- We take responsibility for one another;

abancedisa abanye.

(and who serve others around us.)

- We exist to serve humanity;
- We are committed to the marginalised;
- We work towards *shalom* (peace and prosperity) in society.

-----ooOoo-----

WORKS CONSULTED

- Abraham, K.C. & Mbuy-Beya, Bernadette (eds) 1994. Spirituality of the Third World. Maryknoll N.Y.: Orbis Books.
- Ackermann, Denise M. 1994. A "Spirituality of Risk" for Christian witness in South Africa. International Review of Mission LXXXIII (no.328, January): 123-128.
- Africa Insight 1987. Country Profile: Transkei and Ciskei. Africa Insight 17 (no.2): 142-146.
- Anderson, Allan 1992. Bazalwane: African Pentecostals in South Africa. Pretoria: UNISA.
- Anderson, Allan & Otwang, Samuel 1993. Tumelo: The Faith of African Pentecostals in South Africa. Studia Originalia 17. Pretoria: UNISA.
- Ayliff, John & Whiteside, Joseph 1912. History of the Amambo generally known as Fingos. Reprinted 1962. Cape Town: Struik.
- Barker, Kenneth 1985. The NIV Study Bible. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Bediako, Kwame 1992. Theology and Identity: The impact of culture upon Christian thought in the Second Century and in Modern Africa. London: Oxford Regnum Books.
- Bekker, S.B. & De Wet, C.I. 1982. Some Human and Structural Constraints on Rural Development. The Amatola Basin: A Case Study. Development Studies Working Paper No.5. Grahamstown: ISER Univ. Rhodes.
- Bergh, J.S. & Visagie, J.C. 1985. The Eastern Cape Frontier Zone 1660-1985. Durban: Butterworth.
- Black, P.A. 1980. Economic development in the Ciskei, in N. Charton (ed), Ciskei: A South African Homeland. London: Croom Helm.

- Borello, Andrew 1991. The Celebration of the Liturgy Builds Community, in Becoming a Creative Local Church, edited by Patrick J. Hartin, Bernard F. Connor & Paul B. Decock, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 82-100.
- Bosch, D.J. 1979. A Spirituality of the Road. Ontario: Herald Press.
- 1986. Dissension among Christians: How do we handle contentious issues?, in Healing in the name of God, edited by Pieter GR de Villiers, Pretoria: CB Powell UNISA, 1-8.
- 1989. Mission in Jesus' way: a perspective from Luke's Gospel. Missionalia 17 (no.1, April): 3-21.
- 1990. Goeie nuus vir armes ... en rykes. Pretoria: UNISA.
- 1991a. Transforming Mission. Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission. Maryknoll: Orbis.
- 1991b. Re-Evangelisation? Reflecting on the contributions of J.N.J. Kritzinger and S. Mkhathswa. Journal of Theology for Southern Africa (no.76, September): 122-131.
- Botha, Nico, Kritzinger, Klippiess & Maluleke, Tinyiko 1994. Crucial issues for Christian mission - a Missiological analysis of contemporary South Africa. International Review of Mission LXXXIII (no.328, January): 21-36.
- Bourdillon, M. 1990. Religion and Society: a text for Africa. Gweru: Mambo Press.
- Brandel-Syrier, Mia 1962. Black Woman in Search of God. London: Lutterworth Press.
- Bujo, Benezet 1992. African Theology in its social context. Maryknoll N.Y.: Orbis Books.
- Carroll, Jackson, Dudley, Carl S. & McKinney, William (eds) 1986. Handbook for congregational studies. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

