

EMPOWERING AFRICAN ELITES FOR CHRISTIAN PRAXIS : THE EXPERIENCE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF PRETORIA

By

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*submitted in part of the requirements for
the degree of*

MASTER OF THEOLOGY IN MISSIOLOGY – WITH SPECIALISATION IN URBAN MINISTRY

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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FEBRUARY 2003

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to many people whose assistance helped me do research into the topic, write and complete this dissertation. Their advice, patience and encouragement and prayers are particularly appreciated.

My special thanks are to my supervisor Prof. Tinyiko Maluleke, Dean of the Faculty of Theology and Biblical Religions of the University of South Africa, who provided me with the necessary moral and technical assistance to complete the dissertation.

I equally appreciate the full support of Dr. Stephan De Beer, my joint supervisor, Director of Pretoria Community Ministries and Interim Director of Institute for Urban Ministry.

My special thanks are also extended to Dr. Emmanuel Tshilenga, Founder and Pastor of the International Church of Pretoria, who provided me with the necessary information on the congregation and its vision, and to Pastor Nupanga Weanzana for his full support in the completion of the dissertation. I equally thank all the brethren who interceded, for their most needed prayers.

I am greatly indebted to my mother and my whole family, people who have suffered the pain of separation for long.

Lastly I thank God the Almighty for His full providence concerning this Work.

SUMMARY

This dissertation evaluates the vision of empowering African elites in the International Church of Pretoria and suggests the ways to successfully train and empowers these Africans for the positive socio-political transformation of Africa.

Such Christian empowering is so complex that it has to deal with the spiritual, psychological, intellectual and/or technical and socio-political aspects of the life of the trainee.

After describing the problems that prevent these elites from behaving adequately and the portrait that can facilitate the successful selection of their trainers the dissertation proposes the guidelines of the empowering programmes for different elite groups.

In the main the curriculum comprises a four-level conversion component for proper Christian life, and a psychotherapy empowerment coupled with horizontalisation for their liberation from psychological and socio-political evils, and a programme for the selection and the training of the spiritual leaders of the African elites.

KEY WORDS: Empowering; empowering elite; empowering African elite; empowering for Christian praxis; African elite and Christian praxis; elite and socio-political responsibilities; African elite and socio-political betterment, equipping African elite for Christian praxis; training elite for socio-political betterment.

DECLARATION

I declare that *Empowering African Elites for Christian Praxis: The Experience of the International Church of Pretoria* is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

All the biblical quotations and references have been taken from the *MacArthur Study Bible: New King James Version*.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING THE THEME

1.1 Introduction

This study is an attempt to evaluate the vision of the International Church of Pretoria and see how to improve its effectiveness. This congregation has the vision of empowering African elites for Christian praxis. Eventually, it intends to empower these elites to become instrumental for spiritual and socio-political betterment in their communities. The research attempts thus to critically appreciate the vision and see how effective it has been, how it has operated, and to make the necessary suggestions to improve its efficiency.

The chapter comprises seven sections. The *introduction* motivates the study and introduces the different parts of the chapter. The *background and motivation* explain what led to the research and motivate the objectives of the study. The *methodologies and goal definition* concern the methods used during the research and broadly define the goal and the objectives. The *clarification of terminology* deals with the explanation of key terminologies used in the study. The *scope of the study* describes the limitations of the research. The *sources of information* list the main literature related to my research. The *main divisions of the study* briefly introduce the content of each chapter of the dissertation.

1.2 Background and Motivation

This section describes a number of different experiences that have motivated me to work on the topic “Empowering African Elites for Christian Praxis: The experience of the International Church of Pretoria”.

Coming from the Democratic Republic of Congo, then Zaire, on 18 February 1994, I joined the International Church of Pretoria in March 1994 and became

part of the leadership in May 1996. Later on I learnt that the vision of the church was to train and empower African elites for Christian praxis. This was later written down in pamphlets and distributed in the congregation (International Church s.a.:1-2). Unfortunately, I remained almost unaffected. But later on, I started to notice that the people whom the International Church of Pretoria calls African elites often play, or are generally called to play primary roles in their communities. Thus they often exert special influence on others and enjoy higher consideration. Then I realised that the power in their hands, whether political, economic, intellectual or otherwise, could be better used for God's glory and the benefit of their communities if these elite were properly ministered to in terms of Christian principles. Beside all this, I also noticed that as Christians, they generally faced the particular challenges of other religions and of science. At the same time it became clear to me that the achievements of the vision of empowering African elites for Christian praxis were generally poor; and they could hardly be measurably appreciated because of the lack of a measurement mechanism. Training and empowering African elites to become Christians with a deeper relationship with God and true love for other people, to subsequently be instrumental for the better future of their people, seemed to me an excellent idea. And carefully studied and developed, this vision could offer the church an appropriate partnership with socio-political visions that plan for the positive socio-political transformation of life in this continent, such as the African Renaissance and NEPAD. These are the things which also helped to me understand the importance of the vision and the necessity of working on this project. However, the way to go about it remained a difficult question, not only for me but also for the whole leadership.

As years went by I started to notice some of the problems of these African elites. This seemed to be a breakthrough. For if one cannot identify the problem, there is no way of solving it though it stands there. Gardner (2002) lists a number of stages in any process of problem solving. He then says, "First, we must understand exactly what the problem is before we can set out to solve it"

(2002:146). I noticed, for example, that these African elites come across particular challenges from science and from such religions as Islam, etc. They generally have a superficial faith, an inferiority complex, political or civic irresponsibility, and subtle hatred of their own people, acutely selfish ambitions and greed as some of their problems. Besides, Dorr (1996) demonstrates that the elites are generally the cause of most of poverty and suffering in today's world, which many of African elites have also proved to be. This fact coupled with the idea that God who touched and used such people of influence as Moses, Joseph, Esther, Daniel and Zacchaeus for the shalom of their people can also touch these African elites to contribute to the positive transformation of their communities equally strengthened my conviction of the necessity of working on the project of empowering of these Africans for the welfare of their people.

Then my meeting with Dr. De Beer, Interim Director of the Institute for Urban Ministry in 1999, who explained me the academic and financial opportunity that the Institute offered for a training in urban ministry, encouraged me to make up my mind to work on the project. My decision was thus to study how to develop the project in order to produce guidelines for training programmes, properly designed to boost the spiritual and socio-political qualities of the African elites so as to help them to become real contributors to the positive transformation of their communities. Such guidelines are very important; for they can easily feature in the work to be done, but also serve as a measurement reference. At this stage complete and well-detailed empowering programmes are not altogether possible; for they would require too much time, money and effort, yet result in a work more speculative than real.

The biblical conversion and, specially, the positive contribution to their community of such eminent people as Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), Nicodemus (John 3:1-3; 7:50-52; 19:39-40), the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26-40), Saul (Acts 9:1-20), Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48), Lydia (Acts 16:11-15), etc, have also encouraged me to believe that the African elites could equally be transformed to

bring better contributions to today's community.

1.3 Statement of the Thesis

This study proposes a species of political theology where the church tries to actively engage in the positive change of individuals and institutions (Halvorson 1969:279). Practically, it must reach its conclusions through the evaluation of the vision of empowering African elites in ICP. So, the question it has to answer is, "How can the International Church of Pretoria empower its African elites to play a vital role for the positive socio-political transformation in Africa?" More specifically, the question can be narrowed down to this: "What possible empowering programmes can deeply impact on the African elites, to effectively contribute to the positive socio-political transformation of Africa?" After evaluating the vision and analysing these people's spiritual, intellectual, psychological and socio-political problems and challenges, I expect the answer to this question to provide guidelines for comprehensive empowering programmes for both the facilitators and all other elite groups.

1.4 Methodologies and Goal Definition

My methodology consists first of all in a deep learning insertion of myself into elites' communities in order to know what they are and what they do. Therefore, I have been in close contact with them for about six years. I have been preaching to them, listening to them and discussing matters with them. This has allowed me to learn more about, and of, them. Before writing this dissertation, I reconsidered all the experiences I had ever had and analysed them, as will be seen in the following chapters. I have also been visiting a few congregations in Pretoria Central Prison, especially those containing the people who have been the focus of this study of mine. During these visits I have been also talking to both the leadership and the members of these churches, trying to learn about their joys and challenges. During my field research I generally observed the elite while taking part in their activities; sometimes I could just observe them and take note.

To write my dissertation I generally began with a concrete and personal experience, which I could then back up with other people's experiences – especially those taken from their writings.

The goal of the dissertation is thus to propose the guidelines which can help empower the elites to be able to live out their Christian life, contribute to the positive transformation of their communities and embark on a successful ministry, if any. I intend thus that the empowering of African elite for Christian praxis should be a comprehensive and impacting activity, involving both the spiritual leader and the trainee. This also implies that both of them need a conversion of some kind in their interaction, for a really deeper transformation. This further means that the missionary and the mission also need to be affected and transformed in order to enjoy the full benefit. Accordingly, expanding the title of his book *Transforming Mission*, Bosch (1991:511) says that this means that mission is to be understood both as an activity that transforms reality and that there is a constant need for mission itself to be transformed. The truth of seeing the transformation of both the social reality and the mission sets me thinking not only of how to affect and transform my own socio-political reality, but also and above all how to alter the mission of the church and all the ways in which it is conducted. That is why I have put a special emphasis on the correct attitude and character of the ecclesiastical elites/facilitators, and on the way they should work, as prerequisites for positive socio-political change. I thus think that De Beer and Venter (1998:33) are fully correct when stating,

Transformation is seen as the goal of contextual theologies. The missionary, minister or Christian worker must be transformed as well as the church or organisation and as these individuals and groups experience transformation, they will also be able to facilitate the transformation of their communities.

Here the positive transformation of the missionary or facilitator is crucial for the success of the mission. I thus wish my method and approach to be deeply

transformative for us as theologians, ministers or church workers at various levels: religiously, intellectually, morally and socio-politically, so that we are able to facilitate the positive transformation of other people's lives. I think this is equally the wish of the following theologians as seen in their statements. Describing a self-transcending theologian Phan (1996:114) maintains, "The theologian is one who is converted – intellectually, morally, and religiously – that is to say a self-transcending subject who falls in love with God unrestrictedly." Accordingly, describing the person who can construct a contextualised theology Bevans (1998:97) has this to say,

(sic)Task of constructing a contextualised theology is not about producing a particular body of any kind of text; it is about attending to the affective and cognitive operation in the self-transcending subject. It is not about producing an appropriate theology but about being an authentic, converted subject.

And later on, he states, "The starting point is transcendental, concerned with one's own experience of oneself" (1998:98). Then he observes, "Theology is possible only for the converted subject, only for the person who has allowed God to touch and transform his/her life " (1998:99). So, the minister or church worker should be the model for positive social transformation.

Concerning the challenge of science and other religions, I have opted for an integral worldview. Speaking of such a worldview, Wink (1998:18) advises against splitting the religious reality from the material one because this hermetically seals off our theology from the discoveries of science, and science from the wisdom of theology. So, not only have I used science discoveries in this dissertation but also religious debates on Christianity and Islam and other religions as samples of science and religious apologetics. The end result of this method will contribute to the outline of the programme to train and equip the elite for the protection of their faith and for their ministry, in connection with the challenge of science and other faiths.

The very reason why I have chosen to study the African elite is to see how to affect their lives for God's glory and for the good of their communities. Therefore to achieve this I have set out to develop in them real love for God, true love and respect for themselves and for their people. The analysis of their attitudes and behaviours has also been carried out in this same connection. Consequently, the analysis of specific groups such as economic, intellectual and political elites is of no avail here since I do not study them just to examine and confirm their elite status. However, to some extent I will just regroup the four elite groups into ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical elites, to study them in a deeper way for proper Christian empowering.

1. 5 Clarification of Terminology

1.5.1 Empower

As a verb, empower has been coined from the French Prefix "em-", from the Latin "in" meaning in, within, or into, and the root "power" (Walter 1924: 193; Shipley 1984: 96). Literally, it thus means to form, build up or to develop power within or inside. Empowering people requires, therefore inserting oneself in their middle so as to know them and identify oneself with them in order to discern their problems and strengths, and help them identify their problems and solve them. The next step is building wisely upon these strengths in order to develop the necessary abilities within them, to become capable not only of solving these problems but also many others.

The following are the different literal and contextual meanings of the verb empower. These and more theological meanings need to be translated into well-planned intentional actions leading to complete empowerment.

Defining the word, Smith (1996:8) says "To empower someone is to release power in their lives". Empowering non-Christian people is helping them receive Christ as Lord and Saviour, which implies their reception of the power to become

children of God (John 1:12). Accordingly, Edet (1994:124) observes, "Theologically every Christian is empowered by Jesus at his/her Christian initiation to function fully as a child of God". Logically, in theological terms, everyone needs empowering whatever his/her ability to understand that it has been given to him/her by God in order to use it for His own glory and for the good of the community. This can easily be done by taking the elites through the process of various levels of conversion as described in the fourth chapter.

Empower also means *liberate*: make (more) independent; emancipate (i.e., from evil power/influence or any other socio-political pathology) (Atkins, A.T. et al. 2000: 1259). And here it connotes the communication of godly power in order to defeat evil. For the Bible says, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). Using horizontalisations and other socio-political psychotherapies as shown in the fourth chapter will also help to liberate people and solve their problems.

As for Collins (1998:541), empowering people is giving them the necessary means to achieve something; to become stronger or more successful. Evangelistic methods, and religious and scientific apologetics, will also serve this purpose. Legally or administratively speaking, to empower people is to give them the power of attorney, the power to act on behalf of someone.

Smith (1996:9) speaks also of *dunamis* or of the power of the Holy Spirit and of how He empowers and commissions people (Acts 1:8). The same Smith observes later,

To empower individuals or ... is to enhance their power. It is to inspire, nurture, and serve them in such a way that they grow in their power to be and to do. In the context of the church, this means to communicate the gospel in such a way that people receive the wholeness of redemption and the power of the Holy Spirit. That gives them the resources and the freedom to become all God intends them to be (1996:11).

So, empowering is also “the ability to establish a climate in which people can feel free to grow, learn, explore and use their gifts in Christian ministry without fear of retribution” (1996:25). This is also part of the recommendations in the fifth chapter.

In this work, the term “empower” underlines my primary objective, which is to develop or build up strong Christians. In this connection, I particularly underscore the practical and relational communication of abilities to the elites. This is to say that these abilities are to be communicated through through trainer’s positive words and palpable actions. So, empowering people as a theology consists in building up strong Christians through true conversion to Christ, powerful actions of the Holy Spirit, the positive influence of the trainer and other appropriate empowerments, in order to destroy anything ungodly in Christians’ lives and replace it by true Christian values. This requires good prior knowledge of these elites’ real problems, proper training of the facilitators, creation of the appropriate climate, planning and application of empowering strategies and programmes, and regular and effective assessment of the work so as to improve it.

1.5.2 Elite and African Elites

1.5.2.1 Elite

Etymologically, Barnhart (1988:321) says that *elite/élite* is a reborrowing of French in Modern English. The word was borrowed from the old French *elit/eslite*, the past participle of *elire* or *eslire* meaning to choose. The author reports equally that before 1398 an *elit/élite person* was one elected to office, especially a bishop (1988:321). I think it is because of the generalised secularization today, that the term is almost never used for church leaders. As for all the authors I have read, Dorr (1990) is the only one who has ever used elite to speak of church leaders, though Ayandele (1974:20) also lists pastors among his

first generation Nigerian educated elites. People who have written about elite have had various views depending on their contexts and objectives. We can observe this variety of opinions in the following definitions and descriptions, which will ultimately lead to my own definition of the word.

