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KEISKAMMAHOEK RURAL SURVEY

VOLUME III

# SOCIAL STRUCTURE

*By*

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KEISKAMMAHOEK RURAL SURVEY

IN FOUR VOLUMES

- Volume I The Natural History of the Keiskammahock District.  
Volume II The Economy of a Native Reserve.  
Volume III Social Structure.  
Volume IV Land Tenure.

12/9/54

The National Council for Social Research initiated and financed a comprehensive Rural Survey of the Keiskammahock District, a Native Reserve in the Ciskei. The Survey, which was directed by Professor Lindsay Robb, covered a number of different aspects of which this social survey was but one.

Acknowledgement is made of the financial assistance given by the National Council for Social Research both in the conduct of the survey itself and in the publication of this Report. Opinions expressed and conclusions reached are, however, those of the authors and are not to be regarded as being an expression of the views of the National Council for Social Research.

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*year that apartheid government*

PREFACE

Many people have co-operated in producing this report. The greater part of the field material was collected by Miss S. Kaplan, who worked in two communal villages, Upper Nqhumeya and Gwili-Gwili, during 1948 and 1949. She spent a total of nine months in the villages and nine months collating her material. During her field-work she was accompanied by Mrs. T. Maki, a former teacher in the district and a resident of Upper Nqhumeya, to whose tact and warm co-operation much of the success of the investigation is due.

The material on freehold and quitrent villages, and that on male initiation, was collected by Mr. M. E. Elton Mills, in the course of his inquiry into land tenure, published in a separate volume. He spent a total of seven-and-a-half months in three villages, Chatha, Rabula and Burnshell, during 1949 and 1950, and attended initiation ceremonies in 1950. Other valuable material, particularly on the attitudes of people, was presented in a preliminary report on land tenure by Mr. S. Skosana, a resident of the district. The statistical material on illegitimacy was collected, towards the end of 1950, by Mrs. Maki; and that on marriage by Mr. Kobus and Mr. Jafta, in conjunction with a migration survey. Miss E. M. Walton organised the investigation into illegitimacy, basing the questionnaire on a preliminary inquiry by Miss Kaplan; and Miss M. Mitchell, a student of Rhodes University, assisted with the collation of the marriage material. Questionnaires on school education in the district were sent out by the Bureau for Educational Research of the Union Education Department, and the replies were analysed by Professor D. Morton of Rhodes University. His report has been drawn on for the section on schools.

The collation of all this diverse material, and the writing of the report has been done by Miss Walton. I have been responsible for planning and supervising the work, posing questions, and revising the final report.

To Professor Lindsay Robb, the Director of the Keiskammahock Rural Survey, we owe thanks for continuous help in the practical problems of field-work. He organized accommodation and transport, and administered the financing of our activities, thus freeing us to

attend directly to the investigation. To his warmth and enthusiasm we are all indebted.

This report was planned as one of a series on the *Keiskammaboek Rural Survey*, and is not fully intelligible apart from other volumes in the series, particularly Volume II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*, and Volume IV, *Land Tenure*. It has been written in the closest collaboration with Professor Hobart Houghton, who was responsible for the economic report, and his material and conclusions have been freely used.

MONICA WILSON.

Rhodes University,  
November, 1951.

**ERRATA**

Page 98 line eleven read atypical.

Page 129 line three read 1831.

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*Chapter I*

INTRODUCTION

Most of the inhabitants of Keiskammahoek District in the Eastern Cape Province are Xhosa-speaking, and are representative of the southern section of the five million Nguni people whose homes are in that part of South Africa which lies between the Great Fish River and Delagoa Bay, the Drakensberg Mountains and the sea. The district is within a hundred miles of the early frontier between the Nguni peoples and the white settlers who were advancing across the southern extremity of the continent from the west, and it was harried by a succession of frontier wars. When the Europeans first arrived, it was occupied by the Ngqika<sup>1</sup> section of the Xhosa people<sup>2</sup>; but they were dispossessed after the war of 1850, and the district settled with a small number of Europeans and a very considerable number of Mfengu. The latter were also Nguni, refugees driven from Natal by Tshaka's wars, who had found shelter with the Xhosa and lived among them for some time, but who, in 1835, entered the Cape Colony and were settled by the Governor along the frontier, to form a buffer between the Xhosa and the European settlers. The Mfengu sided with the Europeans in the wars of 1846 and 1850 and, after the peace, groups of them were allocated land in Keiskammahoek District. Many Xhosa filtered back, but the Mfengu are still the dominant group, forming about three-fourths of the population of the district.<sup>3</sup> Culturally, Mfengu and Xhosa inhabitants are now scarcely distinguishable, though a hundred years ago there were appreciable differences between them in dialect and custom; and politically they are united in opposition to Europeans. Today, the one real cleavage in the district is between White and Black, African and European; that which formerly existed between Mfengu and Xhosa has virtually disappeared.

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<sup>1</sup>Often anglicised as *Gaika*.

<sup>2</sup>The "great place" and grave of the paramount chief Ngqika were close to where Burnshill mission now stands. See W. Govan, *Memorials of the Rev. James Laing*; Bryce & Son, Glasgow, 1875.

<sup>3</sup>There are also a handful of Thembu and Mpondō assimilated by the people among whom they live.

After the conquest, the policy of the Cape Government was firstly to encourage close settlement of the frontier, and secondly to mingle African and European. Thus, few large farms were granted, and the land of Keiskammahoek and certain neighbouring districts became a chess board of black and white holdings, most of them small.<sup>1</sup> Since 1936, the policy of the Union Government has been the direct opposite of the policy of civilisation by intermingling; the object is to segregate European and African land holdings. Keiskammahoek District falls within the "Native Area," and gradually the European farmers are being bought out by the South African Native Trust. The Europeans who remain are mostly settled in the township of Keiskammahoek, the mission of St. Matthew's, and Fort Cox Agricultural School, or else are traders living in scattered "trading stations." They number little more than 500. There are an equal number of "Coloured" people of mixed origin, some being descendants of the Hottentot levies who played a conspicuous part in the frontier wars, others the offspring of black and white unions.

This report deals with the social structure of the African section of the population. Time and staff were not available to study all three groups in the district and the relations between them, as we wished to do; however, since it is impossible to describe the social structure of the Africans in isolation, there are many references to their relations with the ruling Europeans.

The Africans are peasant farmers and migrant labourers. They number about 15,000 resident at home on some 130 square miles of land,<sup>2</sup> and there are an additional 4,000 domiciled in the district but working in the mines, factories and homes of the cities of South Africa. About half the adult men and nearly one-sixth of the adult women are away at a time. Most men circulate continually between town and country, retiring eventually to their homes in the district, while most women settle down in the district after marriage. Only a small proportion of wives—mostly young women—and unmarried mothers

<sup>1</sup>Fuller accounts of the settlement will be found in *Keiskammahoek Rural Survey*, Volume II—*The Economy of a Native Reserve*, and Volume IV—*Land Tenure*.

<sup>2</sup>The District comprises nearly 219 square miles, of which 53½ square miles is Forest Reserve, and 31 square miles belongs to Europeans, the majority of it being the Municipal Commonage attached to the township of Keiskammahoek. Just over 2,000 Africans live among the Europeans on the Municipal Commonage, St. Matthew's Mission and Fort Cox, of whom about 1,000 are peasant farmers. The latter are excluded from this survey of social structure. The total African population domiciled in the district is estimated to be about 21,500. *Vide* Vol. II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*, in which a full analysis is made of the population of the district.

and widows, whose children are in the country, travel backwards and forwards like the men, supporting their families out of their earnings in town.<sup>1</sup> None of the peasant families can support themselves solely by farming, and about a third of them have no land of their own; all are dependent, in a greater or less degree, on the earnings of members employed in the towns, or working in the district as teachers, forest labourers and so on.

Because the population is so dense, the scattered homesteads traditional among all the Nguni<sup>2</sup> have given place to closer settlement, and what we call *villages* have developed. They are straggling, not compact groups, but the settlement is sufficiently close for the term to be not inappropriate; and, as will be shown in the next chapter, fellow villagers co-operate in a variety of activities and have a strong sense of solidarity.

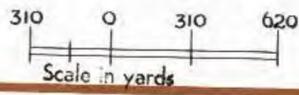
<sup>1</sup>The extent and form of migration is discussed in Vol. II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*, and the relation of migration to land holding and its effect on family solidarity in Vol. IV, *Land Tenure*.

<sup>2</sup>For the traditional Nguni background c.f. Monica Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, O.U.P. 1936, and Hilda Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, O.U.P. 1947.





# CHATHA



MINISTERIAL GRAZING LEASE

FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

NGXANGXASE

KOLOFU

NYANGA

NDELA

SKAFU

NYOKANA

JILI

MARAWULA

## LEGEND

	Colours indicate Village sections and fields owned by sample families living in them
	Indigenous Bush some demarcated by trust
	Land too stony, steep or bushy for cultivation

Chapter II

VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

A—LOCAL GROUPS

Each of the fifteen villages in Keiskammahoek District has its own land, and its own headman and village council, and is politically independent of all other villages, but under the direct authority of the Native Commissioner, the local representative of the Union Government. Each village is sub-divided into sections under sub-headmen, and the sections are further divided into hamlets. A hamlet consists of a group of "kraals" or homesteads, which are separated from other such groups by a stream or gully, or a stretch of unoccupied land (see map II). A homestead (*umzi*) consists of several huts clustered around a cattle byre, and occupied by a kinship group—traditionally, and ideally, by a man with his wife or wives, their unmarried children, and married sons with their wives and children, but nowadays often only by a single elementary family, or a widow with her children.<sup>1</sup> Each homestead has its recognised head, who is the senior male member or, if he is dead, his widow. He (or she) organises the economic activities of the members and they all go to him for advice and direction; nothing which affects them should be done without his permission.

Villages vary in size from 330 to 1,700 members actually living in them, and in addition there are members who are away working in town.

Though each village is established on its own land, the form of tenure varies, and this affects the social structure very considerably. Each village has a commonage on which its members pasture their cattle but, in some, arable land is held on freehold tenure, in others on quitrent tenure, in others on "communal tenure," and in seven villages certain areas are held directly from the South African Native Trust.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The composition of the homestead is discussed in detail in the chapter on Kinship. *Vide infra* pp. 50-60.

<sup>2</sup>cf. Keiskammahoek Rural Survey, Vol. IV, *Land Tenure* for a detailed description and analysis of these different forms of land tenure, and maps of three villages.

Where there is freehold or quitrent tenure, families and lineages are the land-owning groups and inheritance of land within the family or lineage is secure; on the other hand, in a "communal" village, it is the village which is the land-owning group and acquisition of a field depends upon the support of fellow villagers, more especially of the village headman and subheadmen. Tenure on "Trust" land is much like that in a communal village, though holders are subject to more restrictions regarding their use of the land.

In a communal village access to land depends first and foremost on having been born in the village, and though a third of the married men have no fields, each has a chance of acquiring one if he waits long enough, paying his taxes and returning each year to the village; but in the freehold villages there are two classes, the landowners and the "squatters." In the early days, some of the freeholders and quitrenters owned more land than they could use. They brought in relatives to settle on their lands, or share cropped, rented or lent portions of it to settlers who built their homesteads on the commonage; or else they permitted "wanderers" from the European farms to build on and use a portion of their landholdings in return for services.

*Footnote 2 continued—*

Most of the land of any one village is held on freehold, quitrent or communal tenure; therefore we refer to "freehold," "quitrent" and "communal" villages; but Trust land is scattered.

The types of tenure prevailing today in the 15 villages of the district are shown below:

Villages	Types of Land Tenure			
	Communal	Freehold	Trust	Quitrent
Upper Nqhumeya .. .. .	X			
Uthya .. .. .	X			
Gwili-Gwili .. .. .	X			
Moyameni .. .. .	X			
Mthwaku .. .. .	X			
Gulu .. .. .	X	X	X	
Lower Nqhumeya .. .. .		X		
Donsa .. .. .		X		
Upper Rabula .. .. .		X	X	
Lower Rabula .. .. .		X	X	
Zanyokwe .. .. .		X	X	
Wolf River .. .. .		X	X	
Nqolo-Nqolo .. .. .		X	X	
Burnsill .. .. .		X	X	X
Mbems .. .. .		X		X

change gender

Kinship of village

Informants maintain that in the early days these squatters, share-croppers and servants were treated by the landowners as a servile class: there was no intermarriage; the squatters did not attend the village council, or participate in ceremonies in the same fashion as the landowners; nor did the landowners visit the homesteads of the squatters, but would receive gifts of beer and food sent over by them. Today, this class distinction is no longer so rigid: there is intermarriage, and the landowners accept invitations to the homesteads of the squatters and permit them to participate in village council meetings; but the squatters are nevertheless regarded as inferior even though many of them have become independent of landowners. Originally, grants of freehold land were made to Europeans as well as to Africans, but in the last fifteen years the South African Native Trust has bought out most of the European freeholders and divided their farms into allotments on which landless squatters have been settled. These people are known as "people of the Trust" (*abantu betrasti*). They are regarded as an inferior class because: "They have no rights over the land they cultivate, and most of them have no stock at all. They are *amayanuga*, migrants from the European farms, who have no claim to this part of the country." A Trust homestead is referred to as *isitoro se*<sup>1</sup> rather than *umzi*, an indication that the occupants are individual wanderers rather than kinship groups. These people themselves seldom speak in village council meetings unless directly affected, being shy of entering discussions of freeholders or quitrenters.

Although people in communal villages regard themselves as superior to the people of the Trust because they have long had land rights, they are nevertheless referred to derogatorily by freeholders and quitrenters. On the other hand, the people in communal villages have a strongly developed sense of community and neighbourliness and they in their turn tend to regard landowners as rude and anti-social in their individualism. Much of the superior attitude of landowners derives, however, not only from their sense of freedom from authority, engendered by their security of tenure, but also from their rather better standard of living. In the past, those who owned land could borrow money and buy more stock, becoming the wealthiest in stock with the social status which that conferred. Today, freeholders and quitrenters tend to have better housing, many having

<sup>1</sup>From the Afrikaans *strooibuis*.

European style square houses with iron roofs, and they are on the whole more progressive and better educated, with more children going on to secondary school, or training as teachers, than the people in communal villages.

Status in all the villages depends partly on when an individual or his ancestors settled in the district. Many sons of freeholders and quitrenters are landless but their status differs markedly from that of members of "squatter" families because their fathers and grandfathers were original settlers. The descendants of the original settlers are described as "long established people of the place" (*abantu abadala basekhaya apha*) and are generally acknowledged as "important people." In a communal village, a newcomer would first seek shelter in the homestead of a relative or friend, and would look to people to share-plant with him or lend him part of a field. Though permitted to attend ceremonies and the meetings of the village council, he would be expected to efface himself and only speak if requested to do so. It would be some time before he would "know for himself" that the time had come to apply for his own residential site and allocation of arable land. A settler in the village is known as a "newcomer" (*umfiki*) or a "stranger" (*iyanuga*)—a tramp in search of work; a person of no fixed abode. If he behaves himself and earns the respect of his neighbours, he will, after he has been long resident in the village, be described as "a person of the place" (*umuntu walapha*). If, however, he is a "wrong person" and does not behave, he will always be spoken of by the derogatory term *iyanuga*. A child born in a village is known as "a child of the ashes" (*umtana wothuthu*), but a newcomer is never described in this way, even though he may come to be known as a "person of the place."

Homesteads vary somewhat in size and composition, with the type of tenure. The average number of members, for the district as a whole, is seven, but it ranges from an average of nine persons on freehold land to six in a communal village.<sup>1</sup> Homesteads on freehold land are larger, partly because holdings are larger, and partly because the acquisition of land by a married man before his father's death is

<sup>1</sup>Figures include members of homesteads away at work.

very difficult and therefore he cannot set up a separate homestead. The number and identity of people actually living in a homestead varies very much in the course of a year, because migrant bread-winners circulate between country and town and their dependants often stay with relatives during their absence.<sup>1</sup>

When a married man lives in his parents' home he has his own hut, but if he has no land of his own he and his family will "eat from the same pot" as his parents. This is the usual arrangement in areas of private land ownership, but in a communal village a man more often has his own allocation of land, and then he will have his own storage arrangements and his wife will cook a separate pot. He no longer forms an integral part of his parents' home, but creates a more or less separate homestead alongside the parental establishment, the main bond between them being the common use of the *cattle byre*. Only if a son acquires land at a distance does he establish his homestead quite apart, near his field.

While homesteads are not so far apart as among other Nguni, there are no continuous large residential settlements in the district, and left to themselves the people choose to scatter. The most compact village is Burnshill and there the people have only concentrated under pressure from the Administration.<sup>2</sup> The hamlets consist of clusters of 7 to 30 homesteads which are separated from the homesteads of other hamlets by a ridge, a valley, or some other natural physical feature, after which the hamlet may be named, as *Mangweni* from *ummango*, a ridge. Hamlets are most marked in communal villages and on Trust land, where the population is most dense; they are not conspicuous on freehold land. Since sons tend to set up their homesteads near their fathers, a hamlet is often occupied by members of one or two lineages, together with their wives.

In each hamlet there is usually a recognised leader who assumes the position by virtue of his being the senior member of the dominant lineage there. He is not, like the subheadman of a village section, officially appointed by the village headman, but a hamlet sometimes strives for recognition as a separate village section with its own subheadman, independent of the section of which it has formed a part. This happens, as a rule, only if the members of the hamlet

<sup>1</sup>This was revealed during the family budget survey when 260 sample homesteads were visited weekly for a year. c.f. Volume II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*.

<sup>2</sup>c.f. Volume IV, *Land Tenure*.

feel that they have too little in common with the rest of the village section to be properly represented by their mutual subheadman. For instance, a group of Xhosa Christians in the Xesi hamlet in Upper Nqhumeya<sup>1</sup> have for long been striving to become a political unit independent of the rest of the Mfengu and largely pagan Ngqeleni village section.

The village section (*isiphaluka*)<sup>2</sup> is a political unit, defined in terms of the homesteads owing allegiance to one subheadman. Its nucleus is two or three adjoining hamlets, and it may be geographically distinct from other sections, as in Chatha where each of the eight village sections is set on a ridge separated from others by gullies; but where the population is very dense, or there has been much movement, territorial alignment and political allegiance do not coincide exactly. As a rule, all the homesteads of one agnatic kinship group in a village are in hamlets belonging to the same village section and they fall under the jurisdiction of one subheadman, but a son may settle in a hamlet some distance from his father, in order to be near his field, and yet still owe allegiance to his father's subheadman. For instance, in Gwili-Gwili, which comprises eight village sections, there are a considerable number of agnatic groups whose members, though living in hamlets attached to two different village sections, nevertheless all come under the jurisdiction of the same subheadman. In the main concentration of Burnshill there are seven village sections of which three have been concentrated recently on sites laid out for squatters, and though the affiliation to sections tends to correspond with territorial divisions, the rule is not absolute. While some people who move from the area in which their kinsmen are residing prefer to remain members of their original sections, others become members of the new section after they have been living there for some time; it is a matter of choice, but everyone knows to which sections others belong.

Each village section has its own name, which may reflect the clan name of the original settler, an early subheadman, some important resident, or some natural phenomenon of the area: for example, *Kwajili*—"at the place of Jili" (clan name); *Komkbulu*—"at the great

<sup>1</sup>Diagram on page 4.

<sup>2</sup>Village sections in communal villages are also called *ilali*, a term used to describe the village as a whole and to distinguish it as a village with a communal form of tenure from villages with other forms of land tenure.

place" (where the headman of the village resides); *eTolofiyeni*—"at the place of the prickly pear"; *eNgxangxaseni*—"at the waterfall."

That the village section is basically a political rather than a geographical unit is shown by cases in which the section has actually altered its location. In Burnshill, although the people were moved by the Administration from the commonage to the new surveyed blocks, they retain their former affiliation, even though some of them were dispersed. In Upper Nqhumeya<sup>1</sup> the KomKhulu village section was originally situated half way down the Ngqeleni side of the valley; its members moved to the present site because a number of people had died in rapid succession as a result, it was believed, of witchcraft and sorcery. Furthermore, the composition of village sections has been known to change in the course of village history, sometimes incorporating hamlets which were formerly independent political units, and at other times splitting up into two separate village sections. For instance, Madwaleni village section in Upper Nqhumeya<sup>1</sup> has, for some time now, included what was once a separate area granted by the first headman of Nqhumeya to an Mfengu who belonged to a clan senior to his own; this man had independent jurisdiction over his area, allocating land and settling court cases without reference to the headman. The Xesi hamlet, which is said to have formed part of the area granted to the first headman of Nqhumeya, was surveyed and acquired by a Xhosa on quitrent title; he and his followers became members of the Ngqeleni village section when he was unable to meet the rent and the area was reincorporated in Upper Nqhumeya. When the first subheadman of Hukwini village section moved with his family to freehold land in Lower Nqhumeya, the members of his small village section were incorporated under the jurisdiction of the subheadman of the neighbouring Qolweni; it was only when a grandson of the first subheadman was invited to return and take up office that Hukwini became politically independent again.

While the village section is primarily a political grouping and only incidentally a territorial grouping, smaller adjoining village sections sometimes group together to form a territorial unit of "linked village sections." People have no special term to describe linked village sections, nor are they named. Linked village sections are found as a rule only in areas of communal land tenure, and are apparently never formed between large village sections but only

<sup>1</sup>c.f. Diagram on page 4.

between smaller ones and more especially if the group is spatially separated from other village sections. For instance in Upper Nqhumeya,<sup>1</sup> the KomKhulu and Ngqeleni village sections of 37 and 49 homesteads respectively, lying together on a ridge on one side of the valley, form one set of linked village sections. Tolofiyeni, Qolweni and Hukwini village sections of 27, 26 and 14 homesteads respectively, form another set of linked village sections; except for the Zimbileni hamlet of Hukwini, which adjoins Ngqeleni village section, these linked village sections, including the Mdeni hamlet of Hukwini, are residentially continuous on the ridge on the opposite side of the valley. Madwaleni village section of 63 homesteads is spatially isolated from, and not linked with, any other village section. Linked village sections, it is claimed, have always been part of the social structure of Upper Nqhumeya, the small populations of the separate village sections being inadequate for the work usually performed within the individual village section on certain festive or other community occasions. Members of the larger village section in Nqhumeya, and others elsewhere, claimed that they did not have to work together with members of other sections, because there were sufficient people in their own sections.

Since people on communal lands and Trust allotments are dependent upon the representation of their subheadman not only for land allocation but for voicing their views on administrative regulations governing land use, it is in village sections with these types of land tenure that the subheadmen are important and the identity of the group, therefore, marked. This is particularly true among people on Trust land if they feel that their interests are not adequately represented by the village headman. In Upper and Lower Rabula, for instance, the former squatters who settled on Trust land pressed for a headman independent of the freeholders. The majority of people in the villages being freeholders, the likelihood is never admitted of any but a freeholder being headmen of the villages. A former Native Commissioner granted the people of the Trust permission to elect their own unofficial and unpaid headman, who acted as their medium of direct communication with the Administration. However, a subsequent Native Commissioner refused to recognise this unofficial headman, and he became instead a subheadman of the village section comprising the people on Trust land, having no liaison

<sup>1</sup>c.f. Diagram on page 4.

with the Administration except through the headman of Upper Rabula. In communal villages a similar tendency is manifested for people to support a candidate for the office of headman whose homestead is in the same village section as their own, or in a neighbouring village section, in order that they may be in close personal contact with him and thus have someone who will look after their interests. Such a case occurred recently in Chatha where two candidates for the office of headman were nominated, one belonging to an old and well established family, but uneducated and conservative, and the other progressive, but only a second generation resident of the village. The contest for the headmanship developed not along the lines of the candidates' distinctive qualifications, but as a struggle between the upper and lower parts of the village in which the respective candidates lived.

Among freeholders and quitrenters, on the other hand, although the people are grouped, the village sections as political entities are less marked and formal than in communal villages. Two intermediaries, a subheadman and a village headman, are not needed for the less important administrative matters affecting the landowners. In Burnshill, at the time of the introduction of the Betterment Scheme, the subheadmen of the village sections were especially active as a vigilance committee in relation to the commonage; but now that all residents have been moved off the commonage and the boundary has been fenced, the committee is defunct and some deceased subheadmen have not been replaced. In Rabula subheadmen are hardly mentioned among freeholders, and here, too, many subheadmen who have died have not been replaced.

Where there is a group of landowners living under a type of tenure different from that of the majority of people in the village, the group retains a sharp identity as a village section and its subheadman an important role as an intermediary with the headman. For instance, in Burnshill there is a freehold farm, Qawukeni, divorced from the main settlement and the blocks of quitrent arable lots, on which a lineage group is living together with labour tenants and the latter's relatives and friends. These people form a compact village section under their own subheadman; the members share the commonage with the quitrenters, but otherwise they have little interest in the problems which concern quitrenters. In 1945, the Administration brought under the jurisdiction of the headman of Burnshill two

small adjoining freehold villages, Lenye and Fort Cox.<sup>1</sup> Now Lenye forms one village section and Fort Cox two, each under its own subheadman. The people of these village sections have contact with the headman of Burnshill only through their own subheadman; they have little in common with the rest of the people in Burnshill, for each of the small areas constitutes a more or less separate village with its own fenced commonage. The Burnshill village council does not discuss matters relating to Lenye and Fort Cox; only the village headman has anything to do with these areas, and his contact is chiefly through the subheadman, although he does occasionally attend their council meetings.

In a couple of instances, freeholders in a village have succeeded in subdividing from the remainder of a communal tenure village, and have either formed their own village or have linked up as a group with neighbouring freeholders. In Nqhumeya, where the villagers in the early days were encouraged by their headman to acquire surveyed freehold lots lying to the north-west, the freeholders soon formed their own village of Lower Nqhumeya under a headman who had been an important adviser to the first headman of Nqhumeya; the descendants of the first headman continued as successive headmen of the communal village of Upper Nqhumeya. A group of freeholders in Lower Chatha, who formerly came under the jurisdiction of the headman of Chatha, were, in 1933, incorporated for administrative purpose with Nxalawe, Tshoxa and Ngqudela, all concentrations of African freeholders within the boundary of the Municipal area of Keiskammahoeck and subject to municipal regulations.

There appears to have been only one instance of a split in a village wherein the same type of land tenure prevailed, namely in Rabula, where all land was freehold. Lower Rabula was taken over as a separate village by one of the early subheadmen and is today under a headman who is a member of the lineage of the original chief; while the present headman of Upper Rabula is not descended from him. A boundary was not fixed between the two villages, the division being purely by political allegiance. When the Administration defined the boundaries of all villages in the district in 1926, the boundary as established between Upper and Lower Rabula cut off some of the homesteads from the rest of their respective villages; some people live on one side of the boundary and own land on the other;

<sup>1</sup>Government Notice 1902 of 1945.

even the headman of Upper Rabula happens to live on the Lower Rabula side of the boundary.

Except for Rabula, with the unfenced boundary cutting through intermingled homesteads of the Upper and Lower villages, and except for Burnshill which recently incorporated the former small villages of Lenye and Fort Cox, the boundaries of the villages as defined by the Administration enclose the homesteads of all who constitute distinct political units. Everyone living within the boundaries of a particular village is a member of it and owes allegiance to the headman officially recognised by the Administration. Although the boundaries of villages have been defined, they are not necessarily fenced, and it is possible for a stranger to walk from one village to another without being aware of any change. However, some villages are partially encircled by fencing, in order to prevent village-owned stock from trespassing on privately owned land, and other villages, such as Burnshill, are completely fenced in order to control commonage grazing and exclude trespass of stock from neighbouring villages. The average village contains six to nine village sections, and a varying number of hamlets; the number of homesteads varies from about 70 in Dontsa, the smallest village, to about 350 in Wolf River, the village with the largest population. Members of the village describe themselves as people of that village, such as *abantu baseNqhumeya*, and are often referred to by the name of their original headman's clan or clan cluster; in Chatha, for example, the people are referred to as *amaJama* or *amaZizi*, Jama being the clan name of their original headman and Zizi referring to the Zizi cluster of the Mbo people to which he belonged.

~~Social~~ Social intercourse between neighbouring villages is extensive, particularly on special occasions such as the inauguration of a new headman; but except for a rather closer affinity between two villages which derived originally from a single village such as Nqhumeya and Rabula, there is no evident grouping of the separate villages. Since each of the 15 villages in the district is politically independent of the others, there is little consolidation of villages as a group. The Native Commissioner's office forms the strongest of the few ties uniting the different villages into an administrative and political district.

The political autonomy of villages and, to a lesser extent, of sections within the village gives the local group its most formal expression of unity. Every village has its own council or court (*inkundla*), of which all adult males of the village are members. This

council settles disputes and discusses all matters relating to the village.<sup>1</sup> No one who is not a member of the village may attend council meetings unless especially invited, although strangers may be present on the social occasion when court fines are being shared in a feast or beer drink by the members of the village. All matters concerning members of the village are regarded as exclusively the affair of the village council. Headmen do not invite each other to help in the settlement of disputes or the trial of difficult cases coming before their respective courts; failure to settle in the headman's court results in appeal directly to the Native Commissioner. Disputes between villages similarly result in deputations directly to the Native Commissioner. An example of this was the recent dispute between Upper and Lower Rabula over the question of the boundary between the two villages. When the newly appointed headman of Lower Rabula attempted to claim that all those who live on his side of the boundary should come under his jurisdiction, a petition to refuse this claim was sent directly to the Native Commissioner by the headman and others of Upper Rabula who live across the boundary.

Where the political unity of village sections is weak, as among freeholders and quitrenters, there is little identity of the village section other than at social events. Where the subheadman is important, however, as in communal villages, the village section expresses its political unity in a manner similar to the unity of villages: its male members meet in council, and no one who is not a member of the village section may attend these meetings without being invited. However, subheadmen of neighbouring or linked village sections are sometimes in the habit of rendering assistance, with their advisers, in the trial of each other's difficult cases.

People of a village are keenly aware of their political allegiance to their own village, and loyalty is instilled from an early age when recreational activities and school attendance coincide with village divisions. It is common, for example, for the older boys of a village to unite as a group in fighting boys from a neighbouring village, or for a school choir to compete against one from a neighbouring village. Only people born in a village have the right to describe themselves as sons or daughters of that village, although in practice all do so who have lived in the village for a long time. A wife, asked where her home is, invariably replies: "I am daughter of such and such a village." A headman is sometimes described as "father of his people,"

<sup>1</sup>Vide *Infra* pp. 30-4.

although no attempt is made to trace common descent from him. Whenever a death takes place in the village, a meeting of the village council, even if it has already foregathered, is cancelled because, it is said: "the headman has lost a child for whom he must mourn." In some villages, such as Upper Nqhumeya, all the members of the village are expected to cease work in their fields until the burial has taken place.

The identification of persons with a village section similarly begins at an early age: while the boys are still young they band together to herd the cattle belonging to members of one section. In some villages, such as Chatha, the unity of a village section is also expressed in the initiation schools, where all the initiates from one village section share a common lodge separate from those of other village sections; however, in a village such as Burnshill,<sup>1</sup> initiates join from all sections to form one lodge, the division being between the Xhosa and Mfengu members of the village, rather than between village sections. If lightning strikes a homestead, the whole village section to which it belongs is regarded as impure until treated; no one from another section may visit there until such treatment is completed, nor may any member of the section leave. When a member of a village section dies, none of his fellow members will work in their fields until after the funeral, and it is the duty of the young men of the village section to dig the grave.

Members of a village show their solidarity by sitting together at weddings, circumcision feasts, or large beer drinks, held in other villages, and are served in the name of their village with their separate portions of food and drink, after guests from the village in which the event is taking place have been served. The link between villages which derived originally from one village, such as Nqhumeya or Rabula, receives formal expression on such occasions of inter-village hospitality, for if the members of one of the offshoots, such as Lower Nqhumeya, are absent, then the members of Upper Nqhumeya are entitled to claim its portion of food and drink.

Members of a village section similarly show their solidarity by sitting together at beer drinks, circumcision feasts, and weddings, in the village, and are recognised as a group by being given separate portions of food and drink. However, if village sections are linked, separate portions of food and drink are given to the linked village sections as a group, in recognition of their geographical unity, though

<sup>1</sup>Vide Appendix B—Male Initiation.

in the names of the individual sections. When, for instance, three village sections form a linked set, the absence of the members of one entitles the members of the other two to share the portion that would have been allocated to it. Members of the group in which the ceremony is taking place always receive their portions last, after all the other village sections and after all members of other villages who are present. In preparing for the feast, all the young married women of the local group, either the village section or the linked village sections, are expected to help in stamping, winnowing and grinding the mealies, and in collecting wood and water; the young men of the area may help to fetch the wood and water for wedding feasts; and wives who are mistresses of their own homesteads, or who cook separate pots in the homestead, are expected to make food contributions towards the feast.

The homestead is the group within which children are reared and trained in the conduct and methods of work; members of the homestead live together, share food, co-operate in building the huts, raising the crops on the fields, and meeting the household's subsistence requirements from migrant labour wages. The homestead is, however, a relatively small unit, consisting on the average of no more than three or four adults of whom at least one or two are usually away working in the towns. Shortage of labour within the homestead has given rise, therefore, to extensive economic co-operation between neighbours.<sup>1</sup>

Because there is less borrowing and co-operation among freeholders and quitrenters, group activities of the hamlet are less marked there than among those on communal or Trust land; among those in communal villages, there is extensive borrowing and co-operation within the hamlet and the village section. Labour combinations or work parties (*amalima*) are, moreover, popular among these people as the most regular type of social gathering. Shortage of labour within the homestead and kinship group is also undoubtedly the cause of the local basis of co-operation between members of the wider group, the village section or linked village sections, in preparing for special social occasions such as weddings, circumcision feasts and large beer

<sup>1</sup>Discussion here will be confined to the type of economic co-operation arising out of the *labour shortage* and serving to create bonds between neighbours. Owing to the *land shortage*, there is also extensive co-operation in the use of land, such as borrowing, share cropping and hiring: these are fully discussed in Volume IV of the Keiskammahoeek Rural Survey, *Land Tenure*, and need not be described here, since they arise largely out of individual arrangements rather than group activities.

drinks. The members of the local group are bound by their obligations and duties on these occasions, and because of their co-operation in preparing for feasts when the event takes place in their locality, they sit together when they are guests at an event elsewhere and are recognised as a group by having their separate portions of food and beer. Economic co-operation within the village exists as a rule only in relation to grazing. Expression of village unity in Burnshill, for instance, has always been particularly marked in matters relating to the village commonage.

Neighbours co-operate in a variety of economic tasks, but chiefly those connected with the raising of crops. However, they occasionally co-operate in collecting wood and water, cutting thatch and hauling poles, in hut building, erecting cattle byres, sheep shearing and, more rarely, in shopping. Since the trading stores are sometimes miles from the homesteads, co-operation in shopping would be one of the most labour saving arrangements; however, people dependent on cash remittances from labour migrants seldom have ready money at the same time, to enable them to take turns in shopping for a group.<sup>1</sup> The basis of all co-operation is either reciprocity of services, or the pooling of services by those who have no implements with the equipment of those who have insufficient service available. Co-operation in ploughing usually involves the pooling of implements and services; for tasks such as weeding and harvesting, help is received from neighbours in proportion to help given them. For tasks which require only a small labour force, some help is asked from others, but for those which require a larger labour force, neighbours are invited to attend a work party (*ilima*) on a certain day.

Many men postpone their departure for work in the towns until the ploughing is done, or attempt to return in time to do it, while two or three men living in the same homestead often take it in turns to go away. People do not usually hire others to plough for them, though they may sometimes grant the use of a portion of the field in exchange for ploughing. A man who wants his ploughing done more speedily than he can manage by himself, or a man who has no plough and span may call together a work party of oxen (*ilima leenkabi*); he will have to provide beer and food for the men who attend. However, informants are agreed that this form of co-operation

<sup>1</sup>An attempt was made by six women in different homesteads of an Upper Nqhumeya hamlet to take it in turns to go with a hired donkey cart to the nearest store in Keiskammahoek, to purchase monthly supplies for the group. The arrangement broke down, however, for the reason that they seldom had money on hand at the same time.

is rare today. The more common form of co-operation in ploughing is the formation of a partnership which may last for only one season or may continue for many years. Ploughing partners are expected to help one another also in herding and in hauling crops from the fields, and when their own fields are being ploughed they must feed the workers and provide them with beer or *amayewu*. In one type of partnership, one man gives his services, the other contributes the plough and span. The other type of partnership is a "company" of two or three men, each of whom owns either implements or an animal or two, and all of whom are expected to give service. The partner contributing the most in animals or implements is usually in a position to demand that his field be ploughed first. A member of a long established partnership may have his field ploughed for him while he is away working in town, if he contributes plough or span; similarly, a widow who contributes plough or span may become a member of a "company" and have her field ploughed for her.

Men who are often away at work, or elderly men and widows who own neither plough nor span and have no young men in their homesteads to contribute services to partnership ploughing, may ask others to plough for them: "they ask help in ploughing" or "they ask for *indima*" (the amount of land that can be ploughed in one day). Beer and food must be provided for the workers, and the host acknowledges his (or her) indebtedness to helpers by attending their work parties or assisting them in some other way. One woman made her benefactor a gift of mealies from her store hut when his own harvest had been very poor. People often have to wait a long time before they are helped in ploughing, and two or three people have sometimes to be asked before the task is done. Despite this, many people claim that it is better to be helped than to enter a partnership, for partners often quarrel about the order in which their fields are to be ploughed.

An examination was made of 74 cases of ploughing arrangements made in September, 1949, by the landowning members of 25 lineages in Upper Nqhumeya. In eight cases the landowners ploughed their own fields with the help only of the members of their own homesteads and without entering into any co-operative ploughing arrangement; in two cases ploughing was done by means of a work party of oxen or in exchange for rights to the use of an acre of the field; in 64 cases co-operation took the form of help being given or a part-

nership being formed. The spatial proximity of those who assisted one another in ploughing was as follows:—

<i>Location of people assisting one another</i>	<i>No. of cases</i>
In the same homestead (separate fields) . . . . .	5
Some in the same homestead, some in the same village section . . . . .	5
In the same village section . . . . .	42
In different village sections, but the same village . . . . .	12
In different villages . . . . .	2
	—
	66
	—

Two or more landowners living in the same homestead always work together if at least one of them possesses implements and oxen for ploughing; assistance is sought outside the homestead only when the members are without plough and span. It appears that co-operation in ploughing takes place for the greater part between people living in the same village section, and they are usually close neighbours. Of the 42 cases of co-operation within the village section, although 27 involved co-operation between relatives, 15 cases were of unrelated neighbours. Of the 12 cases of co-operation within the same village, four were of people unrelated. Assistance in ploughing is rarely sought outside the village, the two cases cited having involved people related by marriage.

Women who are invited to help with work in weeding or harvesting are not given any special feast, but are served with the food that would ordinarily have been provided in the homestead that day; beer is brewed only when the task being performed falls to men; but women who help in harvesting are normally also rewarded with a part of the day's harvest: this may take the form of boiled maize or kaffircorn, enough to provide their families with an evening meal, so that they do not have to cook when they get home; or they may get, uncooked, a sixpenny-size dish of the crop harvested at the end of each day and a basketful when the harvesting is completed.

Although anything from 5 to 55 people may attend a work party, it is always regarded as a special occasion on which refreshments for the workers must be prepared beforehand. Some people still recognise the right of the workers to claim, in addition to refreshments, *isithabathaba* (tobacco or a small sum of money) when the

work is completed. Invitations to work parties are usually sent to people living in the same village section or in adjoining village sections; people living at a distance are neither invited nor expected to attend: "We only ask those who live nearby to help us." A child is usually sent round to tell people that a work party is to be held. Those who are unable to attend should always give some reason; when such an excuse is not offered, people are likely to be refused help when they in turn call a work party. Only one member of each homestead to which an invitation is sent need be present; if a woman is too busy herself, she will normally send a daughter or daughter-in-law in her place.

A study was made of the assistance sought outside the homestead in the weeding of 39 fields in Upper Nqhumeya during November, 1949, and February, 1950. Four fields were weeded exclusively by members of the homesteads, six were weeded with the assistance of hired labour and 29 with the assistance of work parties. Women must already have done some weeding on their own before they call a work party together: "You do as much as you can, in order to set an example to those whom you have invited to your work party." A foreman (*ifolmani*), appointed by the owner of the field, is responsible for subdividing the field into sections to be worked and for supervising the allocation of refreshments. There are few people who do not complain that weeding is inefficiently performed at work parties, but without a large enough family to do the work, or money to hire labour, people are largely dependent on this form of assistance.

The chief reason for the popularity of work parties is, however, that people enjoy them: they sing at their work, and there is time to gossip and bandy jokes, to rest in the shade and enjoy the refreshments provided, while commenting loudly and openly on their quantity and quality. Staunch Christians provide bread, and tea or coffee with sugar, a little while after the work has begun; these, together with stamped mealies, form the second meal, usually not taken before two or three o'clock in the afternoon. Few people can afford to provide meat which, like beer, serves to draw a large attendance. Some Christians do provide beer at their own work parties, often attempting to camouflage this by having the beer brewed and consumed at the homestead of a pagan neighbour. Among pagans beer and light beer (*amaqewu*) are always provided. The first serving shortly after the commencement of work, is known as *isikbonkwana*



strators.<sup>1</sup> His place in the hierarchy is shown on the accompanying chart, which summarises the administrative, political and judicial bodies through which the people of Keiskammahoeck are governed. The details of this system of European administration of Native areas are adequately described elsewhere,<sup>2</sup> and are therefore not discussed here.

Since Africans have extremely limited and indirect representation in the Union Parliament,<sup>3</sup> they can exercise none of the pressure on the Native Affairs Department such as is exercised by an electorate on Government Departments, and consequently tension between the Administration and the people is often acute. The main links between the people and the Administration are the village headmen and the advisory Councils (*amaBunga*); it is with these, therefore, that we are concerned in this report.

### *The Village Headman*

The headman is the only official of the village political system who is recognised by Government; he is a paid official of the Native Affairs Department, and at the same time he is the leader and representative of his people. The conflict which exists between the Administration and the people renders his position a very difficult one, particularly as his main duties relate to control of land and the collection of taxes, the issues on which there is most friction.

The extensive duties and circumscribed powers of a headman, as laid down by the Administration, are given in detail on the schedule overleaf. They include registration of taxpayers and assistance in tax collection; the enforcement of law and policing; reporting on people who settle in or remove from his village; reporting of occurrences such as disease and death and the presence in his village of unauthorised persons and stock; assistance in such matters as stock dipping, preservation of fences, and eradication of noxious weeds; the obtaining of permits for his people when they require

<sup>1</sup>The operations of the South African Native Trust which controls land are explained in the introduction to Volume II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*, and in Volume IV, *Land Tenure*.

<sup>2</sup>Rodgers: *Native Administration in the Union of South Africa*; Lord Hailey: *An African Survey*, pp. 346—73; 718—25.

<sup>3</sup>African registered voters in the Cape Province elect three white representatives to the House of Assembly. There are educational, property and sex qualifications for African voters which do not apply to Europeans. There are also four senators, nominated by the Governor-General-in-Council and four indirectly elected by Africans, to represent Africans of the four provinces in the Senate.

access to saplings, poles, and thatching grass from areas controlled by Government; and, subject to the control of the Administration, the allotment of land in communal villages. A headman's privileges are few: he may not absent himself from the village for more than seven days without the permission of the Native Commissioner, or for more than a month without the authority of the Chief Native Commissioner and without providing an approved substitute; he is entitled to a travelling allowance when he travels in the performance of his duties; and he is at present paid a bonus for assisting in the collection of taxes. In return for his services to the state, he is paid a commencing salary of £24 per annum, which rises, subject to good behaviour, by £6 every six years until the top of the scale is reached at £42 after eighteen years' service. On retirement he is entitled to a pension of £5 per annum after fifteen years' continuous good service, or £10 per annum after twenty-five years of service.<sup>1</sup>

### DUTIES AND POWERS OF VILLAGE HEADMEN

(as laid down in Government Notice No. 2252, dated 21st December, 1928)

In practice, the headmen of the district are responsible only for reporting deaths; and this is seldom done in the case of children. c.f. discussion on child mortality in Volume II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*.

Chiefs and headmen shall carry out such lawful orders and instructions as may from time to time be given them through or by a Chief Native Commissioner, Native Commissioner, Magistrate or Superintendent.

They shall comply with all laws and render such assistance as may be required of them by responsible officers of the Government in connection with the following matters:—

- (a) The registration of taxpayers and the collection of taxes and rates due by the people.
- (b) The dipping of large and small stock and the supervision thereof.
- (c) The prevention and eradication of animal disease.
- (d) The collection of statistics.
- (e) The efficient administration of the laws relating to the allotment and registration of lands and kraal sites and to commonage and the prevention of illegal occupation of or squatting upon land.
- (f) The preservation of land beacons and fences.
- (g) The prevention, detection, and punishment of crimes and offences.
- (h) The supply of labour for agricultural and other purposes.
- (i) Public health and sanitary matters.
- (j) The eradication of noxious weeds.
- (k) The preservation of game.
- (l) The preservation of forests, monuments, historical objects, and public property.
- (m) Such other matters as the Native Commissioner may from time to time prescribe.

Such requirements will, except in regard to the detection of crime and police administration, be made as a general rule through the Native Commissioner of the district in which such chief or headman resides.

They shall bring to the notice of their people all new laws, orders, instructions, and requirements of the Government communicated to them by the Native Commissioner or Superintendent.

<sup>1</sup>Reg. No. 31, Government Notice No. 2252, 1928, as amended by G.N. 911, 1947.

They shall promptly report to the responsible officers of the Government the following occurrences:—

- (a) Outbreaks of any notifiable disease amongst stock.
- (b) Outbreak of notifiable disease amongst persons.
- (c) The deaths of persons from violence or other unnatural causes.
- (d) The commission of crime and offences brought to their knowledge.
- (e) The presence of strange persons in their areas unless such persons produce lawful authority to be therein.
- (f) The unauthorised occupation of land, or encroachments thereon.
- (g) The presence of a fugitive offender.
- (h) The illicit introduction of arms, ammunition, and intoxicating liquor.
- (i) Meetings for unlawful or undesirable purposes.
- (j) The presence of strange stock in the area without lawful permit.