- Centre For Information Analysis, 1990. SATBVC Countries, Statistical Abstracts 1989. Halfway House: Development Bank of Southern Africa.
- Charton, N. 1985. Resettlement in the Ciskei, in Up against the fences, edited by H. Giliomee and L. Schlemmer, Cape Town: David Philip, 250-265.
- Cloete, G.D. & Smit, D.J. 1984. A Moment of Truth. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Cole, J. 1981. Western Cape: Black influx control and expulsion, in An Empty Table?, edited by M. Nash and N Charton, Johannesburg: SACC, 35-41.
- Cook, G. 1980. Scattered towns or an urban system?, in Ciskei: A South African Homeland, edited by N. Charton, London: Croom Helm, 30-47.
- Daneel, M.L. 1987. Quest for belonging. Gweru: Mambo Press.
- De Gruchy, John W. 1994. Christian Community, in Doing Theology in Context: South African Perspectives. Theology and Praxis Volume I, edited by John de Gruchy and C. Villa-vicencio, Cape Town: David Philip, 125-138.
- De Santa Ana, Julio 1977. Good News to the Poor: The Challenge of the Poor in the History of the Church. Geneva: World Council of Churches.
- 1992. Ministerial formation in Latin America: The example of the ecumenical service centre for evangelization and popular education (CESEP) in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Ministerial Formation Unit I: Unity and Renewal, Ecumenical Theological Formation, WCC Geneva Switzerland 57 (April): 17-28.
- Development Bank of Southern African 1990. SATBVC Countries: Statistical Abstracts 1989. Halfway House.
- 1992. Dual logic. Headway. Newsletter of the Development Bank of Southern Africa. December: 1-3.

- De Wet, C.J. 1980. Betterment and trust in a rural Ciskei village. Social Dynamics 6: 24-35.
- Directorate of Planning 1985. Regional Development Plan: Region 1 – Bisho. Draft report. Bisho.
- Dulles, Avery, SJ. 1976. Models of the Church. Gill and Macmillan: Dublin.
- Du Plessis, J. 1911. A history of Christian Missions in South Africa. London: Longmans, Green.
- Duraisingh, Christopher 1994. Editorial, International Review of Mission LXXXIII (no.328, January): 3-5.
- Éla, Jean-Marc 1988. My Faith as an African. Maryknoll N.Y.: Orbis Books.
- Elliot, J.H. 1991. Household and meals versus the Temple purity system: Patterns of replication in Luke-Acts. Hervormde Teologiese Studies 47 (no.2): 386-399.
- Erasmus, J. 1991. Economic and Social Memorandum Region D 1990. Halfway House: Development Bank of Southern Africa.
- Esterhuysen, Pieter (ed). 1987. The Republic of Ciskei, supplement to Africa Institute Bulletin 27 (no.6): 1-10.
- Geertz, Clifford 1973. The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.
- Gerdener, G.B.A. 1958. Recent Developments in the South African Mission Field. Cape Town: N.G. Kerk-uitgewers.
- Gidsplan 1991. see Gidsplankomitee vir Oos-Londen/Berlin/King William's Town Substreek 1991.
- Gidsplankomitee vir Oos-Londen/Berlin/King William's Town Substreek 1991. Ontwerpgidsplan. East London.

- Gutierrez, Gustavo 1983. We Drink from Our Own Wells: The spiritual Journey of a People. London: SCM Press.
- Haines, Richard & Wood, Geoffrey 1995. What of the youth? Aspirations and survival strategies from the Eastern Cape. Development Southern Africa 12 (no.4): 605-612.
- Hartin, Patrick J., Connor, Bernard F. & Decock, Paul B. (eds) 1991. Becoming a Creative Local Church. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.
- Hayward, Victor E.W. (ed). 1963. African Independent Church Movements. Research pamphlets no.11. London: Edinburgh House Press.
- Helliker, K. 1981. Towards a materialist analysis of the South African state policy of urban relocation with particular reference to Mdantsane. Hons. essay, Rhodes University, Grahamstown (unpublished).
- Hendriks, Jurgens 1992. Strategiese beplanning in die gemeente. Die beginsels & praktyk van gemeentevernuwing. Wellington: Hugenote-Uitgewers.
- Hirmer, Oswald 1991. Gospel Sharing Methods: The Pastoral Use of the Bible (TCM No.20). Germiston: Lumko Institute.
- Hirst, Manton M. 1991. A quarrel between half-brothers. The Kaffrarian Museun Xhosa History Series No.1: 1-14.
- Imasogie, Osadolor 1983. Guidelines for Christian theology in Africa. Achimota, Ghana: Africa Christian Press.
- Kabasélé, François 1991. Christ as Ancestor and Elder Brother, in Faces of Jesus in Africa, edited by Robert J. Schreiter, Maryknoll N.Y.: Orbis Books, 116-127.