Literally, Hornby (2000:374) defines elite as “a group of people considered to be the best or the most important because of their power, talent or wealth. He is a member of the ruling or intellectual elite”. This is merely a quote from a dictionary. However, to me the adjective important is useful; it suggests people who constitute the hope for their community – beside God Himself. The general expectation is that the elite are people to achieve important things in the community, which is almost never the reality. It is also because of this abuse of intent that this study is needed, to help the elite of the church be up to their responsibility.

Elite is the best minority of a given group of people (Vincent1971: 231–374). This is according to the writer’s own philosophy, which is quite different from my own and from what the Bible says; because as for the Bible Christians are said to be the light of the world (Matt. 5: 13–14), the head and not the tail (Deut. 28: 13), more than conquerors (Rom. 8: 37) and the possessors of every thing (1Cor. 3: 21,23).

Burns (1978:2,3) considers political leaders in general and other world leaders as elites. For Roussel (1956) a Congolese elite was merely someone with a certain education who was able to copy his master, the colonizer’s lifestyle. At the same time, quoting Lloyd (1966:328; 1967:125; 1977:131), Manghezi (1976:73), states that elites are bureaucrats, secondary school teachers, university lecturers and politicians.

Picturing the American elite, Simon (1999:14) distinguishes the economic elite and political elite. He sees the elite as the people with the greatest amount of

wealth, power and prestige in the nation. Immediately after these two elite groups, he puts a subgroup of corporations comprising the mass media. The political elite group "is composed of persons from both the upper-middle class (lawyers, small business people, doctors, farmers, educators and other professionals) and the upper class" (Simon 1999:16).

Discussing typical patterns of elites in modern society, Dorr (1990:56) distinguishes four pyramids of the minority holding powers and influencing the community, which are: *Money power*, meaning economic power, *Political power*, *Idea power*, that is to say intellectual power, and *God power* which means spiritual power (Heb. 13: 7,17). For Welsh (1979:17–18), elites exist where and when distribution of valued resources is so markedly unequal that some minorities differ sharply from the rest of the society in terms of the high concentration of one or more of these resources.

Each of the authors above has tried to define or describe and/or regroup the elite according to the nature, context and objectives of his/her study. Pondering on all these various views of elites, I can but conclude that though it is an internationally recognised and used concept, elite is never understood exactly the same way in all contexts. An elite rank can be defined or determined according to the time, place and/or circumstances while preciously considering the main determinants of elite state as such. Along these lines Ireland (1976: F5) observes that the notion of elite in common usage is clearly multi-dimensional and not of much use in sociological analysis unless it is redefined or its dimensions specified.

Consequently, for the purpose of my dissertation I consider as elite, people with more power of any sort than others, with higher potentialities or talents, convertible into positive values usable for God's glory and for the benefit of the human community. These potentials may be spiritual, intellectual, economic or socio-political. Therefore, a refugee, a diplomat or any other foreigner/expatriate as well as a local person, holding such values effectively or potentially are all elites. I thus limit elite status to one's effective or potential influence according to

one's immediate or/and future milieu.

1.5.2.2 African Elites

Explaining the difference between his approach, definitions and vocabularies and those used by the scholars of the elite communities in Europe in order to anatomise the educated elite in historico-political terms, Ayandele (1974:4) maintains:

Their vocabularies and classifications, which scholars of Africa are tempted to borrow, are obviously more appropriate for the elites in the relatively monolithic homogeneous culture of the industrial society of which the elite are a natural and logical outgrowth.

This is also why my definition and handling of the term *elite* will seriously consider my African context.

By *African elite* I mean those Africans holding, or at least having access to, some particular values of which many others in the community are in need. That is, for instance, higher education, economic power, spiritual power, and for political power of some sort. These are the people most Africans generally expect to provide appropriate economic, cultural, and socio-political solutions to their problems, but who unfortunately, often disappoint them. Defeating this disappointment is one of the reasons why the elites should be trained and empowered for Christian praxis.

1.5.3 Christian Praxis

Quoting Pieterse (1993:4), De Beer and Venter (1998:51) say that "praxis refers to a ministry practice which is accompanied by critical reflection and which focuses on transformation". In the above remark I am particularly interested in the practice of the ministry, which I relate to the African elite's own ministry, and in the transformation which I equally relate to the possible transformation of the ministry in question and that of their socio-political environment of the elite.

Referring later to Gutiérrez, they observe, “Gutiérrez speaks of praxis as our *lived faith* or the first phase of theological work. It includes prayer, commitment and action” (1998:51). Here, too, I am specially interested in the *lived faith* of these elite, that needs to be prior to their practice of ministry. By *Christian Praxis* I therefore mean both the living out of one’s life following Christian principles and the exercise of one’s ministry according to giftings and callings. This is the primary reason why I hope to provide the African elites with the necessary empowerment, i.e., to facilitate their Christian praxis. It is a way of making them fit to lead a responsible Christian life, to reach out safely and minister to others effectively.

1.5.4 Experience of the International Church of Pretoria

By the *Experience of the International Church of Pretoria*, I mean any positive and negative experience I have ever had in Pretoria, especially in the International Church of Pretoria itself when dealing with the African elite: failures and successes. More concretely this experience is appreciated in terms of the vision of empowering the African elite for socio-political betterment in Africa.

1.5.5 Empowering Pastors, Empowerers, Empowerees, Non-Elites

The terms *spiritual/church leaders*, *empowerers* and *empowerees*, *elites* and *non-elites*, and *empowering pastors* have all been used with positive and mutually building meanings. *Spiritual/church leaders* merely mean responsible church people with enough ability to help others acquire deeper values, while being also empowered in the process. *Empowerers* does not mean people with all possible potentials, abilities and powers, but merely people who can help others to be empowered by God through His Spirit, and the use of wise behaviours and techniques. *Facilitator* is also often used instead of *empowerer* in this dissertation. Empowerees or trainees are simply people who can be empowered. The term *non-elite* used in this study does not mean in any way

people who are useless or of less value; but rather people with other potentials than the ones the elites have. Smith (1996:8) defines *empowering pastors* as people “who rated high in empowering others”.

1. 6 Scope of the Study

My research is about empowering African elites for Christian praxis. The specific context is the International Church of Pretoria. The first thing I tried to do was to know who the African elites were and their different socio-political, psychological and spiritual problems and challenges. I did not specifically investigate the name and number of the elite in the world, in Africa, in South Africa or in Pretoria, for this was unnecessarily too much time and energy consuming and irrelevant. I rather studied the general requirements for the selection and classification of the elite. Then I applied these requirements to the members of the International Church of Pretoria.

I chose to work on this vision, or this aspect of the vision, of the congregation because I saw it as more promising, practical and related to real problems. My concern is not to praise either the vision or the congregation. However, I think that, carefully studied and well developed, this vision can help churches enter into an worthwhile partnership with those socio-political projects that plan to improve socio-political conditions in Africa: The African Renaissance and NEPAD for instance. So, I have decided to study the vision and see how practically effective and improvable it might be. After studying the African elites and their problems and the possible ways to solve these and meet the challenges, I did some investigations into the non-elite and their problems, but relatively fewer. This does not mean that they are a negligible part of the congregation, but they are not the focus of my study, which is rather the African elites, especially those black African elites who have ever been the bulk of the congregation. Related to my study of the elite was the investigation into the facilitators' character and the necessary requirements for effective empowering. Everything I have done here has been designed to propose guidelines for possible empowering programmes,

for I think at this stage well detailed empowering programmes would just be too superficial. The empowering programmes have generally been devised on the basis of the needs and problems observed during my involvement and work among the African elites of ICP. This makes them more truly problem-related and relevant, and less unrealistic.

I also visited churches, discussing the topic with those who could help gain the necessary insights for my research, and seeking cooperation with people in related ministries. I also read theological books such as *Spirituality and justice* by D. Dorr (1990), *Empowering ministry* by D. Smith (1996), *African theologies now a profile* by J.S. Ukpong (1984), *The church in the African city* by A. Shorter (1991) and so forth, the Bible and the Koran, and various social science books related to my research. Most of my readings were more practical and dealt with very practical studies. When reading on such subjects as elites, for instance, I read more about African elites. Such titles as *Class, elite and community in African development* by Manghezi (1976), *African Culture, African Intellectuals...*, by Maluleke (1997), *The Political responsibility of the Intellectuals* by Maclean and Montefiore (1990), etc were of particular interest. Reading practical missions, I learned, *per se*, that the International Church of Pretoria was not the first one in the world to have ever targeted the high-class people for the communal good. Monsma (1992), for instance, reports on what had been done in Acapulco. Miller (1969) also tells of the African political leaders and intellectuals who burnt with a desire to see the church help them achieve socio-political betterment. I equally learned that some church leaders have already started to envisage how to politically empower people as Christians. A brief review of a few books will help set the writings of the above authors more clearly in context.

1. 7 Sources of Information

I learnt much about ICP during the interviews with the leaders and members of the congregation, by ordinary fellowship with these members and by attending conferences or meetings organized by Dr. Tshilenga with his ministry partners

from other churches, where the vision of ICP was tabled and explained to them. The International Church of Pretoria has no records of its history. Therefore, Dr Tshilenga, who is the pastor and founder of this congregation, provided me with most of the information concerning its history, its demographics, and its past achievements. I also visited and interviewed all those who could provide me with any relevant information. I also did extensive reading of materials. A brief discussion of some of them follows.

Smith (1996) has written a book, *Empowering Ministry*, in which he describes the character and activities of an effective empowering pastor: what she/he has to do and how this needs to be done. He also explains the importance of empowering and describes the particularity of empowering as a ministry. This work has inspired me greatly.

Dorr (1990) has described the harmful behaviours of the elites, but has only chosen to do something about their victims, i.e., propose empowerment of the underdog. This is quite different from what Mission to the World did in Acapulco. It is reported that, seeing the important role the high-class people could play in the positive socio-political transformation of the community, the missionaries of Mission to the World, which is a mission arm of the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA), did something I deem most advantageous. They then initiated a rapidly growing work in the city of Acapulco, Peru. Monsma (1992:162-163) reports,

...Mission to the World has chosen to target middle-class citizens and eventually to use them to minister to the needs of the poor. (...) explains: we reason that if the gospel can penetrate the richer classes with the biblical teaching concerning justice, compassion, and concern for others, then the middle and upper class believers will use their position of power and influence to change the way things are done in the city. They will remove the abuses and support the ministries that will help the poor ... the skills and resources of the middle and upper classes, once they have been committed to Christ's cause and kingdom, will be of great value in ministering

among the poor and establishing churches.

This project of Mission to the World is similar to the vision of the International Church of Pretoria on which I am working. But the difference is that instead of targeting the citizens of a country only, the International Church of Pretoria has chosen as its focus the citizens of the world, especially those of Africa, for the betterment of their community – but is operating from Pretoria.

Miller (1969) speaks of hundreds of interviews conducted among East African civil and government leaders, who badly needed the assistance of the church for social betterment (1969:163-183), and among the intellectual youth who wished to use their careers as a ministry both to God and to their community (1969:82). But to be successful these young people need to be specially empowered by the church. The challenge is, with what and how?

Kalonji (2000) has devised some empowering training in his book *La Libération des nations par L'Église*. This can be used for both the elite and all other Christians, to politically empower them in a Christian way. The book expounds in detail the different political responsibilities of a Christian and their limitations for the community. The end result of such an empowerment should necessarily be to build up Christians responsible enough both in the church and in the secular world.

1. 8 Main Divisions of the Study

The dissertation is comprised of five chapters, each introducing an integral aspect of the research. The first chapter introduces the theme and presents the background and motivation of the research, a statement of the thesis, methodology and goal definition, clarification of the terminology, the scope of the study, sources of information and the main divisions of the study. The second chapter deals with the details of the International Church of Pretoria: its brief history, its physical

address, demographics, vision and its general functioning. In short, this chapter presents the context of the study and the areas of issues to be analysed for appropriate devising of the empowering programmes. The stories told here provide the basic issues or sources of the problems to be dealt with in the following chapters. The third chapter concerns the analysis and evaluation of the vision of the International Church of Pretoria in order to see its weaknesses and strengths and plan for the way forward. The achievements of this vision are also spoken of here.

The fourth chapter, the kernel of this study, deals with different forms of empowerment. The first section deals with spiritual empowerment, for these elites' well-balanced conversion and sensibility to the Holy Spirit. There has then been a four-level conversion programme, which aims at a complete and well-balanced conversion of the African elites. The second section is concerned with the psychological and socio-political empowerment of the elites in order to liberate them from psychological ills and anti-social evils and teach them socio-political values. The third section deals with the intellectual and technical empowerment of both ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical elites. An apologetics programme, so as to empower the elites to protect their faith and reach out to others safely and successfully, also features here, too. Evangelistic methods such as EEIII, Four Spiritual Laws, Dinner and Friendship Evangelism, and so forth, stand for a preparation for a successful encounter with non-Christians. The last section speaks of the selection and training the ecclesiastical elite, and of the proper climate they need to create for a successful empowering of others. This empowerment is also intended to help them understand and acquire the vision before being allowed in the leadership. This section represents the most important step for any sustainable empowering project.

The last chapter expresses the conclusions of the work. In the main it summarizes the principal findings of the thesis as they relate to issues

encountered during the research; then it suggests the way forward for the congregation.

1.9 Conclusion

This introductory chapter has been of a particular importance in this that it has helped to introduce the different parts of my dissertation, explain the methodology used and clarify special terminologies, describe the scope of the study, present different sources of my information and the conclusion of the chapter.

The topic *Empowering African elites for Christian praxis: the experience of the International church of Pretoria* has been inspired by the vision of the church, but mostly by the particular challenges and problems of these African elites. The challenges, which generally came from science and other religions, the superficial faith and counterproductive attitudes and behaviours of these elites such as inferiority complex and subtle despise of themselves and of their people have been among their biggest problems. This list of problems and challenges and above all, the idea that God who touched other people of much influence in the past to change them and use them for the welfare of their people could also do the same with these elites convinced me to work on the project. At the end of my research, I expect to propose an outline of the possible empowering programmes to the International Church of Pretoria for the proper empowering of its African elites.

CHAPTER TWO: THE INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF PRETORIA

2.1 Introduction

I will now introduce the International Church of Pretoria, its history, its vision and its related institution and activity, its demographics and different details regarding the composition of its general population. This is merely a descriptive study of the congregation with its strengths and weaknesses.

I will thus provide the available details on the beginning and evolution of the church and speak of its vision as it relates to Africa, and of its care for the needy. The table of demographics presenting the detailed figures for each group will show the fluctuating evolution through years. The characteristic traits of each elite group and non-elite group as well as of ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical groups, will also be provided followed by the conclusion of the chapter.

This chapter on the International Church of Pretoria has been positioned just after the first chapter because everything that I have done in the subsequent chapters has been based on the analysis of the issues and/or issue areas pinpointed here. The advantage is that the devising of empowering programmes is the result of the analysis and reflections on real problems encountered in the congregation, rather than of speculations.

2.2 History

The International Church of Pretoria is the congregation of which I have been part for about eight years. Rev. Tshilenga started it in November 1993. I joined the congregation in March 1994. But only later, in May 1996, did I become part of the leadership. The congregation is said to be interdenominational and open to collaboration with all the churches which call upon the name of the Lord Jesus. It is called "International" because it intends to bring together, in Christ, people from

different nations, origins or cultures, races or ethnic groups. It is also termed *International* because it serves temporary expatriate communities (Bakke 1987:130).