They shall prevent, so far as the law allows them to do so, veld burning, soil erosion, interference with *bona fide* travellers through their areas, the sale of poisons, love philtres, and the practice of pretended witchcraft or divinations, and the practice of Native customs which are contrary to the laws and principles of humanity and decency.

They shall render assistance to the educational authorities, teachers, demonstrators, and other officers employed by the Government or Native Councils established under Act No. 23 of 1920 in connection with the welfare of Natives and shall not manifest partisanship in the activities of the various religious bodies in church or school matters.

They shall at the request of the Native Commissioner or Superintendent convene meetings of their people and shall attend such meetings and endeavour to secure the attendance of all people thereat.

They shall in so far as they are able disperse or order the dispersal of all riotous or unlawful assemblies of Natives and may arrest and hand over to the police any person who fails to comply with such order.

They shall not, except when specially authorised under any law, try or decide any criminal charge.

They shall not become members or take any part in the affairs of any political association or any association whose objects are deemed by the Minister to be subversive or prejudicial to constituted Government or good order.

They shall not absent themselves from their area of jurisdiction for a period in excess of seven days without the authority of the Native Commissioner and in case of absence beyond a period of one month without the authority of the Chief Native Commissioner and shall during such absence provide to the satisfaction of the Native Commissioner, without extra cost to the Government, for the proper performance of their duties.

They shall have and exercise in regard to any Native within the area of their jurisdiction such powers and authorities in connection with the arrest and custody of offenders as are conferred upon peace officers by Chapter V of Act No. 31 of 1917 or by any law relating to the theft of stock and produce or to the control of the sale of intoxicating liquor.

They shall have power to search without warrant any Native person or the kraal homestead or other place within the area of their jurisdiction occupied by a Native if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that stolen stock or produce or intoxicating liquor or arms or ammunition wrongfully obtained are hidden on such person or in such kraal or other place, and to seize and convey to the nearest police post any such stock or produce or intoxicating liquor or arms or ammunition so seized.

They shall impound or detain stray stock found in their areas of which the owners cannot be ascertained and in case of detention shall promptly report the fact to the Superintendent or Native Commissioner.

They may detain stock brought into their areas under unlawful or under suspicious circumstances and shall promptly report the fact to the Superintendent or Native Commissioner.

They shall report to the district surgeon or the Native Commissioner or Superintendent every untreated case of venereal disease or leprosy in their area.

The Native Commissioner meets at his office each quarter with all headmen of the district, to notify them of any new regulations

and to discuss matters relevant to the administration of the district. The headmen must make the regulations and instructions known to the members of their villages and must call special meetings of their people whenever required to do so by the Administration. Headmen also go informally to see the Native Commissioner on business concerning their respective villages, and the people of the villages are free to approach him directly.

The earliest conditions of village settlement in the Keiskammahoek area laid down that a village should consist of not less than twenty "dwellings" and that the headman was to be chosen by the people.<sup>1</sup> However, the appointment of a headman who has been selected by a majority decision of the men of the village is not valid unless approved by the Native Commissioner and confirmed by the Administration.<sup>2</sup> In practice, the Native Commissioner usually appoints the man chosen by the people, but has the right to punish or dismiss him for neglect of duty.

Each group settling in the district after the war of 1850 came with its own leader who, where there was communal tenure, was allocated land to divide among his followers. Sometimes the grant was a reward for services rendered in the frontier wars: Mkontwana Ulana, headman of Gwili-Gwili narrated, for instance, how his grandfather fought on the European side in the War of the Axe, how he and his people were able to recover the body of the slain leader of the European forces from the forest occupied by the Xhosa enemy, and how, after that notable achievement, he and his people were given land in Gwili-Gwili.<sup>3</sup> Control over land gave the early headmen in communal villages some of the attributes of chiefs. They are still spoken of as "chiefs" and there has been a strong tendency to regard the office as properly hereditary. In Chatha, for instance, the first chieftainship belonged to the family of Jama, and although the headman today is one who is not related to him, the people insist that he is not the true chief but is still only holding the position for the true heir; they still refer to themselves as the people of Jama and maintain that the land belongs to his descendants. Similarly, the village of Mthwaku is known as the land of Socishe (*umhlaba ka Socishe*), although the present headman is not a descendant of Socishe. All but one of the first headmen were apparently Mfengu, though

<sup>1</sup>Government Notice issued at Kingwilliamstown, 8th March, 1853.

<sup>2</sup>Appointments are made in terms of Sec. 2(8) of Act 38 of 1927.

<sup>3</sup>The reward must have been made years after the deed.

they were of different clans. An heir does not automatically assume office as his father's successor, but must have his right to succeed confirmed by a majority decision of the men of the village and be formally appointed by the Native Commissioner. If an heir is rejected by the men of the village as unsuitable, as has happened on occasion, or no heir survives, or if he is not acceptable to the Administration, then another man of the village is chosen for the position. If the heir is too young to assume office, another may be appointed to act (*ukubambela*) for him.

In freehold and quitrent villages, headmen were appointed at the time of the first settlement, but their power was much less than that of headmen in communal villages because they did not allocate fields. In some at least of the freehold and quitrent villages, the hereditary element has, moreover, never been stressed in the selection of village headmen. In Wolf River, however, an elaborate installation ceremony was organized when the present headman, a descendant of the first headman of the village, was appointed to office in 1948. A praiser (*imbongi*) with a leopard's skin over his lounge suit, and a spear and shield in his hands, was fulsome in his praises of the new headman and his ancestors. The Minister of the Church to which the new headman belonged, and some of the older headmen from other villages, addressed the crowd of some 600 people. Meat, food and drink were provided in abundance by the people of Wolf River, and festivities continued throughout the night.

A man is not usually regarded as eligible for office as headman until employment in urban centres has enabled him to buy sufficient marriage cattle for *ukulobola* and has set him up in stock and farming implements. A headman is not permitted by the Administration to go away and work in town, and an unmarried man is not regarded by the people as ready for the position, "for he will wander about seeking girls, and will not be found at home when he is wanted by the people." During a headman's temporary absences from the village, any man chosen by him and approved by the people and the Native Commissioner, acts for him. The headman of Upper Nqhumeya always insisted that the man he chose need only be approved by the Native Commissioner and not by the people. That the people disagreed with him was clearly shown when he went on holiday in December, 1949, and appointed a man to act, without consulting his people. Without prejudice towards the man who had been so chosen and who was competent and generally well liked, the people

held a meeting of protest against the headman's arbitrary action. It was said to be one of the largest meetings ever to take place in the village, and representatives were selected to lodge an official complaint with the Native Commissioner.

The headman's official advisers (*amaphakathi*) are the subheadmen (*izibonda ezincinci*), who are the traditionally constituted local authorities, and who are especially responsible for bringing to his attention matters relating to their own respective village sections. The position of subheadman is not necessarily inherited, although in some cases it does remain within the senior agnatic family of the village section. Where the position is hereditary, the right of the heir to succession must be confirmed by a majority decision of the men of their village section. There is only one case in the history of Upper Nqhumeya in which an heir was passed over as unsuitable by the men of his village section. If the heir is still too young to assume office, the men of the village section appoint a man to act (*ukubambela*) for him. There is no specific age at which he is expected to take over office, though it is often not until he no longer goes out to work in the towns that he is prepared to do so. Each subheadman should have an assistant (*isikela*) to act for him in his absence and to attend, on his behalf, meetings of the village council. He chooses his own assistant, subject to the approval of the headman and the men of his village section. Only two subheadmen in Upper Nqhumeya have officially appointed assistants, although elderly informants claim that during the former headman's term of office they were commonly appointed by all the subheadmen in the village. Most subheadmen today only appoint assistants when they are going to the towns to work, and many are guilty of absencing themselves from meetings without sending representatives in their place. A subheadman who fails to perform his duties satisfactorily may be dismissed by the headman, with the approval of the men of the village section. Subheadmen are not paid and are not normally recognised by the Administration.

The chief duties performed by a subheadman within his own area, the village section, are a delegation from the headman of the latter's administrative duties in the village as required of him by the Native Commissioner. A subheadman is responsible for seeing that the instructions of Government to the headman concerning, for example, such matters as soil conservation and noxious weed eradication are effectively carried out within his own area. When the Native Commissioner notifies the headman that grazing camps are open for use,

Headman and  
Subheadman

Duties

Affiliated  
Headman

each subheadman is responsible for collecting and conveying to the headman the names of those in his village section who wish to send cattle to graze them. A subheadman is responsible for the maintenance of peace and order within his own area, and must report all untoward occurrences to the headman. He should accompany the headman to the Native Commissioner to report criminal offences involving members of his village section. He reports to the headman the names of those who wish to settle in or move out of his village section. He conveys to the headman requests from the people of his village section for residential sites and, in villages of communal tenure, for arable land; and in communal villages, too, he must notify the headman of any land that becomes available for redistribution through the death or removal of members of his village section. He is also responsible for collecting contributions from members of his area when a levy is imposed within the village for a school building or some other local requirement. People usually describe a subheadman as a "person of importance" (*umntu omkhubulu*), but there are some who disparage the office and refer to subheadmen as "dogs of the chief, to smell things out for him." Many of the subheadmen are themselves dissatisfied with holding unpaid office: "Our work is arduous; we must be prepared to get up at any time of night if there is a fight in our village section, but the headman sleeps comfortably in his homestead, and is paid for his work."

Whenever any administrative instructions concerning the village have to be made known, or when matters or disputes concerning the village or its people have to be discussed, and whenever fields in a communal village become available for allocation, a meeting of the men of the village is called. The meetings take place in the open space above the cattle byre, the courtyard (*inkundla*), of the headman's homestead, which gives to the gathering its name of *inkundla*, i.e., council or court. The council is a place for men, any initiated male member of the village being allowed to participate; women have nothing to do with it unless they are personally concerned in the matter under discussion,<sup>1</sup> but they do evince interest in the proceedings, and will cross-question anyone willing to give them information. Many disputes are brought before the *inkundla* for arbitration, though the headman has no legal power to enforce his decisions, and in cases which are not settled by him and go on to the Native Commissioner's court no cognisance is taken of proceedings in the *inkundla*. Older

<sup>1</sup> *Vide infra* p. 115.

men who are regarded as being particularly well versed in the law and customs of the people, and who are renowned for their skill in "talking cases" (*iinduma*, *amaphakathi*, *amajwilise*), lead the investigation and assist the headman in the arbitration of disputes that come before his court. They are not formally appointed to hold office, but their identity is usually known to the members of the village.

The village council occasionally elects committees to assist and advise the headman on certain matters. Betterment Scheme Committees, established at the behest of the Administration in villages which have accepted the scheme, advise on all matters relating to the application of the scheme and are also sometimes used by the headmen in communal villages to advise them on the allocation of arable land. School committees are appointed to deal with village school education.<sup>1</sup> That the village council is jealous of its authority as a body was shown recently in Burnshill where the headman had appointed a committee to deal with complaints from villagers, because there was such delay in getting the complaints before the village council at its irregular meetings. The scheme operated successfully until the men of the village council objected, claiming that all matters concerning the village had to be brought before them as a body, and insisted on the committee being disbanded.

All matters connected with the smaller local unit, the village section, are the concern of the men of that particular village section, and they form a village section council or court (*inkundla*) which meets in the courtyard of the subheadman's homestead and which settles disputes. Like the headman, the subheadman has his informal advisers, men skilled in "talking cases" to lead the investigation and assist in the arbitration. Village section councils meet very infrequently, and in the smaller village sections a subheadman often conducts routine business referred to him by the headman in the individual homesteads of the men of his area, rather than calling a council meeting. He is usually equally informal in his dealings with the headman. In the past, a subheadman would have been officially summoned when the headman wished to see him; today he calls on the headman without ceremony and is not infrequently even visited by him when there is some urgent matter for discussion.

All matters which are particularly a family concern come before the adult male kinsmen of the lineage remnant.<sup>2</sup> Civil wrongs are

<sup>1</sup> *Vide infra* pp. 154-5.

<sup>2</sup> These matters, and the group constituting the "lineage remnant" are more fully discussed in Chapter III—Kinship.

regarded as primarily family or inter-family matters, settlement of which should first be attempted within the lineage remnant court of the family or the combined courts of the two families concerned. Refusal of the defendant to attend the lineage remnant court, dissatisfaction with the court's decision, or failure to secure the redress demanded may be cause for the case being taken for settlement direct to the Native Commissioner's court which has the power to enforce both attendance and judgements. However, it is widely held that, before cases are taken to the Native Commissioner, arbitration in the courts of the village authorities should first be attempted as a means to satisfaction. Cases usually go first to the subheadman's court for arbitration, and from there on appeal to the headman's court. However, the long delay before cases are heard by the village authorities is often cited as reason enough for taking cases directly to the Native Commissioner's court. Only very occasionally does a subheadman or headman invite a few special advisers to his homestead to discuss and give an opinion of a case, in order to avoid the delay before the village section council or village council meets. Sometimes a subheadman invites the co-operation of other subheadmen, with their advisers, particularly those of neighbouring village sections, to assist him in the trial of difficult cases, but it is more often claimed that a case too difficult for a subheadman should be taken to the headman's court for settlement.

All village council meetings are presided over by the headman, who refers to himself, and is frequently addressed as "chairman" (*umgcini-siblaló*). A few villages also have an elected secretary, and minutes of meetings are kept; in others no record is kept, a man being appointed to act as secretary only when a letter or directive has to be read or lists are to be compiled. The meeting usually takes place on a Saturday morning, it being the duty of the headman to notify all the subheadmen of the village, who will in turn notify all the men in their sections of the intended meeting. In some villages it is claimed that the council should meet every Saturday, in others on every alternate Saturday; but in Upper Nqhumeya it was observed that the council met nine times only over a period of six months, in Gwili-Gwili twice in three months, and in Upper Rabula once in two-and-a-half months.

Meetings usually commence at 10 or 11 o'clock in the morning and seldom last for less than two hours, sometimes continuing without pause for five or six hours. The men lounge on the grass at the

side of the cattle byre, or sit close by in the shade of a tree. As he arrives, each man greets the council by shouting the clan name of the headman, and those already assembled reply with the clan name of the new arrival, who then finds a seat among his friends. Men do not stand when the headman approaches from his homestead, nor is the greeting given him any different from others. The headman sits facing the assembly, usually with one or two subheadmen near him, "because the headman must never sit alone." Exchange of gossip goes on until the men become restless and begin to make loud remarks about the length of time they have been waiting for something to happen. When the headman is satisfied that no one else will arrive, he rises and, with his hat in his hand, informs the gathering of the business of the day. He takes an active part in the discussion, introducing matters, clarifying misunderstandings, and summing up cases. During discussion, each speaker rises and removes his hat before addressing the assembled men through the headman. Otherwise the atmosphere is entirely informal; loud remarks and comments are made during speeches and there are frequent interruptions while an argument among the audience is settled; as time goes on the men grow impatient and remind the headman that they have work to do in their fields, cows to milk, or that they are hungry.

For a decision on a dispute no quorum is necessary, and as long as the parties involved are present a settlement is usually attempted. The subheadmen whose village sections are particularly concerned or involved in any matter are always present; they will have notified the headman of the details of disputes coming on appeal from their courts. When all the facts have been laid before the council, the headman orders the parties involved in the dispute and their witnesses to withdraw while the case is discussed. The views of the old men of the village who attend are always respected and, with their aid and advice and that of the subheadmen present, the headman makes his decisions. A former acting headman of Gwili-Gwili used to withdraw once he had introduced a case for discussion, claiming that cases concerned the men of the village and not the headman, and that his absence enabled fuller and freer discussion; the verdict would be made known to him by his advisers and he would convey it to the parties involved. The accused may be fined a goat, or if he has none then 30s. or lesser sums. A young man of the village will be delegated to collect the fine, and he will usually be allowed a small sum of money for performing the office. All the men of the

village are entitled to join in the feast of the slaughtered goat, or the beer brewed from ingredients bought with the money. The headman and the man who acts as court messenger to collect the fine are entitled to special uncooked portions of the slaughtered goat and also to special servings of meat or beer at the feast.

Attendance at village council meetings is usually poor, the people being insufficiently interested in the meeting to abandon whatever they are doing. It is a frequent complaint in the villages that nothing is ever decided in the village council these days. Many men are notorious for non-attendance, and usually refer to the meetings as a "nuisance" (*imfeketho*). Meetings have sometimes to be cancelled because so few men have arrived. There was some talk in Upper Nqhumeya of fining absentees, but it was realised that there would be no means of enforcing the fines. In communal villages most interest is aroused by meetings at which land is to be allocated. Although the allocation of any land by the village council and headman is subject to the approval of the Native Commissioner who is entitled to reverse any decision reached, the recommendations of the council are normally adopted, and consequently attendance at such a meeting is usually fairly large. Meetings convened to notify men of some routine administrative matter or instruction are always poorly attended. Headmen often say that if the men are not told beforehand what business is to be discussed, natural curiosity brings larger attendances. In theory, the headman is able to act on his own authority or override the wishes of his people, but as such behaviour would in practice result in immediate complaint to the Native Commissioner, the headman is obliged to defer to public opinion.

It is often claimed that the respect in which the headman is held affects village council attendances considerably; the father of the present headman of Upper Nqhumeya was well liked by all sections of the population and always had larger attendances than his very much less popular son today. The present headman is often reduced at meetings to asking why the people appointed him to office if they are not prepared to respect his authority. However, it appears to be less the office of headman which commands respect than the ability and character of the incumbent. According to informants, "a good headman must have much patience with the people; he must be honest; he must not be cruel, selfish or bad tempered." The former pagan headman of Upper Nqhumeya was respected by Christians and pagans alike, for, as one Christian said of him: "he was a man

you could respect, even if he was a heathen; he was interested in his people, and encouraged our children to attend school." On one occasion in Gwili-Gwili a large group of men, both pagans and Christians assembled at a funeral, were seen to rise as one man when an old man who had acted at one time as headman of the village appeared; he, a Christian, was often described as "an honest and just man." The arrival of the present headman was greeted with scant ceremony; a few men sitting on a bench moved over to make room for him.

It is possible that the status of the headman's office, and to a lesser extent that of subheadmen, was greater in the past. There certainly appears to have been a larger hierarchy of officials, who not only served to elevate the headman's status, but also to perform some of the functions of village government which today he performs himself. For instance, details of cases coming on appeal to the headman's court in Upper Nqhumeya had to be notified through an official "presenter of cases" (*induma enkulu*), and in Gwili-Gwili through the senior subheadman (*isibonda esikhulu*). Such officials would notify the headman, arrange with him for a hearing of the case and are said also to have introduced the case in court and guided the proceedings. In Upper Nqhumeya the hereditary "presenter of cases," who also acted in the capacity of official court messenger responsible for collecting court fines, is said to have been the most important of the officials in the traditional hierarchy, and the one "closest" to the headman; sons of the headman could only be circumcised together with boys from the kinship group to which this official belonged. In Gwili-Gwili there was an hereditary official, the guardian (*ikbankatha*), who attended the headman's sons when they had been circumcised. The first headman of Upper Nqhumeya is said to have had a praiser (*imbongi*) to laud his exploits and those of his ancestors; and there was also a special official (*inchwaba lakomkhulu*) responsible for watching over the graves of the headmen. Furthermore, there were invariably hereditary food tasters (*umxhamli*), responsible for tasting the food and beer of the headmen on ritual and festive occasions, for fear of poisoning; today a headman designates any one of his subheadmen to perform this duty. In the past the senior subheadman was responsible for summoning those whom the headman wished to see in his homestead, and is said to have been the headman's "mouthpiece" on important occasions and to have acted for him during his absences from the village. Today in Gwili-Gwili the senior subheadman has

a status no different from the other subheadmen; and in Upper Nqhumeya the office of senior subheadman, that of the village section in which the headman lives, is vacant and the headman himself performs the duties.

Today people refer to the headman as their *inkosi* (chief) but they seldom address him as such; he is usually addressed as *isibonda* (headman) or else by his clan name. His homestead is in no way distinguished from the others of his village section or village. His residence is spoken of as *Komkbulu* (at the great place) but this term is sometimes used more to describe the meeting of the village council which takes place at the headman's homestead than to specify his particular homestead or village section. In a village such as Upper Nqhumeya, where the patrilineal descent of the headmanship has been undisturbed, the village section in which the headman lives is called *Komkbulu*; but in a village such as Chatha where the office of headman has not been hereditary for a long time, people speak of *Komkbulu* only when referring to certain events or decisions taken by the village council when it met there.

The headman carries no emblem of his office, and he and his wife ordinarily go about the village unattended, being approached without ceremony and mixing freely with the people. However, when the headman attends certain social occasions or visits the Native Commissioner he should always be accompanied, preferably by his subheadmen, who are known as his "guards" (*amagadi*). On formal occasions the headman's wife should similarly be accompanied by attendants (*amaphakathikazi*); these, in Upper Nqhumeya, are chosen by the women of the *Komkbulu* village section from among their number. While some attempt is usually made on festive occasions to see that a headman is well seated, his presence is seldom conspicuous. The headman is entitled to separate portions of meat and beer on festive occasions in his village, and he is always served first. At any family ritual he attends he is usually granted a special portion of meat and beer for himself, but this is said to be given of grace and not by right. He performs no ritual on behalf of his village, and his ancestors are thought to influence only his own lineage. A subheadman is similarly entitled to special portions on festive occasions in his own village section, and he usually shares the headman's allocation at feasts elsewhere.

Headmen and subheadmen have no right to exact tribute or service from their people. They usually have no personal servants, and if

help is given to them in the ploughing of their fields or other work around their homesteads, it is on a basis no different from that normally rendered between neighbours. Though headmen often have some of the largest fields in their villages, wealth is not one of the hallmarks of their office. Nevertheless, better clothing and material equipment, a large number of cattle, goats and sheep or a horse are distinctions admired in a headman. An educated man in Wolf River commented proudly: "Our headman has better clothes than any of the others around here." The people of Wolf River bought a horse for their headman; but many headmen in the district have to go about their official duties on foot. It is not the headman or the subheadman who is in a position to give gifts in exchange for services rendered him, but it is he who renders services in exchange for gifts. Gifts should be given to the headman, and also to the subheadman concerned, by villagers who desire land, residential sites or permission to move from one village section to another, and by a stranger wishing to settle in the village. In the past, cattle, goats or sheep were "taken at night to the headman's place, but he always knew from whom they came." Today it is more usual to brew beer for the headman, give him a bottle of brandy, clothing or small sums of money. When the request has been granted, the headman must also be thanked (*ukubulela*) with a gift. However, with his limited authority today, under the European Administration, the headman is often unable to help even when gifts are given him; this caused a cynic to remark: "A headman should say on his deathbed: 'there is no place in heaven for me; I shall go to hell because I have eaten up so much money from poor widows without helping them'." *Headman dual sig. of direct rule*

Under the system of direct rule, a headman is an uneasy mediator between two conflicting sets of values and interests, those of the European Administration on the one hand, and those of the people on the other. The people require of their headman that "he must not always be running to the Native Commissioner with complaints, nor seek his support in the affairs of the village." Many informants said that they would not like to become headmen; they consider that the headmen are poorly paid, that their privileges are few and their tasks thankless; "headmen are the Native Commissioner's policemen." One of the most progressive headmen in the district summed up the position: "If there is some instruction from Government that I must make known to my people, they always suspect me of

working together with the Native Commissioner and of being in sympathy with the Government and opposed to their interests."

The only political link between the villages in the district, other than the centralisation achieved by the Administration and the Council (*iBunga*) system, is afforded by the Headmen's Association (*intlanganiso yenkosi*). This Association, known also among progressives as a 'Vigilance Association,' was formed by the people themselves in about 1930, and is entirely independent of and is not attended by the Native Commissioner. The Association has an elected chairman and secretary; minutes are kept of meetings, which are held overnight twice yearly in each of the villages in turn. Proceedings begin and terminate with hymns and prayers, and refreshments are contributed by the men in the village acting as host to the meeting.

Any men of the district who wish may attend meetings, and attendance is expected of all headmen and councillors, the latter to make known to headmen the business of the Local Council. Matters affecting the interests of the people of the district are discussed, and resolutions thereon may be forwarded to the Native Commissioner. Attendances are so poor, however, that the half-yearly meetings were a recent introduction in place of former quarterly meetings. Only some of the headmen and some of the men from villages neighbouring the one in which the meeting is being held take the trouble to attend, and sometimes even local councillors absent themselves. Distances between villages and the general lack of public interest manifested by conservative headmen have always hampered the effective workings of the Association, which is kept going by a handful of progressives.

#### *The Council System*

Besides the village councils or courts (*iinkundla*) which are but a modern form of the traditional chief's *inkundla*, there is a system of district Councils (*amaBunga*) which have no traditional roots. Their history begins with the Village Management Act of 1881 and the Glen Grey Act of 1894, under which a District Council was established in Glen Grey; but it was only after the introduction of the Native Affairs Act of 1920 that the council system was extended further in the Ciskei. Local councils were established in the Tamacha, Middle-drift, Peddie and Victoria East Districts by 1927, in Keiskammahoek in 1928, in Herschel, East London and the Hewu Districts during the 1930's. In 1934 the Local Councils of the Ciskei amalgamated on a

federal basis to form the Ciskeian General Council, members of each of the Local Councils electing two of their number to sit for a period of two years on the General Council. Each constituent Council granted a fixed proportion of its annual revenue and delegated certain of its functions to the General Council. But each remained autonomous in local affairs, and retained the right to spend the bulk of its revenue independently of the General Council. The General Council has, moreover, the power to re-delegate certain of its administrative functions to any Local Council.<sup>1</sup>

The office of the Native Commissioner is the headquarters of the Keiskammahoek Local Council, which meets there on the first Wednesday afternoon of every alternate month. Two of the six African members of the Council are nominated by the Governor-General through the Native Commissioner, who is *ex-officio* chairman of the Council; a full-time African secretary is paid from Council funds; and a European clerk on the Native Commissioner's staff acts as treasurer. Council revenue is derived from local taxes and fees paid by the African people of the district.<sup>2</sup> All estimates of Council expenditure require the approval of the Governor-General. The Council is empowered to provide within the district for the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges; drains, dams and furrows; means for the prevention of soil erosion; an improved water supply; the destruction of noxious weeds; the suppression of diseases of stock by the construction and maintenance of dipping tanks and other means; and generally "for any such purposes which can be regarded as proper to local administration and may be committed to it by the Governor-General."<sup>3</sup> The Council is also empowered to advise the Native Commissioner on any matters affecting the general interests of the Africans whom it represents, and to furnish its views upon any matter on which the Native Commissioner may request advice.<sup>4</sup>

The Ciskeian General Council (*iBunga*) meets annually in Kingwilliamstown for a period of a week. The Chief Native Commissioner of the Ciskei presides over the meetings and is also the chief executive

<sup>1</sup>Proclamation 34/1934, Sec. 4.

<sup>2</sup>All African males in the Union over the age of 18 pay a general tax of £1 per annum to the central Government. In the Keiskammahoek District divers additional charges on local homestead and land owners, though excessively ramified by the various types of land tenure, amount, in general, to an annual tax or rental of 10/- to 12/6 on each householder, which is paid, together with a dog tax, into the revenues of the local council.

<sup>3</sup>Native Affairs Act No. 23/1920, Sec. 6.

<sup>4</sup>Act No. 23/1920, Sec. 7, as amended by Act 15/1927.

officer of the Council. All resolutions taken by the Council are conveyed to the Minister of Native Affairs for his approval. Two select committees, each comprising three Native Commissioners nominated by the chairman and four councillors elected by their fellows, deal respectively with Council finance and with all land and legal matters. Other *ad hoc* committees are appointed as need arises. The secretary and treasurer of the General Council are officials of the Native Affairs Department. The funds of the General Council are derived mainly from a percentage contribution of the annual revenue of each of its constituent local councils; the percentage payable is determined annually by the General Council and is presently ten per cent. All estimates of expenditure have, as in the case of local district councils, to be approved by the Governor-General. The General Council is responsible for the encouragement of afforestation; assistance in the advancement of scholastic, agricultural and industrial education by the provision of scholarships; grants in respect of hospital treatment, medical training and the provision of sanitation and medical services to the Africans.<sup>1</sup> The General Council is also empowered to pass resolutions on any matters initiated for consideration and affecting the Africans within its area of jurisdiction, or on specific matters submitted for its consideration by the Governor-General or the Minister of Native Affairs.<sup>2</sup>

Meetings of the Ciskeian General Council are open to the public, and usually some 50 or 60 visitors attend. Procedure at the meetings is dignified and formal, the level of discussion is high and a wide range of subjects comes under review. Topics include parliamentary representation; marriage, inheritance and other legal matters; education and health; and public facilities such as transport, communications, water supplies, postal services and trading rights. Minutes of meetings are kept and blue books are published in English. However, the real responsibility, especially with regard to finance, rests in the hands of officials of the Native Affairs Department; and in many important matters affecting the interests of Africans, the Council is restricted to the passing of resolutions which are not necessarily acted upon by the Minister of Native Affairs.

A great weakness of the council system lies in the poverty of many of the Local Councils which, by limiting the funds of the General Council, severely circumscribes its sphere of usefulness. Revenue

<sup>1</sup>Proclamation 34/1934, Sec. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Proclamation 34/1934 Sec. 4.

in 1948, for instance, amounted to only a little over £5,000, of which the Glen Grey District Council contributed £1,565 and Keiskammahoek Local Council only £168. The total expenditure by the General Council that year of £4,715 included about £2,300 on health, £1,300 on education and £650 on agricultural shows, irrigation and maintaining plantations.<sup>1</sup> Owing chiefly to its limited financial resources, the General Council has increasingly tended to leave afforestation to the South African Native Trust which was established in 1936, and is seeking the permission of the Secretary for Native Affairs to hand over its existing plantations to the Trust. In an effort to overcome the uneven rate of progress among constituent councils, amalgamation on the Transkeian pattern was considered in 1944 by a select committee of the General Council.<sup>2</sup> The acceptance of this scheme involved the delegation of all authority to the General Council and the payment of all local revenues into the coffers of the General Council. Councillors from the wealthier districts were particularly opposed to the scheme. The Herschel representative "made it quite clear that his Council would take the view that the benefits which would be derived from amalgamation would not compensate for the loss of its autonomous powers," and the Glen Grey representative declared openly that his Council "could not shoulder the debts of other Councils which were bankrupt."<sup>3</sup> Any suggestion for increasing the funds of Local Councils is always opposed as "additional taxation that would be greatly resented" by the people. Although they were unable to suggest any alternative means of raising income, councillors refused in 1944 to accept the suggestion that a levy be imposed on stock, as is done in the Transkei to cover the Government's expenses of cattle dipping operations and eradication of stock diseases; they

<sup>1</sup>Expenditure was distributed as follows:

Scholarships .. .. .	£1,305
Prize grant to Fort Cox Agricultural School .. .. .	25
Grants in aid to various institutions .. .. .	25
Maintaining Plantations .. .. .	63
Irrigation works .. .. .	133
Agricultural competitions and shows .. .. .	440
Grants in aid to hospitals .. .. .	837
Nurses' Salaries .. .. .	862
Erection and maintenance of clinics .. .. .	612
Health magazine .. .. .	13
Miscellaneous .. .. .	400

£4,715

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings of the Ciskeian General Council, 1944, pp. 21—46.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.* p. 23.

maintained that such action would be "a breach of faith with the people" who, when they accepted the jurisdiction of Local Councils in their respective districts, understood that the Councils were to furnish dipping tank facilities out of their revenues.<sup>1</sup>

In Keiskammahoek, dipping facilities are about all the Local Council can regularly afford in the way of expenditure for the benefit of the people.<sup>2</sup> Collection of revenues is something like £1,000 in arrears.<sup>3</sup> In addition to its annual contribution to the General Council, expenses of its councillors' travel and subsistence while on official business, and the salary of its secretary, the Local Council has to meet the rates on freeholders' properties charged by the

<sup>1</sup>In the Transkei, "the dipping of cattle is not the duty or responsibility of the General Council. The owner of stock is, under the Stock Diseases Act personally responsible, and he is required to pay a stock rate levied by the Governor-General to cover the expenses of cattle dipping operations and the prevention or eradication of cattle diseases in his district." *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Expenditure of the Keiskammahoek Local Council from 1944 to 1948 is given below, compared with the expenditure of the wealthier Glen Grey District Council for 1948. The Glen Grey Council owns a demonstration farm, tractors and threshing machines which can be hired by the people, and it employs agricultural demonstrators.

Item	Annual expenditure of Local Councils					Glen Grey 1948 £
	Keiskammahoek					
	1944 £	1945 £	1946 £	1947 £	1948 £	
Salaries .. .. .	219	244	191	202	204	2003,
Dipping .. .. .	421	365	424	495	480	2,034
Transport and subsistence allowances .. .. .	68	76	81	68	88	1,696
Contributions to General Council .. .. .	259	130	270	141	168	1,564
Divisional Council Rate ..	323	323	323	323	323	—
Miscellaneous expenditure ..	314*	63	59	349†	94	4,240‡
Public works (mainly roads and bridges) .. .. .	696	391	180	300	—	6,777
Agriculture (farm and threshing operations) .. .. .						955
Education (grants) .. .. .						843

Notes:

\*£240 of this amount formed a suspense account to be used for the construction of dipping tanks.

†£300 of this amount was invested with the Public Debt Commission.

‡£2,000 of this amount was invested with the Public Debt Commission; another £229 was being held in a suspense account.

<sup>3</sup>At the end of 1943, for instance, it was estimated that approximately £1,172 was outstanding in Local Tax and quitrents in Keiskammahoek District. *Proceedings of the Ciskeian General Council*, 1944, p. 32.

Kingwilliamstown Divisional Council, an obligation which it assumed when the freeholders accepted the jurisdiction of the Local Council and payment of local tax in lieu of rates on their properties. Although over a period of four years £1,600 was spent on public works, chiefly the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, in the fifth year, 1948, the Local Council had insufficient money even for maintenance. Yet the councillors have refused to agree to the chairman's suggestion that the secretary's services be dispensed with in the interests of economy.

The reaction of the people to this ineffectiveness was expressed by a councillor: "A man asks for a bridge over the river near his homestead. There is a general need for a bridge at this point. When his request is refused he thinks that the Council is opposing him personally and doesn't understand that we have no money." The people themselves say: "When the Local Council first started, it promised us many things. We are still waiting to see these things." "The Local Council has done nothing for us except dipping, and it is always trying to tax us further." "If the Council is unable to afford its commitments, it should be discontinued. There are many districts in the Ciskei that have managed quite well without Local Councils." The opinion is quite widely expressed that, *prima facie*, the Councils are powerless to ameliorate the conditions of the people. "The laws of Government are severe on us. There is little help possible from the Councils." "We have been told that the Council tries to help us in our difficulties. It tries to help but Government laws are against it." "I have not seen any help from the Council. There are too many new laws introduced by Government to depress the people." "Help against the depression of the people can only come from the towns."

A small group of radicals in the district claims that neither the Local nor the General Councils can, because they are Government controlled, work in the interests of the people. "The Native Commissioner is the chief of the District. When he is placed as chairman over the Local Council, he can only administer what prospers the Government and not the people; the same applies to the Chief Native Commissioner as the chairman of the General Council." Among these radicals it is held that the councillors are the "good boys" of Government, interested in holding office because of the prestige that accrues to them, and ready always to toe the Govern-

ment line. "The councillors are used as weapons against the people, but they don't realise it."

Some of the more progressive men in the district and the councillors themselves are of the opinion that, despite the limitations, the Councils "benefit the people because they are able to have a say in the government of their district." It is the more progressive elements who control the Council, as instanced by the fact that at present all six councillors are Christians, three are able to speak and read English, and two are village headmen, one has acted as a headman and one works as a clerk in the town of Keiskammahoeck. To them the council system undoubtedly provides a valuable training in local government, but it is questionable whether the mass of the people derive any benefit, for they manifest little interest in the Council's operations and general apathy as an electorate. Disinterest tends to be greater among pagans than among Christians and greatest among the younger men who are frequently away at work in the towns and who declare: "the Council is the affair of the fathers."

For the purposes of the biennial elections, the fifteen villages in the district are organized into four wards which, for the greater part, group together those villages in which the same type of land tenure predominates. The different types of land tenure are equally represented on the Council at present, for, inclusive of the two nominated members, there are presently two councillors each from villages of communal, freehold and quitrent tenure. All male adults in each ward are entitled to nominate one representative for every 100 local tax or quitrent payers. At the last elections in 1949 there were 30 such representatives and they, as is customary, elected four of their number as councillors. Nominations of representatives are made at official meetings called together in each ward and attended by the Native Commissioner. In practice, however, most of the nominations are usually decided upon at informal preliminary meetings called together by the retiring councillor of each ward. Neither the informal nor official meetings are ever well attended; few people are sufficiently interested in the nominations to walk long distances to the village of the ward in which the meeting is held. The headman of Mbems complained that the councillor for the ward to which his village belongs "is not a man who has the support of my people"; yet only two men from his village are said to have been present when preliminary nominations were called for at an informal meeting in the neighbouring village of Burnshill. Even when informal meetings,

prior to official nominations, are held separately in each village of the ward, attendances are usually poor. One councillor said: "It is only those who are interested in being nominated and their followers who attend." It has even been alleged that men desirous of being nominated rally supporters from villages of other wards, and also that representatives are bribed to elect certain men as councillors. Even if such allegations are exaggerated, it is true that many of the councillors have been re-elected time and again since the inception of the Council, a fact which reflects in some measure the general apathy of the electorate.

Although meetings of the Local Council are open to the public, few people are sufficiently interested to listen in. Only a very few people complain that councillors never report back to their wards on the conduct of Council business; most people are not interested in hearing reports. Councillors complain of great difficulty in arranging gatherings of their constituents to which they can make reports: they will be told by a headman whom they have approached, "yes, we will arrange a meeting," and then hear no more about it. A councillor who lived in Gwili-Gwili occasionally invited members of that village, whom he represented, to attend meetings at his homestead, but the response was always poor. Until the recent elections, two councillors working as clerks in the town of Keiskammahoeck made known that they were available after business hours to any people who wished to make representations through them to the Local Council; yet informants in some villages declared that, if they had a request to put before the Local Council, they were compelled to take it directly to the Native Commissioner. Symptomatic of the lack of effective contact between the councillors and their people is the dearth of applications for General Council scholarships, a fact which has frequently been commented upon by the Native Commissioner in his capacity as chairman of the Local Council. This state of affairs is apparently not uncommon in other Local Council areas: the treasurer of the Ciskeian General Council, in his annual report in 1949, suggested that one of the reasons for a marked decrease in the number of applications for scholarships was that insufficient information was being given to the people on the opportunities available to them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the Ciskeian General Council, 1949.

## Chapter III

## KINSHIP

## A—KINSHIP GROUPS

The basic form of kinship grouping in the village is the monogamous family, consisting of a husband, a wife and their unmarried child or children, either their own or adopted. Polygynous families in which one husband marries more than one wife, each of whom, together with her children, forms a separate unit in the homestead, are very rare today. The homestead (*umzi*) in which the family lives forms the nucleus of the local or territorial grouping.<sup>1</sup>

The monogamous family when it coincides with the homestead is the simplest form of domestic family. Very rarely, however, does an elementary family live alone in a homestead. Traditionally, the people lived in patrilineal kinship groups (*imzi*), and in the days when danger from marauders made concentration necessary for defence, a number of married men, together with their wives and children, would live together in one *umzi*. Although brothers or sons are never ordered to leave a homestead unless they or their wives are repeatedly quarrelsome or are believed to be witches, nevertheless the tendency now is towards the breaking up of *imzi* very soon after the brothers or sons get married. Fission may arise because of friction between wives and brothers, but it is chiefly influenced at the present time by the sense of economic individualism acquired by the younger generation in the course of their labour migration experiences, wives being particularly anxious to have their own homesteads in order to be free of a mother-in-law's tutelage.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, two major factors, both of them economic and inter-related, work against the breaking up process and cause families to live gregariously in the one homestead. There is too little arable land in the district relative to the population. Not only are married men unable, therefore, to acquire landholdings and to establish

<sup>1</sup>*Umzi* is the word used for the patrilineal kinship group which lives together in the one homestead. The word *umzi* is also commonly used for the homestead itself, the cluster of one to five huts facing onto the cattle byre and overlooking the arable fields and belonging to or registered in the name of the head of the *umzi*. c.f. Chapter II—Local Groups.

<sup>2</sup>c.f. pp. 59, 76, 171-4, 183-4.

independent homesteads as they would wish, but the agricultural produce of the area is inadequate to feed the population. Remunerative employment outside the district is therefore imperative in order to meet the subsistence requirements of the family. During long periods of absence from the district, a man may prefer to let his wife and children remain in the homestead of his relatives; if both man and wife are labour migrants, they certainly cannot leave young children alone; and if unmarried mothers or deserted wives or widows go out to earn their children's support, they are obliged to leave those children in the care of other women at home. The absence of able-bodied adults from the district in itself causes those remaining behind to favour living in a homestead with other adults, in order to receive some co-operation in domestic and economic routine.

A son or brother who leaves the homestead peacefully usually prefers to establish his new homestead near his close paternal relatives; in villages of freehold and quitrent tenure he is, in any case, confined nowadays to the land belonging to his lineage group. Consequently, the homesteads of male members of one agnatic group are usually found in the same locality. The lineage group consists of all the surviving agnatic kinsmen with whom relationship can be traced through a common grandfather, great-grandfather, or great-great-grandfather, but they are seldom all found residing in the locality<sup>1</sup>; some members of the lineage group are living in other districts or in urban centres, either having emigrated from Keiskammahoek or else having remained in their districts of origin while a few of their paternal relatives came to settle in the Keiskammahoek District. Sometimes it is only one man and his family who are the local representatives of the lineage group. The local agnatic descendants of a common grandfather or great-grandfather, that is the local members of the lineage group who are actually domiciled in the district, constitute the lineage remnant. The people have no special term for the lineage group or remnant; they are referred to as *umzi* (patrilineal kinship group), *abantu bakowethu* (our people) or *abantu bakulotata* (father's people), but these terms are also used to describe other forms of grouping. Traditionally the members of a lineage group were differentiated from others by the name of the lineage founder and were known, for instance, as "children of Jota" or "children

<sup>1</sup>For example, only one complete lineage group was found among all the people living in Upper Nqumeya and Gwili-Gwili.

migrant  
labour

especially  
in the  
the Nqumeya



N.B. Cause abantu a father's people & un'... ..

of Majola." This name serves today as the distinctive surname (*ifani*) of the members of the lineage remnant.

While each group of kinsmen is itself patrilineally constituted, affinal links are created between two groups on the marriage of a man and woman. The behaviour of a wife at her father-in-law's homestead is characterised by elaborate verbal (*ukublonipha*) and spatial (*ukucexa*) avoidances, observed as a mark of respect. Relations between a man and his mother-in-law and also between parents-in-law are similarly characterised by mutual respect and avoidance. In the presence of his mother-in-law, a man is always expected to have his head covered and wear a jacket. An instance was observed at a wedding, when the young men hailing from the village into which a sister of the groom had married were wearing either hats or scarves tied around their heads: "We are grooms (*abayeni*) at this place and are giving respect to our mother-in-law." Parents-in-law treat one another as honoured guests. A bride on her first visit home after her marriage is given beer, or tea and sugar, and perhaps bread, to take back to her parents; and the gift is returned in full measure, sometimes including goat's meat, when the bride returns to her in-laws. If a woman returns to her parent's home to have her baby, those of her relatives who accompany her back to her husband should have a goat slaughtered for them by the husband's family.

The children born of a marriage belong to the husband's lineage group, but they are especially honoured guests at the homesteads of their maternal uncles; they are entitled there to a special portion, the hump (*ilunda*), of a slaughtered ox; "it is a very great thing to be an *umtshana* (son or daughter of a man's sister)." Although women customarily go to live with their husbands' families on marriage, they may return to their parental, brothers' or other relatives' homes on the death or desertion of a husband, after divorce, or for any such reasons as dissatisfaction with their marriages, failure of their husbands to support them, or because they are accused by their husband's family of witchcraft or sorcery. Their children normally remain with the husband's family but may accompany their mother, particularly if they are small and she is returning to her people because she was widowed early, or was deserted, or not supported by her husband. Nevertheless, such children, even though they live with the maternal kinship group, remain members of their paternal kinship group and retain their paternal surname. Illegitimate children, on

the other hand, usually live with and are absorbed by the maternal group, adopting the surname of their mother's father.

Members of various lineage groups who claim to be descended from a common paternal ancestor constitute the patrilineal clan (*isiduko*). The lineal connection with the clan founder is remembered in varying depth; usually it cannot be traced more than four or five generations above the senior survivor; in some cases an additional eight to ten ancestors on the ascending plane are remembered. But while members of lineages of the clan can trace ancestry in varying depth to the clan founder, they have in the course of lineage subdivision lost the point of connection one with the other; therefore the links which each lineage traces with the clan founder form a chain isolated from those of other lineages. Members of a clan describe themselves as "people of the same blood," "people derived from the same stem," and the name of their common ancestor, the clan founder, constitutes the clan name by which the members of the various lineages recognise their clan relationship. While women retain their clan identity on marriage, they cannot transmit their clan name or the legal affiliation it implies to their children. However, illegitimate children absorbed into their maternal lineage group adopt its clan name.

Groups of clans claiming descent from a still more remote ancestor to a depth of four or five generations above the clan founders, form the clan cluster. The various clan clusters, including the Zizi, Bele and Hlubi, constitute the Mfengu people. Before dispersal of the Mfengu from Tugela, Natal, these clan clusters were locally concentrated. Today, not even the separate clans, let alone the clan clusters, are locally concentrated; only a fraction of the members of the various clans and clan clusters are to be found in the district. Unlike the Mfengu, the Xhosa people are usually unable to give the affiliation of their forebears in the many Xhosa tribes of the last century; among them and the Thembu people, the clan is the largest agnatic descent group. Among these peoples, as well as the few Mpondo, there are again no local concentrations of clans in the Keiskammahoeck District, but they function still in the control of marriage, for clan exogamy is practised by all the people of the district. The clan name, such as Jama, or clan cluster name, such as Zizi, forms the polite mode of address, with the prefix *ma* in the case of women. When one would especially give honour to another, he calls that person's *isibongo* (praise); this includes the clan name, the clan cluster (e.g., Zizi, Hlubi

or Bele) or the people's (*e.g.*, Xhosa or Thembu) name, together with the names of some of the person's more illustrious ancestors.