- Karanja, Wambui Wa 1987. 'Outside Wives' and 'Inside wives' in Nigeria: A study of changing perceptions in Marriage, in Transformation of African Marriages. International African Seminars New Series No. 3, edited by David Parkin & David Nyamwaya. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 247-261.
- Kilbride, Philip Leroy & Kilbride, Janet Capriotti 1990. Changing Family Life in East Africa. Women and Children at Risk. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Kinoti, George 1994. Hope for Africa and what the Christians can do. Nairobi: AISRED.
- Kinghorn, Johan 1986a. Die groei van 'n teologie- van sendingbeleid tot verskeidenheidsteologie, in Die NG Kerk en Apartheid, edited by Johan Kinghorn, Johannesburg: Macmillan, 86 - 116.
- 1986b. 'n Evaluasie van Apartheidsteologie, in Die NG Kerk en Apartheid, edited by Johan Kinghorn, Johannesburg: Macmillan, 167 - 193.
- Kinsler, Ross 1992. Pilgrimage and Encounter Ministerial Formation Unit I: Unity and Renewal, Ecumenical Theological Formation, WCC Geneva Switzerland, 59 (October): 5-9.
- Kritzinger, J.J. 1979. 'n Missionêre bediening - op weg na strukture vir 'n jong kerk. Pretoria: NG Kerkboekhandel Transvaal.
- 1985. Statistiese beskrywing van die Godsdienstige Verspreiding van die bevolking van Suid-Afrika. Pretoria: ISWEN.
- Kritzinger, J.J., Meiring, P.G.J. & Saayman, W.A. 1994. On being witnesses. Halfway House: Orion.
- Kritzinger, J.N.J. 1991. Re-Evangelising the White Church. Journal of Theology for Southern Africa (no.76, September): 106-116.

- 1995. Studying religious communities as agents of change: an agenda for missiology. Inaugural paper delivered as professor in Missiology at UNISA, Pretoria (unpublished).
- Kritzinger, J.N.J. & Saayman, W.A. 1990. Sendingwetenskap. Enigste studiegids vir MSA302-C, Studiegids 2 vir MSR521-X. Pretoria: UNISA.
- Küng, Hans 1968. The Church. London: Search.
- Levine, Michiel, 1993. Unemployment in the Eastern Cape. Daily Despatch, East London 5 March 1993.
- Lobinger, F. 1984. Towards Non-Dominating Leadership. Lady Frere: Lumko Missiological Institute (TCM No.10).
- Luzbetak, Louis J. 1988. The church and cultures: new perspectives in missiological anthropology. Maryknoll N.Y.: Orbis
- Manona, C.W. 1980. Ethnic relations in the Ciskei, in Ciskei, edited by N.Charton, London: Croom Helm
- Maxwell, W.A. 1971. The Fingos and the Fingo village. Annals of the Grahamstown Historical Society. no.1: 3-8.
- Mbiti, John S. 1969. African religions and philosophy. London: Heinemann.
- McCoy, Micheal J. 1994. Equipping the people of God for Christian witness: an Anglican account. International Review of Mission LXXXIII (no.328, January): 45-55.
- Methodist Historical Society of South Africa 1958. John Ayliff and the Emancipation of the Fingoes. Journal of the Methodist Historical Society of South Africa iii (no.1, April): 21-24.
- Mesters, Carlos 1989. Defenseless Flower: A new reading of the Bible. Maryknoll N.Y.: Orbis Books.