Both the leadership and the members of the church have come from different countries, or sometimes from the same country but with different linguistic backgrounds. Fortunately, they were all educated and at the time fluently spoke French, so the best communication medium was initially French. Later on, translation into English came into use as English-speaking people started attending the services. Discriminatory languages such as particular mother tongues, not known to others, and the like have not been used though this has never been a written law; the members of the congregation have come to this agreement simply to avoid frustrating brothers and sisters who do not understand these specific languages. French and English are thus official media of communication, used in all the services and meetings of the congregation. Being both interdenominational and international in intent, ICP is a form of city church, welcoming people from different nations in Christ and in love, accepting them with all their cultural diversities.

2.2.1 Moving to the Heart of the City

The international Church of Pretoria had its first service in the church building of the Elim Christian Church – in the east of Pretoria, the capital city of South Africa. They remained there from 21 November 1993 to January 1994. Then they moved from there to the central part of the city because this location was more advantageous since most people had to come from the west, the south and the north of the city centre. The Presbyterian Church, at 294 Schoeman Street, allowed their rear room to be used, so the services were then held there.

Later in 1994, the leadership of the NG Pretoria Congregation invited the International Church of Pretoria to start having meetings in their church building.

Subsequently the International Church of Pretoria moved to this location at the corner of Bosman and Vermeulen Streets, in the Groot Kerk, where they are presently sharing the building with the NG Pretoria congregation and Melodi Ya Tshwane congregation. On Sundays, for instance, the NG Pretoria congregation have their service from 09:00 to 10:00, Melodi Ya Tshwane from 10:00 to 11:30 and the International Church of Pretoria from 11:30 to 13:30. Though the general timetable for these three congregations' services is arranged among themselves, the office of the NG Building Manager secures its observance.

2.2 Vision, Evangelism, African Operation and Care for the Needy

2.3.1 Vision

The International Church of Pretoria is basically a city congregation the vision of which is to bring the entirety of the gospel to human beings from the city. It intends, thus, to welcome, host and train, and empower people from diverse cultures and countries and meet the challenge of such encounters. Political, economic and intellectual elites, both local and foreign or international, are a specific focus (International Church s.a.:2-3). This vision has been spoken of in motivational meetings and conferences with other church leaders and partners over eight years. I have heard of it both from outside and from inside the congregation. I have often had such opportunities as Dr. Tshilenga would take me to such gatherings for one reason or another. He would stand and say, for instance,

The elites of our community, of course, as those of other communities have specific problems and concerns which need special attention. We should not overlook them. At the same time these elites generally enjoy the privilege of economic power, intellectual power and of socio-political power, the values that can be used for God's work and the welfare of the community. The elites are as important as any other people of the community; however, they are very strategic people. Let us consider a bit the difference the conversion of Zacchaeus made to his community in Luke 19:8...(Tshilenga 1998)

But very little has been written about this vision. Needed are discussions of its clear objectives and strategies to reach these, clear descriptions of the African elites' problems and the possible practical programmes to solve them, and the portraits of their spiritual leaders and the possible empowering programmes for the training of these leaders within ICP. However, as a beginning, here follows the summary of its objectives and the strategies to achieve them at the continental level (International Church s.a.:2-3).

Objectives: -Reach the elites of the African cities and towns with the word of God and make of them witnesses and missionaries of Jesus Christ;
-Share with them the needs of their towns, cities, countries, continent and world;
-Fight evil in Africa and contribute to the development of their communities.

Strategies: -Provide the elite with specialised training according to their spiritual needs;
-Provide them with all the necessary evangelistic methods according to the cultural, intellectual and religious environment of their communities.
-Mobilize their resources to meet these needs.

2.3.2 Evangelism

The congregation has always considered evangelism as one of its Christian lifestyle activities for the conversion of many to Christianity. Everyone is, therefore, exhorted and encouraged to evangelise and/or invite people to church whenever possible. Many have evangelism training from time to time. EE111 and friendship evangelism are among the commonest evangelism trainings offered. Dinner evangelism is also used with specific groups of people; in 1996, for instance, it was once organised in Pretoria to evangelise diplomats from different

countries, especially from French-speaking countries. Such dinners are organised whenever necessary.

2.3.2 African Operation

This is a mission body responsible for mission work in Africa. It is responsible for the planting of churches in African cities and for training both clergy and lay people for mission. African Operation is supposed to train people for the fulfilment of the objectives above, and indeed it trained a number of pastors in April 1999. Two of these have already planted churches in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo) and Abidjan (Ivory Coast). In September 2002 six other pastors were trained for mission in African cities.

African Operation was formed in Pretoria in 1998, where its headquarters are. The International Church of Pretoria is part of its three churches in Africa: churches are: one in Pretoria, one in Abidjan, Ivory Coast and the third in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo.

2.3.4 Care for the Needy

The International Church of Pretoria has, apart from professionals, many refugees, both skilled and unskilled. It thus provides for the needs of the needy: food, clothing, etc. This is usually undertaken with the help of other churches who provide the congregation with some of these things. It has also been planning to start a computer training school for refugees, a project which is yet to be put in place. A ladies' knitting and dressmaking project has been operational since May 2002. This project is part of a broader project for the training and integration of everyone in need of such help.

In August 1996, when a multitude of refugees came from Johannesburg to Pretoria and started spending nights in the open with children and infants, the congregation did everything possible to get blankets, food and lodging for them.

The congregation hopes to see the means and skills found in ICP mainly used to meet these needs and employed for the full development of different projects in the future. This is also why proper empowering of its elites is essential.

2.4 Table of Demographics

Here follows the table of demographics of the International Church of Pretoria, presenting four elite groups, and a non-elite group, and the total over nine different years. The table is intended to give the reader a broad picture of which people, and how many, have been part of this congregation through these years. These include only female and male grown-ups, people who can easily be classified as elites or non-elites. What this implies is that the children under-eighteen have been overlooked in the figures below. This demographic table will spare the readers energy and a great deal of useless details and provide them a clear idea of the composition of the population of the congregation throughout these years. The table of demographics goes back as far as the very beginning of the congregation, in 1993, but the study will mainly be based on the personal experiences I have had since I became seriously involved in the life of the Church in 1996.

The classification of Dorr (1990:56) seems to me easier, more related and more meaningful to the particular experience of the International Church of Pretoria than any other case. Here the four groups represent : (1) The ecclesiastical elite or people with *God power*, (2) The intellectual elite or people with *Idea power*, (3) The economic elite or that minority holding *Money power* and (4) The political elite or the minority having access to political power of any kind.

DEMOGRAPHIC TABLE

Year	Eccl. Elite	Ec. Elite	Intect Elite	Pol. Elite	Non-Elite	Tot
1993	1	-	15	-	20	36
1994	7	-	77	-	10	94
1995	6	2	77	-	10	95
1996	7	4	77	3	25	116
1997	6	4	47	7	25	89
1998	3	4	28	3	20	58
1999	4	3	5	5	26	43
2000	5	4	1	10	30	50
2001	5	5	6	10	60	86
2002	6	4	14	12	38	74

Here we generally note that whatever the elite group a person belongs to, she/he is at the same time someone highly educated. But though one may meet the necessary requirements to be selected as part of two or three elite groups, she/he has been counted only once according to the dominant criterion. It is also essential to know that categorisation into elite and non-elite never exists in the day-to-day life of the congregation. No one knows that he/she is an elite of any kind, for the term is never used in any way to address or speak of people in the life of the Church. The bible itself teaches us to make no difference between people because they are all equal in Christ (Col.3: 11; Gal.3: 26-28). But as this work concerns the vision of the congregation, elite and its various categorisations are used just for technical reasons: in order to study each group's problems and see how to solve them.

In terms of number the table reveals that from 1994 to 1998 the intellectual elite formed the largest part of the congregation. They were the very first members of the church. But from 1997 their number dwindled seriously because of the two divisions, which took place during 1997-1998 and had a lot of bad and negative impact on the life of the congregation. The economic elites have generally been the minority. There is no special explanation. But it is also true that the rich have always been a minority. People from the political arena were not part of the

congregation till 1996, the year when increased prayers in the congregation started for them, as did outreach among diplomats. Despite fluctuation, the ecclesiastical elites have always been there. With the growing number of refugees in Pretoria we also notice the growing number of the non-elite in the congregation.

2.5 African Elites of the I C P

Here I mean the specifically African people of the International Church of Pretoria, who hold, or at least have access to, some particular values that many others in the community are in need of. These values are, for instance, higher education, economic power or influence, spiritual power or influence, and political power of some sort. Because the study was conducted in the specific context of the International Church of Pretoria, such general criteria for the selection and classification of the elites as *Idea Power*, *God Power*, *Money Power*, and *Political Power* as put forth by Dorr (1990:56) have been used, but these requirements have been tailored to the level of the congregation, where they have been specifically applied. This means that people with wealth, higher degrees, more spiritual influence, or political power, who have never been part of the congregation, have simply been omitted. This is rather like someone studying the South African political elite of Pretoria who leaves out or ignores H E Nelson Mandela, merely because he lives out of Pretoria. This former President of South Africa could easily qualify as a member of the political elite in South Africa, Africa and the world at large. Unfortunately, because he lives out of Pretoria he cannot be reckoned in.

The elites have then been categorised after their areas of influence as follows: Ecclesiastical elite, i.e., people with spiritual power; people in the leadership of a church or a ministry. Economic elite, i.e., people with economic power or people with a higher economic standing. Intellectual elite: following Burn (1978:141), these people are the devotees of ideas, knowledge and values; it is also the educated people, especially those with degrees or diplomas. Political elites are those enjoying a political power of any kind.

Most of the elites in this study are from different African countries; some of these have South African citizenship but others possess various types of visas in the country. The International Church of Pretoria calls them elites because of the particular values they can contribute. A medical doctor, for example, is someone very important for the community. The World Health Organisation considers that any country needs a medical doctor for every four people. How many medical doctors do we have in Africa, and for how many people? These elites are particularly important for their specific countries, even though the host country or people around them might reject or despise them. This was the situation of the first generation Nigerian educated elites, who were the descendants of the former slaves. These were despised in their community. Ayandele (1974:11) reports, "... slaves were mere chattels who should never dream of becoming leaders ... slaves had no status in law and could be disposed at will ..." But eventually, these same descendants of slaves proved the first and only people to dream of and hope for the transformation of the land (1974:20).

Ayandele (1974:20) lists as members of these educated elite technocrats, pastors, medical doctors, teachers, etc. This again, is similar to the African elites of the International Church of Pretoria.

As part of the African reality, if not that of the rest of the world, Thabo Mbeki, the current President of South Africa, and many of those around him and in prominence in South Africa spent years abroad where they were not what they are today. The incumbent President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, my own country, was born and grew up abroad as a refugee because his father was living there as a refugee, too. Out of twenty-five incumbent cabinet ministers in the DRC only one was appointed from within the borders of the country – the remaining twenty-four were appointed from abroad. The present ambassador of the DRC to South Africa has been living in Pretoria for years. All the diplomats of the Democratic Republic of Congo accredited to South Africa from 1997 to 2000

were appointed from South Africa, where they were refugees. Most of the political leaders and many of the business executives of such countries as Uganda, Rwanda, the Republic of Congo, and the Democratic Republic of Congo are former refugees. And these political leaders came into power straight from abroad, where many were refugees. Clearly the nature of the elite needs further consideration.

In his book *Zimbabwe and the New Elite*, Weiss (1994) speaks of people most of whom, or their parents, were by no means elite before 1980. Navlaka (1989) has published a book entitled *Elite and Social Change*. This book is especially about the Indian students, the prospective elite of India. Some of these were the children of the Indian elites, the dominant strata of the time, but some others were merely the descendants of people from the lower castes – who were no elites at all. The term *elite* is used in this sense to speak of the current and of the prospective high-class people of the community. The International Church of Pretoria has been also using the term in the same sense. Eulau and Czudnowski (1976:16) similarly speak of Winston Churchill, who belonged to the Political Elite of his country still too young to take part in the public affairs, simply on the basis of his being part of the leading family.

For the purpose of my thesis I consider as elite, people with more power or influence of any sort, higher potentialities or more talents, convertible into positively usable values for God's glory and for human community benefit. These potentials may be intellectual, socio-political, economic or spiritual. So, a refugee, a diplomat or any other foreigner/expatriate and a local person holding such values effectively or potentially are elites. I thus limit elite status to people's effective or potential influence according to their immediate or/and future milieu.

The attitudes, behaviours and problems or challenges of the African elites of the congregation have been discerned from some of their stories. These factor are of vital importance, as they have an influence on the success of this vision that

intends to empower these elites. Consequently, an analysis of them will ultimately help one to devise the outline of empowering programmes. What matters here are the causes of their attitudes, behaviours and problems so that remedies can be devised. Below follow the four elite groups, which to some extent, can simply be regrouped into ecclesiastical group and non-ecclesiastical group to facilitate some analysis.

2.5.1 Ecclesiastical Elite

I wish to broadly picture the leadership/ecclesiastical elite of the International Church of Pretoria, especially concerning the issue of the minority making decisions on the orientation of the congregation. This leadership has continuously changed through the years. Dr. Tshilenga is the only person of the pioneering leaders of the Church still on the board. All of those who led the congregation with him, pastors or others, have already left the country, the city, or just the congregation. Apart from this moving in and out, people on this team have always been from diverse Christian backgrounds. It is true that this is an international church, and that all are welcome whatever their Christian backgrounds. However, this situation is both a guaranteed source of leadership wisdom and of varied and repeated problems depending on the wisdom, proactivity and problem-solving ability of the head of the team and the availability or non-availability of all to work for the glory of God and not their own. For example, from 1993 to 1998, the dominant majority of them came from Pentecostal and Charismatic backgrounds; and from 1998 up to now, most of these leaders have been from a very moderate Christianity.

The heterogeneity and complexity of leadership were so strong that sometimes it was even difficult to have a clear, common idea about what should be done. Reaching a common conclusion always required long and inconclusive debates because everyone often saw the problem from his own background. In 1997, for example, there were four pastors and two lay leaders. The first pastor was from

the Anglican Church and had a master's degree in theology. The second was a doctor of theology from the Evangelical Church. The third was from the Dutch Reformed Church and had the equivalent of a master's degree in theology. The fourth was from the Pentecostal Church, with no degree in theology but claiming many gifts of the Holy Spirit. As for the two lay leaders, the first was an engineer, in a long experience with church work. The second was a high school teacher, also with long experience in church work. As from 1998, that is to say, after the second division of the congregation, there have been four church leaders. The first has been a doctor of theology and a pastor from the Anglican Church and the three others have been lay leaders. The first lay leader is a pharmacist and the second has a degree in accounting; both of them are evangelicals. And the third is an educationist. All of them have had a relatively long church experience.

A few years ago, hidden agendas, selfish ambitions, lack of discipline, lack of one or another form of conversion, lack of common vision and the unpreparedness of some of the spiritual leaders to practise what they teach or preach, etc.. caused many of the members to desert the congregation and led to two divisions in just less than a year. Much of this has brought me to some extent back to what Ortiz (1991: 12 – 13) wrote about the Circle Church, especially about how superiority complexes, prejudice, pretention or rivalry and misunderstandings within the leadership led to the destruction of this Church.

Many of the requirements for the ecclesiastical elite provided later will basically be intended to prevent and correct some of these destructive behaviours observed in these spiritual leaders. A few illustrations of their improper attitudes and behaviours, which were contrary to the objectives of the vision follow.