Thus, among all the people in the district, the locally concentrated kinship group is the lineage, or more often that part only of the lineage, namely the lineage remnant, actually domiciled in the district; members of the lineage group represented in the district are usually concentrated in one village. As domestic families, however, these agnatic kinship groups are split up among various independently established homesteads. The domestic family as an operating economic unit is fully discussed in Volume II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*; and the effects of the shortage of land on family unity and on permanent emigration from the district are dealt with in Volume IV. Here we are concerned with analysis of the kinship composition of homesteads, and analysis of the agnatic relationship between homesteads in the same locality, which will reveal the territorial concentration of kinship groups.

The analyses are based upon homesteads in Upper Nqhumeya and Gwili-Gwili villages.<sup>1</sup> These are both communal villages and, as shown in the report on land tenure, homesteads in communal villages tend to be smaller than in villages of freehold and quitrent tenure. In the latter villages, where land can normally be acquired only by inheritance, it is customary for the eldest son to share his inheritance with his brothers. Sons tend, therefore, even after they have married, to remain in their father's homestead, not only because there is no other land available for purchase on which to build their homesteads, but also because they will eventually share in the subdivided inheritance of arable land. In communal villages, on the other hand, a son does have the opportunity of leaving his father's homestead by applying for a separate allocation of land or at least a hut site on which to build his own homestead.

The head (*umminimzi*) of each homestead is usually the man senior to others by age and descent, and if his widow survives him she normally succeeds as head of the homestead. The proportions of male and female heads of homesteads, in all sample surveys of the district,<sup>2</sup> was close to those in the random sample of 90 homesteads in Upper Nqhumeya and Gwili-Gwili (analysed for kinship composi-

<sup>1</sup>These were sampled by Miss S. Kaplan during the course of her field work in 1948-1949.

<sup>2</sup>Analysis in Volume II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve* covered various sample homesteads in six different villages constituting approximately a one-in-seven sample of the entire district.

tion in the succeeding pages) and the 63 homesteads in Madwaleni village section of Upper Nqhumeya (analysed for agnatic relationship between homesteads):—

<i>Heads of Homesteads</i>	90 <i>Homesteads</i>	63 <i>Homesteads</i>
Married men .. .. .	53.4%	} 55.5%
Widowers, deserted husbands or bachelors.. .. .	3.3%	
Widows .. .. .	40.0%	38.1%
Lineage daughters .. .. .	3.3%	6.4%

Lineage daughters who are the heads of their own homesteads may be unmarried mothers, or may have returned home to their people with their children after being divorced, deserted or widowed. In naming the homestead, the locative form of the surname or clan name of the male head of the homestead is generally used, even when he is no longer living; people refer, for instance, to widow Mawulina Sidinane's homestead as *kwaSidinane* or *emaZizini*, her late husband having belonged to the Zizi clan cluster. To its members, however, their homestead is always *ikhaya*, meaning "home."

The nucleus of the homestead is the family of the head of the homestead. Pending the establishment of their own homesteads, brothers or sons and their wives and children are attached to the nuclear group in the homestead. This nuclear group often has attached to it unmarried dependants as well, such as grandchildren, who are sometimes illegitimate, and the husband's brothers, sisters and other paternal relatives. While the homestead is predominantly patrilineal and patrilocal, the nuclear group in the homestead often has attached to it the relatives of a wife, or a married sister or daughter and her children, and much more rarely, a daughter's husband, or unrelated people.

KINSHIP COMPOSITION OF HOMESTEADS

(based on a sample of 90 homesteads in Upper Nqhumeya and Gwili-Gwili)

Elementary, compound or residual family	Agnates		Affines (or unrelated)
	married	unmarried	
1 H & W .. .. .	—	—	—
1 H & W .. .. .	S & W & c	—	—
1 H & W .. .. .	eS & W & c yS(d) & c	—	—
1 H & W .. .. .	SW(d) & c gS & W & c	—	—
10 H & W & c .. .. .	—	—	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	S & W	—	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	eS & W & c yS & W & c	—	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	D & H & c	gc	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	—	gc	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	—	gc Hsgc	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	—	Hb	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	Hb & W & c	—	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	Hb & W & c Hb & 2W	—	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	Hb & 2W & c (1W 2W)	—	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	HbW(w) & c	Hb Hs	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	Hs(w) & c	Hbs	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	—	HsS	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	—	HsD	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	—	HsD	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	—	HFSDS	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	HFbS & W & c	—	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	HFbW(w) & c	—	—
1 H & W & c .. .. .	—	—	Ws
1 H & W & c .. .. .	—	—	WbS & W
1 H & W & c .. .. .	—	—	(man & W & c)
2 H & 2W .. .. .	—	—	—
1 H & 2W & c(1W) ..	—	—	—
3 H & 2W & c(1W 2W)	—	—	—
1 H & 2W & c(1W 2W)	S(1W) & W & c	—	—
1 H & 2W & c(1W 2W)	D(d)	—	—
1 H & 2W & c(1W 2W)	—	gc HbS	—
1 H & 2W .. .. .	—	HsS	—
1 H & 2W & c .. .. .	Hs(d) & c	—	—
1 H & 2W & c .. .. .	HFb & W & c	—	—
1 H & 2W & c(1W)	—	HbD clans-woman	WsS
1 H & 2W & c(1W 2W)	—	—	—
1 H & 2W & c(1W 2W)	—	—	Wc
1 H & 2W & c(1W 2W)	—	—	Ws Wb
1 H & 2W & c(1W 2W)	—	—	1Wb 2WbD
8 W(w) & c .. .. .	eS & W & c	—	—
1 W(w) & c .. .. .	eS & W & c	—	—
1 W(w) & c .. .. .	D(w) & c	—	—
1 W(w) & c .. .. .	S & W	gc	—
3 W(w) & c .. .. .	—	gc	—

Elementary, compound or residual families	Agnates		Affines (or unrelated)
	married	unmarried	
1 W(w) .. .. .	—	—	—
3 W(w) .. .. .	S & W & c	—	ySWs
1 W(w) .. .. .	eS & W & c yS & W & c	—	—
1 W(w) .. .. .	S & W & c D(d) & c	—	SWbD
1 W(w) .. .. .	D(w) & c D(d) & c	—	—
2 W(w) .. .. .	S & W & c	gc	—
1 W(w) .. .. .	D(d) & c	gc	—
1 W(w) .. .. .	—	gc	HMbW(w) & D(d) & c
3 W(w) .. .. .	—	gc	—
1 W(w) .. .. .	—	gc	WsD
1 W(w) .. .. .	—	HbD	—
2 2W(w) & c(1W 2W)	—	—	—
1 2W(w) & c(1W)	—	—	—
1 2W(w) & c(1W 2W)	—	gc	—
1 2W(w) & c(1W 2W)	HbD(w) & D(d) & c	—	—
1 1W(w) & 11W(w) ..	S(iW) & W & c	—	—
1 H(d) .. .. .	—	—	—
1 H(w) & c .. .. .	HFbD(d)	—	—
1 b & s .. .. .	—	—	—
1 D & c & gc .. .. .	—	—	—
1 D & c .. .. .	S & W & c	—	—
1 D .. .. .	eSW(w) & c yS & W & c	—	—

Key to symbols used in the table:

H	.. .. .	husband
W	.. .. .	wife
2W	.. .. .	second wife of monogamist
1W	.. .. .	great wife of polygynist
11W	.. .. .	second wife of polygynist
c	.. .. .	unmarried child(ren)—legitimate or illegitimate
Hc	.. .. .	grandchild(ren)—legitimate or illegitimate
S	.. .. .	son
eS	.. .. .	eldest son
yS	.. .. .	younger son
gS	.. .. .	grandson
D	.. .. .	daughter
F	.. .. .	father
M	.. .. .	mother
B	.. .. .	brother
S(w)	.. .. .	sister
W(w)	.. .. .	widowed
D(w)	.. .. .	divorced or deserted
(1W), (1W), (1W 2W)	.. .. .	offspring of the great wife of a polygynist, or of the first or both wives of a monogamist.

The kinship composition of a random sample of 90 homesteads in Upper Nqhumeya and Gwili-Gwili is given in the above table

It will be seen that the nucleus of the homestead is either a monogamously established elementary family, comprising a husband, a wife and their children, or the compound family, comprising a husband, his second wife and children of one or both wives. There is only one instance of a compound family established by polygynous marriage. These elementary or compound family groups are, moreover, often residual in character, usually because of the death of a husband but occasionally because of divorce or the desertion of one of the partners. In three instances an unmarried woman and her children form the nucleus of the homestead, but an unmarried man is the head of the homestead in only one case.

Two or three families in the same homestead compose the joint family. The society being patrilineal, the ideal is for the husbands of the component units of the joint family to be related in the male line, and for the joint family to come into being when a brother or son marries. However, joint families also arise when a married daughter returns to her own home or other married relatives seek shelter in the homestead. Joint families are to be found in 33 of the sample homesteads, and the following table indicates the relationship between the heads of the constituent family units:—

<i>No. of Cases</i>	<i>Relationship between heads of families in the one homestead</i>
5 .. ..	Father and son(s).
1 .. ..	Father, son and grandson.
1 .. ..	Classificatory father and son.
3 .. ..	Brothers
1 .. ..	Classificatory brothers.
1 .. ..	Man and his brother's widow.
8 .. ..	Mother and son(s).
1 .. ..	Classificatory mother and son.
1 .. ..	Father and daughter.
2 .. ..	Brother and married sister.
1 .. ..	Classificatory brother and sister.
1 .. ..	Father and son-in-law.
1 .. ..	Mother and son and daughter.
3 .. ..	Mother and daughter(s).
1 .. ..	Mother and classificatory daughter.
1 .. ..	Man and his wife's brother's son and an unrelated man.
1 .. ..	Widow and husband's maternal relative.

The joint family is essentially a transitory group, for not only do its component units separate when a brother or son hives off to establish his own homestead, but the structure of each one of the subordinate families itself is essentially a process in time, and within a period of three to four generations a family completely decays. Different stages in the life cycle of the family can be classified:—

1. A wife, a husband and their unmarried children can be classified as the primary family. A newly-married couple, whilst not strictly forming a family in this sense, may for convenience be so classified.
2. A residual family comes into being when children have all married and established families of their own, leaving a wife who is past child-bearing age, and her husband. Divorce, or the death or desertion of one of the partners may also give rise to a residual family.
3. A rejuvenated family arises when a husband, on the death of his wife, or after divorce, remarries a woman who will still bear him children. A rejuvenated family also arises when couples whose surviving children have married, or when widows or widowers or divorced or deserted partners acquire the children of other parents, usually illegitimate grandchildren or orphaned relatives, to live with them. In these cases the interest in the rearing of children, one of the main concerns of the family, is revived, although the process of rejuvenation is itself a temporary phase.

The types of families found in the 90 homestead sample are classified on the following table:—<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>See former table for key to symbols.

TYPE OF FAMILY

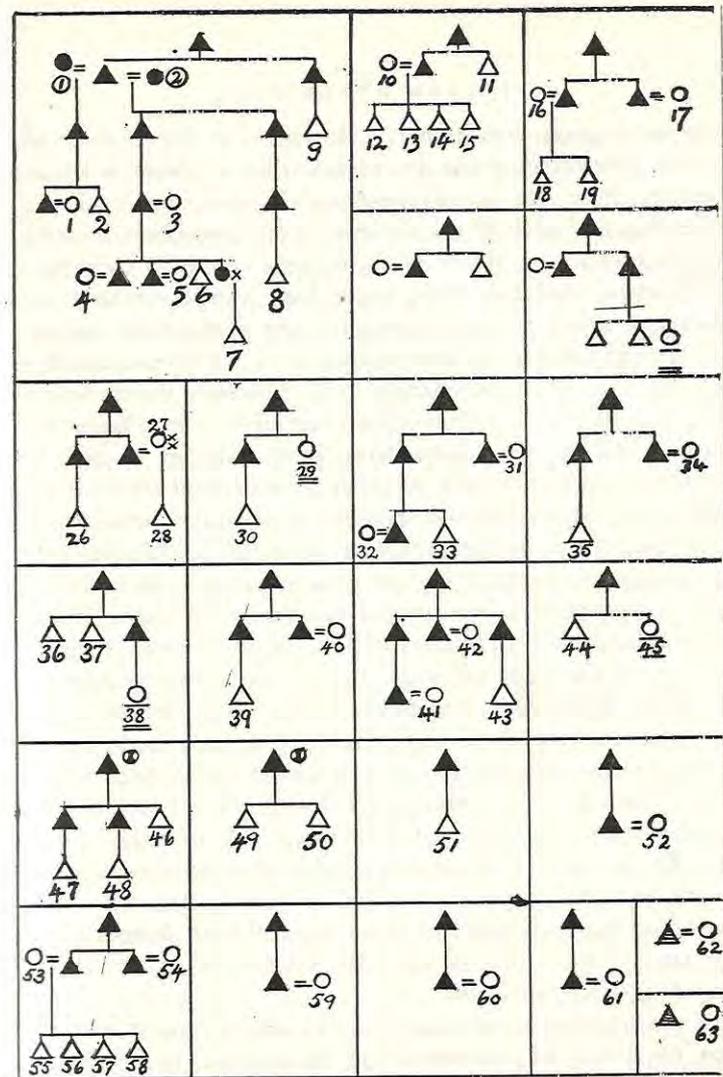
	Primary	Residual	Rejuvenated
Monogamous families :	H & W [n.a.] 4	H & W [p] 3	H & W 2[n.a.] 2
	H & W & c 52	H & 2W [p] 1	H & 2W & c 14
		H(w) & c 1	W(w) & gc 6
		W(w) 11	2W(w) & c & gc 2
		W(w) & c 20	
		2W(w) & c 5	
		H(d) 1	
		H(d) & c 1	
		W(d) 2	
		W(d) & c 6	
		c 1	
	D & c 3		
Polygynous families :	iW(w) & iiW(w) 1		
Total Cases : ..	56	56	24
Per cent : .. ..	41%	41%	18%

Note : [n.a.] = new association. [p.] = past child bearing.

Certain trends in family composition, revealed in the classification of the 136 families belonging to the random sample of 90 homesteads in Nqhumeya and Gwili-Gwili, are borne out by an examination of the families of the heads only of all homesteads in Upper Nqhumeya, as shown on the following comparative table:—

Family composition	136 families		216 families	
	%	%	%	%
Husband and his first or second wife ..	56.0	51.8		
Husband had died .. .. .	33.1	40.0		
Partner had been deserted or divorced ..	7.3	5.4		
Wife has died .. .. .	0.7	1.5		
Unmarried woman living with her illegitimate children, or unmarried children survive both parents ..	2.9	1.3		
	100.0	100.0		

An examination of 40 genealogies revealed that there were 19 lineages with a three-generation span, 12 with a four-generation span and 9 with a five-generation span. Thus nearly half the lineages are composed of the patrilineal descendants of a common grandfather, 30 per cent of a common great-grandfather, and 22 per cent of a



AGNATIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOMESTEADS IN THE MADWALENI VILLAGE SECTION OF UPPER NQHUMEYA

- ▲ --- Males deceased
- △ --- Males living
- --- Females — deceased
- --- Females — living
- --- Married
- x --- Adulterine child
- x --- Premarital child
- =△=○ --- Polygynous marriage
- ▲ --- Husbands did not live here in village
- Wives moved in since death of husbands
- 1-63 --- Heads of separate homesteads
- 25 --- Deserted by husband of Christian marriage, returned to her home
- 29 --- Thwala widow ditto
- 38 --- Unmarried daughter who has had children
- 45 --- Divorcée returned to her own home
- ⊙ --- Agnatic homesteads in other village sections
- --- is great wife
- ⊙ --- is second wife

common great-great-grandfather. However, in the case of lineages with a five-generation span, descended from a common great-great-grandfather, there has usually been subdivision, and each segment, the descendants of each of the common great-grandfathers, is to some extent autonomous of others of the lineage remnant, each having its own distinctive surname. The individual lineage remnant varies in size from 2 to about 30 male members; the average number of males in each lineage remnant is approximately 11, of whom about six are adults. The size of the remnant is not, however, always an index of the time that its members have been settled in the village, for many long-established lineage groups have been reduced in size through emigration of their members to other districts and to the towns.

Although the number of separate homesteads belonging to the male members of a lineage remnant tends to be greater, as noted, among lineage remnants living on communal land than those living on freehold properties, the spatial proximity of those homesteads is fairly similar anywhere in the district. In communal villages nowadays, however, Government regulations with regard to the allocation of hut sites may preclude free choice in the setting up of new homesteads, and in some areas of high density of population a man may be forced to seek a homestead site in a hamlet other than the one in which the majority of his kinsmen are living. Quarrels, fear of witchcraft and sorcery, the desire to be near better grazing or, less frequently, the desire to live among Christian neighbours are all cited as reasons for the spatial dispersion of agnatic kinsmen. Married women who take their children from their in-laws' homesteads when they return to their own people also contribute to the spatial dispersion of agnatic kinsmen.

The chart on the preceding page indicates the agnatic relationship between the heads of homesteads in Madwaleni, the largest village section in Upper Nqhumeya. Only two of the 21 lineage remnants have members living in another village section. In the whole of Upper Nqhumeya there are only nine agnatic groups with male members living in two different village section concentrations; this is fairly representative of the spatial proximity of lineage remnants throughout the district. Ideally, it is only the eldest son, the heir, who is expected to remain in his father's homestead, while the younger sons hive off in the course of time to establish homesteads of their own. The extent to which brothers or sons establish their own homesteads is also evidenced in the chart of Madwaleni homesteads. There were

21 homesteads founded in the area by the first settlers of each lineage and two homesteads established by recent immigrant widows; in 16 cases a brother or son of one generation established his own homestead nearby; in six cases two brothers or sons of the same generation hived off; and in three cases four sons set up separate homesteads. At the time of the field survey in 1949, therefore, 40 new homesteads had been established, and the 21 original *imixi*, or patrilineal kinship groups, had broken up into 61 separate homesteads in the one locality.

To summarise, this analysis of the family, the homestead and the lineage remnant has revealed that:—

1. Of all the families in the homesteads, about 40 per cent are monogamous primary families, consisting of husband, wife and children. A similar proportion of families are residual in character, owing to the death of a husband in two cases out of every three, but also owing to divorce or desertion of one of the partners, or because a spinster mother has no husband, or an elderly couple survive their married children. The remaining 20 per cent of families in the homesteads have been rejuvenated, in two cases out of three through remarriage, usually of a widower, and in the other case through the acquisition, usually by a widow, of the children of other parents.
2. In communal villages, nearly two-thirds of the homesteads comprise no more than a single family, though usually with unmarried dependants attached to it. In a little over one-third of the homesteads there are joint families, although only two out of every three of these are patrilineal, or related in the male line, the other being usually a joint family arising out of the return of a married daughter to the home of her agnates. In villages of freehold and quitrent tenure, homesteads comprising joint families related in the male line tend to be more common.
3. Families are patrilocal, and homesteads comprise patrilineal kinship groups (*imixi*); but in about one homestead in eight a daughter of the lineage is living together with her children; and in about one homestead in nine is living a maternal or a wife's relative.
4. A growing sense of economic individualism develops the tendency towards a break up of the *umxi*, through married brothers or sons hiving off to establish their own

homesteads; but shortage of land and the absence of husbands and parents in migrant employment outside the district has a counteracting influence, compelling or encouraging the patrilineal kinship group to remain together in one homestead.

5. When brothers or sons do leave the paternal homestead to set up their own, they usually build their new homesteads nearby, with the result that all the homesteads of the male members of one lineage remnant tend to be locally concentrated in the same village section.
6. The lineage remnant consists of anything from 2 to 30 male members who are, by definition, the surviving descendants of a common grandfather, great-grandfather or great-great-grandfather actually domiciled in the district; those lineage remnants sharing a common great-great-grandfather have usually subdivided into segments, each consisting of the surviving descendants of each of the great-grandfathers.
7. These lineage remnants, inclusive also of female agnates, are the largest locally concentrated kinship groupings in the district. As there is no territorial concentration of clans, they are without significance in kinship groupings and serve only as a mode of reckoning relationship in the control which is exercised on choice of marriage partner.

There is little differentiation between clans in their members' habits and customs; differences in ritual<sup>1</sup> are usually associated with the clan, but are sometimes connected with the component lineages of the clan. It is inevitable that, with the breakdown of the territorial basis of the clan, the ties between clansmen should weaken, and that ritual and jural functions which were once exercised within the clan should have become the more exclusive concern of the group within which actual blood relationship can be traced. The clan does not act as a corporate group and there is no clan leader; no ritual is undertaken on behalf of the clan as a whole, ritual being primarily the concern of members of the lineage, although the clan ancestor is called upon and clansmen have the right to be present. In theory, clansmen are concerned with the settlement of disputes and matters

<sup>1</sup>c.f. Appendix A—"The Ancestor Cult and Witch Beliefs."

relating to inheritance and marriage, but in practice these affairs are dealt with by members of the component lineages.

Relations with and knowledge of agnatic kinsmen living at some distance away are sometimes maintained by correspondence and occasional visits. In other cases there is no longer any knowledge of members of segments of the lineage who live far away. A grandfather may, for example, have had two brothers, one of whom remained in the village and one who moved to the Transkei; the names of the latter's descendants and their whereabouts may be unknown, and they may thus be without social relevance in the lives of the members of the lineage group who live in the village. The effectiveness of the relationship maintained between spatially separated lineage segments varies with the distance, since a man is more likely to have knowledge of and contact with groups of paternal relatives living in neighbouring districts in the Ciskei than with those living afar off in the Transkei. And it is the members of the lineage who are locally concentrated in the district, who form the effective unit of ritual, attend one another's funerals, assist one another in economic undertakings, and meet to arbitrate in disputes involving one of their number, or to discuss arrangements for the marriage of a son or daughter.

The leader of the lineage group is the primogenitive male descendant of the lineage founder; an eldest son and his descendants are always senior to a second son and his descendants, who in turn are always senior to a third son and his descendants, etc. The order of seniority is as shown by successive numbers in the following genealogy:

I

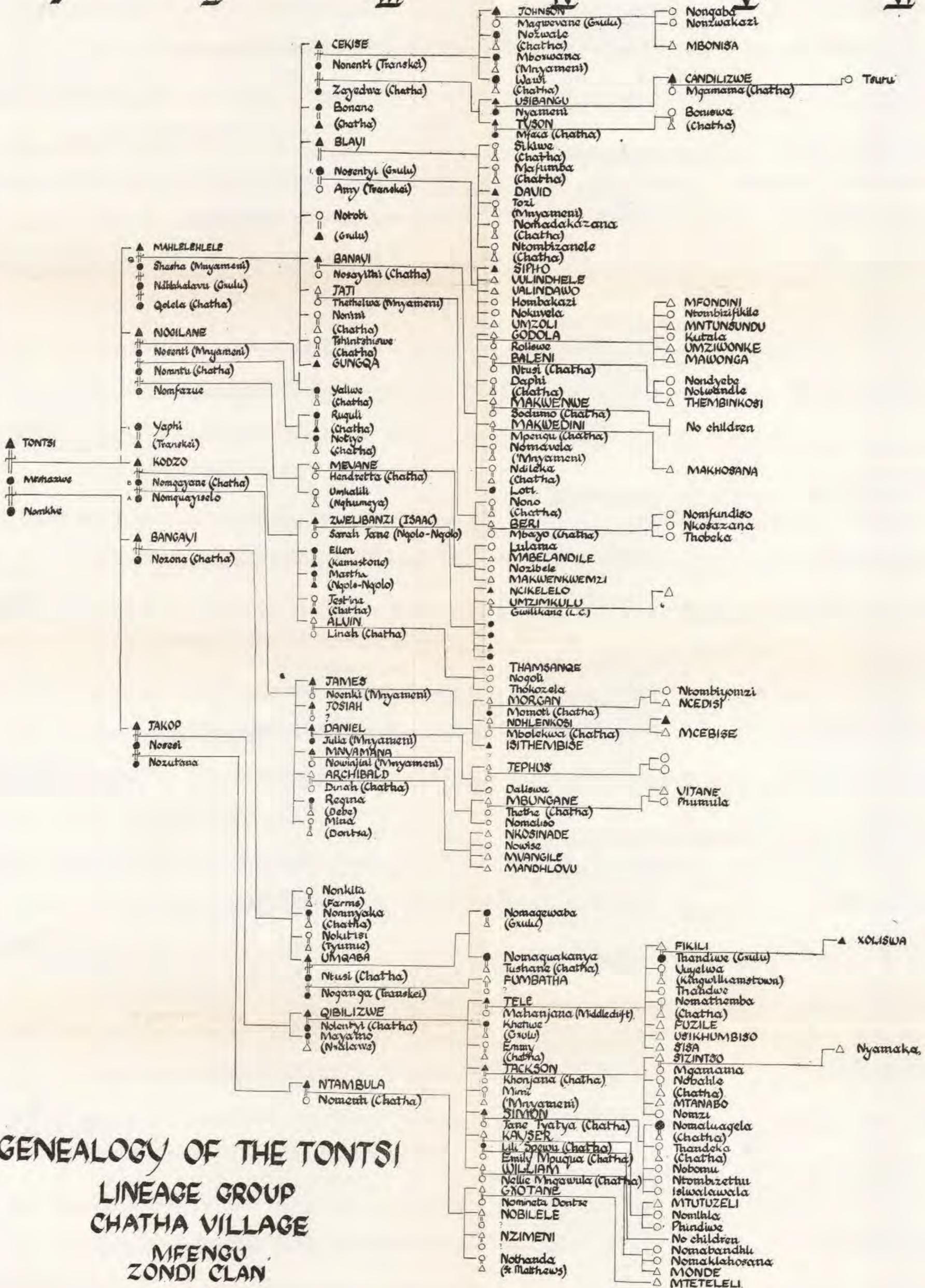
II

III

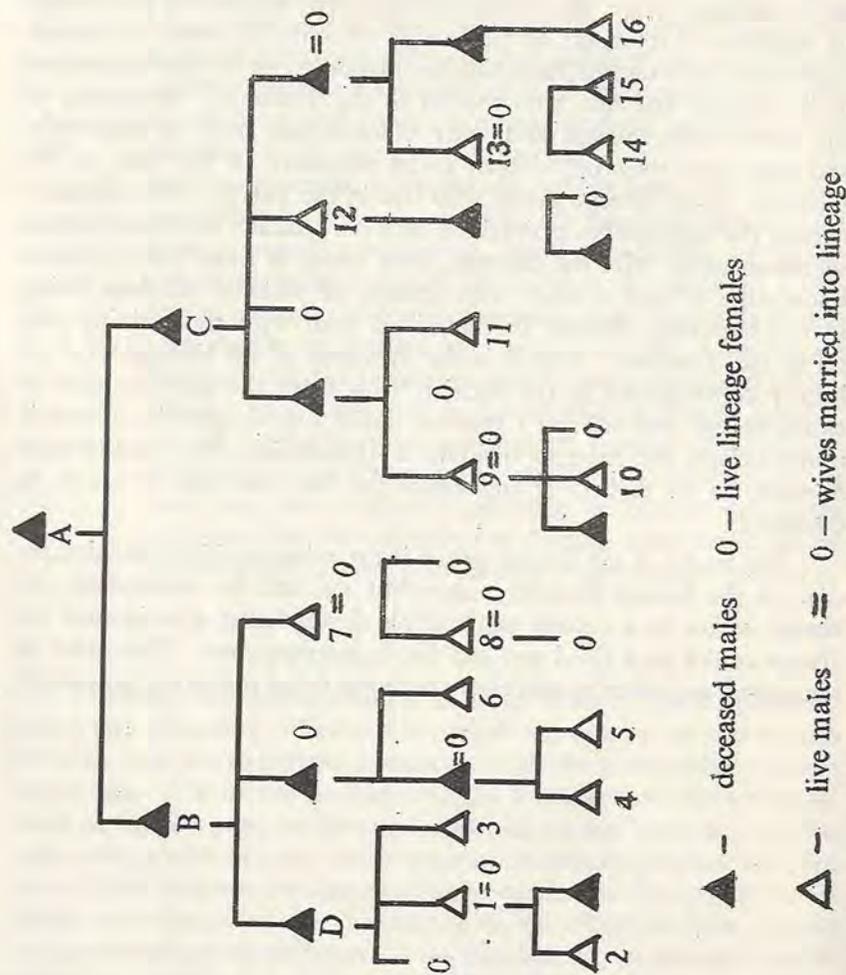
IV

V

VI



**GENEALOGY OF THE TONTSI  
LINEAGE GROUP  
CHATHA VILLAGE  
MFENGU  
ZONDI CLAN**



No. 1 is the leader of the *lineage group*, that is, the leader of all the agnatic descendants of A, the common great-great-grandfather. Since it is usual, however, for the lineage group to have subdivided into *lineage segments* (the separate groups descended from the common great-great-grandfathers B and C) No. 1 would be the leader of the B segment and No. 9 the leader of the C segment. If D and his family happened to have emigrated to the Transkei, while his younger brothers remained in the district, then No. 4 would be the leader of the B *lineage remnant*, namely those descendants of B who are actually domiciled in the district. If No. 4 is too young to assume the office of the lineage remnant leader, his uncle, No. 6, or his grand-uncle, No. 7, would probably act as the leader during the remainder of his lifetime; after the acting leader's death, No. 4 would take up his rightful office. If No. 9 happens to emigrate to town with his family, then No. 11 will succeed as leader of the C lineage remnant; any male descendants of No. 11 will be senior to No. 13 and descendants, who in turn will be senior to No. 16 and descendants.

Ideally, the leader of the lineage group is responsible for performing or supervising all rituals directed to the ancestors at the homesteads of members of his group; he should also be consulted in all matters relating to the marriage of a member, and be informed of disputes involving members of his group. In practice, however, when the leader of the lineage group lives some distance away, his duties are undertaken by the senior kinsman living in the district, the lineage remnant leader. When these two offices are distinct, the lineage group leader is usually notified only of deaths and the performance of the funeral rites for an elderly person, particularly of the rite of "bringing back the shade to the homestead." The advice of the lineage group leader may also be asked in cases of serious dispute, especially over inheritance, between members of the lineage remnant. In the case of lineages with a five-generation span, in which subdivision into segments has taken place, each segment, being to some extent autonomous of others of the lineage remnant, has its own leader who performs his duties independently of the leaders of other segments of the remnant. Nevertheless, the members of one segment continue to invite the members of other segments to attend rituals, the arbitration of disputes, and discussions about marriage.

The members of the component segments of a lineage group approach their ancestors through the lineage remnant leader. His approval alone is required for a ritual undertaking, and he does not

consult with the leaders of other lineages of the same clan. He performs or supervises the complex rites required by each member of his group. While no rituals are performed on behalf of the group as a whole, the rituals for each member are nevertheless the concern of other members. A Thembu in Gwili-Gwili, who was the sole adult male member of one lineage remnant, claimed that he would not undertake a sacrifice unless some of the members of another lineage, his only clansmen in the village, could be present. This man's ritual undertakings did not have to be sanctioned by the leader of the other lineage, and he usually sacrificed the animal and invoked the shades himself, excepting when he himself was ill and the leader of the other lineage undertook these rites for him.

Because clansmen "are of the same blood," "are descended from the one man," they are entitled, even though not specially invited, to be present at the rituals of any member of the component lineages of that clan. While the immediate ancestors of the members of the lineage remnant are the ones most intimately concerned in the welfare of their descendants, the clan ancestor is also invoked at rituals. The relationship between clansmen is thus especially recognised at rituals, and wives of clansmen who attend should contribute food, though this obligation is now often neglected. Clansmen and their wives should sleep at the homestead at which the sacrifice is taking place, "so that the ancestors will send them the same dreams." In practice, however, it is usually only those clansmen and women living nearby with whom a man is particularly friendly, who are invited to attend his rituals, and it is becoming increasingly common for them to return to their own homesteads for the night. All indications are that it is more important for members of a lineage than for clansmen to be present at rituals and that, in practice, ritual is essentially the concern of members of the lineage remnant rather than members of the clan. Clansmen only assume importance in ritual when the lineage remnant is very small, or when there is no male member to make a sacrifice for a woman or a child.

Although it is the lineage remnant, or more rarely two lineage remnants in the same or neighbouring villages, which normally form the effective unit at rituals, there are some important occasions when other members of the lineage living afar off should be invited to attend. The greater the distance separating the remnants of the lineage, the less is the likelihood of their being present. However, they should at least be invited to the sacrifice of a beast in case of illness (*idini*)

and the funeral rites of an elderly person, especially the rite of "bringing back the shade to the homestead" (*izila* and *ukubuyisa abadala*). It is claimed by some that even if distant members of the lineage are unable to be present, their concurrence in the undertaking and the approval of the lineage group leader are required on these three most important occasions; they should write and say: "We are unable to come, but carry on."

Informants claimed that, on all occasions of pagan ritual, with the possible exception only of the ritual performed after the birth of a child (*imbeleko*), all the pagan members of the lineage living in the village should be present at the homestead of the one holding the sacrifice. Those who are ill or too old to walk any distance from their homesteads are excused. Lineage daughters who have married in the village should obtain permission from their mothers-in-law to attend. Those agnates living in neighbouring villages should attend at least the three more important occasions. Members of the lineage remnant who are working in town should be notified of the important occasions and should, like other distant members of the lineage group, express their approval of the undertaking; immediate relatives of the patient, or heirs of the deceased, should make every effort to return home. During the period of ritual, it is especially important that members of the remnant should avoid quarrelling; standing quarrels or disputes between them should be reconciled. Some informants claimed that they would even write to make peace with agnatic kinsmen living far away with whom they may have quarrelled. This is done in the belief that the ancestors watch their descendants closely during the ritual and are displeased by any ill-feeling between them.

Whether maternal and sororal kinsmen are present at rituals depends mainly on whether they are friendly with the one holding the sacrifice, and whether they live nearby, but there are some occasions when they should be specially invited. When a deceased mother has appeared in a dream, or has been diagnosed as the cause of illness of her child, the presence of the close maternal relatives, the mother's father and his descendants, is important. If the diviner has instructed a patient that his maternal ancestors require to be propitiated, it is the maternal kin group that must make the sacrifice; the paternal kin group has no power to intercede on behalf of its members with their maternal ancestors. It is usual, however, for a sacrifice to be made to the patient's paternal ancestors before requesting his maternal relatives to undertake a killing for him; the patient's "paternal

ancestors should always be slaughtered for first, they would be angry if he first killed for his maternal ancestors." Although the close maternal relatives are invited to attend sacrifices to the paternal ancestors, "because they are of the same blood," their presence is not regarded as vital to the successful performance of the ritual. Sororal kinsmen, the sons and daughters of a sister, should be specially invited to attend rituals at their maternal uncles' homes, and they are permitted special portions of the sacrificial meat and to partake of the ritual beer immediately after their uncles' agnates have been served.

Affinal kinsmen, the close relatives of a wife, may be invited to attend the rituals that concern her husband, but their presence is only considered necessary when their daughter, the wife, is being introduced to her husband's ancestors (*ukudliswa amasi*) or when she is to put on a necklet of the tail hairs of the "beast of the ancestors" given her by her father (*intambo yobulunga*). It is usually claimed that one of her paternal relatives should be invited to undertake the ritual connected with putting on the necklet, but some informants maintained that this could be done by the husband or one of his relatives. Since a wife comes under the influence of both her own and her husband's ancestors, either may be diagnosed as requiring special recognition. Sacrifices to her ancestors must be undertaken by members of her own agnatic group; those required by her husband's ancestors must be undertaken by members of his group.

Unrelated people, although not invited, are usually present at rituals. Many visitors attend when beer is provided and a beast has been slaughtered; they add to the general air of festivity with singing and dancing. Unrelated women may even assist in fetching water, stamping mealies, baking bread and cooking, and may also make small contributions of money and food. The practice is, however, frowned upon by some pagans, who claim that a sacrifice is solely the concern of the lineage and that everything connected with it should be undertaken by lineage members, and their wives. It is the wives married into the lineage who are expected to do the work, lineage daughters lending voluntary assistance only. If there are not enough wives and daughters to do the work, assistance should first be sought from maternal relatives before allowing unrelated people to help. While a young wife who is a staunch Christian may refuse to attend the rituals of her own agnates, she may be forced to attend and assist with the work at rituals in her husband's group if he is a pagan or lapsed convert. It is only if her husband does not attend the ritual,

being himself a staunch Christian, that she will not be expected to assist. Since the presence of wives is not essential to the successful performance of ritual, an older Christian wife will usually be permitted to absent herself, though she will have to supervise preparations at her own pagan husband's rituals.

Christian members of the lineage who refuse to attend the rituals of their pagan agnates are believed to draw down the retribution of the ancestors on their own heads and not on the group as a whole. Christian kinsmen are not usually notified of rituals, unless it is known that they will be likely to attend. Some informants claimed, however, that they would always invite their Christian agnates in the village, even though refusal to attend would be certain; this is done "to show the ancestors that there is friendship between all the members of the family." Some less staunch Christians do actually attend pagan rituals, although they may refuse to eat the sacrificial meat or drink the beer. In general, however, religious activities are a kinship bond only for pagans, and acceptance of Christianity, more than any other factor, undermines the solidarity of the lineage remnant in this sphere.

The other principal group activity of the lineage remnant, and one which concerns Christians and pagans alike, is the settlement of disputes. Constituted of all the adult men of the lineage remnant, the lineage court discusses proposed marriages of a son or daughter and all types of family disputes and civil wrongs, attempting to secure a peaceful settlement between the parties involved. Only when no settlement can be reached in the lineage remnant court, is a case taken further to the court of the village headman or to the Native Commissioner's court. If both parties to a dispute are members of the same lineage remnant, the case is discussed by the lineage remnant court presided over by the lineage remnant leader. Cases concerning a married woman are dealt with by her husband's lineage remnant, not the court of her own agnates. If the parties to a dispute are members of different lineage remnants, the plaintiff should notify his remnant leader of the wrong that has been done him or members of his family; the leader then arranges with the defendant's lineage remnant leader for a joint meeting of the two lineage remnant courts at the homestead of the plaintiff or his remnant leader. At any sessions of lineage remnant courts, in addition to the agnates, other male relatives or friends may be present on invitation.

Between unrelated or only distantly related people, any type of civil wrong or dispute may arise for discussion and attempted arbitration in the joint session of the lineage remnant courts. But disputes which come up before the single lineage remnant court, involving close relatives, are largely over the inheritance or the use of land. Traditionally, an eldest son inherited with his father's property the obligation to act as "father of the family" (*inkulu inguyise wasapho*—lit.: "the elder is father of the family") towards his widowed mother and siblings. Today, many eldest sons spend long periods in the towns and neglect their obligation towards their ageing parents and younger siblings. Rigid application of the European law of primogeniture nevertheless ensures the eldest son's succession to quitrent and much freehold property, unless the father had made *inter vivos* donation of it.<sup>1</sup> In either case, the stage is set for conflict between brothers. Conflict would arise if an eldest brother were to inherit when his obligations as "father of the family" had been fulfilled by a younger brother, giving the latter ground for claiming he had greater rights to inherit; conflict would equally arise if the eldest brother were to object to having been disinherited on that account. In practice, however, the rights to inheritance are limited by public opinion in the village which censures anyone who "eats the inheritance alone" and refuses to share with his brothers.

Similar cases of dispute frequently arise between brothers over communal land—a younger brother, for example, claiming that he has greater right than his elder brother to the field of their deceased father or of a father's brother who may have left no widow or heirs, on the ground that the elder brother was away in the towns for a long time and failed to give as substantial assistance to the deceased as did the younger. Disputes over land arise not only between brothers, but also between sons and their fathers' widows or brothers. For example, a son questioned his mother's right to refuse him the use of part of his late father's field registered in her name, because she had quarrelled with her daughter-in-law and driven them from the homestead; a young man who had been officially allocated his deceased father's field, complained that his father's brother, having no field of his own, had commenced ploughing his field without his consent during his absence in town.

The obligation of agnatic kinsmen other than father and sons to render mutual assistance in the working of the land appears to be

<sup>1</sup>c.f. Volume IV *Land Tenure*. The law regarding freehold property changed in 1927.

giving place to co-operation between neighbours. In principle, a man is expected to assist his father, mother, son, son's widow, brother and brother's widow in ploughing; it is his duty to do so and he should never be described as *ukufak'intloko* to any of them, or they to him, merely because one gives only his services while the other supplies the plough and span.<sup>1</sup> Some people claim that this applies to other agnatic kinsmen as well, "because they are of the same lineage and should help one another." In practice, however, there is a marked tendency for agnatic kinsmen, other than fathers and sons, to ask for help from each other or to give help only on the same basis as other neighbours.

The extent to which agnatic kinsmen were helping one another in ploughing was investigated in 25 lineages, during September, 1949.<sup>2</sup> In 66 cases in which ploughing was done in partnership, by means of a work party of oxen, or with "help," co-operation was between people related as follows:—

<i>Relationship between people assisting each other</i>	<i>No. of cases</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Agnatic kinsmen .. .. .	22	33.3
Agnatic kinsmen and also affinal relatives ..	2	3.0
Agnatic kinsmen and also unrelated people	4	6.1
Clansmen (not of the same lineage) .. ..	2	3.0
Affinal relatives .. .. .	13	19.7
Man and maternal relatives .. .. .	4	6.1
Unrelated people .. .. .	19	28.8
	66	100.0

While fathers and sons always assist each other, and a son his widowed mother, the extent to which brothers and other agnatic kinsmen, who are not living in the same homestead, will assist one another varies. The fact that agnatic kinsmen work together in less than half the cases may be regarded as symptomatic of the general weakening of agnatic ties. Cattle and implements are individually owned, and the lineage remnant leader has no power to regulate the ploughing arrangements of his people. The separation of agnatic

<sup>1</sup>c.f. page 19.

<sup>2</sup>c.f. page 20 where these cases were analysed for spatial proximity of those assisting each other in ploughing. Widows, with their late husbands' land registered in their names, are here treated as members of the husbands' lineage remnants.

inheritance

mutual assistance

kinsmen in small homesteads fosters economic individualism; this was expressed most clearly in the cases in which men owning ploughs and spans preferred to work on their own, while their agnatic kinsmen less fortunately placed entered into partnerships with maternal or affinal kinsmen or unrelated people. When, as sometimes happens, none of the landowning members of the lineage remnant possesses a plough and span, all are compelled to seek co-operation outside the agnatic group. Again, when a group of agnates has something like seven or eight fields to be ploughed and only one of them owns a plough and span, some of the others prefer to seek ploughing assistance from people able to help them more promptly. Disagreements with relatives, personal preference, and the desire of staunch Christians to work together with their Christian friends, were also quoted as reasons for co-operating with unrelated people rather than agnates.

For the accomplishment of economic tasks other than ploughing, invitations to a work party are usually sent to relatives only if they are neighbours. When examining genealogies in an attempt to establish how far members of the lineage remnant were attending one another's work parties, it was repeatedly stated by informants that "so-and-so was not invited because he lives too far away." However, since paternal relatives tend to be concentrated in the same village section, some at least of a man's paternal relatives are likely to be present. The obligation to render assistance to a paternal relative appears, nevertheless, to be no greater than towards unrelated neighbours, for the social rule is accepted that one always attends the work party of a man or woman who was the first to invite one, even if a close relative happens to be holding a work party that same day.

In all economic undertakings, in assistance with a son's marriage cattle or the expenses of a daughter's marriage, when crops fail or when money and food must be borrowed to tide over a crisis, help can be sought from close maternal relatives: "You should always go to your own people (*i.e.*, paternal relatives) first; if they fail you in any of these things, you can go to your mother's people." They are not bound to assist, and normally they do so only on the understanding of strict reciprocity; for instance, if a mother's brother helps his nephew with his marriage cattle, it is expected that the nephew will in turn assist one of his uncle's children. However, close maternal relatives are expected to make larger contributions than unrelated people when marriages or funerals take place, and will give cause for gossip if they do not, when their financial position enables them

to do so. In the past, a first-born son was entitled, on birth, to a beast from his mother's brother, but it is generally conceded that this custom is falling into disuse. The paternal and maternal grandmother's people play a very much less important role: "Relationship is not so strong with your paternal and maternal grandmother's people; with your paternal grandmother's people, it was your father who used to go to them; with your maternal grandmother's people, it was your mother's brothers who went to them. You go first to your own mother's people." A married man is also entitled to seek assistance from his father-in-law: "You can go to your father-in-law as often as you go to your own father and brother, sometimes even more freely, because he respects you." And reciprocally, a son-in-law must assist his father-in-law.

Thus, while kinsmen may be called upon to assist on occasion, in the normal course of events it is the elementary family, or the joint family living together in the homestead, which forms the effective unit of economic co-operation. Other paternal relatives outside the homestead are not consulted, for instance, in the disposal of stock or agricultural produce, nor do they share the earnings of migrant employment. The homestead family is the group within which children are reared and trained in the conduct and methods of work; members of this family group live together, share food, co-operate in housekeeping, cultivation, herding, and remunerative employment.

In the acquisition and disposal of stock, a man consults primarily with his heir, the eldest son, since savings are put into stock and they are regarded as his bank (*imfuyo yibanki yakhe*—"his stock are his bank"). For ploughing and hauling, a man freely uses the stock belonging to any of his sons living in his homestead, whereas he would not use the stock of a brother without permission, even if the brother were in the same homestead. The homestead is the kinship group within which cash earnings are most often shared; sharing does not usually extend beyond the homestead, although occasional assistance may be expected, for instance, from a man's son-in-law; on the other hand, within the homestead it is becoming increasingly common for the earnings of husbands to be used independently within each of the elementary family groups comprising the homestead, instead of sharing them among all members of the homestead. The group which co-operates in the working of land and which shares the produce is the elementary family or the joint family which eats together from the same pot. As a rule, all the members of the home-

stead eat together from the same pot, but in something like 10 per cent of the homesteads there are brother's or son's wives or other women cooking separately from the other elementary families in the homestead.<sup>1</sup>

*Palle*  
All the men of the homestead, and sometimes sons in other homesteads, keep their cattle in a common cattle byre and their goats and sheep in an adjoining pen. It is usual for the boys of the homestead to herd stock in company with other boys from the same village section, not necessarily in company with boys from agnatically related homesteads. The men of the homestead, with the exception of a father and his eldest son, each have their own distinctive earmark or brand for stock. Because an eldest son inherits his deceased father's stock, the saying is current that "what is the father's is the son's and what is the son's is the father's." His eldest son's permission is required before a man may slaughter or sell one of his animals. Some informants claimed that if the eldest son was away at work and failed to send money home when asked to in an emergency, the father was free to sell an animal without the son's permission. An animal belonging to a younger son is his own, and his father may not dispose of it under similar circumstances without the son's permission.