- Minear, Paul 1960. Images of the Church in the New Testament. Philadelphia: Westminster.
- Mofokeng, Takatso A. 1983. The Crucified among the crossbearers. Towards a Black Christology. Kampen: J.H. Kok.
- Mostert, Noël 1992. Frontiers: The epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People. London: Jonathan Cape.
- Mpagi, Peter Wasswa 1989. The Theology of the Departed and a Suggested Service. African Christian Studies 5 (no.3): 43-67.
- Nadal, Paul 1991. Catechesis: Information, Formation & Transformation of the Community, in Becoming a Creative Local Church, edited by Patrick J. Hartin, Bernard F. Connor & Paul B. Decock, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 82-100.
- Ngubane, Harriet 1987. The consequences for women of marriage payments in a society with patrilineal descent, in Transformation of African Marriages. International African Seminars New Series No.3, edited by David Parkin & David Nyamwaya. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 173-181.
- Ngxamngxa, A.N.N. 1971. The function of circumcision among the Xhosa-speaking tribes in historical perspective, in Man: Anthropological Essays presented to O.S. Raum, edited by E.J. de Jager, Cape Town: Struik, 183-204.
- Nolan, Albert 1976. Jesus before Christianity: The Gospel of Liberation. Cape Town: David Philip.
- Nolan, Albert 1988. God in South Africa. Cape Town: David Philip.
- Odendaal, André 1984. Vukani Bantu! The Beginning of Black Protest Politics in South Africa to 1912. Cape Town: David Philip.
- Odendaal, J.N. 1987. The Witness of the Church in Ciskei. Pretoria: ISWEN.

- Olivier, C.C. 1976. Die religie van die Gcaleka. Unpublished MA thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Oosthuizen, G.C. 1995. Indigenous Christianity and the future of the Church in South Africa. Journal of Constructive Theology 1 (no.1): 25-41.
- Oosthuysen, J.C. Sr. 1972. Isilimela. Die ploegtyd van die Bantoesending in die Kaapland. Kaapstad: N.G. Kerk-uitgewers.
- Pauw, B.A. 1975. Christianity and Xhosa Tradition. Cape Town: Oxford.
- Peires, J.B. 1981. The House of Phalo. A History of the Xhosa People in the Days of their Independence. Johannesburg: Ravan.
- 1989. The Dead will arise. Johannesburg: Ravan.
- Plaatje, Sol. T. s.a. Native Life in South Africa, before and since the European War and the Boer Rebellion. London: P.S. King & Son, Ltd.
- Pobee, J.S. 1979. Toward an African Theology. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Prior, Anselm 1990. Towards a Community Church. The way ahead for today's parish. No.28 in the Series: Training for community ministries. Germiston: Lumko.
- 1993. A Communion of communities: The mission and growth of a local church as reflected in the publications of the Lumko Institute. Unpublished MTh thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- 1994. Equipping the people of God for Christian witness - a Roman Catholic account, International Review of Mission LXXXIII (no.328, January): 57-65.
- Raum, O.F. & De Jager, E.J. 1972. Transition and Change in a Rural Community. Alice: Fort Hare Univ. Press.

- Robertson, Claire C. 1984. Women in the urban economy, in African Women south of the Sahara, edited by Margaret Jean Hay and Sharon Stichter. London: Longman, 33-50.
- Saayman, Willem 1985. The Eucharist in mission perspective. Theologia Evangelica XVIII (no.2): 18-24.
- 1990. Christian Missions in South Africa: Achievements, Failures and the future, in Christianity in South Africa, edited by Martin Prozesky, Bergvlei: Southern Book Publishers.
- 1991. Christian Mission in South Africa. Pretoria: UNISA.
- 1992. "If you were to die today, do you know for certain that you would go to heaven?". Missionalia 20 (no.3, Nov): 159-173.
- 1994. Christian mission in South Africa: a historical reflection, International Review of Mission LXXXIII (no.328, January): 11-19.
- Saayman, W.A., Kritzinger, J.N.J., Maluleke, Sam & Botha, Nico, 1994. Thinking about the "Missiological" in theses and dissertations. Unpublished article, Unisa M- and D-seminar, Pretoria 15 September 1994.
- Schreier, Robert J. 1985. Constructing local theologies. London: SCM Press.
- Shorter, Aylward 1991. The Church in the African City. London: Geoffrey Chapman.
- Smit, D.J. 1984. "In a Special Way the God of the Destitute, the Poor, and the Wronged", in A Moment of Truth, edited by G.D. Cloete and D.J. Smit, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 53-65.
- Smit, P. & Kok, P.C. 1980. Bevolksverspreiding in the R.S.A., 1970-1981 Ontledings van die voorlopige 1980-sensusgewens. Pretoria: HSRC.