2.5.1.1 Ecclesiastical Elites' Discussions

I would like to say a word here about ecclesiastical elites attitudes as expressed in their usual discussions, which have often been expressions of feelings which are in sharp contradiction with the expectations and objectives of the vision above. When the leaders were speaking of black people in general and of black Africans in particular, the discussions revealed the deepest convictions of most of these African elites, which unfortunately sounded quite negative in general. This convinced me still more of the necessity of prior and more serious training of people before engaging them in the leadership of a church, especially of one with a particular vision. I will make more comments and give concrete examples in this connection in the third chapter, which is more appropriate for such analysis.

2.5.1.2 Ecclesiastical Elites with each Other

The time when the congregation divided twice was one of the hardest periods in the history of the church; it was also full of disgusting lessons. Here people who usually taught the word of God wonderfully and often spoke in a holy manner, embarked on ethnic campaigns, backbiting and slandering each other in order to tear off their own piece of the congregation. Such improper behaviours went on for long after the division. Consequently, mutual and true forgiveness and reconciliation required too much time and effort to come about.

Allegedly, conceit and such ambitions as “I know more, I have more unction. So, I deserve to have my own congregation and to be the head of it. Having ‘my own’ congregation is a secured source of financial gains...” were the main causes of the divisions. This was easily discernible when listening to those engaged in this *conflict*. Some bragged of their academic achievements and others of their teaching abilities and better gifts of the Holy Spirit. But the real battle was lost. Many members of the congregation became disappointed and discouraged.

Though a few sided with one party or the other, most just chose to forget it altogether and go their own way.

2.5.2 Non-Ecclesiastical Elites

I will speak here only of the intellectual elite, the economic elite and the political elite, and of their attitudes and behaviours. These will be analysed later in the third chapter in order to see which relevant aspects of the empowering programmes to develop for these elites in the fourth chapter.

2.5.2.1 Intellectual Elite

I will speak here of the intellectual elites' attitudes and/or problems as revealed in their language. A quick glance at the demographic table above, helps one understand that this has been the largest elite group of the congregation, to which belong medical doctors, civil engineers, educators, economists, pharmacists, university lecturers, etc. Most of these are devotees of ideas, knowledge and values (Burn 1978: 141). They are generally on the look-out for rich and deep preaching and teachings. From my experience in ICP I know that these people generally wish to see their spiritual leaders speak and live out spirituality: he/she who teaches the fear of God should live out the fear of God and he/she who teaches praying endlessly should also pray endlessly. Though polite, they often prove to be outspoken. They congratulate one on a good act or work but never hesitate to blame one for a poor achievement, sometimes even in public. I remember here, for example, how some of them spoke severely against the poor contents of the preaching themes at the time, though they used to praise the Lord and congratulate the spiritual leaders for edifying work in the congregation. This was during an evaluation meeting in November 1996. Mr. Buakulavi was an economist with a master's degree from Wits University. "This last time's topics seem to have been wrongly selected..." he said. And another person, a high school teacher, Mr. Kanda, added, "Not only that, the topics are very poorly developed".

2.5.2.2 Economic Elite

The table of demographics suggests how limited in number these church members have been throughout the years. Here I include business people and some of the people with foreign bank accounts, people who had deposited into their accounts thousands or even millions of dollars before coming to South Africa. All of them have also been educated people; thus not differing markedly from other educated people of the congregation, apart from their having more money.

Concerning their financial contribution to the projects of the church, sometimes they would give enough money to solve a given problem when there was one, but sometimes, they would just give an indefinite promise. This is one of the problems to be discussed later.

2.5.2.3 Political Elite

Here, I specially allude to a few diplomatic families and to people who were cabinet ministers, or political party leaders and the like. Their general characteristics are discretion and irregular attendance at church meetings; they often complain that they have got this or that to deal with and have no time left. For instance a few six diplomatic families, who are supposed to be part of the congregation at present, they almost never attend church meetings with other church members. They always prefer special meetings among themselves in their homes. And it is obvious that their attitude requires of the congregation more workers, more time and more money for transport and so on. This unhealthy situation should also be addressed seriously. If anyone feels too busy or too important to fellowship with brethren, this is no help either to the person or to the community. The Bible shows us how important are such fellowshippings (Acts 2: 41–47; Heb.10: 24–25). But for the most part the wives of the political elites prove to be more serious about church matters than their husbands. When truly converted, they do not hesitate to take different responsibilities and assume them

whole-heartedly. For instance, in 1995 the congregation wanted to organize a special fund-raising project for the needy and needed a fund-raising manager; all the church members were there, both men and women sitting in a meeting; no one accepted the responsibility but a Mrs. Muntu. She was the wife of one of the prominent people in the government back home, but was now living in Pretoria. What is more important here is the way that she was taking initiatives and assuming responsibility. Two years later, a Mrs. Moyo from one of the embassies who on her own, chose to organise regular ladies' cell meetings and intercession in her area. This had a deep impact on the lives of many in the area and contributed much to the spiritual and quantitative growth of the congregation. But, when something amiss happens, these same people often react violently and negatively: for example, they may be the first to murmur and desert the congregation. We therefore need to be very careful when dealing with such people.

One of the issues which needs to be addressed by the church here, is the general conceit of the elite and their selfish interest in politics; I mean for their personal *selfish* gains and prestige. This seems to have resulted from the evil lessons learnt from the previous masters of the African people, which continue to have lasting effects even after political colonisation. In his study carried out in Brazil, which I think equally well applicable to these elite, Freire (1993:44) observes "...the oppressed want at any cost to resemble the oppressors, to imitate them, to follow them. This phenomenon is especially prevalent in the middle-class oppressed..." I argue that the psychotherapy proposed in the fourth chapter could be of much help in this connection.

2.6 Elite and Non-Elite

I wish to say a few words about the relationship between elite groups, especially, between the economic, intellectual and political elites, and the non-elite. The non-elite group includes people without degrees, much money or any particular

socio-political power; in brief, people with no special socio-cultural influence, but still very important for God and His kingdom. Therefore, non-elite as used in this study refers to people with other potentials than the ones the elites have.

The inferiority complex of the non-elite is not only vis-à-vis the other races, but also towards the elites of their own race. Whenever one feels victimised by one of the elites in one way or another, even where he/she is wrong, he/she often thinks that it is because the other has money, education or any other value that he/she does not have. A case in point is that of Mrs. Ponanini. She was a divorcee with no significant education, no money and no work. But one of the ladies, the wife of one of the diplomats managed to get a job for her at the home of another lady who was then the executive secretary of UNHCR in Pretoria. She then started living in that home with her two children. But doing her work well was always a problem. She almost never listened to corrective remarks, however accurate they might be. It eventuated that they dismissed her. She continuously complained that they had mistreated her for she had no one to care for her and because she was poor. She accused both the lady who had found the job for her and her employer of not loving her because she had nothing and was not educated as these two were, which was inaccurate.

It is also true that in most cases economic and intellectual elites often, but not always, have rough and transactional relationships with the non-elite. Elites are generally friends among themselves and the non-elite are also friends among themselves. Seemingly one group avoids the other, without being hostile. Very often if the relationship is refined between people belonging to these two groups, there is a mutual profit-relationship: a job, a service or any other profit-relationship. Horizontalisation will also deal with this abnormality in the fourth chapter.

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided background for the International Church of Pretoria and pinpointed some of the most important issues, or areas, which have to be analysed in order to devise the empowering programmes. The brief history of the congregation has been told and its demographics and a full picture through the years given. The congregation was started in 1993 and has been growing relatively slowly.

The demographics has been grouped in elite and non-elite groups. The characteristic traits of each group have also been pinpointed. Different populations of the church have been fluctuating through the years according to periods and circumstances.

Though not much has been written about the vision of empowering African elites, we learn that its focus is the African elites. These elites need to be empowered to assist in the socio-political betterment of their community. Such empowerment requires further development of the vision, which is the concern of this dissertation.

The following chapter will analyse the different groups in the church, the vision and its achievements and comment further. This will consequently deepen the understanding of the important issues in order to better envisage the problem-solving process in the fourth chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF THE VISION OF THE ICP

3.1 Introduction

The concern of this chapter is especially been the analysis and evaluation of the vision of empowering African elites in the International Church of Pretoria. Any general programme or activity of the congregation, which is of no particular relevance to the vision, will not be analysed in this chapter. Here, I have tried to study and analyse the content of the vision, but also people who will be using it and those for whom it will be used. I therefore evaluated the objectives and the strategies stipulated in order to reach the objectives, as well as the facilitators and the trainees. The analysis of the stories about them, as told in the second and third chapters, has helped me understand the psychological status and the character of these elites, to foresee their socio-political behaviours and envisage remedies.

Therefore, the main sections of this chapter are the introduction, the analysis of the psychology of the ecclesiastical elites and non-ecclesiastical elites, the evaluation of the vision and the conclusion. The analysis of the language and attitudes of the ecclesiastical elite will help identify their psychological problems. The analysis of non-ecclesiastical elites' attitudes and behaviours will also lead to the identification of their psychological and socio-political problems. Then I will examine the causes of these problems in order to prepare possible solutions. The evaluation of the vision and achievements will help one to devise the process in the fourth chapter. The conclusion summarises the findings and links them to the next chapter.

3.2 Psychology of Ecclesiastical Elites

I will speak here of the African elites in the leadership of the congregation, specifically of their attitudes and behaviours, and of how these traits of character can affect the results of the work they are supposed to do. The analysis of their language plays an important role; it helps one to know their attitudes and behaviours, and psychological problems.

3.2.1 Ecclesiastical Elites and Empowering Psychology of Consistency

The ecclesiastical elites' consistent pursuit of the assigned objectives is psychologically very empowering for the trainees. Consistency in words, attitude and action is crucial for people involved in empowering others. A continually positive attitude empowers others and develops a positive leadership in them. Accordingly, speaking of the language and attitude of leaders Maxwell (1999:116) concludes, "Therefore...positive assumptions about others will stimulate positive leadership of them". And very purposefully, De Beer (1998:13) observes, "We would not be effective in engaging the city, if we look at the city through condemning eyes". The truth expressed for the city here, holds equally for individuals. For cities suppose first of all the people who live in their midst.

One of the perspectives and/or objectives of the vision of empowering African elites is to develop in them true love, that translating itself by positive and constructive actions for their people. The first step in developing such love is self-confidence and true love for oneself. For love for oneself is a standard for love for others. This is also why Jesus in Matthew 22:39 commands one saying; "You shall love your neighbour as yourself". In this connection I have learnt some unfortunate lessons from the contradictions between the objectives of the vision and the frequently negative and pessimistic declarations and conclusions I have been hearing from the ecclesiastical elites. It is painful to see people with high degrees in theology (Master's or Doctor's degrees) affirm freely and easily, in public, for instance, that " Black people are nothing; they are the most

unintelligent people on earth”, and “They have done nothing in the field of theology. White people are the only ones who have done impressive things. For example John Calvin and Martin Luther did extra-ordinary works”. Most strangely, these pronouncements have been made by African blacks, completely out of context and for no good reason. Some of these people also allege that “Blacks are wicked liars. White people never lie. If a white lies it means she/he has lived with blacks”. Or else that “Black people have been cursed. I do not think that their socio-political situation will get any better”. It is somewhat surprising to see people with such high degrees and generally with a long experience in church work, people who are expected to lift others out of the pit of darkness and suffering, frequently make such allegations. It is of no purpose for spiritual leaders to make such frequent counter-productive statements. For no church member needs them; they are no solution to the problems these African church members are facing. What the members would like see from the ecclesiastical elites is, for instance, the solution to their alleged curse or lie and inability. Conclusively, to all of us Pedro (1991:146) has this to say: “...it requires from all of us, but specially from the pastors and the theologian, to avoid destructive and scandalous attitudes, behaviours, utterances...” .

However, the lesson I have learnt is simple. Degrees in theology and general experience alone are not enough for such a vision. Consequently, people who meet the requirements for the leadership of the ministry must be selected and trained to help them understand the vision and be refocused accordingly. For it is also clear from the statements above that the psychological evils other African elites have been suffering from, seem to have been also common among the ecclesiastical elite. This is, for example, the case with an inferiority complex and/or dependency syndrome, subtle despising of oneself and/or one’s people, and unjustifiable admiration of the other race/s. This has made it mandatory for me to insert a selection and training component for ecclesiastical elites in the empowering programmes, because this important component can help the vision become more effective. Surely this is partly what Linthicum (1991:93) means by

observing: "Without leadership development everything you have done will pass away. But with it, the future is constantly being created anew for the people of your community". Selecting and training the leaders of a congregation or ministry has also an advantage for the head of the congregation and/or ministry. She/he can easily gain approval or love and loyalty from the people she/he has so trained and empowered. This also Maxwell (1999:10) recommends saying,

The core of leaders who surround you should all be people you have personally touched or helped to develop in some way. When that happens, love and loyalty will be exhibited by those closest to you and by those who are touched by your key leaders.

Below follows an analysis of the attitudes and behaviours and problems of the non-ecclesiastical elites of the congregation. This analysis has greatly inspired me and profoundly informed the devising of the empowering programmes in the following chapter. The next chapter will provide the necessary detail on this component.

3.3 Psychology of Non-Ecclesiastical Elites

I speak here only of the African elite who are other than ecclesiastical elite and of their different problems. The analysis of these problems will ultimately help one to envisage remedies.

To eventually develop the empowering programmes, I prefer just to pinpoint some of the observations and experiences I have had during my involvement and work among these elites, instead of telling long stories about them. This will help save much time and effort. The observations have much to do with the traits of character of these elites, which will be analysed and used later. These have generally been inferred from the stories I have been hearing, that have deeply inspired me and informed my research. They have informed me in particular about the psychology or psychic identity of the African elites.

In general after Sunday service, people find themselves together and talk about various topics. These are not planned meetings or talks. At such gatherings as well as on any other occasions where ICP members would meet and talk, it was so common to hear such negative and pessimistic declarations and conclusions as: "We blacks and our leaders... we are stupid". "Can a black invent anything? And I do not believe all those stories that the first occupants of Egypt were black who invented this or that. If the stories were true why do we not invent again nowadays"? "We blacks, we have been cursed; we will never develop". "We cannot do anything good despite our education. I think there is melanin in our brain." The frequency of such declarations, conclusions and the like was so high that it raised serious questions in my mind because these betrayed a negative psychology, which also presaged an expectation quite different from that of the vision. I wondered why they were so frequent; what could have been the causes of such reasoning and what could be the ultimate consequences. These are the questions I will try to answer later in this chapter and in the fourth.

Another aspect of these stories concerns the challenges of science and of other religions the African elites often came across. These often shook their faith, to causing discouragement. This brought me to the conviction that Wink (1998) and McDaniel (1995) were fully correct to think that Christian faith can also be strengthened through the wise use of science and/or understanding of other religious traditions. Wink (1998:18) advises for instance against splitting the religious reality from the material one, for this could hermetically seal off theology from the discoveries of science and science from the wisdom of theology. This would also help understand some religious truths better and deeper. Accordingly, Bucaille (1976:268) observes, "Modern science knowledge...allows us to understand certain verses which, until now, it has been impossible to understand". On the other hand, McDaniel (1995:146) has this to say,

If our Christianity has roots and wings, our primary roots may be in

the Christian heritage, and yet we may have secondary roots in other traditions. Hopefully our multiple roots make us better Christians, just as the multiple roots of trees make them stronger.