Although an eldest son inherits his father's stock, and a younger son may have acquired stock as a gift from his father, earmarked or branded as his own, acquisition of stock by purchase or borrowing may be just as frequently from unrelated people. A man may ask a friend or a relative to lend (*ukungoma*) him a cow, ewe, mare or other female animal, with the idea that he should eventually be allowed to keep one of its young; one case was encountered of the borrower being granted every third calf by a wealthy owner. In the meantime, the borrower has the use of the animals for his own ploughing and hauling, and is entitled to any milk yield. In return, he cares for the stock, usually with responsibility for trespass fines and also camp fees for cattle grazing, and assists the stockowner not only with his ploughing and hauling, but also in all other undertakings; if he does not attend his benefactor's work parties and give all assistance required of him, the loaned animals are likely to be withdrawn. The use of stock, and sometimes also of ploughing implements, may also be acquired from men who are away at work in the towns, or from old people and widows who have no one to herd for them. The keeper is responsible for herding in the same way as a borrower, but unless he lives far

<sup>1</sup>c.f. Vol. II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*, page 54.

away he is not normally allowed the milk yield. In return for his own use of the stock, he assists the owner in ploughing and hauling. A borrower or keeper is not responsible for the death of animals, provided he reports immediately and produces the skin of the dead creature; the meat belongs to the owner, but may be shared with a borrower. One case was encountered where a man had left some of his cattle with his mother living in another village; although she was responsible for their herding and was entitled to use them for ploughing and hauling, this arrangement was claimed to be quite different, for the cattle were described as being "left at home." The usual process of lending stock or giving it into the care of another is arranged between unrelated people or else between relatives on a business basis, with reciprocal obligation on the part of the borrower or keeper to give of his services to the stockowner in ploughing or other tasks; only if the owners have enough labour in their own homesteads would the borrower or keeper be absolved from assisting. Some of the more wealthy stockowners employ the system for the purpose of getting their stock herded in villages where the grazing is better; others use it to conceal their wealth, others to keep poor dependants. Less usual is the system of paying a herd in clothes or money to keep and care for the stock; he has no rights to the milk yield or use of animals for his own purposes, nor is he responsible for trespass fines or for assisting in any of the stockowner's undertakings; the owner collects his animal whenever they are required for ploughing or hauling.

*Borrowers and keepers of cattle*  
An eldest son should always consult with his father or widowed mother before selling or slaughtering stock, even if he happens to live in another homestead. A younger son who owns his own stock is not bound to consult with his father or widowed mother, although he often does so, more especially if he is still living in their homestead. Brothers and other agnatic kinsmen do not have to be consulted, although they may be asked for advice. It is only when an animal is to be sacrificed that the permission of the lineage remnant leader is always sought, but this is not because a man's herd is to be reduced by the slaughter, but because a ritual directed to the ancestors is to be performed. Twenty men whose parents were no longer living were questioned as to whom they would consult before killing or selling an animal: although they all had agnatic kinsmen living close by, 18 claimed that they would consult only with their eldest sons and wives, and that younger sons and other agnatic kinsmen would, at the most,

x be told of the decision but would not be regarded as having any decisive influence. Two men, in addition to consulting with their wives and eldest sons, were also consulting elder brothers living in nearby homesteads. A wife is consulted on the principle that "you work together with her in getting these things" and "because she is the one who helps you bring up your children and will stop you from wasting your goods."

Although the produce of a field belongs to a husband, he should, it is claimed, never dispose of it without first consulting his wife. The land is nowadays regarded as the inheritance of the man, handed down to him from his forebears and to be passed on to his descendants. His wife, by marrying into his kinship group, acquires the right and has the duty of assisting him in the cultivation of the soil, whereby she acquires a claim on the produce. Her children and any others who eat from her cooking pot have the duty of assisting her in the cultivation of the land. When a man has a particularly good harvest, he may allow his wife money for her own use from the proceeds of the sale of part of the crop. A few men consult also with their eldest sons before disposing of produce, but this is not usual: "it is enough that a man consults his wife." A son who has a field of his own does not have to consult with his father, but he may do so especially if he is living in his father's homestead.

The cash earnings of married brothers living in the same homestead are, ideally, expected to be shared among all in the homestead, even though the wives may be cooking separate pots. Sometimes the brothers take it in turns to go to the towns to work, their alternate support of each other's families being on a reciprocal basis. If the wives and children of two brothers in a homestead become dependent upon the earnings of only one of the brothers, while the other fails to send money home when he goes out to work, the recalcitrant brother will be known as a "bad lot" in the village. A married son living in his parent's homestead, even if his wife is cooking a separate pot, is expected to assist other members of the homestead and not use the money he earns solely for the benefit of members of his own family. It is, however, becoming increasingly common for married sons to send remittances directly to their wives, to be spent according to their directions even though it be for the benefit of other members of their parents' homesteads.

Ideally, unmarried sons or daughters working where they get board and lodging (as in the mines or domestic service) are expected

to hand over all their earnings to the father or widowed mother, to be used for the benefit of all the members of the homestead. In return, a son should be provided with all or part of his marriage cattle. An eldest son, being the heir, is especially bound to remain in his father's homestead and assist him in every possible way. Today, a young man usually retains at least part of his cash earnings to pay taxes, buy clothing and material goods for himself and to provide himself with part or all of his marriage cattle. Indeed, there are some parents who complain that their children do not give them even a part of their earnings. Daughters who themselves have illegitimate children to support in town often cannot afford to send money home to their parents. However, if their illegitimate children are in the care of the grandmother or other women in the homestead, it is normally because the mother has gone out to work for their support, and remittances from her earnings will be used for the benefit of all the members of the homestead where her children are being reared.

In almost every homestead the rearing of children falls very largely to women alone, because of the periodic absence of men as emigrant breadwinners. Most of the men who are not heads of their own homesteads, even though they may be fathers of families, spend the major portion of their working lives in employment in the towns. When men set up their own homesteads, they do not go out to work so extensively, but out of every six male heads of homesteads there is nevertheless always one away. In another four homesteads in ten, the head of the homestead is a widow, so that at least half the homesteads are without any male head to organize the economic efforts of the household or to maintain discipline. In virtually all homesteads there are at least some children who are fatherless or whose fathers are away at work. Most informants agree that this lack of paternal discipline in the upbringing of children has a marked effect among young people today, especially at the age when they first go out to work in the towns. It is said that they are cheeky and illmannered, showing little respect for their parents and still less for other elderly people; except when compelled, they seldom do as they are told; they take little interest in looking after stock, ploughing or performing the other duties expected of them at home; they do not support or help their parents as they should; they have lost all sense of discipline and think only of their own pleasure and how to spend their money on themselves. As a result, it is said, these young people seldom remain at home for very long between tours of work in the towns;

Wives  
and  
land

and when the boys are at home, they spend most of their time moving about restlessly courting girls. The girls who go out to work in the towns come back spoiled and tend to do much as they like at home; and every other one eventually returns home from the towns with an illegitimate child.

After boys have been through the initiation ceremonies,<sup>1</sup> however, they tend to exhibit a greater sense of responsibility; and when women marry and go to live with their in-laws, they come under much stricter supervision than in their own homes.<sup>2</sup> This stricter discipline tends, on the other hand, to aggravate conflict within the homestead. Young women to whom wage earning has given a taste of independence are often reluctant to accept contentedly their subordinate role as a daughter-in-law in the homestead. A wife is never fully assimilated into her husband's kinship group: she belongs to another clan and is regarded as a stranger and therefore dangerous; and in the pagan view she continues, after she is married to come under the influence of the ancestral spirits of her own agnatic group. After the freedom she enjoyed as an unmarried girl in her father's homestead, her new status as wife is fraught with difficulties, both in Christian and pagan homesteads. The tensions between a wife and her in-laws are particularly acute when she is a Christian and her mother-in-law a pagan. It is often said that a homestead is a peaceful place until a new bride comes.

## B—MARRIAGE

### General

Genealogies show that intermarriage of the Mfengu and Xhosa, the two most numerous peoples in the Keiskammahoek District, has taken place fairly frequently, though Xhosa men are said to prefer to marry Xhosa girls. There is intermarriage also between Xhosa and Mfengu and the few Thembu and Pondo peoples living in the district. In the villages of freehold and quitrent land tenure, intermarriage of landowners and squatters takes place nowadays, although in earlier generations they did not mix readily.<sup>3</sup> Intermarriage of Christians and pagans and of educated and illiterate people is also general, the only exceptions usually being the relatively better educated

<sup>1</sup>c.f. Appendix B—Male Initiation.

<sup>2</sup>c.f. pp. 113, 123.

<sup>3</sup>Vide page 6.

and staunch Christians who tend to select spouses from among their own group.<sup>1</sup>

Choice of marriage partner is, however, limited by the rules of clan exogamy. Patrilineal clans (*iziduko*) are strictly exogamous, and marriage into the clan of the mother or either grandmother is also forbidden by most Xhosa. The Mfengu and Sukwini-Xhosa only prohibit marriage within the patrilineal clan and within the same lineage as the mother or either grandmother. The usual explanation advanced for this application of exogamy is that there should be no marriage or sexual relations between those of the "same blood." Among the Xhosa, with the exception of the Sukwini clan, "one blood" includes all the members of the four clans of the father, mother, and the paternal and maternal grandmothers. Among the Mfengu, the Sukwini-Xhosa and the Thembu, the concept of "one blood" is significant in the paternal and maternal grandmothers' clans only where actual blood relationship can be traced; and this same restricted concept of actual blood relationship applies also to the mother's clan among some of the Mfengu and the Sukwini-Xhosa.

Informants claim that, in the past, a man and woman within the forbidden categories who married or had sexual relations would have been driven from the homestead. Today, among Christians and pagans, marriage between members of the same patrilineal clan is regarded as inexcusable, and pagans believe that it incurs the irrevocable displeasure of the ancestors. Only one instance was encountered in the course of a field survey of Upper Nqhumeya and Gwili-Gwili villages, in which this strict rule of clan exogamy had been violated: a man and woman who shared a common paternal grandfather had outraged public opinion some 20 years ago by marrying in the Native Commissioner's office. It was largely for this reason that the man, who was heir to the headmanship of Nqhumeya, was passed over in favour of another relative. The couple changed their surname after their marriage, and spent considerable periods in the towns, in order, it was said, to "hide their shame." In cases of marriage within the prohibited categories of the mother's and grandmother's clans, it was claimed by some informants that the wrath of the ancestors could be propitiated by the slaughter of a beast "to break relationship" (*ukuchitha ubublobo*). Only one case was encountered of such incest, a young woman in Gwili-Gwili having married one of her mother's blood relatives. Her father had, however, refused to slaughter a

<sup>1</sup>Vide pp. 136-7.

beast "to break relationship," and he had also declined to accept marriage cattle (*ikebaxi*) for her or to provide her with a trousseau. The fact that her first child was alive and healthy, and her second child had been born without difficulty, was widely attributed to "luck," but punishment from the ancestors was still prophesied for her.

The sense of oneness within the patrilineal clan and relationship with the maternal and grandmaternal clans is marked by the drinking of milk and eating of sacrificial meat of the cattle belonging to any member of the related clans or lineages with whom exogamy applies. The sense of difference between clans is marked by the taboo on acceptance of these foods from members of an unrelated clan. Food avoidances between members of unrelated clans are a form of respect (*ukublonipha*).<sup>1</sup> Unmarried people show this respect towards members of clans with whom they are permitted sexual relations and marriage. Even after marriage they may continue "to give respect" in this way. An elderly Christian volunteered that until fairly recently and as long as he had "an eye for the girls," he had continued "to give respect" by avoiding drinking the milk of unrelated clans. Married women informants also declared that they continued these avoidances, for they never knew but that they might be in a position one day of contemplating marriage with a man of another unrelated clan.

A woman who marries, as permitted, into an unrelated clan is never fully absorbed into her husband's clan, but is always regarded as partly a stranger. As a stranger, the new bride may not drink the milk of her husband's clan until a goat has been sacrificed for her by the husband's paternal relatives in the cattle byre; a special portion (*inguba* or *intsonyama*) of meat cut from the right foreleg of the goat is given to the wife "to taste first" (*ukufwami sa*) and she is given the milk of her husband's cows to drink.<sup>2</sup> This ceremony, known as

<sup>1</sup>According to all accounts, milk is the only food that the younger generation, both Christians and pagans, avoid today. Pagans do not partake of the ritual meat portions of sacrifices to the ancestors of unrelated clans. Other foods, which by tradition among the older people come under ban, are: any part of the internal organs and the heads of cattle, goats and sheep, and any part of a fowl or pig. Since food avoidances do not apply to beer prepared for the ancestors, it is clear that the avoidances are centred around cattle, more especially in reference to their milk yield, excreta, internal organs and heads. It is not difficult to understand why pigs and fowls, which are the village scavengers, come under prohibition in extending respect to strange clans, but the reason for the extension of avoidance to parts of sheep and goats is not clear.

<sup>2</sup>Among all the people of the Keiskammahoeck District, when a married woman thus begins to drink the milk of her husband's clan, she nevertheless continues to drink the milk of her own and related clans' cattle, as before her marriage. This is in contrast to the Pondo women who cease to drink the milk of their own clans' cattle after they have been given the milk of their husbands' cows. c.f. M. Hunter: "Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Status of Pondo Women" *Africa*, Vol. VI (1933).

*ukudliswa amasi* (lit.: "to be given sour milk to drink") may not take place for some months or years after her marriage; the period varies according to families. Nowadays, because of poverty, some women have to wait a considerable time before their husbands can afford to sacrifice a goat. One informant related that, because her husband owned very few goats, a sacrifice was not made on her behalf but she merely drank milk in which the right foreleg of a live goat had been dipped; this is said to be a not uncommon compromise today. The *ukudliswa amasi* ceremony is essential for the wife, since it "introduces her to her husband's ancestors," under whose influence she comes from the time of her marriage, and it is the one ritual which her relatives must be invited to attend. It is the performance of this *ukudliswa amasi* ceremony which, at the present time, legitimises an *ukuthwala* union, or elopement.

Although Christians deny the connection, pagans claim that the "bride's dinner" (*idinala yomtshakaxi*) held after a Christian marriage, has a similar function to the *ukudliswa amasi* ritual among pagans. Many Church members are nevertheless strict about not drinking milk at their husband's homes until a goat has been slaughtered for them. This killing, although it differs somewhat in detail from the traditional *ukudliswa amasi* ceremony and does not include any invocation of ancestors, has become an accepted part of many Christian marriages. On the morning of the fifth day of Christian wedding festivities, when the bride's marriage party (*uduli*) is to return home, the groom's master of ceremonies (*unozakuzaku*) gives to the bride's master of ceremonies a goat, together with a small container of milk to be tasted by the bride. The young men of the bride's party cut the goat's throat near the hut set aside for the bridal party, and in some cases the bride is given a special portion of the meat from the right foreleg (*intsonyama*) to "taste first" (*ukufwami sa*). Certain portions of the meat are the perquisites of the husband's people and others belong to the bride's party. The Christians are at liberty to take any of the meat home with them, in contrast to pagans who consume all the meat at the homestead where the sacrifice is made.

Similarly a husband may not drink milk in his wife's clan until they have killed a goat for him. It is remembered that this killing for the groom by the bride's people used often to be performed, but, since a husband does not come under the influence of his wife's ancestors, the ceremony is not essential for him as it is for the wife, and the custom is rarely observed at the present time.

While the performance of the *ukudliswa amasi* ceremony establishes a ritual bond between a wife and her husband's ancestors, it is in the passage of cattle (*ukulobola*) from the groom's kinship group to the bride's that the union is legalised and the husband's right to the children is established. Even though marriage contracted by European civil law gives the man legal right to the children, the custom of giving cattle is nevertheless retained in practically all marriages in Church or the Native Commissioner's office. The sanctions of the union by civil rites are still much less strong than the sanctions of a customary union, and the passage of cattle is still regarded by the vast majority as the *sine qua non* of a legal union. When a man has given cattle for his wife he stands to lose the cattle if he ever deserts her; and any home that has benefited from a woman's *ikhazi* (cattle given for her) is bound to give her support and protection, which means that she has a second home in which she can take refuge when ill-used by her husband or to which she and her children can go if deserted.

Formerly there was little individual freedom of choice of marriage partner. Matches were arranged by parents, the young man's people going to the girl's home to negotiate marriage and agree on the number of cattle that should pass. Free choice was not entirely precluded by this procedure, for an arranged match may have been undertaken by his parents at the request of a young man who had picked out the girl of his fancy. Nevertheless, it was the group of the groom's relatives who provided the *ikhazi*, and by the same token the bride was regarded as marrying into the group. It was this attitude which conditioned the bride's status in the home of her mother-in-law to which she was taken.<sup>1</sup> Even when the young people chose to elope together leaving the question of *ikhazi* to be discussed later by their parents, the girl was supposed to be taken to the home of the man's parents before consummation, and the same attitude prevailed that she was marrying into the group which would furnish her *ikhazi*. The opportunity young people have of marrying by civil law has done little, *per se*, to alter the status of a bride in the home of her in-laws, for the custom is still retained in such marriages of negotiating the passage of cattle from the groom's people to the bride's. The cattle did not all necessarily pass before the marriage took place, but could be paid in instalments over a long period; thus

<sup>1</sup>c.f. page 76.

the adage "the bridegroom is the sea" (*umyeni lulwandle*) implies that he could always be relied upon as a source of cattle.

Informants agree that today an unwelcome match is seldom forced on a girl,<sup>1</sup> although in the majority of cases prior negotiations still take place as to the number of cattle to pass as *ikhazi*. However, the character of *lobola* is undergoing change. Most important is the fact that young men, who earn wages in the towns, become less dependent on their kinship group to supply them with cattle for *lobola*. A man who has earned his own *ikhazi* has the basis for more independent loyalty towards the wife of his choice than obligation towards his kinship group. His independence extends to the earlier establishment of his own homestead and his wife as mistress in it. Furthermore, with the decay of the ancestor cult, the religious significance of cattle as the link with ancestors enters less into *lobola*. Horses and sheep are sometimes used as substitutes for cattle, although they are still called cattle.<sup>2</sup> Money is increasingly substituted for cattle in *ikhazi*,<sup>3</sup> and this is both the cause and effect of commercialising and emphasising the economic aspect of *lobola*. As one informant said: "It is useless to ask for cattle, because one is forced to sell them in order to get clothing and many other things required by the daughter for marriage." The *ikhazi* is often partly used to provide the girl's outfit. At one wedding an elderly relative of the groom announced publicly: "It was complained that the number of marriage cattle asked for was too high. But the bride's father pointed out at the time that the marriage cattle would be 'eaten up' by the goods provided for the bride. It is true. This man (the bride's father) is left with nothing. When you (the groom) go out to work, you must send him something every month."

An investigation was made of some 2,000 marriages in the lineages of approximately 220 families in the villages of Gxulu, Chatha, Burns-hill and Mthwaku. In 1,704 marriages in which information regarding *lobola* was available, it was found that in 1,517 marriages *lobola* was with cattle only, in 45 cases in cattle and sheep; in 77 cases both

<sup>1</sup>The exercise of arbitrary parental authority over a girl is not altogether extinct, however. For instance, in a survey on illegitimacy, a case was encountered of a woman who, only a few years ago, bore a premarital child to her lover and subsequent husband, with the express design of avoiding marriage with another man selected by her parents.

<sup>2</sup>A horse, which is regarded as more valuable than a cow, is usually included nowadays in a bride's *ikhazi*. The standardised value at which sheep are substituted for cattle is at the rate of 12 sheep for a beast, 10 sheep for the flesh and 2 for the horns.

<sup>3</sup>Until 1950 the accepted equivalent was £5 sterling for a beast. Today it is generally regarded as £7 sterling.

cattle and money were given; in 42 cases money only passed; and in only 23 cases was there no *lobola* whatever. That the substitution of money for cattle is a fairly recent phenomenon is shown by the following table of proportions of marriages in each decade for which various types of *ikhazi* were given:—

Decades	Cattle and other stock	Cattle and money	Money only	No <i>lobola</i>
	per cent	per cent	per cent	per cent
Before 1890	98.9	—	—	1.1
1890's	98.6	0.7	—	0.7
1900's	98.6	0.7	—	—
1910's	96.7	1.4	—	1.9
1920's	96.1	2.7	0.6	0.6
1930's	91.9	5.5	1.4	1.2
1940's	79.0	10.4	8.0	2.6
Total Period	91.7	4.5	2.5	1.3

It was found that 77.8 per cent of all marriages before 1890 were customary unions, or pre-arranged pagan marriages. In those days, customary marriages were occasions of extensive festivity and ceremony at the respective homesteads of the bride and groom, lasting over a period of two or three weeks, and attended by most of the people in the respective neighbourhoods. Although many of the features of customary marriages survive, the greatest changes from olden times are in the shorter duration of the festivities and the absence today of the traditional dancing (*umdudo*).<sup>1</sup> The parents of the bridal couple cannot afford to feast a host of guests for very long, and for this reason both pagan and Christian marriage ceremonies today rarely last for more than a week. Without the traditional dancing there is less display at customary than at Church marriages, and even pagans, therefore, prefer to have a Church wedding if they are marrying a Christian. Before 1890, only 16.5 per cent of all marriages in the villages investigated were Church marriages, but the proportion has been increasing steadily and since the 1910's has exceeded all other types of marriage combined. This is due not only to the increasing number of Christians and the preference for the display, but also to the emphasis which the European Administration lays on Church marriage, instanced by the fact that a man is unacceptable as a village headman unless he has been married in Church.

<sup>1</sup>In the neighbouring district of Middledrift, marriages are still occasionally celebrated with the traditional dancing, but the custom has entirely died out in Keiskammahock District.

At a customary marriage the ceremonies commence with the arrival at the bride's home of a group of young men (*abayeni*) representing the groom and asking for the bridal party (*uduli*). The groom's people are allocated a special hut and a goat or sheep is specially slaughtered for them (*umthula ntabeni*). In former times they remained at the bride's home for three or four days, during which more killings took place and business was discussed over the festivities. The groom's people contributed towards the marriage expenses with a goat, sheep or money (*uswazi*); this custom of paying *uswazi* still survives, although nowadays a bottle of brandy or money is given, £5 being the usual sum each time an instalment of marriage cattle is passed to the bride's father. Formerly, the groom's people also paid *isifubelo* (lit. : napkin) which implied compensation for the napkins that were used by the bride in her infancy. The bride is admonished by the groom's people and a statement regarding her health and virginity made by one of her relatives. The two marriage parties then proceed to the groom's homestead, where the bridal party is given a special hut and a specially slaughtered goat or sheep, and again the representatives of both sides discuss business over the festivities.

Traditionally, during the two or three weeks of festivities, the bride was secluded from the groom, and young men in the parties gave small presents for the right to talk to the girls and to make love and have external sexual intercourse (*ukumetjha*) with them. The men danced (*ukududa*) naked except for small penis covers; the girls danced the *ukungqungqa* and the women sang and beat time (*ukuyiyizela*) for the dancing. While the young men stared "with watering mouths" (*bevuuzisa amathe*) at the girls, who wore short costumes for the occasion with their thighs uncovered, the women would point out to the young men that if they wasted their money on trivial matters instead of buying cattle, they would never be able to marry such attractive girls. This is the part of the traditional ceremony which no longer survives in Keiskammahock District.

Various additional tributes are normally paid to the bride's father, "money for the beard" (*imali yendevu*) amounting to £1 is paid at the beginning of the ceremonies, and at the end, just before the bride's departure, a wire ring (*ucingo*) is placed on the post (*ixhanti*) at the entrance to the cattle byre, together with an additional £1 if the bride's father is a rich man and proud of his girl (*unamabongo*); payment of £10 may also be made for the courtyard (*inkundla*) and £8 for the married daughters of the home (*amankazana*).

Towards the end of the ceremonies, the young men and girls go to a nearby river to wash, whereafter the girls dress up and assemble in the courtyard with the bride between two of them. Admonitions follow and finally a form of dance (*umsino*). The bride then accompanies her party (*uduli*) to her new home, where she is told about the observances of the place, the words similar to the names of senior male relations of her husband which she will be expected to avoid in speech (*ukublonipha*); and the parts of the homestead frequented by men which she will be expected to avoid in her movements (*ukuceza*).

In Christian, as in customary marriages, prior negotiations take place between the groom's and bride's people regarding the number of cattle or the amount of money that should pass as *ikhazi*. Also similar to customary marriages is the formation of a groom's party (*abayeni*) and a bridal party (*uduli*), the cores of which are usually made up of the members of the respective "Parliaments" to which the groom and the bride belonged.<sup>1</sup>

In order to avoid an expensive marriage ceremony, the bride's father frequently connives with the young couple to elope. A group of the young man's friends assist in the abduction (*ukuthwala*: v.t. to carry off, abduct, elope with) of the girl, who is supposed to affect a semblance of resistance. Frequently the young man abducts the girl quite genuinely without her father's connivance, either because he has no cattle or insufficient to meet the expected demands of her father, or in order to force the father's consent and hasten negotiations on the number of marriage cattle to pass. Sometimes, too, the girl is genuinely taken by surprise, for if she has two lovers one may abduct her in order to make sure of her. Some couples do marry in Church after *ukuthwala*, but it is more generally the pagan form of union; which may later be formalised as a customary marriage by the woman's ceremonial drinking of the milk of her husband's cows (*ukudlisma amasi*). The number of *ukuthwala* unions have been increasing steadily among the people of the district, and in the four villages investigated, *ukuthwala* unions have exceeded the number of customary marriages for the past two decades. In Burnshill village, where the people are generally more sophisticated than in other villages in the district, *ukuthwala* unions have far outnumbered customary marriages for the past four decades, and for the past ten years have been almost as numerous as all other types of marriage combined.

In the wake of the increasing frequency of *ukuthwala*, marriages by

<sup>1</sup>Vide infra page 162.

civil rites in the Native Commissioner's office have been increasing. The first of these office marriages in the four villages investigated were performed at the beginning of the century. In Chatha, where Church marriages predominate, there have been only five cases of "office" marriages in the past 30 years. However, in the other three villages they appear to be increasing in popularity, and in Burnshill during the past decade, more than one-fifth of all marriages have been performed in Native Commissioners' offices.

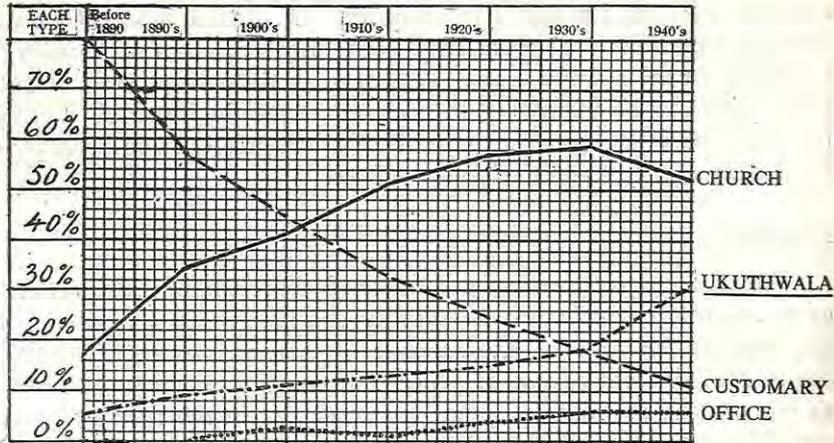
### Analysis

On the graphs overleaf are depicted the changing proportions of the four types of marriages during the past seven decades. At the turn of the century, the number of Church marriages showed the greatest increase, from 16.5 per cent of all types before 1890 to 34 per cent in the next ten years, 41.1 per cent in the 1900's and 51 per cent in the 1910's. Marriages by European civil law, in church or office, have exceeded both forms of pagan marriage, customary and *ukuthwala*, since the 1900's in Burnshill and Chatha, since the 1910's in Mthwaku, and since the 1920's in Gxulu. In all four villages combined, more than half the marriages since the 1910's have been by Christian or civil rites, the highest proportion of 64.6 per cent having been reached in the 1930's. Informal marriages, *ukuthwala* and "office", have recently become increasingly popular in all villages, representing 36.6 per cent of all marriages during the past decade. *Ukuthwala* unions have shown the most remarkable recent increase, from 14.6 per cent of all marriages in the 1920's to 18.3 per cent in the 1930's and 30.3 per cent in the 1940's.

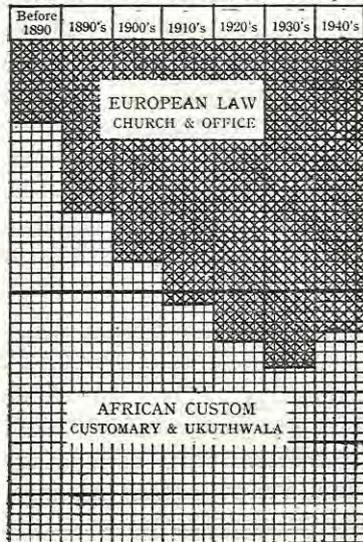
On the average, the number of cattle which pass as *ikhazi* is larger in Church and customary marriages, which are pre-arranged and celebrated, than in "office" and *ukuthwala* marriages. Over the whole period, the average number of cattle in 1,512 first marriages with *lobola* was 7.4 head, the averages for the different types of marriage being 8.2 head in a Church marriage, 7.2 head in a customary marriage, 6.0 head in an office marriage and 5.4 head in *ukuthwala* union. That there are individual exceptions, as many as 13 head of cattle being given as *ikhazi* in *ukuthwala* and "office" marriages, and as few as one head in Church and customary unions, is revealed on the following table showing the incidence of head of cattle in respect of the various types of marriage:—

TYPES OF MARRIAGE

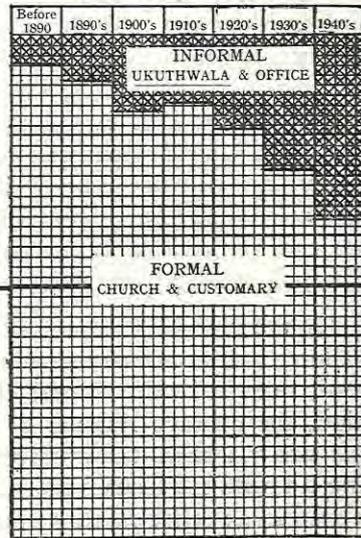
Proportions of Total each decade



AFRICAN CUSTOM & EUROPEAN LAW



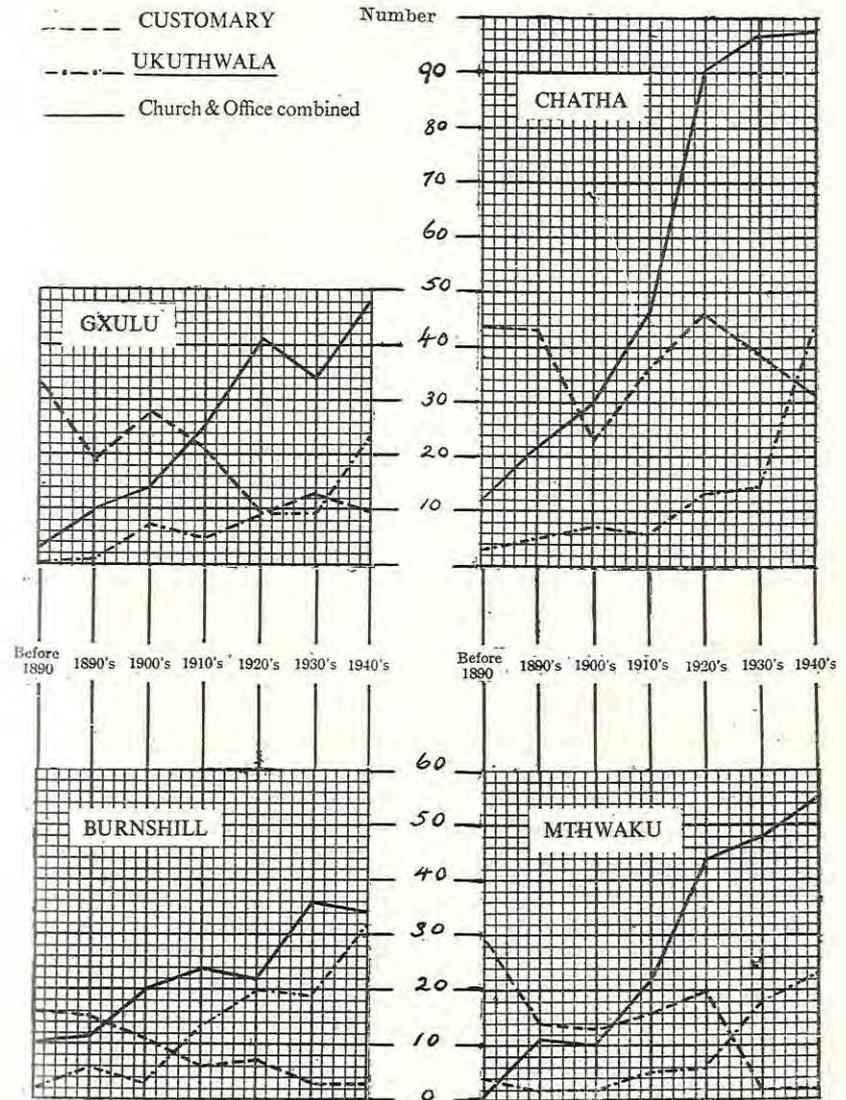
FORMAL & INFORMAL



50%

TYPES OF MARRIAGE

Number in each village in each decade



Head of cattle	Number of marriages in which each quantity of cattle passed as <i>ikhazi</i>				
	Church	Customary	Office	<i>ukuthwala</i>	Total
1	3	2	1	5	11
2	4	5	1	16	26
3	7	2	5	23	37
4	19	19	7	33	78
5	43	36	5	57	141
6	63	97	6	46	212
7	113	93	4	27	237
8	181	103	7	29	320
9	157	43	3	10	213
10	106	35	—	1	142
11	40	9	—	1	50
12	29	4	1	—	34
13	3	—	1	1	5
14	3	—	—	—	3
15	2	1	—	—	3
Total cases	773	449	41	249	1,512

The differences between the various types of marriage in average number of cattle given appear to have widened over the years. In Church and "office" marriages the number of cattle has tended to increase, and in customary and *ukuthwala* marriages the number has decreased. This is indicative, perhaps, of the kinds of persons who today marry by European civil law or by pagan rites, the latter being the poorer and less educated members of the community. Furthermore, *ukuthwala*, which at one time was more the means of forcing the bride's father to agree to the match, is today rather deliberately entered into for reasons of poverty, and it is therefore to be expected that the number of cattle given as *ikhazi* should reflect that poverty. The following table shows the average head of cattle entering into *ikhazi* in respect of each type of marriage during each decade:—

Decade	Average head of cattle as <i>ikhazi</i>				
	Church	Customary	Office	<i>ukuthwala</i>	All types of marriage
Before 1890 ..	7.4	7.5	—	6.0	7.3
1890's .. ..	8.4	7.4	—	6.4	7.6
1900's .. ..	7.9	7.0	4.8	5.3	7.1
1910's .. ..	7.9	7.5	5.5	5.0	7.4
1920's .. ..	7.7	7.2	6.9	5.8	7.3
1930's .. ..	8.5	7.3	5.3	5.3	7.6
1940's .. ..	8.7	6.1	6.1	5.2	7.2
Total period ..	8.2	7.2	6.0	5.4	7.4

As there were only 53 cases of second and subsequent marriages of the man, in which information regarding *lobola* was available, the base is too narrow for any conclusion to be drawn from differences in the amount of *ikhazi* for the different types of marriage. It is significant, however, that in 50 cases in which cattle only passed as *ikhazi*, the average was only 4.5 head of cattle, some three head less than the average on first marriage.

From the foregoing table, it is evident that the average head of cattle given in all marriages has scarcely changed at all over the years, regardless of the fluctuating monetary exchange value of the beasts.<sup>1</sup> In terms of money, the value of average *ikhazi* has risen considerably, 7.2 head of cattle in the 1940's being worth considerably more money than 7.3 head of cattle before 1890. It is this realisation on the part of the increasingly commercially-minded African which does much to retain the substance of cattle instead of money in *ikhazi*; a bride's father prefers to demand a beast rather than £5 if he can sell the beast for more than £5. In 41 cases of *lobola* with money only, it was found that the average amount of *ikhazi* was £33 4s. od.; on the equivalent basis of 7.4 head of cattle as average *ikhazi* for first marriage, this gives a monetary value of only £4 10s. od. per beast. On the other hand, in 76 cases of *lobola* with cattle as well as money, the average was found to be 5.9 head of cattle, together with £17 4s. od.; taking the average again at 7.4 head of cattle, the money received was equivalent to 1.5 head of cattle, or £11 10s. od. per beast. Thus, on the average, the greatest value would appear to accrue to the recipient of *ikhazi* when both cattle and money are included, less when cattle only are used, and least when the *ikhazi* consists of money alone. This anomaly suggests that it is generally only in cases of very poor people, who have no cattle with which to *lobola*, that money alone is given and the amount, therefore, is small. In only 10 of the 41 cases was an amount given which exceeded £45

<sup>1</sup>The economic repercussions of this quantitative attitude towards marriage cattle are discussed in Vol. II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*, Chapter VI. Since the chief feature of *lobola* is emphasis on the number of head of cattle, it is of interest to note that, in respect of 1,704 marriages for which information on *ukulobola* was available, no less than 11,800 head of cattle passed as *ikhazi*. It is estimated that 1,700 women marry in the district every 10—15 years. It can be accordingly said that within such a period of 10—15 years 11,800 head of cattle pass as *ikhazi* in the district. Since this stock figure happens to be approximately equivalent to the total cattle population of the district at any one time, there is the equivalent of a virtual complete turnover in the ownership of all cattle in the district every 10—15 years. In other words, even if the average life expectancy of a beast is as short as 5—7½ years, it means that one out of every two head of cattle owned in the district changes hands in *lobola*.

or the approximate monetary equivalent of 7.4 head of cattle. On the other hand, it is among the more wealthy that the bride's father demands cattle as well as money; of the 76 cases, in as many as 54 the number of cattle together with the money, reckoned at the equivalent of about £6 per beast, exceeded the average of 7.4 head of cattle as *ikhazi*.

Among second and subsequent marriages, there were only two cases of money entering into *lobola*; in one, £5 and two head of cattle were given, and in the other £15 only. These may have been individual cases of small *ikhazi*, but they may also bear out the evidence already presented, that a man gives considerably less *ikhazi* for his second than for his first bride.

Since young men nowadays tend to depend less on their families and more on their own wage earnings to *lobola*, it might be expected that they take rather longer to prepare for marriage and wed rather later in life than they used to. Investigation<sup>1</sup> into the ages of bridegrooms since the last century proved this to be the case. Before 1890 the average age of men at first marriage was 24.3 years, by the 1930's it had advanced to 28.6 years and in the past decade it reached 30.1 years. At the turn of the century women were, on the average, five years younger than their husbands and this difference in age has recently increased to six or seven years. Nevertheless, the age of women at marriage has also advanced, from 19.3 years before 1890 to 23.6 years in the 1940's, reflecting both the delayed ability of young men to afford *lobola* and the modern tendency for girls to go out to work in the towns for a few years before settling down to marriage. Over the whole period, the average age at which men have married for the first time is 27.1 years, and women at 22.4 years of age. There is no very significant difference between villages, except that it appears that when the men of one village tend to marry slightly later in life than in another village, their wives too are rather older. On the average, the age of men at their second and subsequent marriages was 44.1 years, and their brides were 28.1 years of age; but here again the average ages have advanced considerably since the last century. Average ages of partners are shown on the following table, by decades for all villages combined, and by villages over the whole period:—

<sup>1</sup>Investigation in the four villages of ages of brides and grooms produced a sample of 850 men and 1,461 women at first marriage and of 132 men at their second and subsequent marriages, together with their brides.

All villages by decades	Average age, in years			
	At first marriages		At second, etc., marriages of the men	
	Men	Women	Men	Their brides
Before 1890 .. ..	24.3	19.3	31.0	19.5
1890's .. ..	24.0	20.6	43.3	24.0
1900's .. ..	24.8	21.4	40.0	23.2
1910's .. ..	29.4	23.1	40.3	26.5
1920's .. ..	28.0	22.6	46.0	29.0
1930's .. ..	28.6	22.3	47.1	30.0
1940's .. ..	30.1	23.6	49.0	32.0
Average over period	27.1	22.4	44.1	28.1
<i>By villages]</i>				
Chatha .. ..	26.8	21.9	41.7	26.4
Burnshill .. ..	27.7	22.4	41.9	25.8
Gxulu .. ..	28.5	22.7	44.5	28.3
Mithwaku .. ..	28.5	23.2	50.7	33.8

Differences between the ages of the sexes at marriage are borne out by the 1946 census of population of the whole district. The following are the proportions of each sex in various age groups who were or had been married at the time of the census:—

Age groupings years	Per-cent of each sex-age group	
	Males	Females
0—14	0.0	0.0
15—19	0.0	3.3
20—24	2.3	46.3
25—29	29.8	76.0
30—34	71.1	87.6
35—39	86.8	91.1
40—44	92.2	92.4
45—49	91.7	94.0
50—59	96.3	94.1
60 and over	98.8	97.0

According to the census, of all men aged 25 years and over, only 16.1 per cent had never married, and of the women aged 20 years and over, 17.1 per cent were single. In detail, the marital state of these groups was as follows:—

Marital state	Proportions of each sex	
	Males 25 years and over	Females 20 years and over
Unmarried .. ..	16.1%	17.1%
Married .. ..	77.3%	56.3%
Widowed .. ..	6.3%	26.3%
Divorced .. ..	0.3%	0.4%

The two most remarkable features of the census statistics are the very small number of divorces and the great preponderance of widows compared with widowers. The census enumerates only 16 women and five men as divorced. Although some divorced persons may have remarried and been enumerated in the census as married, the small number of divorces among the African peoples of the district is borne out by the field investigation in the four villages of the marriage survey; only three cases of divorce of any sort were reported. This is partly because many people are ignorant of the legal procedure for securing dissolution of a marriage contracted under European civil law, and others are unable to afford the expense of a suit filed with the Native Divorce Court, but ignorance and poverty are not the sole reasons for a low divorce rate. Nearly half the marriages are customary unions and field workers were instructed to record all types of divorce. Separations are more frequent, the woman returning to her people, the home which benefited from her *ikhazi*. By comparison with the three divorces recorded in the survey, there were 45 cases of desertion reported.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 26 were desertions of spouses who had been married in Church, one in an "office" marriage, six by customary marriage and eleven by *ukuthwala* marriage.

Among a people traditionally accustomed to polygyny, there is no social barrier to a man's taking a second wife in customary marriage after he has deserted or been deserted by his wife, and cases

<sup>1</sup>There is reason to believe that this record of desertions is far from complete. In a survey of illegitimacy, analysed in the next section of this chapter, the question of desertion was more thoroughly investigated, in order to determine legitimacy of offspring; it was found that, among a group of 110 women, there were no less than 7 cases of definite desertion of a spouse, and six additional cases of desertion where, however, the legality of the marriage itself had been doubtful. Attention is also drawn to the analysis of families in the preceding section of this chapter; the proportion of families in which one partner had been deserted being shown as approximately seven per cent. A similar proportion of desertions among the 2,000 cases investigated in the four villages of the marriage survey would give 150 instances of desertion, instead of the 44 recorded.

are known of women, married originally under European law, "remarrying" (after having been deserted by or separated from a first husband) without a legal divorce.

The 1946 census enumerates 1,228 widows and only 138 widowers in the district. This extremely high proportion of widows—more than one-quarter of all women over 20 years of age—gave rise to the suggestion that the term "widow" included many women whose husbands had gone to town and with whom all contact had been lost, whether in fact the husband was dead or not. However, in all field surveys, informants displayed no reluctance to discuss those who had disappeared after emigrating to town, and there is little reason to suppose that a woman would be reluctant to give this information concerning her husband. After careful field investigation, it is concluded that, in the vast majority of cases, the husbands of those who describe themselves as "widows" are, in fact, dead.

Several contributing causes for the excess of widows over widowers are clear. During the past 40 years in the district women have, on the average, married men six years older than themselves, so a wife can generally be expected to outlive her husband. Secondly, a man who is left a widower has all to gain by remarrying, for he needs a wife to care for his children, his homestead, and his crops,<sup>1</sup> but a woman, if she remarries, is likely to be separated from her children by her first husband, who legally belong to their paternal relatives, and, furthermore, she may lose any rights over her former husband's stock and land and her children's rights to land be jeopardised. Many widows therefore may prefer not to remarry. Thirdly, more men than women go to work in town and do not return.

The difference in the marriage age also creates a surplus of marriageable women who, in the traditional society, were additional wives.<sup>2</sup> According to the 1946 census there were only 481 eligible males over the age of 24 in the district, and 74 of these, chiefly widowers, were over 65 years of age. At the same time, there were in the district 565 single women between the ages of 20 and 29, so that divorcees, deserted wives, or widows would not find much offer of marriage.

<sup>1</sup>Vide pp. 75, 120-2. A man usually only remains a widower or bachelor if he has in his homestead his mother, a sister, an adult daughter, a daughter-in-law or other female relative to fulfil the necessary economic tasks.

<sup>2</sup>Sonnabend has shown that a seven year's difference in the marriage age between the sexes allows 20 per cent of the married men to have two wives. H. Sonnabend, "Demographic Samples in the Study of Backward and Primitive Populations," *S.A. Journal of Economics*, vol. 2 (1934) pp. 319-21.

Without including deserted wives, who can only be estimated to number about 130, there were altogether 1,130 eligible women between 20 and 49 years of age enumerated in the 1946 census of the district. Widespread concubinage is the result of so high a disproportion of unattached women, living as they do in a society in which the practice of polygyny has been discarded under the combined pressure of Christianity and poverty, while celibacy is still regarded by most people as intolerable.