- Spradley, James P. 1980. Participant Observation. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Sprunger, A.R. 1972. The contribution of African Independent Churches to a relevant Theology for Africa, in Relevant Theology for Africa, edited by Hans-Jurgen Becken, Durban: Missiological Institute L.T.C.
- Sundkler, B.G.M. 1961. Bantu prophets in South Africa. 2nd edition. London: Oxford University Press.
- SSP 1983. See Surplus People Project.
- Surplus People Project. 1983. Forced removals in South Africa, volume 2. Cape Town.
- Thomas, T. 1980. Malnutrition in the Ciskei. Unpublished report to the Friends of the Ciskei. Grahamstown: Rhodes University.
- Thorpe, S.A. 1991. African Traditional Religions. Manualia Didactica 16. Pretoria: UNISA.
- Van der Vliet, Virginia 1974. Growing up in Traditional Society, in The Bantu speaking People of Southern Africa, edited by W.D. Hammond-Tooke, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. 211-245.
- Van Schalkwyk, Annalet 1994. Christian witness and women's issues, International Review of Mission LXXXIII (no.328, January):105-113.
- Villa-Vicencio, Charles 1992. A Theology of Reconstruction. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- WCC 1993. See World Council of Churches.
- World Council of Churches 1993. Ecumenical Formation: Ecumenical Reflections and suggestions. A study document of the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches. Geneva.

- Weber, Hans-Ruedi 1981. Experiments with Bible study. Geneva: WCC.
- West, M. 1975. Bishops and prophets in a Black city. Cape Town: David Philip.
- White, Luise 1984. Women in the changing African Family, in African Women south of the Sahara, edited by Margaret Jean Hay and Sharon Stichter. London: Longman, 53-68.
- Whitehead, E.E. & Whitehead, J.D. 1982. Community of faith: Models and strategies for developing Christian communities. New York: Seabury.
- Wilson, Francis & Ramphela, Mamphela 1989. Uprooting Poverty. Cape Town: David Philip.
- Wipper, Aubrey 1984. Women's voluntary associations, in African Women south of the Sahara, edited by Margaret Jean Hay and Sharon Stichter, London: Longman, 69-86.
- Yorke, Gosnell L. 1995 Biblical hermeneutics: an Afrocentric perspective. Religion & Theology 2 (no.2): 145-158.

NEWSPAPERS

- Daily Nation, Nairobi, 15/06/95, p. 20.
- Daily Nation, Nairobi, 10/06/95, p.1.
- Daily Nation, Nairobi, 17/06/95, p.14.
- Daily Nation, Nairobi, 22/06/95, p.19.
- Daily Nation, Nairobi, 05/07/95, p.18.
- Eastern African Standard, Nairobi, 16/06/95, p.6.

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

Interviews were conducted in the period January 1991 to October 1995.

<u>Informant</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Position/ type of information</u>
Belewa, Mr.	m	50	East London	school inspector, on statistics of schools
Bongo, Nowest	f	45	Ndevana	member of the U.R. Church
Booi, Jane	f	65	Ilitha	pensioner & member of the U.R. Church
Booi, Hota	m	66	Ilitha	member of the U.R. Church
Booi, Elsie	f	62	Ilitha	member of the U.R. Church
Cwaba, Fole	m	55	Ilitha	elder & member of the U.R. Church
Dalasile, Mrs.	f	48	Ndevana	sister in charge of the clinic at Ndevana
Dambe, Nomfusi	f	50	Ilitha	member of the U.R. Church
Dyanopu, Dosh	m	68	Ilitha	elder & member of the U.R. Church
Gcoyi, Koboto	m	50	Ndevana	elder & member of the U.R. Church
Gcoyi, Martha	f	45	Ndevana	chairperson women's league U.R. Church
Gcoyi, Nomthandazo	f	20	Ndevana	youth member of the U.R. Church
Gcoyi, Nophumzile	f	34	Ndevana	member of the U.R. Church
Gedezana, July	m	89	Ilitha	senior elder & member of the U.R. Church
Gqadushe, Siphwo	m	30	Ilitha	deacon & member of the U.R. Church
Gqumo, Maarman	m	60	Ilitha	member of the U.R. Church
Gqumo, Lena	f	58	Ilitha	member of the U.R. Church
Gqumo, Peter	m	26	Ilitha	deacon & member of the U.R. Church
Gushman, Nompelo	f	35	Ndevana	member of the U.R. Church
Jantjie, Andries	m	66	Ndevana	elder & member of the U.R. Church
Jantjie, Getrude	f	58	Ndevana	member of the U.R. Church
Jedana, John	m	50	Ilitha	pastor, Jerusalem in Zion congregation