The aspect of the challenges faced by these elites causes me to think of programmes both to protect the faith of the African elites and to help them embark on a successful ministry where necessary. But since the first step in Christian empowering is spiritual, spiritual aspects will have to come first; then, all others. The receiving of Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and Lord, as well as that of the power of the Holy Spirit to be able to function as a child of God, represent these aspects in concrete terms. In the same vein Edet (1994:124) observes, "Theologically every Christian is empowered by Jesus at his/her Christian initiation to function fully as a child of God". Part of this statement John 1:12 also declares. Commenting on the aspects of Christian empowering and referring to Acts 1: 8, Smith (1996:9) also speaks of how the Holy Spirit empowers and commissions people. Given that ICP intends to empower the African elites both spiritually and socio-politically, a conversion component has to be a key part of the empowering programmes. The four levels of the conversion, which play a very important role as socio-political preparation, are to be carefully considered, as we will see in the fourth chapter. Before then, the following section synthesises the reasons why these elites need empowerment.

3.3.1 Elite in Need of Empowerment

This section is about African elites as met in the International Church of Pretoria, and their attitudes and behaviours. These elites are generally people from African countries, some of which have been through repeated wars. They have come to South Africa and to Pretoria for one reason or another. However, they enjoy or have access to some rare values most other people do not have access to within the congregation and eventually beyond. They are therefore considered to be the representatives of the elite class not only of their particular countries but also of Africa as a whole (from within the congregation). Their categorisation as elite is

based on values other than their moral excellence or their high standard of socio-political qualities, which are also much needed values for the positive socio-political transformation of the continent, in particular and of the world community in general.

The section thus deals with some aspects of the African elites' defects apart from their high qualities. This is by no means a way of suggesting that the African elites are the only ones to have deficiencies. But being myself an African, I consider it a responsibility to prove myself more unbiased and to deal with the issue in a more realistic way. David R. Simon, being one of the American elites, has written a series of books on the American elites. When one has read at least two of these books on Elite deviance, he/she can see how these big and powerful people of this most powerful country of the day, i.e., the USA, apart from the intellectual, political and economic powers they hold, excel in terms of their moral standards. They are defrauding individuals, companies and states, and even murdering their own wives and children in order to gain millions from assurance companies. None of these defects prevents them from qualifying as elites in any way, though. Dorr (1990) also speaks of elite classes in his *Spirituality and Justice*. One can hardly see any constructive values in the elite as described in this book. On the contrary, these elites are the cause of poverty and suffering of many in the world.

However, for the sake of this dissertation that is to empower the African elites for Christian praxis, any moral deficiency or lack in socio-political values is a serious problem. Consequently, it requires strong corrective actions. To achieve positive socio-political and religious betterment, these elites need to have real love for themselves and for their own people. Without heart/real love for their community, their elite state is but a selfish and mean value. Accordingly, speaking of ubuntu/botho and the culture of communal solidarity Mulemfo (2001:58) has this to say,

If ubuntu/botho is the divine inner capacity that leads the person

to do good, then the culture of communal solidarity is its outward expression. It should be understood that people without ubuntu/botho are unable to help their society develop.

The eyes and hearts of the African elites are nowadays turned to other countries and continents. They complain that they want to go because their leaders are evil and their countries and the continent are too poor. They often whine, saying that political leaders have been looting countries and institutions and impoverishing individuals and nations with their friends, mostly of foreign nations and continents. These African elites forget that they have been trained to work and give hope to their people, and many of them have been among these leaders, who often loot and impoverish African countries.

These elites necessarily need empowerment to develop real love in their hearts for themselves and for their people so as to understand their socio-political responsibilities, in order to work and save their own people and the continent. Speaking of *Reconstruction* at a conference at UNISA in April 2001, Professor Mugambi, quoting Professor Mbiti said, "African elites have a terrible responsibility for the continent". Is this not true?

The following section provides a synthesis of the different causes of African elites' wrong attitudes and behaviours, to envisage how to plan remedies later on.

3.3.2 Causes of African Elites' Wrong Attitudes and Behaviours

I wish to present a brief picture of the reasons behind some of the wrong behaviours and/or attitudes of the African elites. This identification of the causes and the reasoning are a step towards resolution of the problems. Both emotional and psychological, and socio-political causes will be analysed later on, in order to see how these problems could be solved.

Manghezi (1976:75) maintains, "The elite of Africa tend to have repeated rivalry for power among themselves". This same rivalry seems to be generalised and amplified or intensified through personal pride and selfish ambitions. Though many of them live in Africa and have even been brought up in Africa, they behave like foreigners. Despite all this, they remain power holders. As Said (1995:36) says, "...knowledge gives power...", their general higher education gives them an advantage. That is why these elites' countries have recourse to them from time to time for leadership, though their behaviours are improper.

As for subtle self-despising, repeated hateful and negative language against oneself and against one's own race, Fanon (1991:111-114) considers that this has been caused by brain-washing through reading and well-prepared indoctrination. In the same vein Freire (1993:44) observes,

In their alienation, the oppressed want at any cost to resemble the oppressor, to imitate them, to follow them. This phenomenon is especially prevalent in the middle-class oppressed, who yearn to be equal to the "Eminent" men and women of the upper class.

On this matter Biko (1988:43) also has this to say, "No wonder the African child learns to hate his heritage in his days at school. So negative is the image presented to him that he tends to find solace only in close identification with the white society." This was so; unfortunately, it seems to me that many have grown up with that wrong image of their people and of themselves to hand it down to more generations to come. I also think that the almost generalised and repeated disappointing behaviours of black African political and religious leaders and or of people in authority, in general, have added much to the problem. This same reason has created much distrust in the hearts of these African elites vis-à-vis their political and religious leaders. They often wrongfully or rightfully criticise them, and almost hatefully. This is almost a general trait for those from countries where they have endured or have been enduring long dictatorships, endless wars and all their socio-economic consequences possible. Though political indifference

and passivity are encouraged by the theologies that teach against political participation, ignorance of people's political rights and responsibilities and prolonged privation of primary needs are essential causes. The other cause may be the long-standing consequence of the oppression. Along this line Freire (1993:47) states, "For the oppressed, at a certain point in their existential experience, to be is not to resemble the oppressor, but to be under him, to depend on him." A dependency syndrome is thus created in them.

Speaking of the education system in Zaire/DRC, Downey (1981:22) states, "It is true that the trend towards professionalism and institutionalism in leadership training has made that training more susceptible to 'Education for education's sake' rather than 'Education for living'. And later on he asserts, "Emphasis is placed on the accumulation of facts by rote memory rather than the progressive development of reasoning capacities" (1981:116). Repeating Downey's second statement, Nümerger (1996:153) adds more elements or insights, maintaining,

The myths of the oppressors lay down the present structures of social reality and are internalised by the oppressed. Through constant indoctrination the existing power structure is reproduced within the psyche of the oppressed...The education system of the ruling party reduces the subjects to mere receivers of material which is laid down layer by layer into seemingly empty vessels (...). Individual experiences and powers of decision on the part of the oppressed are devalued and, where possible, eliminated altogether. The education provided by the oppressor teaches them not to think. Their consciousness is "flooded" by the "cultural invasion" of the elite.

The elite of whom Nümerger is speaking are also who he calls the Western oppressors. But many of today's African elites have been their victims in a way or another. Nowadays, they are the living reproduction of the Western oppressors in the African community, in various ways. They slavishly imitate the Westerners, exploit and impoverish their own people, etc.

A proper consideration also needs to be done of the damaging role generally and constantly played by the Westerners and their governments. They often consider as good political leaders and/or presidents, people who execute their own agendas and not those agendas well-fitting for their African fellow people, who even manage to wage violence against those who disobey them.

3.4 Evaluation of the Vision and its Achievements

I have already said that the congregation was planted in 1993 and that its vision is to train and empower African elites, namely, ecclesiastical elites, intellectual elites, economic elites and political elites, for Christian praxis. It is mainly in the perspective of this particular vision that I wish to briefly appreciate these achievements.

The vision intends to put a special focus on African elites, people who generally play primary roles in their communities, to empower them so that they can play these roles in the most constructive ways as Christians. As a vision this is really an interesting and relevant one for a time like this, when such projects as the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the African Renaissance are looking for people of integrity and good will. For example, NEPAD (2001:57) states, "...African leaders are making a commitment to the African people and the world to work together in rebuilding the continent". Such a pledge and such work require necessarily people of good will, accountability and integrity, which is also part of the responsibility of this vision.

Unfortunately, the full implementation and evaluation of the vision have seemed to me to be difficult questions, for there are no terms of reference for good evaluation. The congregation comprises both the elites and the non-elites. But there are no special programmes for the elites, no action plan, no strategies, no description of the problems and how to solve them, no profiles of the people who can help solve them, no definition of the objectives whatsoever and the way to

achieve them in the congregation. Yet, one will remember that the objectives and strategies presented in the second chapter are general ones, for the churches to be planted in the cities at the continental level. This renders the evaluation of this vision more speculative than real, since there is no measure for such work. For, here, it is somewhat difficult to know exactly how many went through which programme, and to appreciate the end results in some measurable terms.

However, the following results can be listed both in connection with African Operation and the congregation itself. Six pastors specially equipped for urban church planting were trained in 1999, though not necessarily within the congregation. Two of these pastors have already planted churches, fully in action, in different African cities: Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo and Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Six others have been trained in September 2002 and have gone back to different African cities for mission work. A few African intellectual elites are supposed to be actively serving the Lord in other churches as they are exercising their careers in South African cities (3) and other African cities: Abidjan (1), Libreville, Gabon (2). And two of a few diplomatic ladies who have been trained are also serving the Lord back in their countries.

3.5 Implementation Difficulties

Considering all the years, which have gone by, and that the general achievements are somewhat poor, but still better rather than nothing, one can understand how hard the task has always been. The implementation of this vision has often met with many difficulties, mostly because of the leadership's lack of proactivity and common vision, for the work and lack of deeper understanding of the vision. The leadership did not see to it that the vision was communicated to all in clear terms in order for them to understand it and work accordingly. The lack of a clear action plan and clear objectives, and appropriate ways to reach these objectives in the context of the congregation, has but added trouble to the whole matter. And up to now empowering has mainly been about

evangelism, preaching or teaching and not any other more specialised or target-oriented activity. This will be part of my concern in the fourth chapter of this dissertation, in order to find ways of solving this problem.

3.6 Conclusion

The chapter has concentrated on the analysis of the people involved in the vision of empowering African elites for Christian praxis, as well as on the evaluation of the content of the vision and its implementation and achievements in the congregation. All the other good programmes and activities of the International Church of Pretoria which are not directly linked to this particular vision have simply been overlooked because of the irrelevance of their contribution to the research here.

The analysis of the stories about the African elites has helped gain insights into their spiritual, psychological and socio-political problems. The evaluation of the vision has also led to deeper appreciation of its strengths and weaknesses, and put more responsibility on me for its survival, if possible. The analysis and evaluation above will strongly inspire the fourth chapter, on effective devising of the empowering programmes.

CHAPTER FOUR: EMPOWERING PROGRAMMES

4.1 Introduction

The analysis of the issues and/or issue areas dealt with in the third chapter has now paved the way for a consideration of the possible empowering programmes. The programmes are intended to facilitate the implementation of the vision of empowering African elites for Christian praxis in the International Church of Pretoria. The intent of the chapter is, eventually, to propose an outline of the possible programmes for a successful implementation of the vision in the church.

The chapter then presents different forms of empowerment for the African elites. The first section deals with spiritual empowerment, for these elites' well-balanced conversion and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. The second section is concerned with the psychological and socio-political empowerment of the elites. The third section deals with the intellectual and technical empowerment of both non-ecclesiastical and ecclesiastical elites. The last section speaks of the selection and training of the ecclesiastical elites, and of the proper climate they need to create for a successful empowering of others.

4.2 Forms of Empowerment

In theological terms, empowering people is a complex, comprehensive and long process. It covers the spiritual, intellectual, psychological, material and socio-political aspects of the life of the person to be empowered. I consequently regroup different forms of empowerment into three main categories: spiritual empowerment, psychological and socio-political empowerment, intellectual and/or technical empowerment. Spiritual empowerment is that which is directly related to godly matters, such as conversion to Christianity and the manifold work of the Holy Spirit. Psychological and socio-political empowerment analyses psychological and socio-political problems of the elites and deals with their resolution. Intellectual and/or

technical empowerment deals with different kinds of training, such as those to protect the faith of the elites and to prepare them for ministry.

4.2.1 Spiritual Empowerment

Here, I proceed from the assumption that the Bible says that to as many as have received Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord He has given them the right or power to be called children of God (John 1 :12); and that by grace God gives life to people and that by His Spirit He empowers them to live after His will. So, the first empowerment here is that of the Holy Spirit.

4.2.1.1 Empowerment of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit plays a very important role. When the Holy Spirit comes, He convicts one of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16: 8-18) and He teaches in depth (John 14 :26). More importantly, He empowers and gives special power, wisdom, knowledge and fear of the Lord, and abilities or gifts for special callings (Isaiah 11 :2 ; Acts 1 :8 ; 1 Cor.12). The human responsibility here is to earnestly pray for the Holy Spirit to come and act according to the need.

In practical terms, the leadership of the International Church of Pretoria must pray, encourage their members to pray and organise prayer meetings in order to see the Holy Spirit come and empower people for wider and deeper spiritual, moral and social change in the community. For only by the Holy Spirit can these African elites be deeply touched and transformed to really contribute to effective, positive transformation in their communities.

4.2.1.2 The Holy Spirit in the Theology of God's Manifest Power

In general the Holy Spirit manifests Himself according to places and times, but also according to the way people trust and approach Him. The way people

approach the Holy Spirit consequently affects their life, their philosophy of work and their theology which makes the whole difference.

The theology of God's manifest power is a theology by which God makes Himself more manifest through mighty and palpable signs, miracles and wonders. Usually, when one is highly educated and well off and has socio-political power in his/her hands, he/she hardly need God; he/she is God for himself/herself, or else these values are his/her own God. But when she/he sees palpable and extra-ordinary things done by the spectacular power of the Holy Spirit, she/he can feel the need of such a special God. This same lesson I learn from most, if not all, of the cases of conversion of biblically prominent people, or at least, of their acknowledgement of the God of Israel as the living one or the God of Gods and Lord of Kings (Dan. 2:46-47; 2 Kings 5: 14-15).

This theology also has the same positive effects in Africa today and in most Third World countries. Congregations where such theology is effectively used, one may find such prominent people as cabinet ministers, members of parliament and rich business people, etc., who are really committed to God. These congregations are also generally big and powerful (Anderson and Hollenweger 1999:28-29). Here, these people feel secure and protected against witchcraft and other evil powers (Anderson 2000b: 117,121). But where the situation is different, even though there are such eminent people, they generally remain *spiritual bats* as Ukpong 1984: 11 would call them, Christians in the Church, yet using magic or other evil powers for their protection (Anderson 2000a: 381).

I remember, here, two cases of serious commitment of Christians who saw a palpable sign of the power of God in their lives. One was the wife of a Congolese diplomat who nearly died in his hospital bed; but who, after a prayer by a leader of the International Church of Pretoria, was healed and became very involved in the life of the congregation. The other is that of a couple, a medical doctor and his wife who was also a medical doctor. A few months after the wife became pregnant,

she went to hospital for a pregnancy check up. She was, unfortunately, informed that the fetus could not develop normally; that there was a grave mental and physical defect. That even though the baby might develop to maturity, she would be seriously mentally and physically handicapped. The only solution was abortion. But after talking to the pastor who exhorted them, telling them about the creative and re-creative power of God, and who prayed for the healing, the couple went back home and decided to see the doctor again for another test. To their happy surprise, everything was perfect. More than seven years later the girl is continually mentally and physically healthy.