### C—ILLEGITIMACY

#### General

In the survey on marriage, analysed in the previous pages, it was reported by the field workers, who were African men and relative strangers to the four villages in which the survey was conducted, that there were 11 cases of illegitimate children born among 1,767 women of the sample families in Gxulu, Chatha, Mthwaku and Burnshill; but further investigation showed that this figure indicated the attitude of the people towards illegitimacy rather than its incidence. Legitimacy is much more broadly interpreted by the villagers than it would be in point of law, and even when, by their own standards, the birth of a child is illegitimate, the fact is not readily admitted, but rather a polite fiction as to the status of the child in the kinship group in which it lives is generally accepted.

It is indeed often difficult to establish whether a couple is living in wedlock or not, according to local standards. A woman may "just live" with a man, the man may "just take" her to his homestead; there is no passage of cattle, no *lobola*. According to some informants, such a form of union does not even properly constitute an *ukuthwala* marriage, yet the field workers reported from Gxulu and Burnshill six cases of *ukuthwala* marriage without *lobola*. Supplementary investigation, made subsequently in another village, revealed ten cases in which a woman, who had been "just taken" by a man, had later been deserted by him or had left him and had returned with her children to her own people. The children born of such a union are no less illegitimate if the woman remains with the man than if she leaves him and returns to her own people, yet, while she remains with him, it is difficult to secure definite information on whether they are, in fact, publicly regarded as being married. Similarly, seven cases were reported from Chatha and Mthwaku of "customary

marriages" without *lobola*. The situation would appear to have been potentially the same as in the cases of *ukuthwala* where no cattle passed, for an *ukuthwala* union can become a customary marriage by the performance, at any time subsequent to the union, of the *ukudliswa amasi* ceremony.

Though the Churches forbid polygyny among their members, and poverty and the shortage of land as effectively debar pagans from marrying a second wife, yet concubinage, the cohabiting of a man and woman not legally married, over a considerable period, appears to be fairly common. We distinguish concubinage—a semi-permanent relationship—from casual extra-marital intercourse. Bearing in mind the difficulty of ascertaining the identity of a child's father, unless he is recognised as the living or deceased husband of the mother, it is significant that, among a group of 110 mothers, no less than seven cases were definitely reported of a woman bearing one or more children to a "man who had another wife." Among the same group, only one case was reported of polygyny, and in that instance both wives had been deserted by their husband.

Marriage by Christian or civil rites would appear, at first sight, to establish a more definite basis for classifying the legitimacy of the offspring. However, the separation of couples so married is very rarely effected in legal divorce. Only two cases of divorce were reported from Chatha and Mthwaku, yet from those villages as well as from Gxulu and Burnshill 27 cases of "desertion" were reported among couples who had been married by Christian or civil rites. After "desertion," either spouse may quite possibly enter into an *ukuthwala* union with another, publicly accepted as legitimate, but hardly so in point of law.

Thus, any analysis of the incidence of illegitimacy of births must distinguish in some way between unions which are, and which are not, legitimate marriages. The opinion of the African woman field worker, who reflected the accepted attitude of her neighbours, was taken as authoritative. In general, *ukuthwala* marriage, even without the passage of *lobola*, and even without formal divorce from a former spouse, is regarded as legitimate, so long as the union continues. On the other hand, those unions are counted as illegitimate which had never been legitimised by the Christian or civil marriage ceremony or, according to custom, by the performance of the *ukudliswa amasi* ceremony, and which broke up from one cause or another, the mother returning with her children to live among her own people.

It must be borne in mind that *ukuthwala* or other informal union without the passage of cattle, is always subject to being broken, whereupon the children would effectively be illegitimate, and would return with their mother to her people. It must also be borne in mind that on such an intimate matter as the fathering of children, evasion by the mothers is almost bound to result in a higher claim to legitimacy of their children's births than admission of illegitimacy. For these reasons, the incidence of illegitimacy shown in the analysis hereunder is almost certainly conservative.

Premarital pregnancy is generally tolerated, though not approved. In the past, sex play without penetration (*ukumetsha*) was an established part of the relations between girls and boys, and the custom of regularly examining girls for virginity secured a measure of parental control. The latter custom has fallen into disuse, however, as has the custom of including an additional beast among the marriage cattle in respect of a bride whose virginity was intact. In the social life of the village today, there is ample opportunity for sexual relations between young people,<sup>1</sup> and while sex play is countenanced by many, full extra-marital intercourse is not. Damages can be claimed by a father for the seduction of his daughter, even though pregnancy does not result, the rate, which was formerly three goats, being normally five goats at the present time.

The Churches censure premarital sexual relations among their members, and exclude a girl who bears a premarital child from Church activities and social occasions, until the child has been weaned.<sup>2</sup> It is said that pagans, in the past, also forbade their daughters to take part in the social life of the village until the premarital child had been weaned. The claim that a girl begets a child in order to prove her fertility to the man she is going to marry, is found to be substantiated for only one-fifth of those who bear premarital children, in that they subsequently marry the fathers of the children. The girl's father is entitled to claim damages (*intlavulo*) from the man to whom she has borne the child, the normal claim for a first premarital pregnancy being five head of cattle, for a second premarital pregnancy three head, and for a third one head. The man's legal claim to his child can be established only by payment to the girl's people of an additional beast for maintenance (*isondlo*). Although

<sup>1</sup>c.f. pp. 159-68.

<sup>2</sup>Among staunch Christians, stigma attaches to the girl even when she later enters into a legal marriage. c.f. page 166.

damages are commonly claimed and paid, the man does not, however, usually get his child. When the man agrees to marry the girl, her father will waive his claim to damages, or, if payment has already been made it will be regarded as forming part of the marriage cattle (*ikhaxi*). Many men attempt to escape paying damages by going off to work in the towns; the girl's father will then press his claim through the man's relatives. The claim for damages is rarely pressed when a girl has conceived in town and the man has no relatives living near her home, for it is said that the cost of the rail fare to the towns would "eat up" any damages that might be collected.

Adultery on the part of a wife is no less severely censured by pagans than by Christians, since it was regarded as a great sin (*iblazō*) in traditional society, even before the Churches introduced new standards of sexual morality. If a woman conceives an adulterine child, her husband is entitled to divorce her, sending her back to her own people. Even though her husband may forgive her adultery and keep her in his homestead, he is entitled to claim damages from her lover.

Among the Mfengu in the past, a widow was inherited by a close junior kinsman of her deceased husband, "to raise seed" to him. If the widow were then to cohabit with or bear children to another man, the husband's people could claim damages from him, but the children belonged to the deceased husband. This custom of the levirate (*ukungena*) was not found among the Xhosa, but any children borne by a widow were regarded as children of the deceased. The levirate is no longer practised today, and when either Mfengu or Xhosa widows bear children, the deceased husband's people are said to have no right to claim damages from the father of the child. Not infrequently, a widow with fatherless children to support, and who has no menfolk in her homestead, is under considerable pressure to take a lover in return for favours such as representation before the village council or ploughing of her field.<sup>1</sup> Whatever her motives, however, she incurs little censure, except from the Christian Churches, for bearing illegitimate children.

A premarital child for whom the maintenance beast has not been given, belongs to its mother's family. When the mother marries a man other than the father of the child, her husband has no claim to the child, which remains with her family. The child is addressed

<sup>1</sup>c.f. pp. 118-9.

and referred to as "child of the mother's father," and the fiction is maintained that it is coeval with the mother and her siblings. To address or refer to it as "child of its mother," or to impute in any way that its birth was not regular, is regarded as a grave insult. An adulterine child may be accepted by its mother's husband and allowed to live in his homestead, or it may be "given away" to be brought up by a relative or friend, or alternatively may be born and brought up among its mother's people if she was cast out by her husband. A child born of a widow in her deceased husband's homestead remains with her and belongs to the husband's group. It was held by some informants that if a widow had returned to her own people and there borne a child, it could be claimed by the deceased husband's group only if they were prepared to pay for its maintenance.

In the economic sphere, an illegitimate child belongs to the family with whom it lives. A boy's right to succession and inheritance is supposed to be coequal with, although in practice is generally subordinated to, those of the legitimate members of the family.<sup>1</sup> His obligations to help with the economic support of the homestead from his cash earnings as a labour migrant, and the assistance he should receive with his marriage cattle are equivalent to those of the legitimate sons of the homestead. Similarly, the marriage cattle given for an illegitimate daughter belong to the family which maintained her. An illegitimate child in the homestead will be made to feel as much one of the family as possible: it will take the clan name and surname of the family; ritual will be performed for it, "so that people will not know the birth of such a child"; and it will be allowed to partake of the ritual portions of the sacrificial meat to which the legitimate kinsmen are entitled, in order that it "should not be made to feel different." However, the real descent of the child from its genitor is strongly felt in the practice of the ancestor cult. Effective performance of ritual for an illegitimate child is said to lie with the genitor's people, and they are often requested, secretly or openly, to make ritual killings to the genitor's paternal ancestors, even though, for the sake of appearance, a ceremony may already have been performed in the homestead of the child's social father, the pater.

<sup>1</sup>The custom of regarding a premarital child as coeval with its mother's siblings, means that a boy ranks among his mother's brothers, to whom he is generally junior in years, rather than among his mother's brother's sons to whom he may be senior in years. The problem of seniority would not usually arise with an adulterine child or one born of a widow, for he would generally be younger than his legitimate half-brothers.

*Analysis*

The analysis is based mainly on a field survey in one village, initially planned to incorporate data on the legitimacy of births given by all mothers belonging to the village, numbering some 300; however, the closing down of the Keiskammahoeke Rural Survey in November, 1950, interrupted this field work and restricted the survey to 110 mothers of 54 homesteads only. Despite the narrow statistical base, a full analysis is here presented of all the information which was obtained directly from the mothers or grandmothers. There is no reason to believe that the random sample of mothers is in any way atypical of the women of the district.

That the 110 women of the random sample survey are a sufficiently representative cross-section is suggested by comparison with certain partial information covering 52 women of 22 sample lineages in the same village, together with 58 women in the 27 homesteads of a single section of the same village. The comparative information is set forth hereunder for the two independent, but possibly overlapping, groups of 110 mothers each:—<sup>1</sup>

<i>Cases of women who have borne children out of wedlock</i>	<i>22 lineages and 27 homestead sample</i>	<i>54 homestead sample</i>
Premaritally, with subsequent marriage to father .. .. .	10	9
Premaritally, or as spinsters to:		
1 man .. .. .	22	26
2 men .. .. .	9	7
3 or more men .. .. .	5	4
Total premaritally .. .. .	46	46
In adultery .. .. .	4	6
As widows .. .. .	20	10

<sup>1</sup>It must be remarked here that a few of the cases shown on the table are duplicated in the one woman who, for instance, may have borne a premarital child and, later one in adultery; a few of the cases have also borne more than one child under the same conditions, for instance, as the concubine of one man, or to different men after being widowed. Also, as has already been suggested, and as will emerge from the case histories of some of the women in the 54 homestead sample, the classification of illegitimacy is over-simplified, but it does suffice for a comparison between the two samples and as a broad indication of the marital state of women at the time of their illegitimate sexual relations. The statistical differences between the two groups are insignificant, except in the cases of widows, which suggests the sample here analysed to be conservative.

Analysis of the 476 births to 110 mothers reveals that nearly half the mothers have borne one or more illegitimate children and one quarter of all births are illegitimate. Of all first pregnancies, 40 per cent are illegitimate, and the incidence of illegitimacy among successively born children is as follows:—

	<i>Proportion of illegitimate children among total</i>
	<i>%</i>
First-born children .. .. .	40.7
Second- " " .. .. .	24.7
Third- " " .. .. .	22.4
Fourth- " " .. .. .	24.1
Fifth- " " .. .. .	15.2
Sixth- " " .. .. .	16.7
Seventh- " " .. .. .	11.5
Eighth- " " .. .. .	10.5
Ninth- " " .. .. .	8.3
Tenth and subsequent born children	0.0
TOTAL .. .. .	23.9

Because large families of seven and more children occur chiefly among legitimately married couples, and because total child mortality is greatest in such families,<sup>1</sup> the survival rate of legitimate children is found to be markedly lower than that of illegitimate offspring, with the result that, of surviving children, only a little over 70 per cent are legitimate and almost 30 per cent are illegitimate.

It would appear to be very rarely indeed that illegitimate children are taken from their mothers into the homesteads of their genitors, only one such case being reported among 78 surviving illegitimate children. A premarital child whose parents subsequently marry, normally lives with them. Otherwise, in the vast majority of cases, illegitimate children are found to be living with their mothers or her parents or relatives, which means in practical economic effect that the children were or are the responsibility of the mother. Only one case was reported of a genitor, a married man, giving "irregular support" to two illegitimate children who had been born to him by another woman. The following table indicates the whereabouts

<sup>1</sup>Child mortality is discussed in Vol. II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*, pp. 45-50.

of illegitimate children in November, 1950, shown in relation to their mothers :—

Whereabouts of children: M with mother * in the homestead of X separated from mother	Number of children, classified according to illegitimacy			
	Pre-marital	Adulterine	Of women separated from husbands	Of widows
*Genitor .. .. .	3		1	
*Mother's husband .. .. .	1			1
*Mother's husband's relatives .. .. .				1
*Mother's parents .. .. .	1	1		1
*Mother's relatives .. .. .	13	1		1
In town (independant) .. .. .	15		3	
Elswhere in district (independent) .. .. .	3	1		1
Total surviving children .. .. .	61	4	4	9
Summary : Patrilocal .. .. .	5	1	1	2
Matrilocal .. .. .	40	3	3	3
Independent .. .. .	16			4

Although, on so narrow a base, no certain deductions can be drawn, it is of interest to note that of 20 illegitimate children who were independent by 1950, all the males were working in towns, and only four of the females had married and settled down in the district, the remainder having also emigrated to the towns. This is perhaps suggestive of the subordinate economic position of illegitimate children in the homestead, necessitating their self-support in urban employment. Rather more significant, however, is the extent to which dependent illegitimate children become separated from their mothers, nearly 40 per cent being shown on the above table as living apart from their mothers. The comparative proportion of dependent legitimate children who are separated from their mothers is less than 16 per cent. This markedly greater separation of illegitimate dependants would appear to be due, in the main, to the mothers having to go out to work in the towns in order to support their illegitimate children, although one-fourth of the separations resulted from the custom of a premarital child remaining behind with its

mother's people when she married a man other than the father of the child.

The whereabouts in November, 1950, of all the 110 mothers of the sample lineages are detailed hereunder :—

Whereabouts of mothers: *— in the homestead of. H—with husband. X—without husband, he being elsewhere at work, or having deserted. D—husband dead.	Mothers of children	
	legitimate only	some illegitimate
*Husbands .. .. .	H 18 X 6 D 12	9
*Husband's relatives .. .. .	H 1 X 3 D 3 H 4	3 1 1
*In town .. .. .	X 1 D 2 deserted concubine 3 spinster 6	1 2 3 6
*Mother's own relatives .. .. .	X 1 D 2 concubine deserted 6 spinster 6	2 1 6 6
Dead .. .. .	6	4
Total mothers .. .. .	56	54

While it must be borne in mind that labour migrations, both of the women themselves and of husbands, cause continual change in the place of residence,<sup>1</sup> it would nevertheless appear that those mothers who at one time bore illegitimate children are displaced in the patrilocal society to a much greater extent than the mothers of only legitimate offspring. Of the mothers who have borne only legitimate children, 94 per cent are living with their husbands or husbands' people ; the comparative proportion of mothers who bore one or more illegitimate children is 46 per cent, the remaining 54 per cent living with their own people or in town, where they normally regard their homes in the district as being among their own kinsmen.

<sup>1</sup>c.f. *The Economy of a Native Reserve*, pages 53—4.

That the rate of illegitimacy is increasing is suggested by an analysis of the ages of the mothers in the sample families, and comparison between the older generation (the wives, widows and sisters of homestead owners) and the younger generation (the daughters, grand-daughters and nieces of the homesteads). These facts are set forth hereunder :—

Legitimacy of children borne	Number of women, and (percent of totals)			
	Age groups—years			Total
	45 & over	31—44	17—30	
Total women .. .. .	42 (100)	38 (100)	40 (100)	120 (100)
No children .. .. .			10 (25.0)	10 (8.3)
Legitimate children only ..	25 (59.5)	20 (59.6)	11 (27.5)	56 (46.7)
Including illegitimate ..	17 (40.5)	18 (47.4)	19 (47.5)	54 (45.0)

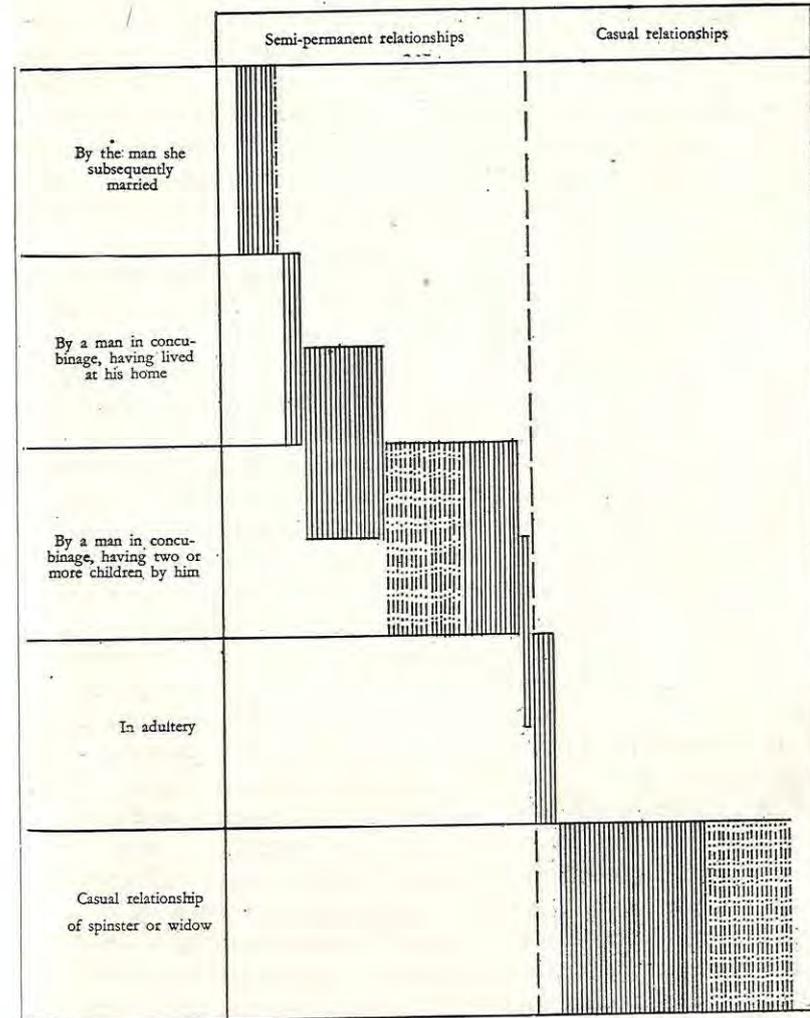
	Generation	
	Wives & widows of homestead owners	Daughters & grand-daughters of homesteads
Total women .. .. .	71 (100)	49 (100)
No children .. .. .		10 (20.5)
Legitimate children only ..	43 (60.6)	13 (26.5)
Including illegitimate ..	28 (39.4)	26 (53.0)

Of all the women in the sample families who have passed out of the reproductive age, taken as 45 years and older, 40 per cent had borne one or more illegitimate children. By comparison, of all those who are still in the reproductive age group, 17-44 years of age, including ten women who are not yet mothers at all, 47 per cent have already given illegitimate birth; of those who are mothers, the proportion who have illegitimate children is 54 per cent. Including the ten childless women among the total of the younger generation, the daughters and grand-daughters of the homesteads, it was found that more than half the younger generation had given illegitimate birth, compared with only two-fifths of the older generation. That sexual immorality among unmarried people is increasing, is suggested by the fact that only about one-fourth of the older generation, compared with half the younger bore illegitimate premarital children, and relatively twice as many of these among the older generation subsequently married the father of the child. It would also appear that

CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH ILLEGITIMATE PREGNANCIES OCCURRED

Basis: 54 homesteads comprising 110 mothers, of whom 54 gave birth to 114 illegitimate children

Key: One vertical line represents one illegitimate pregnancy:  
 ————— conceived in the District  
 - - - - - conceived in town



increasing labour migrations of women causes an increasing number of illegitimate conceptions in towns, relatively four times as many of the younger generation having conceived in towns compared with the older.

A significant fact is brought to light on further analysis of the circumstances under which the illegitimate pregnancies occurred, for more than half of them are conceived in unions that are, or have become permanent or semi-permanent. In respect of the remaining half of the illegitimate pregnancies, the identity of the father was usually concealed, so that it is quite possible that some of them were also the result of concubinage. The circumstances under which illegitimate children were conceived, are depicted graphically on the preceding page.

The practice of concubinage would appear to be the most potent single initiating cause of illegitimacy. Occasionally a woman has been a concubine of two different men. Among the older generation, 12 of the 28 women who bore illegitimate children had been concubines, in that they bore two or more illegitimate children to the same man, or had at one time been taken to the homestead of the man and after bearing one or more children had been deserted or had for some other reason returned with their children to their own people. Of the 26 women of the younger generation who bore illegitimate children, seven were concubines and another seven were themselves the offspring of concubinage. Altogether, 50 of the 114 illegitimate children born were conceived in concubinage.

The implications of concubinage in setting an example to the next generation in the family are more serious when it is seen how either legitimacy or illegitimacy is prone to be cumulative in families. Of the 54 homesteads in the sample, in 15 of them all the women gave illegitimate birth, in 17 all the women had only legitimate children, and in 22 homesteads some women had illegitimate and some had only legitimate children. The cumulative tendency is more clearly revealed in analysis of the parentage of the mothers. The parentage of the older generation of wives and widows of homestead owners is unknown, but among the 49 adult daughters and granddaughters of the homesteads, it would appear that the women tend to follow the example of their own mothers: of the 23 younger generation women who bore no illegitimate children, 21 were themselves born in wedlock; of the 26 younger generation women who did bear illegitimate children, 15 were the offspring of mothers who had given

illegitimate birth. Thus only 11 of the younger generation initiated illegitimacy in their families, and of these three were concubines, two subsequently married the fathers of their premarital children, one gave premarital birth to a child whom the genitor took to his homestead, one committed adultery, one was a widow living in her parents' home, and three conceived in a casual relationship, one at home and two in town.

Although the statistical base of this analysis is admittedly narrow, the conclusion which emerges is that it is the large group of unmarried women who bear illegitimate children. The married women appear to be, for the most part, faithful to their absent husbands. What proportion of the genitors of illegitimate children are married men we do not know for certain; the indications are that a substantial proportion are married. No longer practising the traditional polygyny, which gave to the second wife and her children legitimate status in his homestead, the married man visits an unmarried woman as a concubine and leaves her with a family of illegitimate children to support; only very occasionally does he marry his concubine later. In order to support their children, the women increasingly emigrate to the towns for remunerative employment, and there they and their daughters generally either live as the concubine of some man, or engage in promiscuous sexual relations. Of 93 women who have or at one time had husbands or lived in the homestead of a man who "took her" without legitimising the marriage by *lobola*, only six gave birth as a result of promiscuity with another man, while their husbands were alive or were keeping them. Of the seven resultant illegitimate children, four are still alive. By contrast, seven of the fathers of illegitimate children are known to have been married men and to have had a semi-permanent relationship with an unmarried woman; of the remaining 15 men who fathered children of their concubines, it is possible that some were also married men. Of the 50 resultant illegitimate children, 36 are still alive, and only one child lives with its genitor's people, all the rest being either independent or with their mother's people. These two categories of illegitimate children together constitute a little over half the total surviving illegitimates. The others were born of widows, spinsters or women separated from their husbands, seven of the survivors having homes with their genitors' or mothers' husbands' people, and 31 being either independent or living with their mothers' people.

## ILLEGITIMACY—CASE HISTORIES

Case histories of the 54 women in the sample homesteads who bore one or more illegitimate children.

The symbols A, B and C represent successive men with whom the women cohabited, being in some cases the women's husbands. Birth of illegitimate children is indicated in italics.

No. of cases	History
Had a child by A, and:—	
4	Lives with her own people.
5	Works in town.
2	<i>Had a child by B</i> , and lives with her own people.
1	<i>Had a child by B</i> , and went to town.
2	<i>Had a child by B</i> , in town.
1	Married A.
1	Married A and had children—A died— <i>had a child by B</i> .
2	Married A and had children—A died— <i>had children by B</i> , a married man.
10	Married B.
1	<i>Had a child by B</i> to avoid marriage with another—married B.
1	"Twala" by B and <i>had two children by him</i> —returned to her own people—went to work in East London and <i>had a child by C</i> .
1	"Twala" by B and <i>had a child by him</i> —returned to her own people—went to work in East London and had <i>five children by various men</i> —returned to her people.
1	<i>Had three children by B</i> in East London—"twala" by C and <i>had three children by him</i> —returned to her people.
1	<i>Had seven children by B</i> in East London and was deserted— <i>had a child by C</i> in Port Elizabeth.
1	Married A and had a child—left A, who is still alive— <i>had a child by B</i> —"married" B and had children by him in his homestead.
1	Married B and had a child—B died— <i>had another child by A</i> —married A, childless marriage—A died— <i>had a child by C</i> in B's homestead.
Had children by A, a married man, and:—	
1	Lives with her own people (rumoured to be again pregnant by A).
1	<i>Had three children by B</i> —A's wife died—married A and had children by him—A died, lives in his homestead.
"Just lived" with A, <i>having a child or children by him</i> , and:—	
2	Returned to her own people.
2	Returned to her own people—married B.
1	A went to town—she went to East London and <i>had a child by B</i> —returned to her own people.
1	Returned to her own people— <i>had two children by B</i> , a married man.
Junior wife of A, a polygamist, and had a child by him:	
1	A deserted and she returned to her own people— <i>had a child by B</i> — <i>had a child by C</i> .
Married A and had a child or children by him— <i>had a child by B in adultery</i> and:—	
1	Died in childbirth.
2	Was forgiven.
1	Was forgiven and <i>had another child by B</i> , also forgiven.
1	Was sent back to her people—now working in East London.
1	Was sent back to her people— <i>had two children by C</i> .
Married A and had children by him—A died, and:—	
2	<i>Had a child by B</i> .
1	<i>Had four children by B</i> , a married man in East London.
1	<i>Had a child by B</i> , a married man—B's wife died—married B.

## Chapter IV

## SEX AND AGE

Sex and age are important bases of social differentiation in the village, and of division of labour in the homestead and the community. Men are always superior to women in status. Within the structure of each sex, seniority in age confers relatively superior status; by example, precept, and if necessary by firmer means, children are taught from their early years to defer to older siblings, to be obedient to their parents and to extend these patterns of behaviour both to other kinsmen and to unrelated people.

Women's inferior status is evident in every sphere: their social behaviour is circumscribed by a greater number of restrictions than are imposed on men; their rights of inheritance are very limited; they are treated in Native Law as minors; they are debarred from holding political office and from taking part in the political affairs of the village; and they are unable to intercede with the ancestors. Monogamous marriage, while increasing the intimacy between husband and wife, and enhancing the social position of a woman as wife and mother, tends to diminish the economic independence enjoyed by women in a polygynous household, since the husband exercises more direct control over the organisation of the household's economic efforts. Marriage by Christian or civil rites, which at one time afforded to widows and daughters rights of property inheritance equivalent to women of other racial groups in South Africa under common law, has, since the passage of the 1927 Act applicable solely to Africans, had the practical effect of excluding women from inheriting land.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the relative shortage of land available to the expanding population has caused deterioration in the economic status of women. It is the underlying cause for the legal establishment of the right of primogeniture and male inheritance of privately owned land, and it has caused a change in attitude, tantamount to economic dispossession of women, on communal land. Traditionally, each woman who kindled her own fire had her own field and controlled its produce, but as land becomes scarcer it is allocated to and inherited by men,

<sup>1</sup>c.f. Vol. IV, *Land Tenure*.

not women, and the rights of women over land are disappearing. Wives are regarded as having no right to sow crops other than as directed by their husbands, nor to introduce, in the absence of their husbands, innovations such as contour banking and ploughing.

On the other hand, women who work as domestic servants or in other employment in the towns, or who are fitted by education for some profession, have a greater measure of economic independence than women had traditionally. Advancing old age to some extent enhances the status of women: the spatial and verbal avoidances which complicated their early married days are very much less strictly observed; and they have considerable say in the affairs of the homestead, often greater than that of men their junior in years.

Age categories corresponding to the stages in the span of existence from childhood to old age are differentiated for the sexes in the village community. These sex-age categories rest ultimately on the biological and physical differences between the sexes in maturity, rather than in youth or in old age, when there is little real difference in the physical capacities of the sexes. Before maturity, transition from one age category to another is gradual, and training in the economic sphere is in the duties which will ultimately fall to the respective sexes when they attain adult status. During maturity, differentiation between the sexes in all spheres of activity is firmly established, and emphasis is on the respective age categories, in recognition of the principles that the heavier duties shall fall to the younger members of the community and the greater responsibility and authority to the older. Consequently, membership of particular age categories is socially emphasised, and assumption of a new status is marked by the performance of ritual or official promotion. In old age, sex differentiation is but a recognition of the differing lifetime experiences of the individuals, while old people of either sex occupy the most respected positions in the community. Old men and women are closely identified with the ancestors, the same term *abantu abadala*, being used for both living and dead.

The main age categories for each sex, the activities, rites, and clothing differences associated with them are tabulated overleaf. The categories embrace all those whose social position is similar, but no whole category is organised as a group. The entry of an individual into certain categories is marked by ritual. For a child of either sex, the ritual slaughter of a goat is an expression of the pagan father's care for his child's health and well-being. It is said that: *ingakhalanga*

THE MAIN AGE CATEGORIES

MALES

Appr. age — years	Term	*Activities	Ritual	Clothing
Up to 7	<i>umntwana</i> Child	Secluded with mother for 10 days after birth. Carried about on back. Weaned at about 2 years. Taught to walk and talk. Plays.	<i>imbeleko</i> Slaughter of goat.	Wears protective charms in infancy. Cotton shirt or nude as he grows older.
8	<i>inkwana</i> Little boy	Begins to herd sheep and goats. Still plays a good deal. May begin to attend school.		Cotton shirt worn sometimes with tattered shorts.
12	<i>inkwenkwe</i> Boy	Herds sheep and goats. Attends school intermittently. Belongs to Boys' Association. Hangs about the older boys.		As above.
17	<i>inkwenkwe endala</i> Senior boy	Herds cattle and assists with ploughing. Belongs to Boys' Association. Begins to go out to work in towns. May have lovers.		Begins to take pride in appearance. Wears finery of mine buck and woollen finery knitted by girl friends.
20	<i>umkhwetha</i> Initiate	Lives in circumcision lodge in the bush. Observes liquid, food, and verbal avoidances. Strict seclusion until wound healed — then visited by boys and girls, but still secluded from women of his mother's age category. Visits initiates in other villages; hunts; may assist in fields and herding.	Circumcision. Slaughter of goats during initiation ceremonies.	Painted with white clay; washing blue designs on face. Covered with blanket. Carries a stick.
20	<i>ikywala</i> "unripe fruit"	Spends his time with cattle, herding or ploughing, until first working tour to towns after initiation.	Comes out of circumcision lodge.	At home wears head kerchief; paints face with red ochre; carries long black stick. New clothing.
23	<i>umfana</i> Young man	Often at work in towns. At home, assists with men's tasks. Has many girl friends. May belong to Parliament and Church Association for Young Men. Attends village and kinship councils. Will marry after amassing sufficient cattle — usually at 29 years of age.	Informed by other young men on return to village that he is one of them.	Dandified European clothing; completely discards clothing worn as a boy and <i>ikywala</i> .
45	<i>indoda</i> Man	Full responsibility as father and husband. Listened to with respect in village and kinship councils. Still a labour migrant, but less frequent. May belong to Church Association for men.	Promotion signalled by a feast.	European style clothing, but less careful of appearance.
60	<i>indoda enkulu</i> Senior man	Labour migrant career has ceased. Does increasingly less work about homestead. Duties fall to sons. Treated with great respect. Right to supervise the work of members of his sex on all occasions. Most influential say in village and kinship councils.		As above.

THE MAIN AGE CATEGORIES

FEMALES

Appr. age — years	Term	Activities	Ritual	Clothing
Up to 7	<i>umntwana</i>	Secluded with mother for 10 days after birth. Carried about on back. Weaned at about 2 years. Taught to walk and talk. Plays.	<i>imbeleko</i> Slaughter of goat.	Wears protective charms in infancy. Calico petticoat or nude as she grows older.
8	<i>intombazana</i> Little girl	Learns to grind and smear. Plays a great deal. May begin to attend school.		Calico petticoat or simple print dress.
12	<i>intombi</i> Girl	Helps with all household tasks and cultivation. Acts as nursemaid. Attends school. Attends activities of Boys' Association.		Simple cotton dress.
17	<i>intombi enkulu</i> Senior girl	Capable of running homestead. Those coeval with boys attend Boys' Association; those coeval with youths become members of Parliament. May belong to Church Association for Girls. Usually goes to work in towns for a few years.		Great attention paid to appearance. Smears face with fats. Begins to acquire European finery with earrings. Enjoys wearing ornaments. Free to go bareheaded.
24	<i>umtshakazi</i> Bride	If migratory labour career ceases, works for mother-in-law. No part in social life of village. Observes elaborate verbal and spatial avoidances in her new home. May join Church Association for Women.	Marriage and <i>ukudliswa amasi</i> Slaughter of goat	Christian bride no longer allowed to wear ornaments. Ankle-length long-sleeved print dress. Black alpaca shawl over shoulders pinned at neck. Black head kerchief tied peasant style and low over the forehead; raised after a few days, on permission of mother-in-law — ends now crossed at back and knotted in front. Shawl will also be lowered below right armpit leaving right arm free to work.
25	<i>umfazana</i> Young wife	Continues to work for mother-in-law. Will begin to attend social functions in village. A mother herself. Special tasks on ritual and other occasions.	Birth of first child.	Shawl tied under both armpits, across breast. Head kerchief tied as before, but higher on forehead now.
45	<i>umfazi</i> Wife	Full responsibility as wife and mother. No longer works for mother-in-law.	Promotion signalled by a feast.	Shawl tied around her waist. Greater variation in tying head kerchief. Less careful of appearance.
60	<i>umfazi omkhubu</i> Senior wife	Grandmother. Does progressively less work in homestead and fields. Assisted by daughters-in-law and children. Great say in affairs of homestead — treated with respect by both sexes. Right to supervise and control work of members of her sex on all occasions. Responsible for promotion of younger women.		Dressed as above. Little concerned with appearance.

*ibokhwe umntwana uyafa*—"if a goat does not cry, the child will die." After ten days' seclusion of the confined mother and new-born child in a hut, and after the mother has cleansed herself of the pollution of childbirth by brewing beer, the father brings a white goat to the door of the hut, and pointing to it he addresses the occupants of the hut, informing the child that this is "the blanket" he gives. After the goat is slaughtered and skinned, the mother partakes of her special portion of meat cut from behind the right foreleg (*inguba* or *insonyama*). Formerly the goat's skin was used in strapping the child on the mother's back (now it is usually sold and the proceeds used to buy material or a shawl for the same purpose) and the ritual is called *imbeleko* from *ukubeleka*, to carry a child on the back.

During childhood and adolescence, transition from one age category to another is gradual and coincides with physical development. No rigid code of behaviour or distinctive dress divides the members of different age categories, and an individual's participation in activities in the economic sphere increases in scope only as aptitude develops. However, increasing recognition is given to sex divisions in the economic and social spheres during growth towards maturity, until, by the time the age is reached of initiation to adult status, the sex categories are sharply divided and are emphasised in ceremony.

Although initiation ceremonies for girls at puberty have fallen into disuse,<sup>1</sup> those for boys between the ages of 18 and 23 are still customary.<sup>2</sup> For a boy, circumcision is an essential preliminary stage to the achievement of manhood, and after the operation instruction and advice is given to him, and ceremony and ritual performed to impress upon him his transition to the older age category. Occasionally a boy may undergo circumcision alone, but it is customary for a group ceremony to be held for all initiation candidates (*abakhwele*) in one locality. The frequency with which ceremonies are held may differ from one locality to another, some taking place annually, and some as seldom as at three-yearly intervals. On the day preceding the circumcision operation, a goat is customarily slaughtered for a boy and the special portion of meat cut from behind the right foreleg is given to him (the *inguba* portion). This ritual killing is known as *ukungcamisa*, and if it is neglected, it is feared that the boy may go mad or die.

<sup>1</sup>Certain elements of the traditional girls' initiation ceremony are now found incorporated in the marriage ceremony.

<sup>2</sup>A detailed account of male initiation is given in Appendix B.

After circumcision, the boy enters upon his period of seclusion and remains, together with the other initiation candidates, in a hut (*ibuma*) especially built in a secluded spot in the bushes. The burning of this hut on the occasion of the coming-out ceremony symbolises the passing of the boyhood stage and the emergence of a new being, an adult. This is the most important implication of the initiation ceremony. It is impressed upon the candidates by the older men of the village, who harangue them at the *inkundla* on the seriousness of their ceremonial entry into adult status, on the behaviour, demeanour and qualities henceforth expected of them by the community, and on the wisdom which they have to gain in political and economic affairs by learning from their elders.

Formerly the initiation of girls had a similar connotation, to impress upon the girl the implications of her emergence to a new status, and to signalise to her neighbours, in ceremony, that she was now marriageable.

From the time of initiation into adult status until old age, strict demarcation between the sexes pertains in all social, political, religious and economic affairs. During this span of maturity, membership of the various age categories is socially emphasised and circumscribes an individual's activities, notably in the economic sphere, the principle being that the younger adults in the community shall bear the heaviest burden of work and shall be subject to the direction, instruction and authority of the older and more experienced adults.

For a boy, initiation is completed by a tour of work in the towns. During this tour, a boy is undergoing change (*ukutshintsa*—to change) and occupies the interim status of *ikwiyala* (lit.: “unripe fruit”). He may seek work in a centre different from the one in which he had worked as a boy, and may engage also in different employment. He changes his clothing, discarding the casual garments of boyhood in favour of fine European clothing purchased with the proceeds of his labour. Usually his relatives at home expect no money, or very little, from him at this time. On his return to the village, he is informed by the other young men in the village that he is one of them (*umfana*). Some informants claim that he becomes a young man in the towns as soon as he has acquired a complete new set of clothing. It happens very rarely that a boy does not go out to work as an *ikwiyala*. If he is sickly, or has undertaken the herding for members of his family who are away at work, then, at the end of the year in which he was circumcised, and provided that he has obtained new clothing, he will

be told by the young men in the village that he may join them. Membership of this age category lasts for some 20 years, and upon the members falls the heaviest share of work: frequent migrations to the towns for remunerative employment, in order to contribute to the family's income, and when at home, the ploughing, building and other tasks that fall to men.

The equivalent transition of girls to adult status is bound up with marriage and reproduction. A woman has the right to bear children and to enjoy full sexual intercourse only after she has married. If she bears a child extra-maritally, she remains, irrespective of her age, a girl (*intombi*) or a woman without a husband (*idikazi*). Until she has borne her first child, a married woman is known as a “bride” (*umtshakazi*) and must withdraw from the social life of the village. She observes elaborate verbal and spatial avoidances in her new home, submits to the jurisdiction of her mother-in-law in domestic work and in the manner in which she is permitted to wear the doek and shawl donned after her marriage. After the birth of her first child she becomes a “young wife” (*umfazana*), and is then permitted greater freedom of movement about the village, and may begin to attend social functions. Membership of this age category lasts for approximately the period of her reproductive years, and although a measure of freedom from the domestic control of her mother-in-law comes with permission to kindle her own fire, she continues to bear the heaviest share of the housekeeping, cultivating, and other tasks that fall to women in the community. When a married woman returns home for some reason to her parents, either with or without her children, she is strictly speaking no longer a “young wife” but a “married daughter who has returned to her own home” (*inkazana*), with greater freedom of movement and less onerous duties to perform than a young wife.

The promotion of young men and young wives to the more senior status of “men” (*amadoda*) and “wives” (*abafazi*) is usually made when there are sufficient members of the junior age categories to undertake the work that falls to them in the village section on certain occasions. Moreover, each homestead should contain a man (*indoda*) and a wife (*umfazi*), and as those occupying such status in the homestead die, others, provided they are not too young, will be promoted in their stead. Many people complain that promotions are made at an earlier age than in the past, “because the older people die much earlier today.” Political authorities, headmen and sub-

headmen, automatically assume manhood and its privileges on their appointment to office, irrespective of their age, and their wives similarly assume more senior status. When men are promoted their wives do not automatically become members of the more senior status group, although their promotion is usually not long delayed after that of their husbands, provided that they are not brides or young wives of only a few years standing, and provided also that they are not living in the same homestead as a mother-in-law. Christian women in some localities claimed that they were not dependent upon promotion to more senior status, but that they merely "knew" when it was their time to assume the duties and privileges of the higher status. Many of the men in these same localities, as well as men and women, both pagan and Christian, elsewhere, continue to depend on formal promotion.

A young man depends for promotion to manhood on the "senior men" (*amadoda amakhulu*) or "fathers" of the village section in which he resides. Similarly, the "senior wives" (*abafazi abakhulu*) or "mothers" of the village section in which a young wife resides are responsible for promoting her to the more senior status of "wife." Although they have no decisive authority, existing members of the age categories of "men" and "wives" in the village section are permitted to attend the discussions on those of their own sex considered for promotion to these categories. There is no fixed time at which these promotions should take place, nor are they held regularly. Some say that the reminder that it is time to promote people should be made by the subheadman and his wife respectively to the "fathers" and "mothers." The latter will then meet separately at the subheadman's homestead to discuss and make final decisions regarding promotions. It is expected of men and women who have been promoted, that they should provide food and drink at the subheadman's homestead. Such festivity, in which all the members of the village section are entitled to share, signals the particular individual's assumption of the new status, with its attendant increased privileges, responsibilities and authority and lessened economic duties.

With advancing old age, a man or a wife becomes a "senior man," (*indoda enkulu*) a "father" or a "senior wife," (*umfazi omkhulu*) a "mother." "They know when it is their time." Old men control and organize the work of their juniors, have authority over others, and their opinions carry the greatest weight in kinship and political

councils. Old women similarly need do little work, and have the right to organize the work of younger women in the everyday life of the homesteads, at feasts, and at such work parties as they may attend.

The sex-age categories embrace those whose social position in the village community is similar, but who do not form organized groups within which there is social cohesion. Circumcision candidates who have been secluded together, for instance, speak of themselves as "we who painted clay on one another's backs" (*sasiqabana ifutha emblana*), but do not form a group with a distinctive name, among whom specific obligations of mutual help obtain. They perform no communal tasks, nor are there any social occasions when they are entitled to special treatment as a group. Although members of sex-age categories do not constitute organized groups, nevertheless, as far as the individual is concerned, sex and age largely determine membership in particular social groups in the village community and delimit the individual's participation in activities in the political, religious and economic spheres. While some of these activities pertain only to certain age categories, others are identical with those of other categories of the same sex, but are marked by an increased scope which reflects increasing skill as age advances.

Participation in political activities is confined to men. A woman is not allowed to attend meetings of the village section council or the village council unless she is concerned with the matter under discussion, and even then she must sit some distance apart from the assembled men and be represented by a male spokesman.

All adult men of the particular locality, irrespective of age, are entitled to take an active part in proceedings and deliberations of the village section or village councils. On attaining adult status, and therefore qualifying for participation in political activities, circumcision candidates are exhorted, during the instruction and advice delivered to them by the men of the village council, to attend meetings in order to receive training in traditional law, and to learn procedure from their elders. At council meetings there are no prescribed seats, but the older men usually sit together, apart from the younger. It is expected, moreover, that the younger men will defer to the opinions of the older, deporting themselves with the object of learning, rather than of voicing opinions. Middle-aged men are listened to with respect, while the old men, or fathers, have decidedly the most influential

say in controversial matters. To only one office of village government are young men appointed, that of court messenger (*umsila*), appointed as occasion arises and with responsibility for the collection of court fines. Advisors (*amaphakathi amancinci*) to subheadmen and headmen are invariably old men. They are not formally appointed to hold office, but they are those who are regarded as being particularly well versed in the customs of the people and renowned for their skill in "talking cases," since their function is to act as advisers and assist in the arbitration of disputes. Similarly, the office of assistant (*isekela*) to a subheadman, since it involves deputising for the subheadman when he is away at work, is invariably filled from among the older men who no longer engage in migrant employment. In practice, the attendance of young men at village council meetings is sparse and intermittent, since so great a proportion of a man's early working life is spent as a migrant labourer in the towns, and this engenders in young men a measure of disinterest and apathy towards the council, which undermines its efficacy as a political authority. It also means that they learn little of traditional law.

In lineage councils, men senior by age, the elders of the lineage remnant, have the right to speak first at all meetings and are informally consulted by the lineage remnant leader. Apart, however, from this deference accorded to the wisdom and experience of older men, age categories do not feature in the kinship structure or activities, since seniority is in accordance with descent in the male line, and the right of primogeniture precedes age. If, however, the senior male descendant is too young to assume the hereditary duties of a lineage remnant leader, an older kinsman will deputise for him, and usually continues to do so until death, whereupon the rightful heir, if he is of suitable age, will become the leader.

Because lineages are patrilineal, the unequal status of the sexes is particularly evident in kinship activities. Women do not take part in the meetings at which affairs of the lineage are discussed, nor are they allowed to attend sessions of the lineage remnant courts unless they are concerned in the matter under discussion, and even then they must sit some distance apart from the assembled men. Cases concerning a married woman are dealt with by her husband's lineage remnant, rather than her own male agnates. Women do not intercede with the ancestors on behalf of their own or their husband's lineage members, and informants denied that a woman could ever undertake a ritual killing; even if there are no male members

of the lineage remnant, a clansman, it was claimed, could always be found to undertake the sacrifice. Furthermore, it was observed that women were never present when a ritual killing took place, even though entrance to the cattle byre, where the sacrifice is made, is permitted to clan daughters. On ceremonial occasions of lineage ritual, the young men (*abafana*) cook the meat for the men of the lineage; and beer for the ancestors, although prepared by women, may be tasted (to determine when it is ready for straining), only by a male member of the lineage. On occasions of domestic ritual, such as circumcision, marriage, and funeral feasts, it is the duty of the young wives married into the lineage to undertake the preparation of food and beer, the collection of firewood and water and the cooking of those portions of the meat allocated to women; daughters of the lineage, even when married, are not required to help.