Kalipa, Nowanisi	f	75	Ndevana	pensioner & senior member of U.R.Church
Khalipha, H.	m	55	Ndevana	elder & member of the U.R.Church
Khalipha, Nomisile	f	30	Ndevana	member of the U.R.Church
Konzapi, Nolulamo	f	45	Ndevana	member of the U.R.Church
Kupiso, Simon	m	28	Ilitha	deacon & member of the U.R.Church
Lidziya, Elliot	m	71	Ilitha	elder & member of the U.R.Church
Lidziya, Lina	f	68	Ilitha	pensioner & member of the U.R.Church
Lidziya, Nothembile	f	45	Ilitha	member of the U.R.Church
Madikane, Qinshile	m	58	Ilitha	member of the U.R.Church
Madonono, Andrew	m	60	Ilitha	scribe & member of the U.R.Church
Madonono, Eslina	f	58	Ilitha	member of the U.R.Church
Mankayi, Nobulelo	f	46	Ndevana	member of the U.R.Church
Maramba, Klaas	m	52	Ilitha	member of the U.R.Church
Maseti, Alfred	m	68	Ilitha	senior elder & member of the U.R.Church
Maseti, Gladys	f	63	Ilitha	member of the U.R.Church
Mazomba, ME	m	50	Ilitha	pastor St John's Spiritual Apost. Ch.in SA
Mgcina, Mr.	m	45	Ndevana	traditional diviner and healer (<u>iggirha</u>)
Mkafuli, Aron	m	63	Ndevana	elder & member of the U.R.Church
Mkafuli, Notime	f	61	Ndevana	member of the U.R.Church
Mkafuli, Amos	m	19	Ndevana	non active church member
Mlambomni, Kleinbooi	m	77	Ilitha	pensioner & member of the U.R.Church
Mlambomni, Nolast	f	74	Ilitha	pensioner & member of the U.R.Church
Moltena, Nosakhele	f	48	Ilitha	member of the U.R.Church
Mqikela, Edith	f	42	Ilitha	teacher, situation at schools
Mqikela, Moses	m	45	Ilitha	elder & member of the U.R.Church

Mxhosa, Ester	f	61	Ilitha	pensioner & member of the U.R.Church
Ntlokwana, Mr.	m	35	Ndevana	member Filipu Reformed Church in Zion
Peter, Nosayineti	f	63	Ilitha	leader in Women's league of the U.R.C.
Saule, Nowinile	f	46	Ilitha	member of the U.R.Church
Saule, Nowentye	m	48	Ilitha	member of the U.R.Church
Skafu, Zilindile	m	45	Ilitha	elder & member of the U.R.Church
Skafu, Nolizwi	f	41	Ilitha	member of the U.R.Church
Stofile, Nzimani	m	44	Ilitha	member of the U.R.Church
Stofile, Nokholekile	f	38	Ilitha	member of the U.R.Church
Strübing, Hans-J.	m	35	Ilitha	pastor Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tostile, Nomutile	f	38	Ndevana	member of the U.R.Church
Tostile, Samson	m	41	Ndevana	deacon & member of the U.R.Church
Vongwe, Nonkoliso	f	20	Ndevana	youth member of the U.R. Church
Vuso, Nobekile	f	35	Ndevana	member of the U.R.Church
Willem, Niklaas	m	45	Ndevana	evangelist Filipu Reformed Church in Zion
Yonani, Ennie	f	75	Ndevana	pensioner & member of the U.R.Church