I believe that regular opportunities for such powerful testimonies to be heard or given are really edifying and very effectively empowering (Ndungu 1997: 53). I also consider that one aspect of such testimonies is what Anderson (2000a: 379) observes here, "People are not only convinced by the triumphs of Christianity but also by its trials". For instance, one undergoes various failures and sufferings but remains faithful to God through the power of the Spirit.

4.2.2 Empowerment through Conversion

This is a key part of any Christian empowerment process. It opens the elites to God's richest spiritual resources. They are blessed with all the blessings in heavenly places (Eph. 1: 5); they receive the power to become children of God because of their believing in the name of Jesus Christ (John 1: 12). Accordingly, speaking of *Power, empowerment and cultural acquiescence*, Edet (1994:124) maintains, "Theologically every Christian is empowered by Jesus at his or her Christian initiation to function fully as a child of God". And adds that, "Christ empowered all who turned to him..." (1994:125). Nowadays, He still empowers all those who turn to Him. The deeper and more balanced the conversion is, the more spiritually strong a Christian becomes.

Dorr (1990 :8) and Phan (1996 :114) point out that conversion needs to be a full one in order for one to enjoy a better relationship with God and one's neighbour, both in word and in deed. A full or well-balanced conversion means one affecting by the (four) different levels of personal, spiritual, interpersonal and socio-political life. In terms of the ideas of these two theologians and many others the four levels of conversion are religious, intellectual, moral and political.

4.2.2.1 Religious Conversion

Describing religious conversion, Marsh (1990 :235) says: "Religious conversion is the peak of of self-transcendence". Then, he continues saying, "...religious conversion is other-worldly falling in love with God without restriction" (Marsh 1990 :135). This falling in love takes place when one receives Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Saviour. This opens the person to all of God's richest resources (Col.2:3). Many of the African elites of the International Church of Pretoria have experienced this conversion. But it is good to follow through the process so as to bring their faith to a higher level through prayer, study and the practice of the word of God.

4.2.2.2 Intellectual Conversion

Quoting Lonergan, Smith (1981 :179) defines intellectual conversion as "a radical clarification and, consequently the elimination of an exceedingly stubborn and misleading myth concerning reality, objectivity and knowledge". From Romans 12 :2 we learn that the change of mind causes transformation, prevents conformation to worldly life and allows discerning what is the good and perfect will of God. This is to say that this conversion helps one acquire God's perspective and easily distinguish right from wrong.

Intellectual conversion is very important for all Christians; but it is even more important for these African elites to help them see life from the perspective of God and to understand and use the power they have got according to godly principles,

meaning for their own good and that of their communities, and for the glory of God.

Intellectual conversion is of special importance for ICP elites, who generally appreciate life according to the thinking of the common man and not in terms of godly principles. The development of this conversion requires intentional and constant actions from the trainer and the trainee. The trainer has to teach, exhort, intercede, organise intercession for the purpose and follow everything through. Taking the advice into consideration, the trainee has to read, meditate, study and where necessary memorise the Word and pray for the purpose.

What I also usually do to develop this conversion is to connect any socio-cultural or political event with the word of God in order to help the elites or Christians in general know the reasons why what is good is to be done and what is wrong is to be avoided.

4.2.2.3 Moral Conversion

Dorr (1990 :13) explains that this is more than mere preparedness to observe moral principles. This is the conversion chiefly concerned with one's interpersonal relationships. It is a deeper change of heart and/or mind making, one readily prepared to relate to others, especially to the poor, on a person-to-person basis. To be morally converted is to have come to the point where one can "see as really significant the events that touch the lives of the poor, for better or for worse" (1990 :17).

This conversion is very important for everybody; but it is more important for Christians to show love to humanity. It is even more important for people of ICP, who as I explain in Section 2.6 have transactional relationships, to develop deeper and better relationships. Proper development of people's conversion can offer NEPAD and/or the African Renaissance the kind of people they need to work

adequately and succeed, according to the pledge in (NEPAD 2001 :57). Some call this conversion *moral renewal* (Pityana 1999 :137) and others *moral rebirth* (Teffo 1999 :166, 168). Of course, these two thinkers speak from their own fields of knowledge, which are not theology, yet which contribute to spiritual, moral and social advancement. *Ubuntu*, which Pityana (1999 :144) considers as the organising principle of the African morality and “reference to human solidarity”, as well as relevant biblical principles coupled with appropriate examples provided by the trainer can easily help develop this conversion. Visits to and caring for the elderly, needy, etc., for example, can play a very important role.

4.2.2.4 Political Conversion

Explaining this, Dorr (1990 :14-15) says that political conversion is the conversion of one’s mind to political responsibility. To be politically converted involves the understanding of how one’s society is structured and how it works, and the commitment to correcting injustices, not only on an ad hoc basis but also by replacing the unjust structures with those that are equitable.

This conversion is of greater importance for everybody, to combat political irresponsibility and positively contribute to social justice. The analysis of the psychology of the African elites and of their wrong attitudes and behaviours in the third chapter shows that there are glaring cases of political irresponsibility among these elites. Combatting this irresponsibility, to develop in them a heart for the good of their community, is also a Christian responsibility for us.

Speaking of *ubuntu* and its unifying effect Teffo (1999:153) says, “*Ubuntu* or humanness implies a basic respect for human nature as a whole. It is a social ethic, a unifying vision enshrined in the Zulu maxim ‘*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabanye*’ (One is a person through others)”. What we can also learn in this statement is that as a philosophy *ubuntu* is a unifying vision for the communal welfare. It is like one of the biblical principles, “Love your neighbour as yourself ” (Matt. 22 :39). The

use of relevant biblical principles and of the philosophy of *ubuntu*, compounded with good and appropriate examples, can well help develop this conversion to fruition.

4.3 Psychological and Socio-political Empowerment

As mentioned earlier, this empowerment analyses the psychological, social and political problems of the elites in order to solve them. Down here follow the main features.

4.3.1 Psychotherapy

Defining psychotherapy, Wolman (1973:304) has this to say

Psychotherapy is a loose term encompassing a variety of treatment techniques of organic and non-organic mental (i.e. behavior) disorder. In a narrower and most commonly used sense, psychotherapy means psychological treatment of mental disorder in contradistinction to the physical and chemical treatment methods.

It is thus a therapy or remedy for a psychological therapy or illness. It can be used in case of any psychological and social abnormality. The main two techniques I discuss now are horizontalisation and relevant biblical principles, and the African heritage.

4.3.1.1 Horizontalisation

This empowerment consists in smoothing over relationships between different racial or social groups. It can also be used to combat inferiority and superiority complexes or any other racial and/or socio-cultural evil. Special attention is paid here to the rich and the poor groups, or else to the elite and non-elite groups. The analysis of the relationships between elite and non-elite reveals a rough transactional relationship between these two groups. The more the relationship between members of these different groups grows smoother, the more generally it

betrays a mutual transactional, clannish and/or ethnic relationship between them. The non-elite seem to betray an inferiority complex, which could result in elites developing a superiority complex; though such behaviour has not been generally noticed in the International Church of Pretoria.

Empowering programmes need then to be careful not to let the elite develop pride or feel more important than the non-elite. Accordingly, the non-elite should be helped to feel as important as they are. This levelling of some down and others up, should also be a regular and careful practice. Well-planned and regular instructive and socialising meetings, where the different groups share food and drink, talk and discuss and learn, can help to solve the problem.

Superiority as well as inferiority complexes have almost the same consequences both on the person him or herself and on the people around her/him. One with a superiority complex usually harbours an affected love for oneself, meaning a fake and wrong love for oneself and a constant hatred for the other. Accordingly, a person with an inferiority complex generally has a subtle hatred of oneself or a mixture of hatred and love for self, for his or her social group or people and for the other social group or people (Fanon 1967: 60,67); inner insecurity and subtle fear are also something general in both cases. Describing the two opposite collective personality structures and the interaction between the oppressed and the oppressor (Western) - after Mannoni and Freire - Nümberger (1996:151-153) observes that the oppressor is characterised by sadistic love and an oppressive superiority complex, while the oppressed is alienated and ruled over through constant indoctrination into a deep inferiority complex. This is why these psychopathologies need to be eliminated out and the victims rendered more confident and secure, more loving and effective.

Horizontalising is much easier to do for Christians than for non-Christians. In the same vein Nümberger (1996:159) argues that the Christian faith should have the effect of horizontalising vertical relationships on the level of collective

consciousness. He continues,

Faith in the Creator reminds people that they have brought nothing into the world and will take nothing out of it. Faith in the Redeemer reminds people that "Christ, being rich, became poor so that we may be enriched by His poverty" (2Cor8:9). Faith in the Spirit reminds them that they all belong to the level of miserable sinners and have all been elevated to the status of "sons and daughters of God". The equal dignity of all human beings is a theologically essential component of basic Christian assumptions (1996:159).

The healing truth from the word of God or and other appropriate sources can therefore help to level and smooth over relationships between different classes, groupings or races, and to empower them accordingly for proper behaviour.

4.3.1.2 African Heritage as Psychotherapy

Positive and relevant aspects of the African cultural heritage can be of use to help these Africans correct and improve their own self-image, to urge them to good actions, to faith in God and to security where necessary. This can also help to connect this heritage to Christianity.

In the same way as values are gleaned from the Bible to exhort or teach, values can also be taught from this heritage. For instance, Shuuya (1973:50-51) says that the Ovambos considered their God to be omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, maker of everything, all-watching, faithful and never lying. This knowledge can help to connect the elites with their cultural past and Christianity. It can also help to teach them from the faith of their fathers, especially if they are from Ovamboland. Shuuya (1973:52) also tells of the same Ovambos praying for rain, for a rich harvest and better hunting, and even for God to blow a speck of dust out of their eye. This understanding can help to exhort them to faithful prayer both for great and small things, for themselves and for their community.

The insights from African traditional religion and philosophy are also intended to play the role which C.H.Felder, the editor of *The Original African Heritage Study Bible*, had in mind when he published it. This was to connect African blacks or Blacks of African descent historically with their Creator, but also with the entire history of the Christian faith and their past. Introducing this history, Felder (1993:1813) maintains, "The role of Black History is not to prove that the contributions of the Black people...are better or worse than other races, but to stress the simple fact that Africans and African descendants can look back upon their past with pride...". Accordingly, knowing the importance of the positive past of a people for their self-confidence and hope for their future Biko (1998:363) has this to say,

Further implications...are to do with correcting false images of ourselves in terms of culture... religion... There is always an interplay between the history of a people, i.e., the past, and their faith in themselves and hopes for the future.

Such a heritage can actually play a positive role in psychotherapy.

4.3.1.3 Inferiority Complex and its Multifarious Psychotherapy

As the analysis has shown in the third chapter, the inferiority complex and its syndromes have a special impact on the African elites; that requires a variety of techniques in order to combat this complex.

Before speaking of the causes of an inferiority complex and/or a dependency syndrome, I first of all mention a few signs of this social abnormality. These include the elites' blind tendency to defend Westerners' evil actions; to believe that they cannot afford much but that Westerners can; to believe that Westerners can give them power or keep them in power and better their economies; to use the policy of divide and rule; to subtly despise, ill-treat and exploit and impoverish their own people as the Westerners have been doing; but also their slavish

admiration of other people's values and empty pride in speaking Western languages.

African people in whom I noticed an inferiority complex, especially the most educated ones who were also Fanon's concern, and any other person or group of people with such a complex should be helped to feel equal with others and important in Christ (Gal. 3: 28) and to accept, love and value themselves; but also to accept, love and value others and live with them in a way worthy of the name of Christ (Acts 4: 32, 34).

Fanon (1967:60) observes, for instance, that "In the man of colour there is a constant effort to run away from his own individuality, to annihilate his own presence". I think this is in part the reason why most of the African elites I have met in the International Church of Pretoria, are never prepared to accept or share responsibility for the suffering, failure or destruction in their communities. These elites are often too good; for they comment on, criticise and condemn the ruling class. And never do they have an alternative concrete solution to propose, especially a solution where they have a direct role to play. Explaining the causes of black people's attitudes and behaviours, Fanon makes a number of meaningful statements which can help one to understand the problem but also find a way to solve it. He says, for instance,

The Negro, having been made inferior proceeds from humiliating insecurity through strongly voiced self-accusation to despair. The attitude of the black man toward the white, or toward his own race, often duplicates almost completely a constellation of delirium, frequently bordering on the pathological region (1967:60).

And later again, he maintains, "This lack of esteem of self as an object worthy of love has grave consequences. For one thing, it keeps the individual in a state of profound inner insecurity, as a result of which it inhibits or falsifies every relationship with others..." (1967:75).

Trying to further describe the black man's inferiority complex Fanon (1967: 228) adds, "The black man wants to be like the white man. For the black there is only one destiny. And it is white". The above statements can help us understand some of the causes of the black man's inferiority complex and to think of possible remedies. Fanon (1967:25) considers also that those who are the most educated are generally the worst victims of this complex. These are the people who were brainwashed in various ways. They read or were told and/or taught about the white God, white Jesus, white Virgin Mary, white Moses, white Paul, etc...; but also about a black devil, black witches, black villains (Fanon 1991:111-114), even though that is not the very truth; about white men always succeeding while black men are never successful; about white economies and governments always prosperous and black governments and economies always failing. The truth, which is almost never told, is how have the Western prosperous countries become rich or else how the unprosperous African countries have become poor. Trying to explain the cause of the poverty of the poor, Moltmann (1983:133) maintains:

These poor nations are underdeveloped because they have been de-developed - dragged down by wealthy nations of the world. They are hungry because they are being starved. They are getting poorer because they are being forced into debts. They are not suffering because of some deficiency of nature.

Freire (1993:44) also makes interesting statements, which can help us understand some of the abnormal behaviours of these African elites. He observes, as quoted earlier:

...the oppressed want at any cost to resemble the oppressors, to imitate them, to follow them. This phenomenon is especially prevalent in the middle-class oppressed, who yearn to be equal to the "eminent" men and women of the upper class.

The fact remains true even after socio-political decolonisation. The statements also help us understand why the African elites' attitudes can hardly be different from those of the "former masters", the Western imperialists. The "former masters" came to Africa so as to selfishly take riches from Africa to the West in order to build their countries and economies. The African elite embezzle money from Africa and take it to the West to replenish their bank accounts overseas, buy villas and enjoy life over there. The Western imperialists were domineering over the so-called Third World people and exploiting them; the African elites do the same. The Western masters led a selfish secluded life far from the local people; the African elites tend to do the same. And even some from my own country the Democratic Republic of Congo, then Zaire, would go to Europe almost every weekend, just to watch movies while the majority of people went without food in their own country. Their behaviours and attitudes are just the opposite of the following African theologians proclaim real blessings to be. Nthamburi and Waruta (1997:52) maintain, "For African Christians God's blessings are not enough if they only come to benefit individuals, they must become the blessings of their community of faith, and they must be tangible...".

Speaking of the African traditional leadership, Mulemfo (2001:48) observes that anybody chosen as a leader was responsible for the well-being of his/her subjects, and that the African traditional governments played an important role, looking after the public affairs of their subjects and territories, matters which the present African political systems are rarely prepared to do.