A woman is more limited in her activities in her husband's homestead than in the homesteads of her male agnates. Entrance into the cattle byre, for instance, for such purpose as fetching of dung used in plastering the floors and walls of huts, may be made by a daughter, but not by a wife of the homestead. Similarly, a wife does not handle livestock other than pigs and fowls, in her husband's homestead, but on the other hand a daughter, when she is not menstruating, may handle her father's livestock should need arise. A daughter may herd her father's stock if there are insufficient boys in the homestead to undertake this work; she may also sometimes be seen acting as ploughboy; she may be made responsible for planting seeds behind the plough, if there is no youth available to do the work; and she may occasionally milk her father's animals. Informants denied that a wife would ever milk; they claimed that there would always be a clan relative of the husband who could be turned to. Only an isolated instance was observed of a woman herding goats and sheep, and she was old, past the menopause, and was doing so to enable a young grandson to attend school.

With such exceptions, born only of necessity, all tasks directly or remotely involving the handling of stock are performed by men or boys. Herding is the duty of boys; ploughing, planting or sowing, and threshing with the use of animals is done by men with assistance of boys; similarly, milking is a task for men; when sheep or goats are to be sheared, a work party of young men (*abafana*) in the locality is invariably called together for the purpose; and erecting and repairing of cattle byres and sheep and goat pens is done by the men of the

homestead, sometimes with the assistance of a work party for men. All money from the sale of livestock, meat, skins and wool belongs to a husband; the only produce of husbandry regarded as the perquisite of a wife is from the sale of fowls, eggs and pigs.

At seven or eight years of age, a boy becomes a goat and sheep herd, and as he grows older he takes over the herding of cattle. While sheep and goats are herded in the village throughout the year, the duties of cattle herds may cease, or be relaxed, during that part of the year when the cattle may be placed in fenced grazing camps. Herding is by no means easy work, owing to the difficulty of finding good grazing on the commonage and the vigilance necessary to avoid trespass on Government controlled forests or fields under cultivation, with its penalty of fine or impounding fee. When a boy first goes out to work in the towns, a younger brother will be promoted to herd cattle in his stead, but even on his visits home he may be forced to resume his duties if there are insufficient boys to do the work. For the same reason, even older men will undertake herding. The absence of older boys in towns causes the task of herding to fall more arduously on the younger boys, and this preoccupation affects school attendance. Some people take considerable pains to ensure that economic duties shall not interfere with a child's school attendance, but others are little concerned about education.<sup>1</sup>

Men who have young boys in their homesteads to assist with the herding are favoured as ploughing partners, for the members of ploughing partnerships assist one another in herding and in fetching cattle when required for use from the cattle camps. Ideally, an operating plough team consists of a senior boy (*inkwenkwe endala*) as plough-boy, an able-bodied man (*umfana*) as ploughman, and another young man (*umfana*) to sow and plant the seeds. Despite the endeavour of labour migrants to return home for the ploughing season, the regular absence of so many males of these particular age categories means that older men (*amadoda*) and younger boys (*amakwenkwe*) more often have to undertake the ploughing in the community. When there are several boys in the homestead to assist with the ploughing, it is possible for them to take turns in attending school. Wives whose husbands are away, or widows who cultivate their own fields, have to arrange with friends to plough for them, if they have no other male relative nearby. A woman with oxen and ploughing implements has little difficulty, since there is so serious a shortage of

<sup>1</sup>c.f. Chapter V, B.

equipment that help in ploughing her field would be willingly given in return for the reciprocal loan of her ploughing span and implements. A woman having neither male relatives nor ploughing implements, however, may find herself in so dependent a position that she may be obliged to accept a lover in return for the ploughing of her field.

While sex division of labour in tasks involving the handling of stock has its genesis in the belief that sexually active women have a detrimental effect on the animals, no such beliefs promote the sex division of labour in other economic tasks. Consequently, the division is less rigid, and tends to break down if there is a shortage of labour of either sex. When husbands and sons are away in the towns, a woman will take over the tasks normally performed by men, unless they can be postponed until the man returns home for a visit. Similarly, if a woman is overburdened with work, she may well receive assistance from her menfolk in some of the tasks normally performed by women.

In construction work, sex division of labour is clearly in accordance with physical capacity. Erecting of aloe and branch fences around gardens, and along fields bordering on commonage, is the work of men. In hut building the work is divided: men are responsible for levelling the foundation, cutting and hauling the poles and saplings required for the framework, erecting the framework for the walls, hanging the doors and window frames, and sewing (*ukuthunga*) thatch in the European style; women cut thatching grass and also thatch a domed roof in the traditional style (*ukufulela*), and in addition they plaster the inside and outside of the framework walls and make the floor. Final decoration of the hut and the painting of designs in whitewash and blue may be done by women, girls, young men or boys. Maintenance of the hut, replastering the walls and smearing the floor, falls to women.

Not infrequently, a wife may have added to her other duties the responsibility for having a hut erected during her husband's absence, if he sends money home for this purpose. Men especially skilled in the work may be hired to cut saplings and poles; a specialist, always a man, is usually hired to erect the framework of a conical roof and to sew on the thatch; a specialist is similarly hired to build the walls of a rectangular hut with sun-dried brick or sod; men especially skilled in carpentry may be asked to assist in hanging windows and doors; and skilled women, usually of the older age categories, may be invited to attend a work party to thatch a domed roof in traditional

style. Work parties are usually summoned when the framework of a round wattle and daub hut is to be erected, for plastering the inside and outside of this framework, and for cutting thatching grass. They are called to level the foundation of a hut only when the site is on a steep slope. Only men and women who live in the same locality, and in some cases only men and women of particular age categories, are likely to be invited. While the young men (*abafana*) of the locality are often invited to do the work that falls to men, older boys (*amakhwenkwe amadala*) do not usually participate in building activities, being insufficiently skilled.

Work in the fields and the raising of crops falls largely to the women, since they have the responsibility for feeding dependants. Traditionally, the men hunted and tended the stock while the women tilled the soil. Today, with meat of domestic animals forming part of the diet only of the more well-to-do or on festive occasions, the people depend for food upon crops and upon purchases from the trading stores. By and large, responsibility for raising crops rests with women when the produce is for consumption, and with men when the produce can be sold for cash. Hoeing of fields or garden plots, and weeding of arable lands, are the responsibility of a wife (*umfazji*). The harvesting of winter crops, wheat, barley, oats and birdseed is the work of men, while other crops, chiefly mealies and kaffircorn, are reaped by women, and vegetables or indigenous fruits and plants are picked by them. Sorting, winnowing, threshing, grinding, stamping and all preparation of food falls to women, with the exception of such threshing as is done with a machine.

Wives are assisted in their tasks by the girls in their homesteads. Other wives who kindle their own fires in the homestead, and relatives or friends living nearby, may also be asked to give help, which will be reciprocated. Women often assist men in the harvesting of their winter crops and are sometimes assisted by them in turn, and also by boys, in hoeing, weeding and reaping of summer crops. While women often return from the fields each day during harvest carrying on their heads tins full of mealies or kaffircorn, a large part of the harvest is brought to the homestead on ox-drawn sledges in charge of young men and boys. Grinding, stamping and winnowing of dry mealies are among the earlier tasks taught to girls. Men may assist women to flail kaffircorn or wheat with long sticks, but it is becoming increasingly common for a group of men in the same

locality to combine in hiring a threshing machine from a European trader or farmer.

Many people who do not have sufficient help in their homestead to weed and harvest without outside assistance, regard hired labour as the ideal way to get the work done. A woman may start weeding herself and then hire someone to complete the work at the prevailing price of 7/- an "ox acre" (*iakire yenkabi*)<sup>1</sup> or may, on occasion, ask the older boys (*amakhwenkwe amadala*) of the locality to assist, "thanking" them with a sum of money, 2/- or 2/6 to share among themselves. The most common form of assistance in weeding and reaping is, however, the work party. Often only people of a particular age category are invited to attend: a work party for men is usually called together when the winter crops are to be harvested; a young man (*umfana*) may invite other young men of the locality to do the weeding on his field; an older woman (*umfazji*) may invite only other older women and older men (*amadoda*); a young married woman (*umfazana*) may invite only other young married women. A few members of other age categories also may be present on such occasions, but the work party is still described as one for "young men," "senior people" or "young married women," as the case may be. At larger work parties, the men usually work in a group apart from the women, and any girls (*iintombi*) who are present will form a separate group, for "they have their own things to discuss, it is not fit that they should work together with the older people." For work in the fields, a party for older boys (*amakhwenkwe amadala*) is particularly popular,<sup>2</sup> and invitation is usually extended through a son or neighbour's son. They, it is claimed, are available to work when other people are still too busy on their own fields to attend a work party, and consequently there is less delay in accomplishing the work if they are invited to do it. Furthermore, since they have no fields of their own, the assistance they give requires no return. A young man (*umfana*) is usually asked to act as foreman (*ifolmani*), and he is responsible for supervising the allocation of food and beer, and for subdividing and marking off the field into sections, and organizing the sectional work. Not infrequently, when a man is preparing for a tour of migrant work in town, he will arrange with some young

<sup>1</sup>c.f. Volume IV, *Land Tenure*, for explanation of the area of an "ox acre".

<sup>2</sup>Of 29 work parties observed in Upper Nqhumeya village in 1949, five were specifically for older boys.

man to act as foreman at whatever work parties his wife may call together during his absence.

Collecting firewood and water are the most onerous of women's tasks, owing to the distance of supplies from the homestead. There are very few homesteads possessing tanks for collecting rainwater, and the number of husbands who collect water for their wives in drums conveyed on ox-drawn sledges is small.<sup>1</sup> Two buckets of water a day are usually required for ordinary domestic purposes, but when hut plastering and smearing operations are in progress an additional one to four buckets may be required. A work party may be called together to collect water and firewood, but informants generally agree that it is rarely done, being an unnecessary expense. A woman may, however, ask other wives kindling their own fires in the homestead, or neighbours or relatives to help in such tasks, as well as in grinding mealies or kaffircorn, when large supplies of food or beer are being prepared for a festive occasion or a work party. A pregnant woman, who customarily continues with household tasks until the time of her labour, is especially responsible for laying up large supplies of firewood in order that those attending her during her ten days seclusion following the birth of her child may have ample supplies on hand.

In addition, women perform the usual domestic work of cooking, cleaning, washing and mending of clothes, and shopping. It is seldom that men are without any woman to undertake domestic tasks for them. Two cases were encountered of men, one deserted by his wife and the other at home on account of ill health while his wife was still working in town, who were keeping house, and preparing and cooking food for themselves and their children. They were referred to by neighbours as representing the "new look" family. Among the more well-to-do, especially those who own some means of conveyance, it is possible to purchase from the trading stores bulk supplies of mealies, kaffircorn, peas and beans, and this will be undertaken by the husband.

Each wife who kindles her own fire is separately responsible for performing all domestic tasks and housekeeping. When there are only infant children in her homestead, a young mother often borrows an older girl from a relative to help in nursing the children, and to assist in household tasks. Eventually, however, she will be assisted by her daughters who, from the age of about eight or nine years begin

<sup>1</sup>Four such cases were observed in Upper Nqhumeya village in 1949.

to undertake women's tasks, and at 13 or 14 years are competent to perform most of them. In the course of time she will be assisted by those of her sons' wives who have not received her permission to kindle their own fires. Only when she has enough people to work for her, or when she is very old, does a woman herself no longer work.

The services of a daughter-in-law are eagerly anticipated, for a bride, even though she and her husband are allocated a separate hut, is expected to work for her mother-in-law, assisting her in all household tasks, relieving her of much of the heavy work, and cooking the food provided by the mother-in-law over the latter's fire. Even after the first year of her married life, by which time she has normally already borne her first child, a young married woman still continues to work for her mother-in-law. The time when she ceases to do so and may begin to kindle her own fire, that is, cook in her own hut, is not determined by custom. Unlike a married daughter who has returned home (*inkazana*), a young wife (*umfazana*) may never request permission to do so, but must wait for the suggestion to emanate from the mother-in-law. Ill feeling between a daughter-in-law and a mother-in-law, leading often to accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, results in permission being granted relatively speedily. When the two women get along amicably, however, the mother-in-law may be reluctant to dispense readily with the younger woman's services. The wife of an eldest son should, it is said, continue to work for her mother-in-law as long as the latter lives, for on her death "she will become the senior woman (*umfazi*) of that homestead." Today, however, there are few daughters-in-law who are prepared to cook indefinitely for their mothers-in-law. On being given permission to kindle her own fire, a wife and her husband are expected to erect a new hut in the homestead for themselves, and should have a field and separate storage facilities. The fact that her husband does not own a field need not necessarily delay a daughter-in-law in obtaining independent domestic status in the homestead, for land can be hired or planted on shares, and the produce obtained in this way supplemented by purchases at the stores. Often there is only one woman who kindles her own fire in the homestead, but there may be two, and sometimes as many as three.

In the past, once a daughter-in-law had been given permission to kindle her own fire, she did not cook only for her husband and children, nor did she take meals alone with them. Each wife kindling her own fire would either take a turn cooking for the others, or would

separately contribute dishes towards a common meal, shared by all members of the homestead. At present, however, the trend is for a woman who kindles her own fire to cook for her family alone, she, her husband and children eating separately from others in the homestead. Sufficient food for two or three days is usually cooked at one time and meals are taken very irregularly, different members of the family often eating the same meal at different times. The terms *ibilekfisi* (breakfast) and *idinala* (dinner) are in common use. The day starts with a cup of very strong, sweet, black coffee and home-made bread; the main meal includes mealies, kaffir corn, peas, beans or wild plants cooked as spinach; and the last meal of the day is taken a short while before retiring, "for one cannot sleep well on an empty stomach." Although children are normally given three meals a day, in times of shortage adults manage on only one.

Food is usually served by the woman who has cooked it. If meals are served indoors, the men will sit together on the men's side of the hut, and the women on the women's side; if out of doors, the men gather at the side of the cattle byre or in the shade of a nearby tree, and the women in the shade of the huts. Among "advanced" people, adults are served at a table, a separate place being laid for each member of the family, other than the children who feed from a common dish. Whatever the seating arrangements, however, separate portions should be given to the head of the family, his wife, his circumcised sons, his daughters-in-law, his adolescent sons and his adolescent daughters. The sharing of a dish by husband and wife, by father-in-law and son or daughter-in-law, by mother-in-law and son-in-law, or by mother and circumcised son, is taboo, and this prohibition is rigorously observed.

Although dishes should not be shared by a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, by a mother and her daughters or adolescent sons, and by a circumcised brother and his adolescent siblings, the observance of these rules is less rigorous, and depends largely on the amount of food that has been cooked. Food left over in the dishes is usually given to the children, but a circumcised brother may hand what is left over in his dish to an adolescent sister. Visitors may be given separate portions, if there is sufficient food, but usually they share in the dish appropriate to their sex and age. For instance, a man who is the contemporary of the head of the family will be invited to share in his dish; young men who are contemporaries of his circumcised sons will share in their dish; and neighbours' children will share in

the common dish of the young boys and girls. In most cases, however, poverty tends to limit the sharing of meals with casual visitors, hospitality being dispensed and food shared only at feasts and work parties.

On ritual occasions, after special portions of beer and sacrificial meat have been allocated, the remainder of the beer and meat is allocated among all persons present according to sex and age. While members of the lineage have priority, other maternal and affinal kinsmen and unrelated people may share in the portions appropriate to their sex and age, or be given separate portions if there is sufficient. The older men will usually sit apart from the younger men, the older wives apart from the young wives, and the daughters apart from the wives. At other feasts or work parties, food and beer are similarly allocated, after portions have been given to those whose status entitles them to special respect.<sup>1</sup>

Age and sex as determinants of status were traditionally modified among the Xhosa and Mfengu people by differentiation within and between the lineages, and among the Xhosa at least there was a recognised hierarchy of clans<sup>2</sup> based on genealogical seniority. Status within lineages also turned on seniority in the kinship structure which did not necessarily coincide with age, but which, combined with age and sex largely determined an individual's position in society. Differences in wealth existed and modified status in some measure, but they appear to have been relatively less important than seniority, age, and sex. Today wealth is relatively much more important, and a new factor, education, also affects status.

In villages with freehold tenure of land there has arisen a class differentiation between the relatively wealthy landowners and the landless squatters, but, since these do each constitute groups, status within each group is still possible of determination on the basis of age and sex. When the possession of wealth is individual, however, as with wage-earners, or those with education in some profession, it gives rise to conflict between the conservative adherents to traditional custom of status based on seniority, age, and sex, and those enjoying or aspiring to the emancipation afforded by economic independence. There is a divergence of values and interests between the older generation who remain at home in the Reserves and the young people who are frequently away as migrant wage-earners in the towns. Young

<sup>1</sup>c.f. p. 36.

<sup>2</sup>c.f. J. H. Soga, *The AmaXhosa, Life and Customs*.

men and women are in contact with a highly competitive society which upholds individual ability and drive, irrespective of age. Formal schooling introduces an additional line of cleavage. Traditionally, knowledge was the attribute of age; elderly people who have acquired wisdom by participating to the fullest extent in the skills and activities of village life have the right to arbitrate disputes within the family, the lineage remnant and the village councils. European schooling, with its emphasis on the values and beliefs of another culture, undermines both traditional teaching and the claims of age to widest and greatest knowledge, and young people begin to question and criticise the teachings and beliefs of their parents.

Not only does labour migration introduce sets of values foreign to traditional custom, but wage earning in itself accords economic independence which breaks down the parental and marital authority and discipline by which youth is held in subjection to age, and women in subjection to men. Complaints that children are no longer as obedient as they once were, and similarly that daughters-in-law are neither as hardworking nor as obedient as they used to be, are widespread: "Children only listen to you as long as you can still beat them"; and "Girls return from the towns spoilt, and do as they please at home." As the assets of the older generation, land and its produce, shrink in importance in the family economy relative to the wages earned by younger men and women, the traditional order of economic dependence tends to be reversed. A father cannot compel his child to hand over to him his wages or to support him in his old age, unless he has some economic hold over the child. Young men no longer depend on their fathers for cattle: *lobola* for marriage can be earned by a young man independently of his father. A freeholder who has the right to dispose of his land by gift or testament still manages to retain a measure of control over those of his sons who are desirous of acquiring or inheriting his land. The relatively larger size of homesteads in villages of freehold tenure than in those of communal tenure is indicative of the greater extent to which a father can keep his sons attached to him when they are dependent upon him for land, having no alternative prospect of acquiring it. In villages of communal tenure, however, young men are not dependent upon their fathers for land, and the smallness of homesteads at the present time bears testimony to the weakening powers of age. Desirous of independence, sons are anxious, soon after their marriage, to establish their own homesteads and obtain their own lands. In this they are abetted by

their wives, who, having experienced independence as migrant wage earners before marriage, are unwilling to submit to the domestic restraints imposed by a mother-in-law. Furthermore, the women's early migrant labour experience, and knowledge that they are capable of self-support, gives them potential independence from the domination even of their husbands. The fact that labour migration of women, including married women and mothers, is increasing,<sup>1</sup> although primarily due to poverty, is also related to the widening revolt of women against the restraints imposed on them in the tribal society.

The possession of wealth is implied in school education: only the more well-to-do are able to afford a higher education for their children, and education brings with it in turn greater earning power than the average. A teacher, minister, clerk or nurse is, irrespective of age or sex, described as an "important person" (*umntu omkhulu*), the designation otherwise reserved for the elders of the community (*indoda enkulu*—"senior man" and *umfazzi omkhulu*—"senior wife"). Teachers are addressed by their titles of office, as "teacher" or "mistress"; the wife of a teacher merits the respectful address of *inkosikazi*—"ma'am."<sup>2</sup> Those who are unmarried are voluntarily provided with free lodgings in the village, and may even be boarded free of charge, if their hosts can afford it. A school mistress, unlike other young married women, is never expected to undertake domestic chores. If she wishes to maintain a separate household, she is given her own hut, and children are lent to her to carry out the housekeeping tasks. A piece of land is usually voluntarily provided for her by a member of the village, and is worked for her by voluntary helpers.

Although the number of such professional people is still small, yet even among the bulk of the people in the village community school education tends to modify status based on sex and age. Those who have received a higher education than the average tend to regard themselves as a group apart, and of superior status to the illiterate. The younger teachers and educated men may vent their opinions at village council meetings, much to the disgust of the older conservative men. The tendency for girls, on the whole, to receive a higher education than boys is bound to have an effect on the traditionally inferior status of women in the patrilineal society.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>c.f. Vol. II, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*.

<sup>2</sup>Literally "chief's wife".

<sup>3</sup>c.f. pp. 147-8.

## Chapter V

## VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

Among people who are neither related nor living in the same locality, there may exist a community of interest, such as that established by membership of the same church, by school education, by a common taste in recreation, or by economic interdependence. A group is constituted when certain of such kindred persons work together or participate in activities of mutual interest, or take their leisure together with some degree of regularity. Such voluntary associations cut across family and kinship ties, and may even extend beyond the immediate locality. However, the nucleus of the association is usually a group of persons living fairly near one another, since the basis is a common interest which normally can be sustained only by continuing personal contact. Nevertheless, a link between similar groups in different localities can be fostered by occasional association between them, and mutual development of their common interest. When the association is relatively permanent, it forms part of the social structure of the people.

The more enduring associations found among the people of Keiskammahoek District are church groups, school groups, recreational associations and gift clubs. The first are groups of people of the same religious beliefs congregating for worship, and forming associations for the promotion of their religious interests. School groupings are made up of individuals attending or organizing schools. Recreational associations are formed by young people of similar age. Gift clubs serve in practice as voluntary savings associations, and are associations chiefly of women, for mutual financial assistance with the expenses of their children's marriages.

## A—Church

*Christians and Pagans in the District*

Before traders were granted licences to open up stores in British Kaffraria, and well before European farmers were granted land in

the territory, the missionaries were at work. In the area which now comprises the Keiskammahoek District the first school was opened up by the Glasgow Society at its Burnshill Mission Station in 1831, when the Ngqika-Xhosa were still in occupation of the territory. Very shortly after the expulsion of the Xhosa and the subsequent settling of Mfengu in the area, the Anglican Mission of St. Matthew was established, and there the first hospital, which is still today the only one in the district, was built.

The missionaries brought with them not only the doctrines of Christianity, but the standards and modes of European civilisation. The influence of the latter has been widespread, and in the Keiskammahoek District has extended among pagans almost as generally as among Christian converts. In some Xhosa-speaking areas there is a sharp distinction between the pagan and conservative "blanket" or "red people" and the Christian or "school people"; but in Keiskammahoek District there are virtually no "red people" at all. Pagan and Christian homesteads are built alike and equipped with European furnishings as extensively as individual incomes permit. Pagan and Christian men dress alike in European style. Most pagan women wear the long-sleeved, blue print dresses and sombre black doeks of their Christian neighbours; women in the traditional pagan costume of ochre-dyed skirts, heavy with braid trimmings, and breast cloths or red blanket cloaks are seldom seen in the Keiskammahoek District, although they are a common sight in the neighbouring districts of Kingwilliamstown and Middeldrift. School education is no longer the prerogative of Christians, although on the average they tend to go to school in relatively larger numbers, and for longer periods, than pagans.

Many of the Mfengu had been exposed to missionary influence before they were settled in the Keiskammahoek area, and in the villages the work of converting pagans continued throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. Elderly informants repeatedly claimed that the early converts always stood staunchly by the rules and teachings of their churches, their behaviour generally distinguishing them as adherents of the new faith. To act against established tradition and in opposition to kinsmen, in order to embrace a new faith and an unaccustomed way of living, no doubt required greater sincerity of belief in former days. By contrast, many of the second or third generation of converts, though baptised in infancy, have never sought

to become confirmed. Being able to accept Christianity with less opposition than their forebears, they are not obliged to make a stand for their beliefs.

Those who are baptised, but not confirmed, are sometimes the children of parents who were church members, but for the greater part are the children of a mother who was a church member and a father who was either a pagan or had never been confirmed even though he had been baptised as a Christian. Many of these people never attend church, have maintained no interest in Christianity, and are to all intents and purposes pagans. Some, while they attend church occasionally, are not anxious to be confirmed, since that requires acceptance of the full obligations of church membership. Even the number of confirmed church members is only a superficial index of the extent to which Christianity has been absorbed. There are church members who take no part in church activities: of them it is said, "they just sit." Other church members, while attending church regularly and participating in church activities with considerable zeal, still resort to the pagan ancestor cult in times of crisis, such as illness or accident.

Unless the individual baptised in infancy later experiences a sincere conversion, he is deterred from being confirmed by the rules which the churches impose upon the behaviour of their communicant members. Full church membership requires not only acceptance of Christian doctrines, regular church attendance, participation in church activities and financial contribution,<sup>1</sup> but also severance from pagan beliefs and customs. Converts are forbidden to hold or to attend ritual killings connected with the ancestor cult, or to subscribe to any of the procedures connected with the appeasement of ancestors or the warding off of attacks by supposed witches and sorcerers. They are also excluded from participation in traditional dances. Christian standards of sexual morality are expected of them: monogamy is demanded<sup>2</sup>; pre-marital sex relations are forbidden; husband and wife are expected to be faithful to each other; and widows are not allowed to follow the traditionally acceptable custom of bearing

<sup>1</sup>The fact that church membership required money was cited by two informants as a reason for avoiding confirmation.

<sup>2</sup>Today, poverty bars polygyny among pagans as effectively as church rules among Christians.

children who are treated as children of their deceased husbands.<sup>1</sup> The practice of initiating sons to manhood by having them circumcised is discouraged, and the performance of the initiation ceremonies according to traditional custom is forbidden.<sup>2</sup> Beer brewing and drinking, around which so much of the social life of the pagan revolves, is strictly forbidden to all church members, except the Anglicans who are permitted to brew beer for domestic consumption and except in the case of a wife whose husband is a pagan and who is usually permitted to brew beer for him, though not to partake of it herself. Church members are further expected to refrain from the use of profane language, gambling or contracting debt.

These limitations on behaviour are more than many baptised Christians, particularly men, are prepared to accept. One informant explained: "As long as these people are not confirmed, they feel that they can attend church and also go to beer drinks, take lovers, use bad language and attend pagan customs. When you are confirmed, your church expects you to give up all these bad habits." Notwithstanding the rules, there is considerable laxity even among church members. In theory, breaches of behaviour should be reported by church dignitaries in the village to the minister, and the members should be suspended or expelled from the church. In practice, however, the church dignitaries often overlook the lapses of others, for the reasons either that they themselves are not as observant of church rules as they might be, or because they "wish to live in peace with those about them." Furthermore, men and women suspended or expelled from one church know that there are always other churches which will accept them, so keen is the rivalry between the churches for members.

<sup>1</sup>In the analysis of illegitimacy given in Chapter III—C, no study was made of the religious affiliation of the mothers. Of all the mothers in that sample, 50 per cent gave birth to one or more illegitimate children, pre-maritally, adulterine or as widows. It is of interest to compare the results of certain other sample surveys undertaken in the same village and relating to the religious affiliation of women, with this concrete evidence of the unfaithfulness to Christian standards of sexual morality of one woman out of every two. The majority of women in the analysis of illegitimacy were from one village section, where two-thirds of the homestead owners are Christians. This, however, does not necessarily mean that the other women in the homestead are Christians. Nevertheless, another sample group taken from the entire village and including wives of homestead owners, as well as widowed homestead owners themselves, revealed that 68 per cent of the women were baptised and confirmed and another 6 per cent were baptised only. These comparative percentages suggest that, while something like 70 per cent of women are supposedly Christian and since only 50 per cent of mothers do not give birth to one or more illegitimate children, no less than about one-third of Christian women fail to adhere to their churches' standards of sexual morality.

<sup>2</sup>The ways in which Christians regularly circumvent the dictates of their Churches in this connection are discussed in Appendix B—Male Initiation.

The mission churches exist side by side not only with the ancestor cult, but with the independent or so-called "Native Separatist Churches," which, to varying extents, combine and reinterpret the elements of the old and new religions. Of the mission churches, the Methodist, Anglican and Presbyterian have the largest following in the district. Those termed by the census "Native Separatist Churches" have a combined following in the district somewhat larger than any one of the mission churches. However, the "Native Separatist Churches" include the large Bantu Presbyterian Church, which has European missionaries in charge of some of its congregations, as well as the independent sects, of which there are today reported to be several hundred in South Africa. The table hereunder gives the religious affiliation of the Africans in the Keiskammahoek District, as reported in the 1946 census:—

Religion	Males No. (%)	Females No. (%)	Total No. (%)
<i>Mission Churches:</i>			
Methodist .. .. .	1,905	2,507	4,412
Anglican .. .. .	1,695	2,357	4,052
Presbyterian .. .. .	668	958	1,626
Baptist .. .. .	78	105	183
Congregational .. .. .	23	15	38
Roman Catholic .. .. .	18	19	37
Lutheran .. .. .	14	1	15
Dutch Reformed .. .. .	6	5	11
Other .. .. .	6	4	10
Total Mission Churches (excluding Bantu Presbyterian Church) ..	4,413 (59.0)	5,971 (61.1)	10,384 (60.2)
Native Separatist Churches (including Bantu Presbyterian Church) ..	2,030 (27.2)	2,613 (26.7)	4,643 (26.9)
Pagan .. .. .	1,001 (13.6)	1,187 (12.1)	2,188 (12.7)
Unspecified .. .. .	13	15	28
	7,457	9,786	17,243

These figures cannot be accepted as altogether accurate: it seems likely that entire families have been stated as affiliated to the church in which, in fact, only one or more of the family may actually have been baptised or confirmed. Evidence is available from two sources which shows that the numbers of Christians are overstated in the census. The one is information obtained directly from officials of three of the largest churches in the district,<sup>1</sup> which suggests a rather

<sup>1</sup>Rev. A. P. Skosana of the Methodist Church; Canon A. E. Jingiso of St. Matthew's Anglican Mission; and Rev. N. Kumalo of the Burnshill Bantu Presbyterian Church.

smaller total number of professing Christians than the census. The other source is from a survey<sup>1</sup> of a sample group in the village of Upper Nqhumeya, which reveals a much smaller proportion of men church members than emerges from the census.

From the three denominations with the largest following in the district, the following information was obtained:—

Followers	Methodist	Anglican	Bantu Presbyterian
Communicants .. .. .	880	1,096	598
Catechumens .. .. .		195	60
Members on trial .. .. .	500		
Total membership .. .. .	1,380	1,291	658
Baptised children in Sunday school .. ..	1,186		
Adherents .. .. .	<i>not stated</i>	2,360	1,800*
Following—Total .. .. .	2,566+	3,651	2,458

\* Stated as "about three times the number of communicants".

Combining this information supplied by the churches and that recorded in the census, it would appear that there are nearly twice as many confirmed Christians as admitted pagans in the district, but that the bulk of the population is somewhere between the two opposing beliefs. Some 24 per cent of the total population are communicant members of the mission (including Bantu Presbyterian) churches; and 13 per cent are admitted pagans. Of the remaining three-fifths of the total population, 15 per cent profess affiliation with various separatist churches, the beliefs of some of which combine elements of the ancestor cult with Christianity; and 48 per cent profess affiliation with the mission churches. Among these latter proportions are children and youngsters baptised but not yet confirmed; but of the adults who profess affiliation with the churches, although many may attend church irregularly, others are probably no more than baptised into the denomination and live to all intents and purposes as pagans.

Further information supplied by the Anglican denomination in respect of the year 1939 shows that, of a total of 1,189 communicants, 846 were women and only 323 were men. This preponderance of

<sup>1</sup>Conducted by Miss S. Kaplan and Mrs. T. Maki.

women is revealed also in figures based on the field investigation in Upper Nqhumeya of the extent of conversion among a sample group of homestead owners and their wives :—

Extent of conversion	Men Women % of total each sex	
	Baptised and confirmed .. .. .	28.3
Baptised only .. .. .	22.0	5.8
Pagan .. .. .	49.6	26.1
Unspecified .. .. .	0.1	0.2
	100.0	100.0

Inevitably, many women converts and even some who are staunch Christians must marry pagans and neo-pagans or forgo marriage altogether. Because the men have a wider field of selection, those who are church members usually marry only women who have been converted. But among women it is usually only those of the more advanced group, the “progressives” such as teachers and nurses or daughters of ministers, teachers and clerks, who consistently marry men who are church members. Among 111 couples of the homestead owner group in Upper Nqhumeya village, wives who were confirmed, though not necessarily practising or staunch Christians, were married to pagan husbands in 26.1 per cent of the cases, and to neo-pagans, or husbands who had been no more than baptised, in 15.3 per cent of the cases. Similar proportions are revealed in the following table showing the religious affiliation, at the time of marriage, in the cases of 39 espoused couples:—

Husband's religious affiliation at time of marriage			Wife's religious affiliation at time of marriage
Confirmed	Baptised only	Pagan	
4 (10.2%)	6 (15.3%)	13 (33.3%)	Confirmed .. .. . 23
1 (2.5%)	8 (20.5%)	7 (17.9%)	Baptised only .. .. . 9
			Pagan .. .. . 7
4	14	20	39

Of 20 church members who married pagan or neo-pagan spouses, only one was a man, and among the 19 women were many staunch

Christians, some of whom had come from families of which one or both parents were staunch Christians.

Bearing in mind that the religious affiliations of the members of a homestead, such as wives or daughters-in-law, are not necessarily reflected by that of the homestead owner, and bearing in mind also that church members are not necessarily practising Christians, the following table of proportions of Christian and pagan homestead owners in the various village sections in Upper Nqhumeya gives some indication of the residential arrangements :—

Village section	Proportion of homestead owners	
	Christian	Pagan
Tolofiyeni .. .. .	66.6	33.3
Hukwini .. .. .	64.2	35.7
Madwaleni .. .. .	57.1	42.8
Ngqeleni .. .. .	40.8	59.1
Komkhulu .. .. .	35.1	64.8
Qolweni .. .. .	19.2	80.7

In some cases, the homesteads owned by Christians and pagans are intermingled; in others, clusters of Christian or pagan-owned homesteads are to be found. There is no evidence, however, that the two predominantly Christian localities, Tolofiyeni, and the Xesi hamlet in Ngqeleni, assumed their character as a result of a conscious attempt at residential segregation by Christians. Most of the members of the lineage remnants represented in these two areas are descendants of men who had lived there in the early days of the village history, and in both areas a woman of prominent family is said to have been converted to Christianity fairly early, and to have spread it among her kinsmen and neighbours. As an example of conscious Christian segregation, it is said that early in the village history of Gwili-Gwili, converts moved to the Mnandi village section where the first school was founded; today, however, there no longer remains any significant difference in the number of Christian and pagan-owned homesteads in that area.

The outward forms of Christianity hold no mysteries for pagans in the villages. Evangelists and preachers often go between the homesteads expounding their faith. Some pagans attend revival meetings and concerts in aid of church or school funds. When pagans and Christians live in the same homestead, grace before meals and evening

prayers are an accepted part of daily routine. Sunday is a day of rest for all in the village: the village council does not meet, nor do agricultural and building activities take place. Pagans celebrate Christmas by beer drinks, they ask for Christmas boxes (*ikilisimesi*) from well-to-do Christians and are usually given some small gift of food, and they are as active as Christians in smartening up their huts with new plaster and decoration in anticipation of the festive season. Pagan men marrying Christian girls frequently marry according to Christian rites, and the funeral of a pagan is presided over by an official of the church to which members of his agnatic group belong. Pagans attend the marriages, baptismal feasts and funeral services of Christians, and even join in the hymn singing on such occasions. The reaction of Christian on pagan belief and practice has been profound.

#### *Church Groupings*

Although missionaries have been at work in the district for a full century, rather less than half the adults are today confirmed members of one of the mission churches. There are, nevertheless, another three persons in five, inclusive of children, who are in varying degrees weaned from pagan beliefs, and who participate to varying extents in church activities. Potentially, therefore, voluntary association based on mutual belief in Christianity would appear to be the largest single grouping cutting across the traditional structure of the society, which is based on local, kinship and sex-age groupings. However, several factors limit the effect of Christianity on the traditional structure. The denominations with larger followings organize their members in relatively small groups according to locality, sex and age. Therefore, the traditional local and sex-age structures have been reinterpreted in the voluntary church groupings, and despite the fact that there are more women in the churches than men, the traditional law of male authority is not disrupted by the new religious groups.

Nevertheless, the formation of voluntary associations based on mutual acceptance of the doctrines of Christianity potentially undermines the principles on which the kinship structure, and to a lesser extent the local structure, are founded. The teachings of orthodox Christianity are a negation of the ancestor cult which is bound up with the kinship structure. But the degree to which the ancestor cult persists in the beliefs of the people is evidenced not only in the reluctance, even of many members of mission churches, to sever completely

from the rites associated with it,<sup>1</sup> but also in the comparatively large following of the numerous "Native Separatist Churches," which, to varying extents, combine the old cult with the new evangelism. The principle of political allegiance to headmen and subheadmen, upon which the local structure is founded, is subject to the threat of realignment of loyalties when there exist in the locality two groups of opposing religious affiliation. This is more serious among other Southern Bantu groups whose chiefs have a certain measure of autonomy and power; ascendancy in the political structure of the village is given to that group of either Christians or pagans to whose beliefs the chief or other local political authority subscribes. The Mfengu of the Ciskeian villages, however, are under a system of virtual direct rule by the European Administration and strict control of the limited powers of village authorities who are forbidden to show partisanship in the activities of the various religious bodies in the village. Consequently, the religious affiliations of the local headmen or subheadmen have little effect on the local structure, when political effectiveness is already attenuated by direct European administration.

The extent to which the kinship structure is weakened in practice by the voluntary association of Christians cutting across kinship ties, depends on the cleavage which exists between pagan and Christian kinsmen; cleavage develops to the extent that Christians refuse to take part in the activities associated with the ancestor cult, for it is in this sphere of ritual that the solidarity of the kinship group is expressed. The weakening of the local structure comes about through cleavage between Christian and pagan neighbours, and the development locally of two separate social groups. Much of the social life of pagans revolves around the brewing and consumption of beer; it is essential to their ceremonial feasts and it is the main incentive to their attendance at work parties in the neighbourhood. To the extent that Christians refuse to brew or consume beer, they exclude themselves from the social gatherings of their pagan neighbours, and develop a closer affinity with others of like tastes in social intercourse.

Christians tend to regard themselves as superior to pagans. Many, though intimate and friendly with pagan kinsmen and neighbours, scoff at their beliefs and customs, while pagans retaliate with accusations of hypocrisy revealed in the discrepancies between the teaching and practice of Christianity. The emphasis in the district is on deno-

<sup>1</sup>The ways in which Christians compromise on the rites associated with the ancestor cult are discussed in Appendix A.

minational differences, rather than common Christianity; associations are formed along denominational lines. Transfer between denominations is, however, readily made when a Christian desires association in the same church as kinsmen or neighbours. A Christian woman, for instance, who belongs to a church denomination other than that of the man she is to marry, customarily becomes a member of his church. If she is marrying a pagan, she transfers to the church to which members of his agnatic group belong since she will be living among her husband's people. Thus the male members of a lineage remnant, their wives and children, when they are converted Christians, tend to belong to the same church. Exceptions do, however, occur when doctrinal differences are felt to be more important than association in the same church with neighbouring kinsmen. The lineage remnant thus includes, besides pagans, members usually of one church, less frequently of two churches, and very rarely of three different churches.

Since all the mission churches organize the religious and social activities of their members along fairly similar lines, there is a certain degree of familiarity between the different church groups in the same locality. Members of one church may attend the services and meetings of another denomination, and in social activities there is even formal co-operation between the different church groups on certain occasions,<sup>1</sup> as well as informal mutual assistance among the women in helping to prepare refreshments.<sup>2</sup> Leaders of local church groups usually invite one another to attend the meetings and special occasions of their churches.<sup>3</sup>

Church groupings, like kinship groupings, cut across village, and even district, boundaries. The local congregation may coincide with the village, but it may also include church members from two or three neighbouring villages. Moreover, in villages where groups of members live some distance apart, there may even be two or more congregations of the same church. For instance, in Gwili-Gwili

<sup>1</sup>The exception is the Anglican church, which remains more aloof from the others. Unlike other denominations, its Women's Association, for instance, does not formally invite the Associations of other churches to attend its revival meetings.

<sup>2</sup>Elderly informants agreed that even when the women of the different churches were friendly, such assistance was very much less frequently given than in the past, the young women particularly being much less willing to assist than they had been a generation ago.

<sup>3</sup>On one occasion, when the Methodist Church was to hold a revival meeting in Upper Nqhumeya, one of the elders of the Bantu Presbyterian Church complained of feeling unwell; he insisted, however, on attending because he had been invited, explaining that if he stayed away it would be said: "These Bantu Presbyterians are becoming too big (self important) to attend our affairs."

the Anglican and Baptist Churches each have one congregation, and the Methodist Church two congregations. In Upper Nqhumeya the Bantu Presbyterian and the Free Churches each have one congregation and the Methodists have two, one of which is known as the "Church of the Poor" and includes a few members who claim that they are too poor to buy suitable clothing in which to attend church, so they form a separate congregation holding services in the homestead of one of its members. While most of the Baptists in Upper Nqhumeya form part of the Baptist congregation in the neighbouring village of Rabula, there is a very small congregation of the church in the Xesi hamlet, which lies on the opposite side of the village from Rabula. Members of the Anglican Church belong to congregations of their church in neighbouring villages.

There are usually two or three times as many adherents in the congregation as communicants, or confirmed church members. The main activity of the congregation is to meet for worship at Sunday services, either in a homestead or in the school building belonging to the church or in the church edifice, if the members have been able to afford the erection of a separate hut or rectangular brick building.<sup>1</sup> Church services are conducted by the minister, or by an evangelist or pastor who is often a local school teacher, and Sunday school is held for the children of the congregation. From among the church members in the congregation, Sunday school teachers, elders and other dignitaries are chosen to assist the minister or pastor in his church work. The priest, minister, or pastor officiates at the baptisms of children and marriages and funerals of members of his congregation or neighbouring congregations which have no ordained leader.

In addition to baptismal and marriage feasts given by parents, the opening of a new church or concerts in aid of church or school funds are important festive and social occasions for the congregation. Attendance at these social occasions is not confined to members of the church, but although Christians of other denominations and pagan friends and relatives may attend, the occasion is essentially a social gathering of the church groups concerned, and the preparations are organised by the group, or individual members of the group. For the frequent concerts which are held in aid of church or school funds, various officials will be elected or appointed from among the congregation concerned: a chairman who will act as master of cere-

<sup>1</sup>The Anglicans require a separate consecrated building for worship, but the other churches in the villages worship in any convenient building.

monies on the occasion, a secretary to list all financial contributions, messengers to advertise the event and invite choirs from schools in the village and in neighbouring villages to provide the singing entertainment, and door-keepers to control the audience on the night of the concert. The women of the congregation concerned are responsible for preparing and contributing towards the refreshments.

Concerts take place overnight, and refreshments are served as the evening wears on, and again early in the morning. Most of the food which is provided is bought on credit from the trading stores and paid for out of the proceeds of the concert. Each choir member pays an entrance fee of 3d., or 6d. in the case of an adult. The entrance money of the members of the church concerned is usually collected beforehand, and the audience is required to make contributions "to open the bag," that is, to have the amount of the collection disclosed to them, and their own generosity announced to the gathering. Proceedings begin and close with hymns and prayers. The choirs, led by their teachers, provide the entertainment by singing traditional songs, and also songs that are a mixture of Xhosa and English, and are accompanied by stilted dance motions. After the first round of choir singing, members of the audience are expected to contribute to hear their favoured choirs perform again. Sums such as 1d. or 3d. are usually bid, but an amount of 1/- to 2/-, contributed usually by a teacher, wins a hearty round of applause. The greatest prestige accrues to the choir which receives the most financial support. A net balance of £4 to £5 remaining after the refreshments have been paid for is regarded as evidence of a very successful night.

The communicant members from among the congregation of each of the mission churches are organized into voluntary associations, on the basis of sex and age. Since there are two to three times as many females as males among communicant members, Women's and Girls' Associations are more widespread than Men's and Young Men's Associations. The latter have either never been established in many of the congregations, or they have been abandoned because of lack of interest and support. The associations vary considerably in size, depending not only on the enthusiasm of church members but on the numbers of church members in the local congregation. It is only if there are not enough members in either of the congregations, that two congregations of the same church in a village will combine in forming an association for one sex-age category of their members. Otherwise, each congregation has its own associations.

The Girls' Association comes under the general supervision of the Women's Association of that congregation, and likewise the Young Men's Association would fall under the supervision of the Men's Association. Some denominations, for example, the Bantu Presbyterian, do not require their young people to have been confirmed before joining the associations, but they are required to serve a probationary period, usually six months, before being admitted to full membership in the associations. The serving of a probationary period is also required of adults confirmed in the Bantu Presbyterian Church, but in other denominations, such as the Methodist, confirmation as church members is sufficient qualification for admission to the associations. Each branch association has its own annually elected committee, composed of a chairman, secretary and treasurer, which, in the adult associations, considers all applications for membership. The supervision over the young people may be exercised by the members of the Women's Association electing one of their number as chairman of the Girls' Association, and the committee of the Women's Association considering applications for membership in the Girls' Association. Applications for membership are considered by the appropriate committee on the basis of the applicant's behaviour and regular attendance at divine service and meetings. Admission to membership is marked, among the women in particular, by permission to wear the distinctive uniform of the Association.<sup>1</sup>

The aims of all the associations are similar: they seek to promote the habit of prayer and Bible study among members, in order to foster Christian behaviour both in the home and the community; to encourage a missionary spirit and effort in raising funds for missionary work and other church needs; and to provide occasions for people of like convictions and interests to meet together. In encouraging religious habits, the association works locally and arranges prayer meetings among its own members. In the missionary work and raising of funds, the association takes a lead in organizing the congregation, and holding concerts for the people of the locality.

Typical of the wider group activities of the churches are the meetings of the Women's Association of the Bantu Presbyterian Church.

<sup>1</sup>Admission to full membership in the Women's and Girls' Associations is usually termed "joining for a blouse." As an example of the types of uniforms, that of the Bantu Presbyterian Women's Association consists of a black skirt (material costs approximately 20/- to 25/-), a white blouse (material 12/-) and a black doek (material 6/6). Shoes need not be worn. A black alpaca shawl or a blanket "to give respect" (*ukublonipha*) completes the costume. Members of the Bantu Presbyterian Girls' Association wear black skirts, white blouses and white caps.

Chief among these are revival meetings (*imjekelo*), which take place quarterly. They involve women of the congregations in Mthwaku, Gxulu, Chatha, Wolf River, Rabula, Upper and Lower Nqhumeya and in the Keiskammahoeke municipal area. The other two villages, Mbems and Burnshill, in which there are congregations of the Bantu Presbyterian Church, combine on this occasion with women of some of the villages in the neighbouring district of Middledrift. The revival meeting is held in turn in each of the villages where there is a comparatively large Bantu Presbyterian following. The members of the local branch of the Women's Association in the village where the meeting is being held act as hosts of the occasion. They contribute food, arrange the slaughter of a goat for meat, purchase additional foodstuffs on credit from the trading store, and prepare all the refreshments, with the assistance sometimes of friends of other denominations. Elders of the local congregation of the Bantu Presbyterian Church not only contribute towards the cost of the feast, but attend the meeting, together with other men of the congregation. If there are local branches of the Men's, Young Men's or Girls' Associations of the Bantu Presbyterian Church, the members may attend the meeting and bring contributions. Representatives from Women's Associations of other denominations in the locality are formally invited to attend. Unless a minister presides over the meeting, one of the elders of the local congregation will do so, and he will be seated with the three committee members of the local Women's Association. The local treasurer is responsible for gathering in all the contributions and the secretary for listing them.

It is customary, on such occasions, for the Central Committee of the Women's Association of the Bantu Presbyterian Church in the district to make a grant from central funds of about 30/- towards the cost of the refreshments. All net proceeds from the revival meeting will be paid into this fund. The treasurer of each of the Women's Associations from the various congregations involved in the meeting is responsible for collecting beforehand a subscription of 1/- from each member. These contributions are presented by the respective treasurers at the chairman's table during the course of the meeting. The representatives of Women's Associations of other denominations bring contributions from their fellow members. Contributions from others attending the meeting usually bring the net proceeds to a total of something over £5.

Contingents from other villages begin to arrive during the afternoon, announcing their approach with lusty hymn singing. By sunset, most of the visitors will have arrived, and the feast is served by the young women of the local branch of the association. A hut is normally set aside for the committee members of the various branches of the association who are present, and they are joined by leading men of the congregation. Seated at a table, these people receive individual helpings of food. The other women present usually crowd together on the floors of three or four huts, and groups of them share food from communal dishes. The proceedings of the revival meeting commence with hymns and prayers and the reading of the Biblical text for the night. Everyone present is entitled either to pray or to preach. Shortly after sunrise the meeting is terminated with a hymn and a prayer and food is served before everyone disperses.

Similar to the revival meeting, but on a smaller scale, are the quarterly committee meetings, which involve the committee members of the same branches of the Women's Association as combine to hold revival meetings.

The group activities of churches or religious societies other than the mission churches are of minor significance in the district. Many of the independent congregations lack any wider association with church groups from other localities; many are ephemeral. It was found, for example, that in both the villages of Gwili-Gwili and Upper Nqhumeya, there were a few members of the Thwathwa, the Sigxaßaya or *ibandla likaKrestu*, and the African Congregational churches, the latter being an independent sect recognised by the Government. These churches had, however, failed for some time to attract new members or even to retain their existing membership. Services were no longer held and some of the former members had joined other churches in the villages. Miscellaneous European-inspired movements also operate in the district. For instance, in Upper Nqhumeya, the Truth Society of the Bible Watch Tower Movement, introduced by a zealous convert and his wife, has a small following of four men and seven women, whose gatherings usually turn into heated, if friendly, discussions on points of doctrine.

More significant are the activities of the True Templars Association, a European-inspired freemasonry, semi-religious in character and devoted to encouraging temperance. Lodges of the association are formed in several of the villages, drawing their membership from among the various churches. The association thus serves as a link

between denominations, founded on a common standard of social conduct. Weekly meetings are held in turn at the different churches in the village, and representatives are sent to attend the annual conference of the association.

The community of interests and beliefs between members of a church, besides providing an alternative basis for group co-operation to kinship and locality, provides also a new basis for informal co-operation outside the sphere of church activities. The community of interests fosters the growth of cliques. This form of grouping is much more prevalent among women than among men. It usually consists of some six or seven church women of similar age status, who find one another personally congenial and live in fairly close proximity. Members of the clique tend to assist one another with household tasks, agricultural work and various economic undertakings, and to feature prominently in assistance at each other's festive occasions.

## B—SCHOOL

### *School Education in the District*

According to the 1946 population census, there are in the district 3,182 males and 3,347 females between the ages of 6 and 18 years inclusive, or a total of approximately 6,500 African children of these school-going ages. The education survey<sup>1</sup> covers approximately 2,800 school pupils, but there is no means of estimating how many of the remaining 3,700 children in the district do not attend school at all, and how many school children were excluded from the returns. If the village school in Upper Nqhumeya is taken as representative,<sup>2</sup> then figures which were compiled with the assistance of the principal of that school indicate that two-thirds of the children in the village are enrolled and one-third have never attended school. On this basis,

<sup>1</sup>The main data upon which this account is based were obtained through questionnaires sent to the principals and teachers of the village schools in the Keiskammahok District, and to the parents of pupils. Twenty-three of the 27 schools sent in information. Answers to the questions were, however, so imperfect that the analysis cannot be regarded as at all comprehensive, but merely as a general indication of the village schools in the district and the education which they afford to the African people.

The questionnaires were sent out in 1949 by the Bureau for Educational Research of the Union Education Department. Analysis of the returns was made by Professor D. Morton of the Education Department of Rhodes University.

<sup>2</sup>This village was the only one in which fieldworkers, Miss Kaplan and Mrs. Maki, secured first-hand information. It is doubtful, however, whether Upper Nqhumeya is representative of any but the more conservative villages in the north of the district. In the southern part of the district the people tend to be more sophisticated, and it is known that, in Burnshill village in particular, there is a high enrolment of children at schools.

and judging by the total number of 27 schools in the district, it would appear that the education survey covers between four- and five-sixths of all village school education in the district. The analyses given here are based, for the most part, on 23 village schools, 77 teachers, 2,809 pupils and roughly 400 parents of pupils, although in some cases the base is reduced even further because of incomplete answers to questionnaires. In presenting this account, therefore, the reader is asked to bear in mind these statistical shortcomings, and is also reminded of the important fact that, on such matters as the literacy of parents and other members of the family, the distance of schools from children's homes and reasons for irregular attendance at school, the survey entirely excludes anything up to one-third of the people who have nothing whatever to do with village school education, who do not send their children to school and have not been questioned on their reasons therefor.

School education was introduced into the district by the missionaries. The first was the Rev. James Laing of the Glasgow Missionary Society, who opened a school in Burnshill in 1831 when the Nqyika-Xhosa were still in occupation of the area. Today there are altogether 27 primary schools in the district,<sup>1</sup> operated by the following churches:—

Bantu Presbyterian	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11
Anglican	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Methodist	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Free Church of Scotland	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Independent Church	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
United Church	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Congregational Church	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Unknown	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1

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27  
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In each village in the district, with the exception of Dontsa,<sup>2</sup> there is at least one school, and there may be up to two or three in a village. Attendance at school is voluntary, and a child may enrol

<sup>1</sup>There is also one secondary school, St. Matthew's College, which is mainly a boarding school, run by the Anglican Mission.

<sup>2</sup>In this village, some four-fifths of the land is under forest, and the population is relatively sparse and scattered. On its south-west boundaries lie the village of Nqolo-Nqolo, Mthwaku and Gwili-Gwili, where school facilities are available to the Dontsa residents.

at any school which is accessible, even if it be in a village other than the one in which he or she resides.

The typical school is an aided mission school with buildings and furniture provided either by the mission, or acquired with the aid of local funds, and with teachers' salaries paid by the Cape Education Department; it is subject to periodic inspection by an official of the Education Department; classes are conducted in two rooms for some 100 pupils whose ages range from 6 to 19 years. All the village schools are elementary or primary schools, offering no more than an eight-year course up to Standard 6. About one-third of the schools take their pupils up to this latter standard, and the bulk of the remainder go to Standard 4, one school stopping at the intermediate Standard 5. A few schools, however, remain very elementary indeed, offering as little as three years of schooling, up to Standard I only. Thus the standard of education offered is at or below, and in some instances well below, that reached by the average 12-13-year-old-European child, who is educated under a system of compulsory school attendance.

By and large, the tendency in the village communities is for Christians to be more educated than pagans. Not only do relatively more Christians enrol in the schools, but their period of attendance is longer. While it has proved impossible to analyse the reasons which motivate people in acquiring an education, probably because they have never formulated the reasons in their own minds, it would appear that the vast majority go to school merely to achieve literacy.<sup>1</sup> Those who do not go to school at all (and the majority of these are pagans) apparently have no desire to acquire even a bare ability to read and write. Although most parents assented to suggested reasons for sending their children to school as giving them a broader outlook on life and a better chance of employment, the number who acquire a standard of education which could be considered as actually conferring those benefits is something less than a quarter of the school-going population. Those who proceed from the village schools to secondary schools and to a standard of education which qualifies them for clerical, or teaching, or other professional employment, comprise barely 10 per cent of the school-going population.

<sup>1</sup>An African woman who had taught school in the district for a considerable time explained in the following terms how literacy is usually gauged: "A boy is told to write a letter to a member of the family working in Johannesburg. When the answer comes and he can read it, showing thereby that what he wrote was understood, his parents are very proud. They say 'My son can read and write. He has now had enough schooling'."

There is a very definite preponderance of girls at village schools; more girls attend and their period of attendance is longer than that of boys.<sup>1</sup> However, this relatively better education of girls is not carried over into the secondary schools, for as many boys as girls go on to acquire a higher education, and teachers in the village schools in the district, for instance, are almost equally distributed between the sexes.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, it can be inferred that there is no positive intention to give girls a better education than boys at the village schools, but that it is less inconvenient for daughters to be at school than for sons.

The economic duties of boys afford less opportunity for school attendance. For instance, half the parents of school-going children named, among various reasons for keeping their children away from school, ploughing and herding duties, which are performed by boys. These reasons undoubtedly account in very large measure for a number of boys never attending school at all, for they are essential tasks not easily performed by any alternative member of the family. By comparison, less than a quarter of the parents of school-going children named as a reason for keeping children away from school the duty of assisting with nursing or otherwise looking after babies and young children, and considerably less than half named assistance with weeding as a reason. Neither of these duties, which are performed by girls, can be regarded as so indispensable as to prevent girls from attending school altogether. The reason most frequently given by parents for a child's absence, was the lack of local events on a child's or parent's attention. However, such events normally occur infrequently and last for only short periods; there are no lengthy distractions for girls in such events; on the other hand, the boys tend to spend most of their time during the winter hanging around the lodges of the circumcision candidates (*abakbwetha*) who undergo the male initiation ceremonies.<sup>3</sup> The teachers in the district are agreed that attendance of boys falls off markedly during these two or three months every winter. Finally, although migration to the towns for employment during their late teens is almost as general among girls as boys,<sup>4</sup> those

<sup>1</sup>As an example, the attendance records at the village school in Upper Nqhumeya during the last quarter of 1948 revealed the following, in respect of all those of school-going age in the village:

Attending school . . . . .	110 girls	47 boys
Previously attended school . . . . .	8 "	35 "
Never attended school . . . . .	25 "	75 "

<sup>2</sup>Of 77 teachers in the district, 40 are men and 37 women.

<sup>3</sup>Vide the account of Male initiation, Appendix B.

<sup>4</sup>For discussion on the extent of male and female migrations, vide *The Economy of a Native Reserve*, Vol. II

who go out voluntarily to seek industrial or domestic employment do so normally after they have already finished with school and achieved a literacy and knowledge of English sufficient to give themselves confidence of finding employment. Active recruitment by the Native Recruiting Corporation within the district of male labour for the Rand gold mines gives to boys alone the assurance of an avenue of employment which requires no vestige of education. All these factors combine to give boys less opportunity and less incentive to attend school merely for the purpose of achieving literacy.

Among the parents of school-going children, it is significant that, while 30 per cent of the fathers stated definitely that they had never attended school, the proportion of similarly illiterate mothers was only 20 per cent. Of those parents who did attend school, 17 per cent of the fathers, as compared with four per cent of the mothers, had a mere two years of schooling to their credit; including these, 51 per cent of the fathers and only 37 per cent of the mothers barely achieved literacy, if a state of minimum literacy is assumed to be represented by Standard 3. Given the conditions of their rural environment, the lack of books of any sort in the average home, and the purely manual labour in which the barely literate African is employed in urban areas, it is doubtful whether this modicum of literacy is actually retained.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, it can be estimated that about 70 per cent of fathers and 50 per cent of mothers of school-going children are either illiterate, or have probably lapsed back into illiteracy.

No analysis by sex is available for the present school-going generation, but since the tendency persists for more girls than boys to attend schools and for longer periods, the relative difference in educational attainments of the sexes is probably not much changed since the days of their parents. It would appear, on the other hand, that, taken together, members of the present school-going generation are distinctly more literate than their parents, according to information supplied by the parents themselves.<sup>2</sup> Comparison of this

<sup>1</sup>It should be remembered that, during the late war, it was found that even in relatively well educated societies, such as Britain, an appreciable number of the people had lapsed back into illiteracy in adolescence, if they had had no need or opportunity to exercise the capacities that the school had given them.

<sup>2</sup>Caution is advised in accepting the statistics as more than a mere indication, however. The figures here are based on replies given by parents to questionnaires. Comparison with figures of actual enrolment of pupils at schools, which were furnished by teachers, shows distinct discrepancy, and suggests that the parents have either forgotten the educational achievements of their older children, have entered the findings carelessly, or have tried to make out their families to be better educated than in fact they are.

information is presented in the following table showing the proportions of children presently at school, of their older siblings and of their parents, who are in each standard or who left school at that standard:—

	Sub A, Sub B	St. 1, St. 2, St. 3	St. 4, St. 5	St. 6	Higher
Fathers ..	17	34	40	7	2
Mothers ..	4	33	44	19	0
Siblings ..	3 3	10 11 12½	10 13		
	6	33½	23	25	12½
School pupils ..	18 9	13 11 16	10 8		
	27	40	18	8	7

Fully 75 per cent of the families profess to have no one of the present generation over eight years of age unable to read and write, and of the 25 per cent who admit the presence of illiteracy, more than half have only one illiterate member. Only one-fifth of the families confessing illiteracy have three or more illiterate members. It would thus appear that, if a family decides to send a child to school, it probably eventually sends all its children to school. Although no data are available from families who send no child to school (and among whom illiteracy is probably much greater) it would appear from the partial data afforded that, not counting the parents, families are generally literate or illiterate as a whole. Higher certificates, indicating educational or professional achievements, are not at all common: in about 8 per cent of the families, some member or another holds a Teacher's Certificate, and in 2 per cent an Agricultural Certificate.

This admission by parents of minimal literacy among the majority of the people is more than substantiated by information obtained directly from the teachers regarding pupils presently attending the village schools. An insight is also given into the crowding and inadequacy of facilities at the schools, which must serve in no small measure to retard the people's enthusiasm for securing an education.

The table hereunder shows the number of pupils of each year of age in the eight classes from Sub A to Standard 6 in all the village schools combined:—

Age years	Standard								Total	per cent
	Sub A	Sub B	1	2	3	4	5	6		
6 and under	219	9	2						230	8.2
7-8	<b>277</b>	100	13						390	13.9
8-9	200	98	35	8	1				342	12.2
9-10	104	<b>85</b>	103	16	24				332	11.8
10-11	72	76	<b>82</b>	64	32				<b>326</b>	11.6
11-12	26	19	91	<b>95</b>	62	26	5		324	11.6
12-13	13	19	67	62	<b>48</b>	37	12		258	9.2
13-14	7	10	18	31	31	<b>43</b>	11	16	167	5.9
14-15	4	11	17	27	40	19	<b>49</b>	28	195	6.9
15-16		3	5	11	22	40	19	<b>17</b>	117	4.2
16-17	3	1	1	8	7	11	27	27	85	3.0
17-18		1		2	3	1	2	12	21	0.7
18-19		1			2	1	3	6	13	0.5
19 and over					1			8	9	0.3
Totals ..	925	433	<b>434</b>	324	273	178	128	114	2,809	100.0
Per cent	33	15	15	12	10	6	5	4	100.0	

Note: Figures in heavy type contain the median.

It is evident from the foregoing table that half the pupils at all the schools combined are in the first two years of schooling, namely the two lowest classes, Sub A and Sub B. Of the total eight classes, the lowest four contain three-fourths of all the pupils. Only 15 per cent of the pupils can be said to have achieved adequate literacy, having passed Standard 3. The educational attainments of the African teachers, though low by European standards, are well in advance of the pupils. Although one teacher has not attained Standard 6, the remainder are educated up to or beyond this standard: two-fifths have gone no higher than Standard 6, as many have taken the Junior Certificate (Standard 8) and one-fifth of the teachers have taken Matriculation (Standard 10). All the teachers are proficient in Xhosa, and nearly three-fourths have also a speaking knowledge of English; less than 5 per cent know Afrikaans, and only one or two know any other Bantu language. Instruction is given through the medium of either Xhosa or English or, more frequently, through both.

Although the median ages of the pupils in each class show an advance of one year in between each progressive standard, they are, on the whole, about two years older than the average European in corresponding classes. Furthermore, ranges of age difference in the same class in the village school are immense. The African child is

often just beginning his schooling when the European is ending his. Pupils enrol in the school at almost any age from six onwards. In Sub A, the first year of schooling, one-quarter of the pupils are nine years of age or over, and Sub B contains pupils of every age from 6 to 18. Similar conditions pertain in all the classes, a range of four years in no case including more than 75 per cent of the pupils in any class, with the exception only of Sub A, where 88 per cent of the pupils are between six and ten years.

Taken all round, the numbers of pupils allotted to each teacher are far in excess of that found in European schools. The table below shows the incidence of pupils among a group of teachers:—

<i>Number of pupils per teacher</i>	<i>Incidence</i>
Under 30	11
30-34	9
35-39	5
40-44	11
45-49	8
50-54	9
55-59	7
60-64	3
65-69	1
70-74	5
75-79	1
93	1

Although eleven teachers have less than 30 pupils, as many have classes totalling 60 or more, one having allegedly 93 pupils. The number of classes assigned to each teacher, and the conditions under which the classes are conducted, afford additional evidence of the poor quality of village school education. Only one-third of the teachers take a single class, half the teachers having responsibility for two classes; of the remainder, six teachers take three classes, eight have as many as four classes to instruct, and two teachers take five classes apiece. If, along with this, is considered the fact that one-quarter of the teachers have to share a classroom with a colleague, it is manifest that very rarely indeed does an African teacher have a single class in a room to himself.

With few exceptions, the village school is entirely dreary in appearance, consisting of nothing but one or more plain and unadorned

buildings on grounds unfenced and completely barren of any vegetation. The buildings are purely functional, being used solely as classrooms, although at one school there is also an assembly hall, and most of the schools have accessory accommodation—a kitchen or store hut used for the school feeding scheme. The classrooms are contained in rectangular brick buildings or wattle and daub rondavel huts, or both; roofs are of corrugated iron and sometimes of thatch, and the floors are more often of beaten earth than of wood. Water, heating, and latrines are, with rare exceptions, entirely absent. Three schools have no water supply whatsoever, about two-thirds of the schools depend upon a nearby river, a few have springs, but only one has a tank to supply drinking water. Ninety per cent of the schools have nothing in the way of lavatory or latrine, and as great a proportion have absolutely no heating facilities. Only about one-sixth of the schools have their grounds enclosed within a fence of barbed wire or branches and aloes, and less than one-quarter have any type of tree whatsoever in the vicinity.

In the majority of cases, buildings and land of the village school have been provided by churches. About three-quarters of the school buildings and half the sites are owned by churches. The other school buildings are Government owned, as are some of the properties. The village councils do not own buildings, but they have made as many sites available for schools as has the Government. In isolated instances, the South African Native Trust and private individuals have provided the school sites. Most of the buildings have been erected within the past 25 years, although a few date back as far as 1860. They were erected by the missions or by the people of the village themselves, extensions usually being made with funds raised by the missions in various ways and by the village councils from among the local residents.<sup>1</sup> The number of classrooms in each school is insufficient to allow all teachers a room to themselves. Half the schools have two classrooms there are some of only one; and others of up to five. On the other hand, there are two teachers at just over half the schools and up to seven teachers in the larger schools, and it would appear that at least one-quarter of the teachers have to share a classroom with a colleague.

<sup>1</sup>For example, a new rectangular brick building was recently added to the existing three huts composing the school in Upper Nqhumeya village, which is owned by the Bantu Presbyterian Church. Funds were raised by concerts and from a village council levy of 2/- on every male adult in the village.

Classroom equipment is entirely deficient. There are desks for only about 44 per cent of the pupils at all schools; no school has enough, the shortfall varying from less than one-fourth to about four-fifths of the total number required. Those pupils without desks may have forms to sit on, but in only one or two schools are all the pupils seated at desks or on forms. Of all pupils at the schools, about one-third have no seating other than the floor. Chairs for teachers are entirely absent in half the schools, and in the remainder there are not sufficient to allow one for each teacher or for each classroom. Tables are also lacking in half the schools, while at the others there are no more than two tables in each. There are no cupboards at all in about one-fifth of the schools, and half the schools have one solitary cupboard, the remainder having up to five.

Although facilities for extra-curricular activities are extremely sparse, about two-thirds of the schools contrive to organize sports, even if they have no fields, and half the schools offer facilities for a small variety of other extra-curricular activity. Although there are games fields at only one-third of the schools, as many again organize sport somewhere within their grounds. Football and netball are the most common, but rounders, cricket, tenniquoits and even tennis are also offered in isolated instances. Grounds being fenced at scarcely one school in every six, these are the only ones able to arrange for the cultivation of vegetable gardens by the children. Some form of handiwork, usually with locally produced and inexpensive materials, is offered at half the schools: woodwork at one school in four, needlework at one school in eight, weaving with rushes and fibres at quite a number, and clay modelling at a few of the schools.

In the main, the schools are reasonably accessible to the village residents. Of those children who do attend village schools, 30 per cent live within a quarter of a mile, and 27 per cent live from one-quarter to half a mile distant from school. About 23 per cent live between one and two miles away, and the remaining 20 per cent live more than two miles from their school. It is probable that, included among the latter are children who attend distant schools in other villages, either because a higher standard of education is offered there than at the local school,<sup>1</sup> or because the local school is run by a church

<sup>1</sup>For example, in the Upper Nqhumeya village school in 1948 there were half a dozen children in Standards 5 and 6 whose homes were in neighbouring villages where the schools took pupils only up to Standard 4.

of which they are not adherents, and their parents choose to send them to a more distant school run by the church of their faith.

### *School Groupings*

It has been shown that school education was first introduced into the district by missionaries about a century ago, and that even today the majority of the village schools are run by churches; the result is that education is closely bound up with Christianity.<sup>1</sup> However, pagans, far from being excluded from school activities, are not infrequently found to be as enthusiastic supporters of education in the community as Christians. People fall into three broad categories: there are those who are entirely illiterate, who take no interest in education at all and do not send their children to school, and the majority of these are pagans; there is the bulk of the community, including both pagans and Christians, whose interest in school education is limited to the achievement of bare literacy, or the modicum of elementary education which is offered at the village schools; and finally there is the minority of the community, usually staunch Christians and including the teachers at the village schools, who regard themselves as "progressives," and whose standard of education is usually advanced beyond that of the village schools, having been acquired at the one secondary school in the district, St. Matthew's College, or further afield.

Led by the progressives, the literate community in each village strives in varying degrees to encourage school education. As a rule, each village has a School Committee<sup>2</sup> responsible for encouraging school attendance, as well as for representing the community in regard to such matters related to the school as finding accommodation for teachers, and approving the use of school buildings for concerts or other community functions. Such Committees are normally elected by the members of the village council, and tenure of office is

<sup>1</sup>In the analysis made of school education in the District, the following facts about the families of pupils presently attending school gave some indication of the extent of Christianity among those attending school:—

- (a) Of all the children's homes, only 51 per cent contain any books at all; 14 per cent of the homes have a Bible, 20 per cent contain hymnbooks or other religious books, and the remaining 17 per cent have various children's or unclassified books.
- (b) Of all the families of school-going children, just over 50 per cent profess to have some member actively associated with church societies.

<sup>2</sup>In Upper Nqhumeya village in 1949, for instance, the Committee consisted of 7 members, of whom 3 were pagans, 3 were members of the Bantu Prebyterian Church which runs the school, and one was a member of the Methodist Church.

indefinite, or for as long as the incumbent performs his duties satisfactorily. Since the results of the annual inspection of the local schools by the Cape Education Department Inspector are reported to the committee, it is able to exercise general vigilance over school education on behalf of the village community.

In some villages, the committees meet frequently and perform their duties conscientiously, in others they are all but defunct and come together only when there is a special matter requiring their attention. Varying conscientiousness of the village communities and their school committees is reflected not only in the regularity of attendance of enrolled pupils, but in the proportion of village children enrolled at the schools. Analysis of average daily attendance records at about five-sixths of the schools in the district showed a variation from over 90 per cent in one or two schools to under 50 per cent in the poorest. Similarly, in the proportion of children who are enrolled at schools there is wide variation from one community to another: in Burnshill village, for example, where school education has been the longest established in the district, the people are relatively sophisticated, and almost all their children are sent to school; in the more remote villages in the northern part of the district, as many as one child in every three may never be sent to school at all. Demarcation between villages, which was originally founded on political allegiance to headmen or leaders of kinship groups, tends to become accentuated when differences exist in earning capacity, culture, values and aspirations, as betokened by different levels of school education achieved in the communities.

Within each village community, too, differing interests based on educational attainments tend to the establishment of status groupings, which cut across the traditional groupings based on sex and age. It has been found, on analysis, that families tend to be illiterate or literate as a whole, that if parents send one child to school they eventually send all their children. On the other hand, the indications are that the present generation of school-going children are considerably more literate than their parents. Thus, interests as developed by school education are not likely to cause cleavage among siblings, but tend to undermine the traditional respect of youth for age and the subservience of children to their parents. It has been found, too, that among the minimally literate, females are more highly educated than males, and this tends to weaken the dominance of men in the patrilineal society.

The illiterate in the community tend to form a group with mutual interests and conservative outlook. As boys, they will have played and fought together while herding stock, at a time when many of their contemporaries were attending school. As youths, they are recruited from the village, in groups, by the Native Recruiting Corporation, for work on the gold mines, and, not having had their awareness developed by education, their experiences while away on tours of work do little to alter their conservatism. In the villages their social interests centre around beer drinks and the festivities of pagan ritual and ceremonies.

On the other hand, the people with some education prefer to seek employment in industries rather than the mines and, having had their perceptibilities sharpened by education, they are usually greatly influenced by the experiences of town life. If, for instance, they have received harsh treatment from European employers or authorities, or have come under the influence of political organizations in the urban areas, they return to the village prepared to promote vigorous opposition to European authority and established conservatism. These semi-educated people, even though they may be baptised and confirmed Christians, are not always regular church attenders, and may, in varying extent, be assimilated with pagans whom they sometimes marry. At this level of partial education, the group among whom they find a social community of interests depends less upon educational attainments than upon the direction in which they develop their religious leanings.

The more highly educated people usually find employment locally or abroad as teachers, nurses, clerks, ministers, agricultural demonstrators or in other relatively highly paid occupation or profession. They tend to educate their children as well or better than themselves, so that greater wealth, which is one of the main factors maintaining higher standards of education, thus tends in turn to be perpetuated by it. The relative wealth and professional occupations of the "progressives" gives them the status in the community of "important people" (*abantu abakhulu*), irrespective of their age.<sup>1</sup> They find a community of interest with others in the village and tend

<sup>1</sup>On the average, the progressives would appear to be relatively young. As an example, the median age of 77 teachers in the district, at the time an analysis was made in 1949, was 30 years of age. The incidence of quinquennial age groups among the teachers was as follows:—

20—24 years of age .. ..	18 teachers	40—44 years of age .. ..	3 teachers
25—29 " " " " .. ..	21 " "	45—49 " " " " .. ..	10 " "
30—34 " " " " .. ..	11 " "	50—54 " " " " .. ..	5 " "
35—39 " " " " .. ..	6 " "	55—59 " " " " .. ..	5 " "

to marry people holding similar status: they attend church regularly, their main social interests centre around church activities, and their group usually includes the ministers and other leaders of church activities. For instance, it was found on analysis that half the school teachers in the district are actively engaged in church activities: nearly 30 per cent assist with Sunday school, no less than 15 per cent are pastors, and 5 per cent profess to do church work. Among "progressives" there is usually a greater acceptance of innovations, such as scientific farming practices, and also a higher standard of living reflected in better cared for homesteads, greater cleanliness, a greater abundance of European material goods and furnishings, and smarter European clothing.

Apart from education, the activities centering around the village schools themselves are not very numerous or extensive. The ages of the children at each school vary within such a wide range, from six years of age to 19 or over, that group activities, particularly at the smaller schools, are difficult to organize. However, virtually all schools participate in the school feeding scheme, which is financed by the Cape Education Department. Until the beginning of 1949, each school operated its own school feeding account into which money, based on a grant of 2d. a day for a child was paid. A school feeding committee, under the chairmanship of the school principal and including various members of the school committee, was responsible for purchasing food and supervising its distribution at the kitchen operated by the school. Because that system was open to considerable abuse, the financial operation of the scheme has been consolidated for the district as a whole, although the distribution of food is still supervised by the local school feeding committees. The school feeding money is now controlled by a central committee of three Europeans and three African ministers; school principles are given orders on local trading stores for the supplies required by their schools. The only other appreciable group activity of the schools is the organization of sports for the children. At about two-thirds of the schools, football and netball are played, and in isolated instances cricket, rounders, tenniquoits and even tennis are organized. The cultivation of school vegetable gardens by the children is possible only at those few schools which have their grounds enclosed by a fence. The organization of scouts and girl guides at the schools is not very common, judging by the fact that only about one teacher in eight takes part in this activity.

The small influence of accessory school activities in the social life of the community can be gauged from the numbers of families of school-going children who have some member or another associated with various organizations or societies of European introduction. About 15 per cent of the families have associations with the Red Cross, sometimes two or three members of the family taking part; about 6 per cent of the families are connected with farmer's associations; 5 per cent of the families have some member associated with scouts or guides; and sports clubs are supported by about 5 per cent of the families. As these proportions are exclusive of the illiterate families, or those who have no children at school, and who probably take little part in such activities, it can be seen that such social groupings are numerically insignificant in the society. However, their educational influence is of no little importance in the changing society.

#### C—RECREATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Besides churches and schools there are secular associations constituted by boys and girls of one age category, who find one another congenial, and who gather for recreation. In these associations males are dominant. They manage the affairs of the associations and are chiefly responsible for their financial support, whereas the girls who participate do so in the capacity of admirers and supporters of the boys roughly contemporary in age. Boys belong to these associations from the age of about 12 years until they lose interest in the activities. This usually occurs when marriage and its responsibilities give them an alternative outlet for their capacities. The participation of girls in the associations' activities automatically ceases when they marry, because of the social restrictions which are imposed on a bride. Since circumcision constitutes, for a male, a sharp demarcation between boyhood and manhood, there is no mingling of those who have been initiated to adult status with those who have not yet been circumcised. Consequently, there are two separate associations to accommodate boys before and after circumcision, the *iBavu* or Boys' Association (*ibavu*—"a boy whose voice has broken," *igqeba, amakhwenkwe amadala*) and the Parliament (*ipalamente, ikongres, intlanganiso yabafana neentombi*). Girls whose brothers and boy friends have not yet been circumcised may take part in the activities of the former, and are informally known as *iintombi zamakhwenkwe*; they may become

members of the Parliament as *iintombi zamadoda* when their brothers and boy friends are circumcised.

The members of the Boys' Association are organised into three divisions: the junior, the middle, and the senior, and a boy's promotion from one to another depends upon his prowess at sparring with sticks (*ukudlala*). A boy of the middle division, for example, may only become a member of the senior division after he has challenged a member of it to spar with him in individual combat, and has succeeded in touching his opponent's head with the stick. Leadership of the association falls to the boy who defeats all the others, and the admiration and attention of girls is given to the best fighters. Imitation of their elders is evident in the privileges accorded to the senior boys and the leader: members of the senior division have the sole right to speak at the meetings of the association—members of other divisions voice opinions only on being asked; and they are entitled to receive their portions of food before the members of other divisions; the leader commands obedience to his orders, presides over meetings, is usually well-seated and may be given a separate portion of food on festive occasions, and he is given small sums of money for his own use when contributions are being collected.

Each division of boys tends to have as its own particular admirers and supporters, the girls who are roughly co-eval with them. The boys expect the girls to clap and sing for them when they dance, and applaud them when they fight. The older boys, who will already have had experience as migrant labourers and who dress in the finery of a mine buck, expect their special admirers among the girls to knit them woollen caps, and woollen chains, which they sling across their shoulders. The boy most skilful at stick fighting will have woollen adornments from many girl friends. He will be called either *udlalane*, meaning "one with many lovers,"<sup>1</sup> or *isikhot solo*, which is the name of a snake "which bites or beats all other snakes and is of a brownish-red colour, similar to the red or brown wool which the girls usually buy" for their hero. A girl sends these presents to a boy through his aunt, to whom she must give an apron or other small gift; this makes the affair known to the parents.

<sup>1</sup>In the past, sex play without penetration (*ukusmetsha*) was permitted between boys and girls. Church and schools oppose the practice. The custom of examining girls (*ukubona kweentombi*) at regular intervals is no longer observed, and even pagan parents complain today, for girls are all too often set pregnant.

By the time a youth or girl becomes a member of the Parliament, he or she is eligible for marriage,<sup>1</sup> and the activities of the Parliament largely reflect the absorption of the members in the opposite sex: the recreation organized by the members facilitates the opportunity for courtship and sexual relations; and one of the chief functions of the Parliament, as a group, is the part it plays at the Christian marriages of its individual members. Instead of fighting his way to leadership, the captain of the Parliament attains his office by popular vote of the members. A vice-captain (*isekela*) is also elected to deputise for him in his absence from meetings or functions, and each Parliament has also an elected secretary (*ubali*) and treasurer (*umgcini-mali*).<sup>2</sup>

Stick sparring competitions between the boys of different associations form part of the festivities at both Christian and pagan marriages, and occasionally the Boys' Association lends group assistance in economic activities, such as weeding. Otherwise, the activities of the association are purely recreational. Every Sunday afternoon the boys foregather at a regular outdoor meeting place to discuss the affairs of the association, to make rules, to take disciplinary action against recalcitrant members, and to hold sparring competitions among themselves. With fair regularity gatherings are held overnight in a borrowed hut to which boys from other associations are invited. Such a gathering is known as a "tea meeting" (*itimiti*) or "party" (*ipati*), although no refreshments are served, the night being spent in dancing the *umfotofoto*, followed, in the case of a "tea meeting," by sparring competitions between the members of the different associations present.

A feast is held at Christmas time for a period lasting anything from a week to a month, depending on how long the refreshments hold out. Money will have been collected from each boy<sup>3</sup> by an appointed treasurer, foodstuffs will have been purchased at the stores by the boys, and carried home by the girls who form the cooking unit. Until they are required, purchases are left in the care of an appointed "keeper of the keys" and the distribution of refreshments is supervised by the steward (*injoli*). A hut is borrowed in which beer and

<sup>1</sup>A boy is not considered marriageable until he has been circumcised. See Appendix B on Male Initiation.

<sup>2</sup>In some Parliaments, these officers hold office for considerable periods at a time, substitutes being appointed to act for them during their absences in the towns. In other Parliaments, they are replaced whenever they leave the village as labour migrants.

<sup>3</sup>Contributions from members vary: In Gwili-Gwili, the boys of senior grade pay £1 and the boys of middle grade 15/-; In Upper Nqhumeya, all the boys pay £1; in Nqolo-Nqolo, senior boys pay £1 and all the other boys 10/-.

light beer are brewed<sup>1</sup> and in which the nightly revelry takes place, the boys dancing and the girls singing and clapping for them. Returning home by day, the boys and girls spend their nights together, love making, feasting and dancing. On some nights, members of other associations may be invited to share in the feasting and compete in dancing. An attempt is made to hold a similar, though less elaborate, feast when any member of the association returns home after a working tour in town. This feast is "to celebrate the occasion of arrival home," and other associations are not invited to attend. The elaborateness of the feast depends on the number of boys returning home at the same time, for a returning member is expected to pay a sum of money (*uswazi*)<sup>2</sup> to the association, from which the feast is provided. If he refuses, or is unable to meet his obligation, his box and blankets may be confiscated and he will be disciplined by his fellow members at the next Sunday afternoon regular meeting.<sup>3</sup> When a hut can be borrowed, beer and light beer are brewed; while it is fermenting the boys and girls spend the nights together; and on the third or fourth night when it is ready to drink the revelry culminates in a feast. If they are unable to borrow a hut, the boys spend the money on tobacco, sweets, cold drinks and buns at the trading stores.

The meetings and social occasions organized by the Parliament are fairly similar to those of the Boys' Association. Like the boys, the youths and girls of the Parliament have their own outdoor meeting place and borrow a hut when required for their overnight social functions. The Sunday afternoon meetings are less regularly attended, since so many members are away working in the towns.<sup>4</sup> In place of the boys' tea meetings and parties, the members of the Parliament

<sup>1</sup>The Administration has very recently forbidden all boys to brew or consume beer.

<sup>2</sup>The amount expected varies: In Upper Nqhumeya and Nqolo-Nqolo, the sum is £1; in Gwili-Gwili it is 5/-.

<sup>3</sup>In Upper Nqhumeya, one lad who came home without having found employment, agreed to give a double contribution the next time he returned from migrant employment, in order to have his confiscated possessions restored to him. Mr. S. Skosana reported a case from Nqolo-Nqolo of a boy who was summoned home from Kingwilliamstown to do the ploughing for his widowed mother. His association demanded £1 from him as *uswazi* and £1 for the Christmas feast preparations. As he did not have the money to give, he went to work for a month at Fort Cox, receiving a wage of £1 which he gave to the association. His mother had relied on the money to buy food, and was compelled to demand it from the boys of the association. The money was handed over, but her son was severely beaten by his associates.

<sup>4</sup>A count was taken of attendance at a Sunday afternoon meeting of a Parliament in Upper Nqhumeya village. Of 14 male members, eight were away at work in the towns, and of seven female members, five were away.

hold a swary (*itswari*) three or four times a year, and, like the boys, one at Christmas time. Other Parliaments may be invited to attend these feasts. These functions are always of shorter duration than those of the Boys' Association, and both the girls and youths contribute towards expenses.<sup>1</sup> Refreshments provided out of the contribution (*uswazi*) which may be made by a member returning home from migrant employment,<sup>2</sup> are consumed by the members of the Parliament at a Sunday meeting. As in the Boys' Association, the girls form the cooking unit, and a steward (*injoli*), a stewardess (*injolikazi*) and a keeper of the keys (*unositfixwana*) are appointed on festive occasions. However, instead of dancing and sparring at their social functions, the members of the Parliament sing and hold choir competitions with other Parliaments. At their meetings, members report requests for group assistance in agriculture and hut building, and discuss business in connection with the forthcoming marriages of their members.

Its most regular function, and that most appreciated in the community, is the part which the Parliament plays at Christian marriages. The Parliament to which the bride belongs, and that of which the groom is a member, come into action separately and form the core of the respective marriage parties. Youths and girls of the respective Parliaments assist in the week-long preparations for festivities at the homesteads of the bride and groom. During the marriage week, horsemen from the respective Parliaments stage an equestrian display (*umkhwelo*) in which members of other Parliaments will have been invited to participate, for the greater the number of horsemen on this occasion the greater the prestige that attaches to the marriage. Each Parliament separately provides refreshments for the horsemen at the bride's and groom's homes. During the marriage week also, singing competitions (*ingoma*) are organized by the respective Parliaments, on the Tuesday at the bride's home and on the Thursday at the groom's. On the Saturday, eight days after the conclusion of the marriage festivities, the members of the bride's Parliament call on her at her new homestead and are entertained there by the groom's family until the following afternoon. They bring with them supplies of firewood to stack outside the hut of the newly-married couple, and they escort the bride to Sunday morning church service.

<sup>1</sup>Youths are usually expected to contribute 2/6 or a large can of beer, and girls 1/6.

<sup>2</sup>In Upper Nqhumeya, it is customary for both male and female members returning from the towns to pay 5/- to 10/- as *uswazi* to the Parliament. Members claim that payment is due "because they have looked after the home" in the absence of the labour migrant. This custom is not observed in Gwili-Gwili.

By no means all the young people of a locality are members of these associations, although the Parliament is more universally supported than the Boys' Association. The latter is in the nature of a "neighbourhood gang" and because the gangs encourage beer drinking and provide opportunity for sexual promiscuity they are actively opposed by the churches and schools.<sup>1</sup> Many parents also disapprove of their activities: they resent the ill-afforded monetary contributions towards self-indulgent feasting; they deplore the absence of adult guidance of the boys' activities<sup>2</sup> and the development of bad habits. In practice, however, it is usually only the sons of staunch Christian families who do not belong; on the other hand, because pregnancy so often results from the sexual promiscuity, daughters from both pagan and Christian families are increasingly debarred by their parents from taking part in the association's activities.

There is less opposition by Christian parents to their sons and daughters becoming members of the Parliament, because they are of a more responsible age, are usually able to make their financial contributions out of their migrant labour wages, and without drawing on their parents as the younger boys must do, and because the activities of the Parliament are not altogether sterile—the assistance which members of a Parliament render in economic activities and at Christian weddings are highly prized. The fact that the Parliament functions at Christian marriages only does not discourage pagans from joining, for not only is it quite possible that they may eventually marry according to Christian rites, but the recreational activities and the companionship of those of their own age are important inducements to their joining.

Since the activities of the Boys' Association are primarily recreational, the membership of each separately constituted association is drawn from one particular locality; this may comprise a single, isolated village section, a set of linked village sections, or a group of village sections which are near one another.<sup>3</sup> A boy will belong to

<sup>1</sup>Disapproval of the activities of the Boys' Association was expressed by a Councillor from Keiskammahoek at the Ciskeian General Council. *Proceedings of the Ciskeian General Council*, 1938.

<sup>2</sup>In the past, the boys appointed an adult leader "who taught the boys, controlled their behaviour and settled their disputes". Mr. S. Soksana wrote in a preliminary report on Land Tenure: "The Boys' Association has strong regulations. Each member must observe them to the extent of disobeying the parents' instructions".

<sup>3</sup>For example, in Upper Nqhumeya village there are three independently constituted Boys' Associations, one for each of the two sets of linked village sections and another for the Madwaleni village section. In Gwili-Gwili village there are two associations, one for the Gqabi, Lota, Gongo, Mapiko and Nsisané village sections which lie together at one end of the village, and another for Komkhulu, Mangweni and Mnandi village sections lying together on the other side of the village.

the association which recruits its members from the village section in which he lives, even if his father owes allegiance to the subheadman of another village section, the boys of which join another association. The members of each separately constituted Parliament are normally drawn from localities identical with those of the Boys' Association.<sup>1</sup> However, if they happen to live in a village section other than that of the subheadman to whom their fathers are politically bound, then, because the activities of the Parliaments are so closely associated with marriage, youths and girls will normally belong not to the local Parliament, but to the one which recruits its membership from the area of the subheadman to whom they owe allegiance.

A loose association exists between the separately constituted Boys' Associations or Parliaments in neighbouring villages in that they will reciprocally invite one another to attend social functions and, among the associations, to compete in sparring and dancing, and among the Parliaments to compete in choir singing and join in equestrian displays.<sup>2</sup> Conflict between linked Parliaments, arising out of personal insult, may lead to ill-feeling or open breach, and for a while reciprocal invitations may cease, or the link may be broken altogether; they seldom, however, take aggressive action against each other. Among the Boys' Associations, on the other hand, any slight to a member of one by the boys of another readily leads to a declared state of enmity and the outbreak of fights.<sup>1</sup> Boys of other

<sup>1</sup>This is true, for example, of Upper Nqhumeya village. However, in Gwili-Gwili there was a recent split in the Parliament for the area comprising Komkhulu, Mangweni and Mnandi village sections: when a few youths of the Komkhulu village section attended one of the functions of the Parliament at the homestead of an Mangweni youth, they were not as well received as they would have wished, and they encouraged members from their village section to establish an independent Parliament.

<sup>2</sup>This linking up of Boys' Associations or Parliaments does not always include the other equivalent groups in the same village, but is invariably with one or more groups in neighbouring villages. The reason for this is that a better sense of rivalry can be promoted between people from different villages. As one informant said: "You can't properly compete with the boys of your own village, because they are one with you." In Upper Nqhumeya, the three Boys' Associations do not invite one another to attend functions, and each also invites different associations from their neighbouring villages. The two Boys' Associations in Gwili-Gwili never linked in friendly rivalry with certain Associations in the neighbouring villages of Mthwaku and Upper Rabula. The linkage of Parliaments is similar, except that the two Parliaments which developed from the split in Komkhulu and Mangweni-Mnandi village sections invite one another and are linked with the same Parliaments in the neighbouring village. They maintain a detachment from the third Parliament in Gwili-Gwili, similar to that between the Boys' Associations, excepting for mutual invitations to equestrian displays at marriages, when all the horsemen available are wanted to add to the prestige of the occasion.

associations often take sides in such conflict, and when it is between two associations from different villages, each will find the most ready support from the boys belonging to the other associations of its own village.

#### D—GIFT CLUBS

It is claimed that "Gift Clubs" were first introduced into the district in 1930 by a woman who had witnessed their operation when she was on a visit to the Transkei. The first club was established in Zanyokwe village, and they later spread to Burnshill, Mbems, Wolf River, Upper and Lower Nqhumeya, Upper Rabula and Lower Rabula, through the process of women from a neighbouring village being attracted by, and anxious to enjoy the benefits of the club, joining one already established, and later breaking away to establish their own local club, when there were sufficient members from their own village to support it. Clubs so formed often include the nuclei of other potential clubs, and the process repeats itself, sub-division often taking place between different localities of the same village. Organized clubs have not as yet spread to those villages lying to the north-east of the district.