Fanon (1967:60)'s statements mentioned earlier, that the black people start accusing themselves and their own people, pinpoint the reason why these elites often put the blame on their own people and leaders, but plead for the Western people even though they know how important is the role the latter play in some of the troubles and wars often suffered in the African continent: Westerners feed tribal conflicts, provide the necessary war logistics for their own selfish profit and start making political declarations. And because of their humiliating insecurity the

African elites accuse themselves, especially their own people, until they despair; and their profound inner insecurity results in a failure to develop good relationships with others. Their subtle lack of self-esteem, resulting in a constant struggle to become white, which is naturally doomed to failure, eventuates in a tragedy of despair and subtle self-hate. Logically, one who does not love himself/herself does not love anyone else (Munroe 1991:107). The Bible says, "Love your neighbour as yourself". Loving yourself is one's very pattern of true love for others. Being too judgemental and demonstrating other forms of masochistic behaviours, have their roots in this lack of self-esteem. This is a constant cause of repeated socio-political problems. The community as a whole often suffers from this failing.

One of the symptoms of the inferiority complex of these elites is the unnecessary pride they often take in speaking Western languages, in eating Western food and blindly espousing Western values. Recognising this unfortunate preference for foreign cultures, Mugambi (1989:111) comments:

In the contemporary Africa...this issue becomes pertinent especially because of the tendency to suppose that foreign (especially Euro-American, but also Arabic and Oriental) cultures are preferable to the African heritage.

These people take pride in working or going overseas, even though they have nothing important to contribute there – perhaps just for washing corpses and old Western ladies.

Empowering these African elites will need uprooting all these causes by the use of the relevant scriptures and the power of the Holy Spirit, but also by that of the lessons from some positively instructive literatures. Corrective measures could come from Psychology or Psychiatry, History or Science, Religion or any other appropriate domain.

As a psychiatrist, Fanon (1967:100) suggests that the patients be helped to become conscious of their unconsciousness and to abandon their hallucinatory whitening, but also to start acting in the direction of a change in the social structure. In the same vein Nümberger (1996:158) speaks also of the transforming conscientisation of the person. The person needs to know that he/she has a problem. What I currently do is to tell the elites about the God who created human beings and made nations from the same blood (Genesis 1:26,27; Acts 17:26); who redeemed all to be equal in Christ (Colossians 3:11; Galatians 3:26-28); but I also tell them of prominent black people who have made the difference in a domain or another. I also use anything at hand to help those who think there are blessed and cursed races have a positive image of themselves.

I equally believe that something needs to be done for the restoration of the correct self-image of the future African elites at the level of the school. Appropriate school programmes should be put in place to combat such root causes as those seen in the third chapter. The elite should therefore be taught not to hate the West or Westerners but to value them rightfully, to appreciate good African values and cultures that are not contrary to the Word of God, and to love Africa and beautify the continent. This is also the role the Church or the African church, in particular, has to play. In the same vein Mugambi (1995:225) says that African cultural values were undermined from the pulpit; they have also to be restored from the pulpit.

Though these African elites are no longer under any western power, they find themselves invaded by the power of the former colonialist or the former masters of their parents. This situation reminds one of the children of Israel who, after being taken out of Egypt, had their heart kept captive by Egypt for a long time. Moses still had to struggle hard to help them walk straight to the Promised Land (Nümberger 11: 4–6). Accordingly, explaining how hard liberation work is Linthicum (1991:84) observes, “You can take people out of the evil empire, but it is truly hard to get the empire out of people”. Here starts the liberating work of the

facilitator, in order to free these elites from this dangerous complex.

4.3.1.4 Non-Political African Elites and Political Responsibilities

Before speaking of the causes of civic and/or political irresponsibility and indifference and of how to combat them, I first of all remind people of their political responsibilities. These responsibilities include observation of the established Law of Justice and human rights, the paying of one's debts and taxes, but also and above all commitment to justice and the preferential option for the poor; knowledge of how one's society functions and commitment to fighting social injustice, to replacing unjust structures by just ones and to building a just society wherever necessary; loving one's people and leaders and praying for them are simply logical consequences.

My experience with ICP Christians, especially African elites who are not directly involved in politics, is that they are almost always negative about political leaders, and generally judgemental of these leaders but also almost never prepared to seriously carry out their own political responsibilities as Christians. For example, they prefer to sit back and criticise rather than come out and speak against social injustice to the relevant authority. Therefore, the empowering programmes should address this political indifference in particular. They should insist on the elites' special interest in the socio-political life of their immediate community and of the community at large, on forgiving their "evil" political leaders, on loving them, loving their communities and praying for these communities (Neh. 1–9). Praying for leaders is an important political responsibility, which needs to be taught (1 Tim. 2:1-4). Serious intercession for the leaders equally combats subtle hatred of these leaders and keeps people from unnecessary criticism, which is generally based on untrue and inaccurate information. Necessary teachings and exhortations need to be planned in order to fight political indifference and a reluctance to start taking political responsibility where necessary. Such negativity and political irresponsibility seem to be general among Africans. Saddened by the negativity

and civic or political irresponsibility of the Africans from the European churches, Kimba (2000:345) exhorts:

You only need to change your low-minded attitudes, telling you that you are too insignificant and powerless to support and offer or forge Africa's future from the European continent. We all have to change our insensitive behaviour which makes you feel good as, after all, we are well off ...

The quotation above clearly addresses the insensitivity and indifference of African Christians and their inability to act for the good of their people. These indifferent African Christians already live in Europe but still politically irresponsible; those who live in South Africa are no different from them. African intellectuals need to show true leadership by playing an active and positive part in the life of their communities. Accordingly, Burns (1978:142) observes that intellectual leaders should be involved in the life of their society because they can respond to the needs of the society. Insisting on the particular role a Christian can play for the benefit of her/his community, Kalonji (2000:53–54) maintains that to work properly after God's will a civil government should have a virtuous leadership with a proper Christian training. It is also true that Christian training should come only from the church and its leaders and not from secular institutions. Therefore, the Church has to have proper leadership training for its members.

The elites should then receive a serious Christian training so as to become politically responsible. Those who have been under dictatorships or under harsh and evil political leaders seem to be less tolerant and less forgiving of any leadership, as previously mentioned. They tend to be very critical of them. And the situation of general suffering, deprivation, poverty, hunger, etc., they have always endured has developed in them an envious spirit, distrust, hostility, and socio-political passivity and negativity. Speaking of the consequences of long-standing deprivation, Burns (1978:65) observes that such deprivation of a physiological need, even if it has been later satisfied, will leave its imprint on the character of the persons. Later on, quoting Jeannie Knutson, he adds in her words,

“Overwhelmingly preoccupied with physiological survival...they do not have enough psychic energy remaining to become mentally or physically concerned with their environment” (1978:65). Then he reports, “Their attitude towards others is marked by distrust and hostility” (1978:65). Many of the intellectual elites of the International Church of Pretoria belong to this category. So, combating these psycho-political abnormalities is a necessity; and it requires intentional and well-planned work.

Since the Bible (Psalm 107: 20) states, “He sent his word and healed them, ...”, all these abnormalities can be corrected to perfection through the proper use of the word of God, the powerful effect of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual leader’s own positive attitude and action. The spiritual leader can also aptly and wisely use any applicable psychotherapy to uproot the evil.

4.4 Intellectual and Technical Empowerment

Here I deal with a variety of relevant kinds of training and techniques which can help empower the African elites. Some of these forms of empowerment are for refocusing the mind of the elites on proper action and reaction, and others are for the protection of their faith and preparation for ministry. Mind refocusing has generally to be carried out through *culturally connected applicability*. Smith (1996 :14-15) explains *connected applicability* as a technique consisting in aptly empowering people by raising the main themes of life or major issues of the day and connecting them with the word of God, to establish a close relationship between the world in which we live and the Word. Culturally connected applicability and self-protection and preparation for ministry thus comprise the following subsections.

4.4.1 Culturally Connected Applicability

The training of the African elites fully considers their general culture, the main issues of their time and the challenges facing them. Therefore, the trainer of the

African elites should be able to understand the time in which they live, their responsibility, their socio-political problems and the challenges facing them.

In one way or another the first three chapters of this dissertation speak of the challenges of science and other religions which these African elites often face. This particular situation causes me to speak specifically of the use of contextual apologetics, convincing scientific evidence and of an empowerment to protect the faith of the elites.

4.4.1.1 Contextual Apologetics

Schaeffer (1968:138–139) maintains that Christian apologetics has two purposes: the defence of the Gospel and the communication of the Gospel to one's generation in terms they can understand better. The word defence is positive here, for it means giving sufficient answers to any questions raised. He later observes that Christian apologetics must be able to show intellectually that Christianity speaks of the true truth, but also to exhibit that it is not just theory. This is needed for the defence of the flock of Christ and also in a positive sense, for reaching out to people who are honestly asking questions (1968:148). He even considers a lived-out Christianity and corporate Christian love as a form of apologetics in the sense that they can easily win souls to Christ (1968:150). Apologetics is thus needed for both the protection of one's faith and for one's ministry. Exhorting Christians to know their apologetics, Logan (1991:138) has this to say, "Today's Christian advocate needs to know his apologetics instead of constantly apologising for not knowing them".

By contextual apologetics I mean apologetics which can be taught to people according to their own fields of study, their careers or particular milieus where they are working, studying or living, and their particular challenges. The same people can also be empowered with any other necessary apologetics

4.4.1.2 Convincing Scientific Evidence

Such evidence can equally make a big contribution to the Christian faith. In the same vein, Boucaille (1976:268) as noted earlier observes, "Modern science knowledge ... allows us to understand certain verses...which, until now, it has been impossible to interpret". Commenting on the contribution of modern science to the faith of scientists, Mugambi (1987:61) observes, "It is fair to comment that, for some people, modern empirical science strengthens religious belief, when they realise that reality is much more mysterious and complicated than all branches of sciences can comprehend". This is why science can be used to teach faith where necessary.

The following can be used as an example of such scientific evidence: Though the Bible has been penned by human beings with their countless weaknesses, which also affected their work in various ways, modern science helps us see that it has been authored under divine inspiration as stated in 2 Timothy 3: 16. In his book *Harmony of science and scripture* Lindsay presents some of the helpful scientific evidence. He says, for instance, that the Bible declares, "It is God who sits above the circle of the earth..." (Isiah. 40: 22), whereas ancient philosophers and scientists had various thoughts about the shape of the earth. Some believed it was shaped like a table, etc., but finally, people came to understand the earth was round; they came to this understanding in the fifteenth century when Columbus sailed the ocean, only to find out that the earth was not flat (1990:15-17). Daniel 12: 4 says that in the end-time knowledge shall increase. This is evident in all fields of knowledge today (1990:237-240).

These and more other examples of scientific evidence, as many as Christians who are scientists can adduce could easily be used to teach and strengthen African elites' faith.

4.4.1.3 Empowerment to Protect their Faith

This is an informative empowerment geared up for self-defence. The programme will thus list a few challenges that science and some religions or movements present to African elites' faith. Concerning religions or religious movements I have chosen to speak here only of Islam, the New Age Movement and Rosicrucianism because of their particular influence in Africa in general and on African elites in particular. The challenges and Christian responses will be proposed in Appendix B to avoid overloading this part of the dissertation. This information is to help the African elites to be able to stand and meet such challenges.

4.4.2 Technical Empowerment

As said early, this particular aspect of empowerment deals specifically with training preparing the elites for practical and successful actions and reactions. Since a good part of the challenges the elites come across will occur when they are trying to minister to people, this empowerment has to deal especially with their preparation for a possible ministry, but also with their self-defence, though the self-protection aspect will not be repeated here. Evangelistic methods and ministries to Islam, New Agers and Rosicrucians are the two subsections here.

4.4.2.1 Evangelistic Methods

Here, I just propose a few evangelistic methods, succinctly described. I also propose that these methods be taught by someone with a better practical experience, for such an experience is what these African elites need the most. The following methods can be of use: EEIII or Evangelism Explosion Three, which is a method insisting on a basic team of three people and their work and

development. Individuals can also use the method as lifestyle evangelism. The method is naturally more practical than theoretical, which is essential. Friendship evangelism is a method which generally requires wisdom and patience, in order to build friendships with people and see how to successfully minister to them. Four Spiritual Laws is a method which consists in presenting the Gospel to people through a four-point plan: God's love to human beings ; humans' sin separating them from God ; Christ the only way to God ; and Christ received by personal invitation. Many other methods can also be taught according to availability and needs.

4.4.2.2 Ministry to Muslims, New Agers and Rosicrucians

This is a special empowerment for African elites' ministries according to needs and contexts. Elites' specific calling and the particular need, according to the time and place where they live, are important determinants for a particular type of training and/or empowerment.

The various training above can only work well and properly empower elites if the trainers themselves have been well selected and adequately trained. The evaluation of the vision and its achievements can well provide evidence for this statement. The ecclesiastical elites of the International Church of Pretoria who merely found themselves in the leadership of the church, without proper training caused a lot of harm to the congregation. That is why before concluding this chapter, I will propose a selection and training programme for ecclesiastical elites.

4.5 Selection and Training of Ecclesiastical Elites

This section will just be short. It will have only two brief subsections.

4.5.1 Selection of Ecclesiastical Elites

This selection must be based on clearly evaluable criteria: the well-balanced conversion of a person with a long standing testimony, both from within and from

outside the congregation, a discernible call of the Holy Spirit to such responsibility, i. e., church leadership and clear spiritual leadership.

4.5.2 Training of Ecclesiastical Elites

This training needs to be more practical than theoretical. It must aim at developing the ability to understand the word of God, to share it and/or convey it well and, importantly, to live it out in the lives of these elites. It should also develop servant leadership, resourcefulness, connected applicability, unconditional love and acceptance, clear discernment of people and their problems in order to deal with them accordingly.

The ecclesiastical elites, thus well trained and empowered, can then start empowering many others. They can first of all create a proper climate for deeper empowering (Smith 1996 :25). Deeper and better empowering work can be done better in small cells or communities. Such small communities can fulfil all of the empowering roles as described in this whole chapter more adequately than in a bigger community. Here follows a description of the activities of such a community.

4.5.2.1 Small Empowering Communities

Empowering programmes should underscore the urgency of helping African elites to discover and understand the importance and the power of the prayer and of the Word of God for their own lives, those of their relatives and those of their communities at large. The trainers should thus help the elites understand that a host of socio-cultural and spiritual problems can be solved through faith. This includes their own and other people's substantial or existential needs: various healings, and fears of evil spirits and of powers which can be dealt with through proper use of prayers and the Word of God and by reliance on the comforting and acting power of the Holy Spirit. The elites should therefore be encouraged to read, study, meditate and even memorise the word of God both individually and

in groups, and to pray as frequently as possible – individually and collectively.

Freire (1973:38) observes, “Democracy and democratic education are founded on faith in men, on the belief that they not only can but should discuss the problems of their country, of their continent, their world, their work...”. What he encourages here is regular occasions for debates on the essential problems of people and of their communities so as to gain deep insights into them and come up with concrete and practical solutions. The same methods can also be used here in various ways. For instance, in order to further their collective sharing of the Word, collective prayers, praise and worship, and brotherly fellowship, the elites should be encouraged to have various meetings in this connection: meetings for eating together (Acts 2: 46), for discussing socio-cultural issues from a Christian perspective, and purely prayer and worship meetings with an important space for the sharing of the Word of God. This is a proper way to strengthen interpersonal relations, too. Something like a public gathering can be organised where people would meet, discuss and deliberate upon some socio-cultural issues and praying according to their own careers or social groupings and/or areas. This would help the congregation to not remain a one- or two-hour Sunday Church but to become an almost, if not every day Church as it was once the habit of the primitive Church (Acts 2:41–47), and meet thus Mbiti’s wish (1989:3) to see Christianity become an all-time religion, one permeating all the sectors of the African people’s life, as was the case with the African traditional religions.

In the same spirit, yearly or quarterly meetings would be scheduled for different elite and/or non-elite groups to meet, discuss, deliberate on socio-cultural issues according to the Christian God’s perspective and pray accordingly. Regular cell meetings could also be organised every week in different areas according to professions, or other criteria. This must necessarily be done only after the serious training and empowering of the cell/group leaders have been carried out. These leaders should only be selected after praying and asking proper guidance

from the Holy Spirit, and clearly discerning their own gifts and calling in accordance with such responsibility.

These small communities are generally the best place where different forms of empowerment can be offered, learnt lessons practised and good characters developed. Where possible both the elite and non-elite can come together and enjoy fellowship.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with a way to empower the African elites, and especially with empowering programmes. Empowering African elites needs thus to be a comprehensive process. It has to deal with ecclesiastical elites and non-ecclesiastical elites. It also has to take their spiritual, intellectual, psychological, as well as their socio-political life and conditions, into account.

The process of empowering African elites has to be careful and evolve from conversion, through various psychotherapies and horizontalisations, to empowerments for the protection of their faith and preparation for ministry. Elites' religious conversion helps them enjoy a special relationship with God; their intellectual conversion helps them perceive the world from a godly perspective; their moral conversion helps them to have healthy and godly interpersonal relationships with their neighbours and to see the poor through the eyes of God; and their political conversion commits them to social justice, fighting unjust structures and building a just society.

Then, come various other kinds of training: Horizontalisations deal with smoothing over relationships; psychotherapies combat psychological and socio-political evils; religious and scientific empowerments deal with the protection of the faith of the elites and with their preparation for a possible ministry. The selection and training of the ecclesiastic elites is a very important step, for it determines the success or failure of the vision. The following chapter will

summarise the findings of this chapter and of the previous chapters; it will then conclude by making recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUDING SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the main findings of the dissertation as they relate to the main issues tackled in the study and points the way forward for the vision of the International Church of Pretoria. These findings are intended to contribute to the effective implementation of the vision of empowering African elites in the International Church of Pretoria. The vision aims at empowering these Africans spiritually, psychologically, and socio-politically after Christian principles and other relevant philosophies, to become highly instrumental for socio-political betterment in their communities.

The chapter comprises then three sections. The first section introduces the introduction of the project and its explicit intent to devise and propose an outline of the empowering programmes to ICP, for the proper empowering of its elites. The second section concerns the International Church of Pretoria, population and its vision. The section has informed me and the vision inspired my research. The third section provides practical suggestions for successful empowering; this would probably help the leadership handle the vision differently.

5.2 Introducing the Topic

I have been working on the topic, of empowering African elites for Christian praxis: the experience of ICP, since the end of 2000. Obviously, the topic is very interesting and practical; it relates easily to most African socio-political problems and can work hand in hand with such socio-political projects as NEPAD and African Renaissance. The type of people that these projects need to work properly and succeed, the church can offer after a complete process of training; NEPAD and other initiatives need people of high morality; people who accept and love others unconditionally; people with whom to build just societies. The church can collaborate with them, train and empower such people.

This topic also take helps to tackle the challenge of helping African elites meet the challenges of science and other religions facing them. It is encouraging to know that the same God who touched such people of influence as Esther (Esther 4-7), Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-8), etc., in the past in order to change their lives and use them for the welfare of their community, can also transform these African elites' lives and use them as well for the good of their people.

The topic is constantly linked up with the explicit intent of the dissertation to devise and propose an outline of empowering programmes to the International Church of Pretoria for proper empowering.

5.3 ICP and the Vision of Empowering African Elites

To recapitulate the International Church of Pretoria is a congregation in Pretoria Central whose population has informed me much and the vision of which has seriously inspired my research. This is also the congregation where I have been part of the leadership since 1996.

The congregation is composed of a good deal of what it would call African elites and many other Africans from different countries and cultures. The elites are generally people with higher education and more influence than these other Africans. Though these elites are generally expected to use their varied influence and do more good to their communities than anyone else, but their attitudes, behaviours and actions prove to be very disappointing in various ways.

The vision of ICP reveals its project to focus on African elites, train them and empower them in order to positively contribute to life betterment in their communities. But the vision has no clear programme or action plan for this to happen. The strategies adopted are also very simplistic: reach the elites in their cities and towns; empower them; marshal their various resources; and draw their attention to the needs of their villages, towns, cities and the world. The standing

question is: "How to do all this?". This question is also the reason why I have been carrying out this research. The following section will therefore constantly try to answer this question.

5.4 Practical Suggestions on Empowering African Elites in ICP

I would like to make a few suggestions here, in line with the objectives of the vision. The suggestions have to propose practical matters that could help the vision to work; they will deal with individuals and groups, small communities and organisations. One such suggestion is to develop an empowering community of faith. The facilitator should be able to shape the congregation into such a community in order to see effective empowering take place.

5.4.1 Empowering Community

By empowering community I mean a community of people having common or equal rights or rank, and common objectives and motives in Christ. Therefore, the congregation should be organised to work in a way which allows people to become fully aware that unity in Christ is power, to feel free to grow and help each other grow up spiritually. The membership should be brought to understand, for example, that Christian life is not a life for special times or places only; but it is for the day-to-day communal good. It seems to me that in the African traditional community their religious life was also manifested in their daily life. Speaking of African cultural concepts Biko (1998:29) states, "Again we did not believe that religion could be featured as a separate part of our existence on earth. It was manifest in our daily lives". Therefore, the congregation needs to know that a Christian has to observe Christian principles for the glory of God, for her/his own good and for that of her/his community. Such high principles need to be conveyed and learnt in a consistent way, and not only from the pulpit or in formal meetings.

Consequently, the intentional pursuit of these elites' deep and well-balanced conversion, through appropriate exhortations and teachings backed up by the good examples of the facilitators, are essential for their general spiritual growth. Sharing the Word and/or meals together in the church, in families and cell prayer meetings, can also help much. These prayer cells can be organised according to the areas where people live, but also according to the areas and/or specialities or careers of the members for some particularly good reasons.

The vision must be kept boiling in the life of the congregation. Every member should know and be excited about his/her own importance in the congregation but also in the community at large. The members should be brought to a deep conviction that their values are not too many or too few, but are quite enough to be used for the glory of God, for their own good and that of their neighbours. Such exercise brings them to value themselves and respect others, so that he/she who is an elite values himself/herself and values others as well. Accordingly, the non-elite value themselves while valuing those who are elite of any kind. The correct attitude of the spiritual leader and wise and systematic horizontalisation can easily bring about such results.

The congregation or community can also be further empowered by impregnating it with the vision by sharing it as we will see in the following section. This is one of the things ICP can do to see its members well empowered. The logical consequence of developing such community is that the members of the community are empowered more quickly and deeply.

5.4.2 Vision-Imbued Community

The leadership should often come together and talk about the congregation and its vision, the development of matters in the congregation in connection with the vision, but also in connection with other related visions and churches. They also should do the same with all the members of the congregation.

I consider that it is merely useless and quite dangerous to tell people unnecessarily that they are elite or non-elite. However, they have to know that the congregation has the vision of causing the positive transformation of their socio-political situation, through empowering its members according to their potentials. They also have to bear in mind that Christian principles are the basic empowerments. Whenever the use of the term elite/non-elite becomes unavoidable, this can be explained in a way which gives rise to no unnecessary bragging, nor causes humiliation and an inferiority complex in the hearts of people. They can be told, for instance, that “elites are people who have academic, economic, spiritual and/or socio-political potentials/values which they can use for the glory of God, for their own good and the welfare of others”, and “Non-elites are those valuable people with potentials/values other than what the elites have, but which are also very important for themselves, for the glory of God and for their community”.

People who can further an important empowering role in ICP or in any other community are its spiritual leaders or facilitators. But the result depends much on these leaders' own degree of personal empowerment. The following section will develop this point.

5.4.3 Empowered Leaders

Spiritual leaders are central to the whole work. They are the people to create the appropriate climate for the empowering of many, and the people to help empower others. As noted earlier, underlining the importance of leadership development, Linthicum (1991:93) observes, “Without leadership development, everything you have done will pass away. But with it, the future is constantly being created anew for the people of your community”. Therefore, to secure the future of the vision and ministry the facilitators should be selected and fully empowered so as to be able to empower others. The selection needs to be based on clear and well-established

criteria; then those selected have to be trained and empowered according to the clearly achievable objectives.

Facilitators need to be people religiously, intellectually, morally and politically converted in order to be able to understand and successfully carry other people through these different levels of conversion. They also need to be very sensitive to the Holy Spirit so that they may cooperate with Him in the whole process. The character of Christ should be clearly discernible in them through unconditional love and acceptance of all people. They also need to be fully reliant on God by instant prayer. Professional qualities such as proactivity, interdependence, conflict management and a bridge-building ability are essential for wise planning of the activities, better collaboration with others, successful resolution of conflicts and for better connected applicability of biblical principles. They are also supposed to be free of psychopathologies such as superiority and inferiority complexes and of socio-political evils such as political indifference and irresponsibility in order to be able to discern these evils in the lives of others and combat them.

Empowering non-ecclesiastical elites in ICP can work well only after the ecclesiastical elites have been adequately selected and properly trained and empowered. This is the best way of preventing more troubles such as the divisions that the congregation suffered at the hands of some of its leaders a few years ago.

5.4.4 Empowerment for Non-Ecclesiastical Elites

Brown (1993:810) defines empowering someone as “Investing one formally with power; endowing one with the ability or power required for a purpose or task”. The purpose of my research is to see how to build up strong Christians by deeply affecting their lives with the word of God, while relying on the help of the Holy Spirit, in order for them to be able to impact very positively not only on their Christian community but also the community at large. One needs thus to consider and work on the general spiritual and/or socio-cultural heritage of the African

elites, so as not to wind up with *half-Christians* or *religious bats*. Speaking of Onuora Nzekwu (1972)'s description of religious bats, what I would call half-Christians Ukpong (1984:9) has this to say, "...Here Christianity can only boast of millions of hybrids, converts who are neither Christians nor traditional worshippers, religious bats who belong to no particular faith, only claiming to be one or the other when it suits their purposes?"

Careful consideration of the second and third chapters has brought me to the realisation that African elites as observed in the International Church of Pretoria have a few general problems, which need particular actions: half or superficial, or else as some call it head conversion; subtle despising of themselves and/or of their own people; blind admiration of Westerners and Orientals; confused feelings about themselves; superiority complex or inferiority complex or both; and political or civic irresponsibility. These same elites sometimes face serious challenges from other religions and of science. The observations above have set me to think of a few empowerments for the elites.

The following forms of empowerment are, therefore, intended to help lay African elites to become instrumental for the spiritual and socio-political betterment of their communities. The programmes include conversion and Holy Spirit empowerments, horizontalisation and psychotherapy empowerments, and protection and ministerial empowerments. Well-balanced conversion and empowerment of the Holy Spirit prepare these Africans to lead a proper Christian life. Horizontalisation and psychotherapy are intended to combat social and psycho-political evils. Well-balanced conversion, sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, horizontalisation, psychotherapy and liberation from socio-political evils are generally almost compulsory for all African elites. Protection and ministerial programmes are provided depending on the desires and/or needs of the African elites. These are merely for the defence of their faith and proper involvement in their own ministry.

Theoretical knowledge of how something can be carried out is good; but its practical understanding and use is better because that is the way to success. Knowing and adopting appropriate strategies may secure success as we will see soon.

5.4.5 Strategies

As far as strategies are concerned the facilitators have to rely prayerfully on the Lord to receive necessary cooperation of the Holy Spirit, for a successful execution of the programmes. Speaking of the importance of the positive influence of the leadership, Kouzes and Posner (2001:89) observe “People learn – and respond to – what we are.” The same authors wrote earlier, “... leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow” (2001:84). Here I can understand that a good relationship between the trainers and the trainees and these trainers’ good and edifying example, are part of the empowering strategies. These spiritual leaders also have to provide an informed and systematic training, both individually and corporately. All of this has to be based on a careful consideration of the trainees’ spiritual, psychological and socio-political statuses and needs, which need to be brought in line with Christian principles. Creation of a proper climate for the work of empowering African elites is also an important part of such strategies.

5.5 Conclusion

This dissertation has especially dealt with developing guidelines for the empowering programmes which can be used in the training of the African elites, in order to empower them for responsible Christian life, positive socio-political betterment and for their possible ministry.

The programmes comprise a four-level conversion component for proper Christian life, horizontalisation empowerment to combat racial and/or socio-political evils, psychotherapy empowerment for liberation from psychological evils, and

protective/defensive empowerment for elites to be able to defend their faith and a ministerial component as a preparation for ministry. There is also a programme, which deals with the selection and training of the ecclesiastical elite.

To be successful, the programmes should first of all be conveyed to and inculcated in faithful people, who have already been liberated from such psychological evils as superiority and inferiority complexes, self-despising, and from socio-political evils such as selfish ambitions, a political and/or civic irresponsibility. Those who have received such training, mostly in a practical way, can then be ready to create the proper climate for the training and empowering of others. This is to say, for instance, that the International Church of Pretoria should organise the congregation and create the climate in such a way that both the elite and the non-elite learn to understand the vision and develop self-confidence and mutual confidence. This is also where they have to learn how to love and respect each other, grow up spiritually and use their talents and spiritual gifts for mutual edification and communal good.

Establishing selection conditions for the leaders of the congregation, and observing them, are important prerequisites. Selecting these leaders, training and empowering them in order to achieve the necessary spiritual growth, to fight superiority and inferiority complexes and to reach complete social and racial horizontalisation are compulsory prerequisites.

The facilitator so empowered can achieve the objectives of the church through his/her faithful prayer and sincere reliance on the Holy Spirit, proper use of the word of God, wise use of the programmes and through his/her good example.

Self-protection and ministerial programmes are ideal empowerments to enable the elites to defend their own faith (1 Peter 3: 15) and to reach out to others safely and effectively. This whole process of empowerment could ultimately develop into a type of high quality Root and Wing Theology, i.e., a theology helping people to put

down deep roots in Christ (Col.2:6-9) in order to *fly* freely, meet socio-cultural challenges of science and religions of the day aptly. The congregation will thus play its role of empowering people as a responsible religious institution. Expressing this same idea McDaniel (1995:38) states, "The proper aim of religion, it seems to me, is to give people wings and roots".

Though the programmes for well-balanced conversion and socio-racial horizontalisation can be common to all, the programmes for self-defence and ministries may vary depending on individuals, their callings and contexts. People living or working in a Muslim community or called to minister to Muslims, for instance, will need more training about Islam, and how to minister to Muslims rather than Science Apologetics, and so forth.

These programmes are more a guideline than something totally exhaustive. Modifications are possible depending on time, circumstance and empowering requirements. This is also, because the issue areas described in the second and third chapters are not necessarily particular to each African elite, which is why I warn against any slavish use but encourage one to use them only after a careful and wise evaluation of each and every case, though there are also matters, which need to be generally and scrupulously taught. Careful implementation of the programmes helps one to know how much has been achieved, and how much still needs to be done. In case of failure other questions can be asked and answers found.

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