These clubs serve in practice as voluntary savings associations, to assist with the expenses of marriage. Normally, when a marriage takes place, the parents of the bridal couple, while bearing the expenses of all the marriage festivities at their respective homesteads, expect their guests to contribute money (*imigido*) and also gifts (*izipho*) to sewell the trousseau of household goods (*impabla*) which the bride will take to her new home. The poverty of the guests often debars them from being able to contribute, or causes them to offer only token gifts, especially if they doubt whether their hosts will reciprocate in the future with money and gifts at the marriages of their own children. Contributions can be more generous if there exists a tacit understanding that the host will return them in time. Consequently, the father of the bride or groom may sometimes hold *amabaso* a few weeks before the marriage is to take place: through subheadmen in

<sup>1</sup>Stick fights (*idabi*) are quite distinct from stick sparring (*ukudlala*). A boy will no longer wait for his opponent to retrieve a dropped stick before continuing the fight, and will give chase when the other has already turned tail and fled. It is claimed that, in the past, opponents fought to kill, and no quarter was shown. At the present time, the aggrieved side obtains satisfaction by routing its enemy.

his own village, headmen of other villages and chairmen of various church associations, he sends out extensive invitations to people of his own or other villages to be present at his homestead on a certain day to partake of refreshments as his guests and to make monetary contributions and gifts to the bride; all contributions received are listed, and it is understood that they will be repaid to the donors in due course. The Gift Clubs are designed to organize and to extend the *amabaso* practice among their members. Not only are abuses prevented by the club's secretary keeping an official record of all individual contributions of money, food and gifts, but the number of contributors is extended through collections being made by officials of other co-operating clubs from their members. Furthermore, club members assist one another in acting as hosts at *amabaso* festivities, by contributing food and drink, lending crockery, cutlery and glass-ware, and assisting in the preparations.

The first club to be established in the district was an *amaBaso* Club. A group of the members became dissatisfied with the limitations imposed by the rules of that club, and broke away to form the first *isiPho* Club. There are today only two *amaBaso* Clubs, the original in Zanyokwe and one in Burnshill, working together and quite independently of the *isiPho* Clubs, which have flourished and now number some nine or ten in the district. Membership in the *amaBaso* Club is limited to staunch Christians, and assistance is rendered only when the bride is a virgin, when the groom and bride are marrying for the first time, by Christian rites, and with the permission of their parents. These limitations do not exist in the *isiPho* Club: both pagan and Christian parents can join, and even unmarried mothers who will be requiring assistance at the weddings of their illegitimate children are freely admitted to membership<sup>1</sup>; assistance is given at both pagan and Christian marriages; if the children of members marry without their parents' consent, gifts will subsequently be contributed, once the parents become reconciled to the union; and the club is not concerned whether the bride or groom has been previously married, or whether the bride has borne illegitimate children. Until comparatively recently, all the *isiPho* Clubs in the district formed one co-operating chain. With the increase in the number of the clubs, and the greater distances separating the members of some clubs,

<sup>1</sup>Unmarried mothers were also found in the *amaBaso* Clubs, which, however, claim not to encourage their membership.

certain *isiPho* clubs are tending to work more regularly with one another than with others.

At the marriage of a member's son or daughter, each fellow-member in the club, and also the members of all clubs in the co-operating chain, are expected to contribute 2/- towards expenses, and, when the child is a daughter, to make a gift, such as a knife, fork, spoon, plate, cup, mat, basket or broom. These contributions are regarded as loans; a record of the contributions will be made, and the recipient is expected to contribute equal amounts or gifts whenever the donors celebrate the marriages of their children. Contributions are not obligatory: if a member gives less or more than is expected, it is recorded, and will in due course be returned exactly; if a member is unable to meet the obligation, or if there is reason to suspect that a contribution will not be repaid, it can always be withheld. In practice, contributions between fellow club members are usually greater than those between members of different clubs. Moreover, gifts to the brides are usually exchanged only between members who are friends or relatives.

Individual Gift Clubs are identically organized, although in size they may vary from some 25 to 75 members. Each has its own hierarchy of officers: clubs with a large membership usually have a chairman, vice-chairman, a secretary, vice-secretary, a treasurer and a messenger; in the more recently established smaller clubs, the duties may be consolidated into as few as two offices. All officials are elected by popular vote, for an indefinite term as long as satisfaction is given and the office bearer is willing to undertake the duties. Officials are always women, for nearly all the members are married women. Men are not denied the right of membership, but the number of males is always very small, and they are usually husbands of the women members.<sup>1</sup> The aims of the clubs are such that there is little purpose in anyone belonging who is not the parent of a potentially marriageable child, and consequently girls and unmarried men are not found among the membership. Parents do not usually join the club until their children are in their middle or late teens. It is regarded as

<sup>1</sup>For example, of 40 members of the Lower Nqhumeya *isiPho* Club, only two were men. When a husband and wife both belong to a club, each is entitled to monetary contributions from other club members when one of their children marries. At the same time, as individual members, a husband and wife must each contribute to the marriages held by fellow club members. There is thus little purpose to the father as well as the mother being a member of the club, for the one parent alone can ensure a lavish marriage for a child by contributing generously to the marriages held by fellow club members, and building up the latter's obligations to reciprocate.

unprofitable for a parent to join a club when the children are not yet adolescent, for, by the time they have grown to marriageable age, people who received that parent's assistance during the years may no longer be alive or in the neighbourhood to reciprocate. On the other hand, a parent who joins a club just before the marriage of a child will receive very little support from other club members, who may be sceptical over her *bona fides*. Even though a parent's need for assistance ceases after the last of her own children has been married it is expected that membership in the club will not be terminated until all obligations have been fulfilled towards those who assisted at the marriages of her children. Those who wish to join a Gift Club usually notify some member of their intention, and she in turn informs the chairman. On the occasion at which contributions are made to the next marriage, the chairman will announce the names of and point out the identities of the new members. Membership is usually terminated entirely informally, by a member ceasing to make contributions and to attend club occasions.

Each independent club meets together usually only when the marriage of a member's child is pending, in order to make arrangements for assisting at the festivities on *isipho* day, for notifying other clubs in the co-operating chain and for collecting all contributions. A club may hold a meeting when the marriage of another club member's child is to take place, in order to collect contributions and appoint representatives to attend, but usually, instead of a meeting, the club officers perform the necessary duties by visiting the individual club members at their homes. The *isipho* day on which contributions are made at the bride's or groom's home is a very festive one, with refreshments provided in abundance by the host and fellow club members. Contingents from the other clubs of the co-operating chain are present, together with relatives and friends invited by the father of bride or groom to attend and make contributions. It is claimed by members that the Gift Clubs ensure greater outside assistance, for not only does the larger feast to which the club contributes make it possible for relatives and friends to be invited in greater numbers, but the presence of people from other villages is more certain when notification of the event is sent through the official channels of the co-operating chain of clubs.

Probably the most significant feature of these Gift Clubs is that they are a group expression of the new sense of economic responsibility on the part of mothers. Traditionally, it was the father who assumed

responsibility for his children's being well set up in marriage. The very existence of the Gift Clubs consisting almost exclusively of women, and their rapid spread in one short generation, is indicative of failure on the part of fathers to fulfil their traditional responsibility. The mothers, banding together in mutual assistance, endeavour to retain the prestige of customary festivities at their children's marriages, and to set up their daughters with household necessities. Although such expression of economic responsibility on the part of women is foreign to a patrilineal society, it is in keeping with the rapidly increasing rate at which women are migrating to the urban centres for employment and supporting dependants at home, and the increasing extent to which they are working, devoid of male assistance, to maintain and feed their families in the district.<sup>1</sup> The grouping of women into Gift Clubs, and the businesslike workings of the chain of clubs over a wide area, is a practical demonstration of co-operation in the economic sphere, significantly different from the traditional neighbourly co-operation in accomplishing heavy agricultural tasks or other domestic and economic undertakings. Both men and women have for long been accustomed to lending their services to neighbours, in order that they may receive reciprocal help in large undertakings. But the women have learnt, through the Gift Clubs, to put money and merchandise out on loan over an extended period, for repayment on specific occasions which would require greater outlay than they could themselves afford from current income.

<sup>1</sup>These matters are more fully discussed in Vol. II., *The Economy of a Native Reserve*.

Chapter VI

EXPRESSION OF CONFLICT

The social structure of Keiskammahoek District has been described in the previous chapters in a manner designed to show the forms of co-operation among the main groupings of Africans living in the villages, and also to reveal the factors causing cleavage and giving rise to conflict within the groups. To conclude this report, a brief account will be given of the evidence of conflict.

Intra-family conflict and tensions between neighbours, whether open or repressed, often appear in accusations of witchcraft or sorcery.<sup>1</sup> The belief that witchcraft or sorcery is being used by an atagonist to cause illness or death gives rise to new tensions, as does the resentment and grievance of the one against whom such accusation is levelled.

NATURE OF CONFLICTS GIVING RISE TO ACCUSATIONS OF WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY

No. of cases	Nature of the conflicts between witch or sorcerer and victim
74	All types of conflict.
33	<i>Economic conflicts:</i>
8	Ownership of land. Disputes over ownership of land—seven cases in freehold villages, one case over land held in communal tenure village.
8	Envy of greater wealth of others—material possessions, stock, cash earnings, etc.
7	Remittances from urban areas: A mother resented the fact that her son sent his earnings to his wife; a wife resented her husband sending his earnings to his mother; an unmarried son failed to send money home to his widowed mother.
5	Disputes over stock: A polygynist failed to allocate stock to the house of one of his wives; ownership of stock in dispute; quarrels over the use of stock for ploughing or the trespass of stock.
2	Failure to pay marriage cattle: In one case, the man was living with the girl, but refused to hand over cattle; in the other, a woman had borne an illegitimate child, but the man refused to marry her. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Vide Appendix A—"The Ancestor Cult and Witch Beliefs".

<sup>2</sup>This case might also be classified as a sexual conflict.

No. of cases	Nature of the conflicts between witch and sorcerer or victim
2	Labour in the homestead: A bride, instead of continuing to live in the homestead of her husband's family and to work for the senior woman of that homestead, preferred to move away with her husband to establish a homestead of her own. <sup>1</sup>
1	Inheritance: Heir refused to give sister furniture promised to her by her father.
12	<i>Sexual conflicts:</i> A lover was jilted; a husband or wife was unfaithful; a wife was jealous of her husband's attentions to another woman, or the children of his first marriage.
3	<i>Conflicts over status:</i> Wives quarrelled over their status in the homestead, or members of a homestead failed to respect the authority of the senior wife.
2	<i>Political conflicts:</i> Sorcery was used by a paternal relative of the headman who wanted the office for himself, or by advisors who were dissatisfied with the headman.
2	<i>Conflicts between Pagans and Christians:</i> A wife who was a staunch Christian in a homestead, the other members of which were pagan, was accused of harming some of them.
11	<i>Miscellaneous causes of conflict:</i> An illegitimate son for whom damages and the beast of maintenance had been paid, refused to live with his father's people; a son refused to share with his mother damages obtained for his wife's adultery; a witch was observed having sexual relations with her son, etc.
11	<i>Cause of conflict unknown:</i> Witch or sorcerer said to have had quarrel with victim, but informants could not, or would not, give details.

In an attempt to ascertain the relationships between antagonists, and the causes of tension between them, one hundred cases of witchcraft and sorcery were investigated. Details concerning these cases are given in the schedule appended at the end of the chapter. This includes all the cases that came to our ears but it was impossible to collect a true random sample, for even people who were well known to the fieldworkers were reluctant to discuss witchcraft and sorcery. Staunch Christians were generally more ready than others to discuss the subject, but usually denied any knowledge of cases in which witchcraft or sorcery had been used. The causes of quarrels or disputes between supposed witches or sorcerers and their victims are those cited by informants; they are not necessarily the real ones, although some people are undoubtedly able to see and to describe situations objectively.

In 26 cases, the victim is said to have been killed or injured because a witch's familiar "wanted meat," was jealous, or "working for pleasure," and no conflict between the accused and victim came to light. In the remaining 74 cases, accusations of witchcraft or

<sup>1</sup>This case might also be classified as a conflict over status.

sorcery are said to have been an expression of conflicts between the accused and their victims. From the analysis listed on the preceding pages it can be seen that nearly half the conflicts are primarily economic—quarrels over ownership of land or stock, inheritance, remittances from labour migrants in the towns, the division of labour in the homestead, and envy of the greater wealth of others. Next in importance in causing tension are sexual jealousies. In the remaining one-fourth of the cases where the nature of the quarrels between witches or sorcerers and their victims was known, conflicts arose from a variety of situations, such as over status in the homestead, over political office, over the division of damages received from a wife's lover, or between Christians and pagans in the homestead.

Those accused of witchcraft or sorcery were related to their victims either by blood or by marriage in 82 cases; in the remaining 18 cases they were unrelated people. An accusation of witchcraft or sorcery, being an expression of conflict, always implies some degree of social intercourse based on face to face relations between the accused and victim. Accusations are always more frequent between certain categories of relatives who live together or near each other than between relatives who are spatially separated in the patrilineal society. Similarly, it is between unrelated people who live near one another that tensions give rise to accusations of witchcraft or sorcery. The spatial proximity of the accused and the victim in the hundred cases was as follows:—

Spatial proximity of witch or sorcerer and victim	No. of cases in which accused and victim were		Total
	Related by blood or by marriage	Unrelated	
Living in the same homestead .. .. .	57	—	57
Living in the same village section .. .. .	19	9	28
Living in the same village .. .. .	5	8	13
Living in different villages .. .. .	—	1	1
Living in different districts .. .. .	1	—	1
	82	18	100

Of the witches or sorcerers related to their victims by blood or marriage, approximately two-thirds were living in the same homestead as the victim; most of the remaining third were living in the same village section, usually in neighbouring homesteads. Related antagonists were only once found living in different villages of the district,

and there was one unusual case in which witch and victim lived in different districts. However, the background of this case involved two brothers who at one time had lived together with their families in the same homestead in a neighbouring district. The younger brother moved to the Keiskammahoe District when the ill health of members of his family and the death of his stock were attributed, by a diviner, to the *uMamlambo* familiar of his elder brother. Some time afterwards, the younger brother's son was on his way to visit his grandmother, in the district where his uncle lived, when a whirlwind suddenly sprang up and the young man died before reaching his destination, a supposed victim of his uncle's witchcraft. Unrelated witches or sorcerers and victims were living for the greater part in neighbouring homesteads, or else in neighbouring village sections. The one case in which sorcerer and victim lived in different villages involved a renowned herbalist, who was believed to have used sorcery to cause the illness of a woman in a nearby village, in retaliation for her having refused to pay his fee after employing him to harm one of her neighbours.

The person most often accused of witchcraft or sorcery is a wife, and second to her a mother-in-law. The relations between a wife and her in-laws, with whom she lives, are fraught with tensions; it is moreover, easy for misfortune in the homestead to be attributed to malpractice of the stranger in the homestead, the wife who belongs to a different clan. It is claimed that wives frequently buy charms (*amakhubalo*) from herbalists, to protect themselves against accusations of witchcraft or sorcery. On one occasion, several women were heard discussing a case of witchcraft while they were busy hoeing in a field: one, an elderly widow who lived in her own homestead, claimed that she would not care if people said she had seven familiars; another younger married woman, who lived in her father-in-law's homestead, retorted: "Oh! you only talk like that because there is no one in your homestead to have you smelt out."

In 31 of the 100 cases of witchcraft and sorcery, a wife is accused of having harmed the following victims:—

A co-wife .. .. .	2 cases
Her husband .. .. .	6 cases
A wife or son of her husband's brother ..	8 cases
Other members of her husband's lineage remnant .. .. .	15 cases

In ten cases a mother-in-law is accused of having used witchcraft or sorcery as a result of conflict with her daughter-in-law. In seven of these instances the daughter-in-law was herself the victim; in two her children were bewitched by their grandmother; and in one her husband was harmed by his mother because he sent his earnings to his wife instead of to her. A further eight cases reflect the tensions between a wife and her husband's family, for her husband, his brother, and his paternal uncle's daughter, are accused of harming a wife in five, two and one instances respectively.

Sources of tension between other relatives-in-law are few. The system of patrilocal marriage, while bringing the wife herself among her husband's people, spatially separates the two groups of in-laws. Neither a husband nor his relatives are accused of having bewitched or used sorcery against any of a wife's relatives. A wife's relatives, in these instances her sister and her mother, are believed to have bewitched a husband in three cases, but are not accused of having attacked any of his relatives.

These cases of conflict between in-laws, as expressed in accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, together constitute 52 per cent of the total cases in the sample. The fact that women are the accused in 45 instances and men in only seven, is symptomatic of the degree of tension surrounding women in patrilocal marriage. Tensions, often expressed in open conflict, are greatest between a daughter-in-law and her mother-in-law. Of the remaining 48 cases in the total sample, involving other than in-laws, women are the accused in only a few more instances than men, there being 28 cases of women and 20 cases of men accused of bewitching or using sorcery against an individual.

Of these 48 cases, ten were instances of tension, leading to accusations, between a mother and her children or step-children, 20 were instances of agnatic kinsmen harming each other, and the remaining 18 cases were of unrelated people bewitching or using sorcery against each other. There is no belief that a mother is incapable of bewitching or using sorcery against her children, or they against her; eight cases involve accusations between mother and children, in addition to the case already cited of a mother bewitching her son as the result of tension with his wife. The accusation in two instances against a step-mother for having bewitched her stepchildren, arises out of the type of conflict that is always potential in a relationship of this kind. Among the male members of the lineage remnant of a two or three generation span, it is only a grandfather who is not accused of witchcraft or

sorcery. However, the number of accusations against each kinsman, viewed separately, is small:—

<i>Accused</i>	<i>Victim</i>	<i>No. of cases</i>
Father	Children	4
Son	Father	1
Brother	Half-brother	6
Brother	Brother's son	3
Sister	Brother	2
Sister	Brother's child	3
Son of one brother	Son of another brother	1

The use of witchcraft or sorcery between members of the lineage remnant, while regarded as repugnant, is not culturally excluded. Accusations of sorcery are always an expression of social and psychological tensions; witchcraft is, however, not always regarded as an expression of anger, revenge, or frustration on the part of the witch, because familiars are believed to act independently of the wishes of their owners, and also to be particularly jealous of their owners' children.

There are no instances in which men and women are believed to harm or be harmed by any of their maternal kinsmen. Here again, the possibility is not culturally excluded, but people do not live together with their maternal kinsmen, nor are their maternal relatives under any obligation to support or assist them. The relationship is essentially friendly and free of the tensions and conflicts that arise when people live together.

How far these accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were made openly, or to what further tensions the accusations led, is unknown. The reaction of the victim or his family varies with the degree of harm wrought by the witch or sorcerer, bitterness and hostility always being greatest when death has taken place, and when the culprit has repeatedly been accused of harming others. A wife may be sent back to her own people, or conditions made so unpleasant in the homestead that she will leave of her own accord. The hostility of an aggrieved family may force men and women to leave the village altogether, or for a long absence in the towns until the resentment in the village has abated somewhat. It is sometimes said of these people that they have left the village because "their hearts have been made sore." One example was cited of a widow, believed to have caused the death of two of her married sons and many of her grand-

children, who went to live in the towns and was expected never to return; her homestead is deserted and the huts are decaying. Since arson is a criminal offence, it is not very common today for the huts of reputed witches or sorcerers to be burnt, in an endeavour to force them to leave, but one case of such burning was recorded. Then the supposed witch, instead of leaving the village, merely went to live with her son in a neighbouring homestead. People living in the same homestead as a reputed witch or sorcerer sometimes go away themselves, for fear of becoming victims; they establish homesteads elsewhere or emigrate to town, believing that spatial separation minimises friction and gives less occasion for attack, even though the possibility remains of the witch or sorcerer directing harm against them at a distance.

Reputed witches and sorcerers are seldom ostracised, for not only are people afraid of becoming their victims unless they remain on friendly terms, but so widespread is the belief, that everyone has relatives or friends who have been accused of witchcraft or sorcery, and no one can be certain that he will not, sooner or later, be accused himself. Furthermore, not everyone believes that those accused are necessarily guilty of the crime attributed to them. Even the victim may refuse to believe that the person said to have bewitched or used sorcery against him is guilty: a mother may deny the guilt of her child; a husband often denies the guilt of his wife, and may be forced to establish his own homestead elsewhere if paternal relatives with whom he is living persist in their accusations.

The Government's attempt to stamp out the imputation of witchcraft and sorcery by making it a criminal offence has met with little success, judging by the number of allegations which continue to be made. However, the number of cases involving witchcraft or sorcery that come before the Native Commissioner's court is small: people point out that if they were openly to accuse anyone of witchcraft or sorcery, they could be threatened with the law. People say, too, that they are never able to prove to the satisfaction of the Native Commissioner that the witch has a familiar or that the sorcerer has used medicines: "It is always you who are punished, not the witch or sorcerer."

Conflict between relatives, particularly those of successive generations, is also expressed by attributing misfortunes to the just anger of senior relatives, both living and dead. Two cases of misfortune attributed to the anger of senior living relatives are quoted

on pages 187-8 and sacrifices to pacify ancestors, angered by quarrelling among their descendants, or neglect of their needs, occur. However, it is probably true to say that far more cases of misfortune are attributed to witchcraft and sorcery than to the curse of a senior living kinsman, or to the ancestors "turning their backs" on their descendants.

It was not possible to ascertain how far conflicts are expressed in disputes being brought for arbitration before the lineage remnant courts or the courts of the village authorities—there are no records of cases that come before the lineage remnant, the headman or subheadman. Nor were we able to make an analysis of cases brought before the Native Commissioner as had been planned.

So far we have been concerned with conflicts between individuals and families. It is these which appear in accusations of witchcraft and sorcery and it is these that form at least a substantial proportion of cases coming before the courts. But there is also tension between larger groups.

The belief that the Mfengu were ill-treated by certain of the Xhosa in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is still widely held. Though this is disputable as an historical fact, it is not fact but the beliefs concerning it that are significant in determining relations and attitudes at the present time. Most people know that the Mfengu fought on the side of the European colonists against certain of the Xhosa in the last century, and there is evidence of organized opposition to Xhosa villagers in the early days of village history. Today, antagonism or hostility between Mfengu and Xhosa is expressed only in individual cases. Two old women having a heated argument at a work party, were respectfully reminded by a younger man that there was work to be done; they flung at him: "You are a Xhosa, you have no right to interfere in Mfengu matters." On another occasion, when applications for land were being considered in the village council, a man was heard grumbling that the land belonged by right to the Mfengu and that, therefore, Mfengu claims should always take precedence over those of the Xhosa. At a beer drink, two young men, one Xhosa and the other Mfengu, had words; an elderly man reproved them: "At first we fought against one another, but our daughters and sons have married to make peace between us. There should be peace between you."

Except for such isolated cases of friction between the Mfengu and Xhosa, the African people of the district form a homogeneous group when it comes to inter-racial tensions. The greatest conflict arises out of the cleavage between Black and White, the existence of the colour-bar in employment and other spheres in South Africa, and the authority which the European Administration exercises over the Africans.

The period before European contact is regarded as the golden age. "Before the White man came, we had plenty of land and stock. Our children were obedient to us, as were their children to them. We lived according to our customs, and were healthy and strong." "It is only since the White men came to rule over us that things have changed, that everything is death for us now. We speak of the dead as those who have run away from the poll tax." Elderly people constantly emphasised that they had been happier under British rule: "Under the Queen, things were much better here with us"; "Under the Union Jack all was well with us—I was afraid when the Union Jack left us; it sold us out to the Boers." Informants draw no distinction between the European racial groups of today, however, and tend to regard the Government and Europeans in general as synonymous: the term for the Government (*uyulumente*) is often extended to refer to all Europeans. "There is no difference today between the Boers (*amaBulu*), Englishmen (*amaNgesi*), Germans (*amaJamana*) or Jews (*amaJuda*)—they all oppress us."

Although they recognise individual Europeans who are both kind and wise in their dealings with the Africans, the people have evolved, and tend to respond to, a stereotype of European. The European is the bogeyman with whom parents threaten their recalcitrant children. Individual tales of ill-treatment and victimisation of Africans by Europeans, usually brought back from the towns, are quite common; even though they are sometimes fanciful, they help to spread the distrust in which all Europeans are regarded. "Europeans have always been out to trick us. They bring us the Book and say that the weak should be helped by the strong; they do not practice what they preach." "We cannot trust any Europeans." Informants who were questioned by the European fieldworker in the course of this Rural Survey sometimes refused to give their names, claiming that "Europeans only want to take our names so that they can send us to gaol." A few members of the African Teachers' Association of the district were opposed to completing the question-

naire on schools used in this Survey, believing it to be a trick tied up with the School Feeding Commission which was hearing evidence at the time, and whose findings were rumoured to be bound to result in the abolition of school feeding for African children.

Lack of courtesy from Europeans in everyday dealings is keenly felt, especially by the more educated and progressive people, who resent being treated as one of a common herd: "In the villages we may be important people, but the white man calls us—'Hey, you boy! Hey, you girl!'—they shout at us; serve us last even if we come first; they despise us and our hearts are made sore." Many argue that the European has no cause to treat the African as inherently inferior: "If we say that we are like children, it is because we realise that the White man has many things to teach us; it does not mean that we can never grow up; like a child, we can be taught." While the greater skill and technical knowledge of the European is recognised and admired, his harshness and cruelty to the African is repeatedly stressed. "Our daughters look after their children, but they disdain to touch our hands in greeting." "God made us black, but He did not decree that the Europeans should oppress us so heavily." They believe themselves to be inherently more kindly and generous than the European.

This conflict over Black-White relations could be expected to instil in the African a sense of unity with other members of the Black group. In isolated instances, such unity is indeed manifested: it was observed how repeatedly kinsmen, neighbours, and friends were prepared to make small contributions to pay for the services of a solicitor or lawyer when a man was to appear before the European judicial authorities for trial on some serious offence—"Even if we know the man to be guilty, we should try to help; he is one of our people." However, this sense of unity is as yet not strong enough, in the Reserve, to overcome the cleavages within the Black group. From many quarters such sentiments were heard as: "White people prosper because they know how to rule and to organize; one man is appointed and everyone defers to him." "There is no unity amongst us; we are like a homestead divided." "Help from the oppression of the White man can only come from the towns." "Here the people do nothing to help themselves. They always say yes to the Native Commissioner." Said one labour migrant: "I only wish I were home more often to be able to say NO to the Native Commissioner.

All the people do here is salute the Native Commissioner and say 'Ewe, nkosi! kulungile, nkosi!' (yes, sir! all right, sir!)."

Although the people's acquiescence is criticised by radicals in the district, in general European domination has been accepted. There is no organised anti-European movement. Very few people are interested in or know about the African National Congress, the All African Convention, or the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union. However, some, at least, of the men encounter these, or join African trade unions during their working tours in the towns. The recently disbanded Communist Party in South Africa is said to have had a strong following in the neighbouring Middeldrift District, and Europeans also claimed that communism was rife among the members of one village in Keiskammahoek District. However, if there were communists in this or other villages of the district, they were careful to hide their identity, and their number must have been very small. It should not be overlooked that there is a tendency on the part of Europeans to regard any deviation from the differential and subordinate pattern of behaviour expected from Africans as evidence of "communism."

On the whole, conflict takes the form of passive resistance to European authority and the voicing of desires for greater advantages and opportunities for Africans, without any concerted effort to secure them. Members of the Ciskeian General Council have asked that the principles of the Atlantic Charter be applied to Africans, and scattered through the reports of Council proceedings are requests for increased advantages or amelioration of existing conditions for Africans. Many of these requests are voiced by all sections of the African population in the district. They include increased political representation; compulsory education on European lines, with Afrikaans as a required subject; higher wages; and the employment in the Reserve of Africans in as many skilled occupations as possible, such as veterinary surgeons, agricultural demonstrators, nurses and doctors.

In the political sphere, conflict with Europeans is manifested in the people's disregard for the Local Council, instituted and controlled by Government, and their desire for more effective representation through their own headman. Very few in the district are actively hostile to the Local Council; most people are merely not interested in it, and it has the support of a small group only, some members of which are mainly interested in their own preferment. Nevertheless,

some of the councillors are the ones to give voice to the desire of the people that headmen should be both better educated and more adequately paid, in order that they may be better able to represent their people before the European governing authorities. Under present conditions, the people are of the opinion that: "The headman is usually an illiterate person who is underpaid and therefore susceptible to bribes, and who concerns himself mainly with seeing that all people of taxpaying age pay their taxes, so that he should get a bonus from the Government." A councillor from Keiskammahoek moved in the Ciskeian General Council in 1947 that the sons of headmen and chiefs should be educated, and that, after Standard 6, Government assistance should be provided for those needing it. In order, too, that headmen should be more conversant with administrative matters, the Ciskeian General Council asked some years ago that all recognised chiefs or headmen in the Ciskei should be invited to be present at its meetings.

In the economic sphere, the greatest conflict arises over taxation and land shortage. Even the most ardent supporters of the Local Council are opposed to any increase of taxation, even though the revenues of the Council are insufficient for its effective operation. The existing burden of the general tax in addition to local taxes, and their inequity in relation to taxation on European incomes, are regarded as being out of proportion to the benefits accruing from expenditure on behalf of the Africans in the Reserve. The people invariably argue that the Government policy of reserving the bulk of the land in South Africa for the use of the numerically smaller White population is the direct cause of Native Areas being overpopulated and overstocked, and that Government expenditure on rehabilitation measures to arrest soil erosion is the outcome of that policy.

In the district, successive actions of the Government in fencing off and controlling pasture in the mountain grazing areas, since the forests were first demarcated in 1885, have been regarded as a contraction of pasture land and an infringement of the villagers' right to free commonage. Cutting of fences is a common reaction, but sometimes the people attempt to establish their legal claim to free commonage: for instance, in Upper Rabula recently, the extension of the mountain forest area fencing was disputed by the freeholders as encroaching on grazing land, and funds were collected in the village to employ a lawyer to sue for the removal of the fences. These actions of the Government have been regarded as signs of bad faith with the

CASES OF WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY

Category of relationship	Witch or sorcerer	Victim	Instances			Spatial Proximity of W or S and victim			Conflict	
			No	Technique		h	vs	v		
				W	S					?
Wife against wife  10%	Sr. co-wife	Jr. co-wife	1	1			1		Jealousy about husband's attentions.	
	Church married wife	<i>ukuthyala</i> wife	1	1				1	First wife driven away when second wife taken.	
	Wife of brother	Wife of another brother	4	2	2			3	1	Witch was senior wife in homestead, but authority not respected. Disputes over freehold land, loan of oxen for ploughing.
		Wife of another brother's son	4	3	1			2	2	Familiar 'wanted meat'. Quarrel resulting from removal of victim to her own homestead.
Wife and her relatives against Husband and his relatives	Co-wife	Husband	2	1		1	2		Jealousy about husband's attentions. Illfeeling over husband's failure to allocate stock to her house.	
	Wife's mother	Husband	1	1				1	Familiar 'wanted meat'.	
	Wife's sister	Husband	2	2			1	1	Familiar 'wanted meat'. Resentment at victim's re-marriage after death of sister.	
	Wife	Husband	4	2	1	1	4			Familiar 'wanted meat'. Husband unfaithful. Wife wanted to be free to join lover. Husband sent remittances to mother.
		Husband's mistress	1	1					1	Wife neglected by husband.
		Husband's father	1	1					1	Familiar 'wanted meat'.

CASES OF WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY (Continued)

24%		Husband's brother	4	4				2	2	Familiars 'wanted meat'. Wife a Christian in pagan homestead. Wife wanted wealthier brother's inheritance for husband.
		Husband's sister	1	1				1		Wife a Christian in pagan homestead.
		Husband's brother's son	5	3	2			3	2	Dispute over freehold land. Illfeeling between wife and victim's mother. Jealousy over victim's labour migrant earnings.
		Husband's sister's child	3	1	2			1	2	Victim disobedient and impertinent. Disputes over freehold land and borrowed cattle.
Husband and his relatives against wife	Husband	Wife	5	5			5		Familiar 'wanted meat'. Familiar jealous of wife.	
	Husband's mother		7	6		1	5	2	Jealousy because son sent all earnings to wife. Resentment at daughter-in-law having own homestead. Victim witnessed witch committing incest. Dispute over ownership of clothes.	
15%	Husband's brother		2	1	1		1	1	Familiar 'wanted meat'. Dispute over land.	
	Husband's uncle's daughter		1	1					1	Quarrel over ownership of stock.
Paternal grandmother against grandchild 2%	Paternal grandmother	Grandchild	2	2			2		Jealousy because son sent all earnings to wife. Grandmother quarrelled with mother of child.	

Techniques : W=Witchcraft. S=Sorcery. ?=Uncertain.

Spatial proximity of witch or sorcerer and victim :

h=same homestead.  
vs=same village section.  
v=same village.  
\*=different villages.  
\*\*=different districts.

CASES OF WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY (Continued)

Category of relationship	Witch or sorcerer	Victim	Instances			Spatial Proximity of W or S and victim			Conflict	
			No	Technique			h	vs		v
				W	S	?				
Parents and children	Father	Child	4	4			4		Familiar 'wanted meat'.	
	Mother	Son	6	2		4	6		Son sent earnings to wife. Son failed to send money from town; to share damages from wife's adultery. Jealousy of son's intention to marry. Son refused to have incest with mother.	
	Mother	Daughter	2	2			2		Familiar 'wanted meat'.	
	Son	Father		1	1			1		Familiar 'wanted meat'.
		Mother		1	1			1		Familiar 'wanted meat'.
	Stepmother	Stepchild	2	2			2		Jealousy over father's attention to child.	
16%										
Brothers and Sisters and their Children	Sister	Brother	2	1		1	1	1		Familiar 'wanted meat'. Quarrel over inheritance.
		Brother's child	3	2		1	2		1	Sister was refused beast from brother's daughter's marriage cattle. Quarrel with victim's mother over authority in homestead. Victim, brother's illegitimate child, refused to live with father, though maintenance beast paid.
	Brother	Brother or half-brothers	6	2	4		3	3		Familiar 'wanted meat'. Jealousy of brother's greater wealth. Disputes over land.
		Brother's son	3	2		1			**	2
15%										
	Son of elder brother	Son of younger brother	1			1	1			Dispute over land.

CASES OF WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY [Continued]

Unrelated persons	Woman	Male neighbour	3	3				2	1	Familiar 'wanted meat'. Victim's sister quarrelled with witch's daughter.	
		Boy	1		1				1	Victim's mother and witch quarrelled.	
		Female neighbour	1	1					1	Victim failed to show respect to witch, her senior.	
		Neighbour's daughter	2	2					2	Stock trespasses. Jealousy of greater wealth of victim's home.	
		Neighbour's children	1	1					1	Unknown.	
		Lover	3		3					3	Lover's neglect.
		Lover's wife	1	1						1	Wife had publicly insulted mistress.
		Daughter's lover	1	1						1	Victim failed to pay marriage cattle.
	Husband's sister's lover	1	1						1	Victim refused to marry mother of his child.	
	18%	Man	Male neighbour	1		1				1	Jealousy over number of victim's stock.
Female neighbour			1	1					1	Jealousy of greater wealth of victim's homestead.	
Herbalist		Woman	1		1				*	Failure to pay fee.	
	Advisers of headman	Headman	1		1				1	Dissatisfaction of advisers with headman—they employed herbalist.	

Techniques : W=Witchcraft. S=Sorcery. ?=Uncertain.

Spatial proximity of witch or sorcerer and victim :

h= same homestead.  
 vs= same village section.  
 v= same village.  
 \*= different villages.  
 \*\*= different districts.

people: "Presumably the object of demarcation and the leasing of grazing was to derive revenues from the people; the action of the Government has resulted in pitiless persecution of helpless Africans. Through impounding fees for stock and court fines, the Forestry Department and the Native Affairs Department have found a way of getting more money from them."

Supervision by the Administration of the methods of ploughing on Trust allotments, directives on what crops are to be cultivated, and limitation of the stock which Trust people may own, are all regarded less in the nature of promotion of the people's welfare than as "disregard for the people's feelings" and enforced submission of landless people to arbitrary authority, for fear of being turned off their allotments. "Life on the Trust lands is similar to the life of the people in urban locations. The headman's work is similar to that of a policeman . . . public opinion is being replaced by fear of the headman and the police." People on Trust land are, "from the Government point of view, more progressive because they are always subservient, willing to do whatever is told them." Radicals in the district have been known to call the Betterment Scheme the "Betterment Sham" and to agitate in their villages against its acceptance. One informant declared: "There are quite a number of cases where men refuse to send their stock to dipping tanks and refuse to have contour banks made on their own farms, merely because they want to give expression to the fact that they are free to refuse."

The more progressive people feel that, as one of them phrased it: "The approach of the Government is bad, and people do not understand what is being done by the Native Affairs Department. The agricultural demonstrators working in the villages are either not trained to do propaganda work or are not given a chance to educate the people to appreciate what is being done for them. The headman is usually an illiterate person—underpaid—who concerns himself mainly with tax collection. The Local Council, as people maintain, is busy conspiring with the Government, instead of assisting by educating the people to appreciate the good that is being done for them."

### Appendix A

#### THE ANCESTOR CULT AND WITCH BELIEFS

Among pagans in the district there are no rites associated with any supreme being. Ancestral spirits (*amathongo*) are believed to be the power for good, being interested in their descendants and concerned in protecting, advising and prospering them. It is believed that people communicate with their ancestral spirits through dreams, and that doctor diviners (*amagqira*) are those who are especially called by the ancestral spirits and are in particularly close communication with them, through dreams. Unless sacrifices are made to the ancestors on certain prescribed occasions, it is believed that they visit their descendants with illness. All ritual killings are regarded as providing food for the ancestors who, even after all the prescribed sacrifices have been made, sometimes send illness to their descendants as an indication that they require additional food: "They see that you are prospering but have not thought of those who are hungry." Breach of certain rules of social conduct is believed to invoke the anger of the ancestors, and while some informants claimed that punishment from the ancestors takes the form of illness, mental derangement, misfortune or even death, others claimed that the ancestors do not actually punish but merely "turn their backs" and, by withdrawing their protection, cause the miscreant to fall prey to misfortune.

There is also some indication that the anger of living senior relatives is believed to bring harm on wrong-doers. A young, pregnant woman was repeatedly impertinent to her father's brother's wife, the senior woman of the homestead. In the heat of a quarrel, the aunt is reputed to have said: "We'll see if you bear this child." The death of the young woman in childbirth was attributed to the aunt's anger. Again, the widows of two brothers, living in different homesteads, quarrelled about the order in which they were to use the plough and span which had belonged to one of the deceased. The elder brother's widow threatened the widow of the younger brother: "We'll see how long your son lives, and if you don't become skin and bone." The son assisting with the ploughing, took ill suddenly and died, and his mother, our informant, had in truth become extremely

emaciated. It is not clear whether, in these cases, the senior relative was thought to have exercised a legitimate power to curse, or to have resorted to witchcraft.

Much misfortune is believed to be caused by the malpractice of witches and sorcerers (*abathakathi*), whose aim it is to destroy property, health and life. The technique of witchcraft is distinct from that of sorcery, for a witch works through a familiar, while a sorcerer uses medicines and spells to achieve his nefarious ends. Anyone may use sorcery to harm others. Some medicines or materials of sorcery are generally known; knowledge of others is limited to such specialists as the herbalist (*ixhwele*). A man who sells medicines to be used for sorcery is himself a sorcerer, and when, as often happens, a herbalist is employed to destroy any enemy, both he and the man who employs him, are equally responsible for destroying or harming life. Spells have no fixed phraseology, but they usually include the name of the intended victim and details of the harm that should befall him. Witches may know the medicines of sorcery, but only in exceptional cases would they resort to the use of medicines to achieve the death of victims: "Witches have familiars to do their work for them; they do not need medicines." While sorcery may, in fact, be practised, the practice of witchcraft is a belief rather than a reality. The familiars of witches, visible only to their owners and those whom they attack, are believed to work evil either at the behest of their owners or independently, for they are credited with the power to harm and kill people even against the wishes of their owners. A familiar, acting independently, is said to destroy people with whom its owner may be very friendly, because it is jealous, or "for pleasure," "because it is hungry," or "because it wants meat".

It is the evil ends for which sorcerers are believed to mix their medical potions and weave their spells that make them culpable; it is not the use of medicines or destructive magic in itself which is repugnant. Herbalists, in fact, who use medicines and spells, are often employed to give preventive treatment to properties or persons, for instance, in the protection of properties against thieves, treatment of people going out to work in towns in order that they may be successful in obtaining work, and treatment of clients to ensure their success in court cases, or to strengthen them against the anticipated malpractice of witches and sorcerers. Herbalists also use medicines in giving curative treatment to patients who are ill or believed to be suffering from the malpractice of witches and sorcerers, and to pro-

erties such as, for instance, in purifying an area after lightning has struck. Powerful medicines of sorcery are said to be used or sold by Indians, Malays, Zulu and Bhaca; powerful medicines are always ascribed to other people, Xhosa, for instance, including the Mpondo among those owning them, and Mpondo including the Xhosa. But the most powerful of all are believed to be those acquired from European traders or chemists in towns. Sometimes the Europeans themselves are believed to use these medicines against Africans: the very poor agricultural yields in the district over the past ten years, a period of recurrent lengthy droughts, are believed by some people to have been caused by Europeans dropping poison from aeroplanes over their fields; one informant said that many animals die because the Government poisons them, being anxious to restrict stock. According to a doctor diviner, there are herbalists with medicines powerful enough to use against Europeans, but no further information could be obtained on this point.

There are a number of ways of harming people by sorcery: the hair or excrement of a victim may be mixed with medicines; medicines may be chewed, or a mouthful of medicated water taken and spat towards the sun; a medicated peg or thorn may be put on a pathway, to trip the victim, or medicines may be sprinkled over a path used by the victim; medicines may be put into a horn, and lightning invoked to strike the victim; dust over which the victim has trodden may be mixed with medicines and thrown outside his hut; food and drink may be poisoned. In order to ruin a man's crops, a sorcerer walks with his eyes closed across the victim's field, takes a plant, treats it with medicines and then plants it in his own field. Medicines of sorcery are said to be sent through the post to victims working in the towns. Men and women, before leaving for work, often obtain certain ground and dried medicines from herbalists and diviners to protect them when they open letters from home or when they dream of witches' familiars.

Witches are believed not only to be conscious of their evil-doing, but to have chosen their role voluntarily. A woman is believed to instruct her daughter or grand-daughter in witchcraft and to pass on her familiar, sometimes even to unrelated women. A father is said to be able to give his familiar to his son, and the man's familiar *uMamlambo* can be purchased or acquired inadvertently from a stranger. However, those selected by full-fledged witches to follow in their footsteps need only do so if they choose. As soon as people dream

of familiars, they should divulge their dreams and be taken to a herbalist or diviner for treatment, otherwise they "will come to know the familiar well," and will become witches. The slaughter of a beast is part of the treatment for a man who has unwittingly come into possession of a familiar.

If a woman possesses one familiar, she is believed to have working for her all three familiars common to female witches, *imPundulu* which instructs *uThikolo se* in evil doing, and *iNyoka yabafazi*, the snake of women. The first has the power to change itself into many different forms, taking on such guises as that of "a handsome young man" or "a bird with a crooked beak." The *inyoka* is "a beautiful snake, no longer than the forefinger, and with two heads." *imPundulu* causes lightning to strike and injures or destroys humans and stock; *inyoka* eats people's insides and causes illness. A man witch is believed to possess either a baboon (*imfene*) as a familiar, or more commonly *uMamlambo*, which is known as "the snake of men" (*inyoka yamadoda*). *uMamlambo* has the power to take on any guise at all, such as a baby, a beautiful woman, a variegated charm, a tin or a mirror. When one of the European fieldworkers on the Keiskammahoek Rural Survey drove up to Chatha in a jeep, and almost immediately after his visit the headman of the village died, the jeep was widely regarded as the manifestation of *uMamlambo*, although no specific person was accused of having sent the familiar. The baboon is believed to be generally harmful to cattle; *uMamlambo* makes its owner's field yield abundantly and increases his stock, but invariably kills the people of the homestead because of jealousy, and may even "eat" its owner's stock for pleasure. While *uMamlambo* is generally believed to harm only people in the neighbourhood, *imPundulu* can be sent to a victim in the towns; it appears in the guise of a young man visible to anyone, but divulges its identity only to its victim, who then becomes ill, dies or disappears.

*iChanti*, the "snake of the river" is a mythical creature with the power to change itself into many different forms, appearing as a chain, a mirror, a cup or anything else; "even when you don't see it, it always sees you, and you fall down unconscious and have to employ a herbalist to get well." Some people claim that *iChanti* is one of the forms into which the familiar *uMamlambo* can change itself; however, it is not generally believed to be a familiar, but rather to be one of the "people of the river." Those who are drowned are often believed to have been "called" by the "dog of the river" (*inja yomlambo*) to join "the people of the river." "People of the river" (*abantu*

*bomlambo*) are believed to live in deep pools and to work harm on victims, particularly at night; even when they remain invisible to their victims, they cause illness, blindness or mental derangement. When illness is ascribed to the "people of the river," they require to be propitiated, and the ritual for this will be prescribed by a doctor diviner. Certain diviners are believed to be initiated by the "people of the river," being called into the river for several days and emerging as full fledged specialists.<sup>1</sup>

Although God (*uThixo*) is not invoked on ritual occasions, He has nevertheless become an accepted part of pagan thought. A doctor diviner, for instance, will explain that his treatment will be successful "with the help of the ancestors and God." A pagan discussing witchcraft and sorcery will point out that "God keeps a list of everything the witches and sorcerers do, and will reckon with them on their dying day." Satan is accepted as the force of evil; people who work evil on earth, including witches and sorcerers, are believed to be "burnt to ashes in Satan's fire before re-appearing on earth as *isipoyo*" (c.f. Afrikaans—*spook*). An *isipoyo* manifests itself as a flickering light just above the ground, or in the guise of an animal or any other object such as a packet of sweets. In Gwili-Gwili, many people were afraid to cross a certain bridge at night because of the *isipoyo* of a murderous woman, born in the village, who had lived a violent life in East London stabbing people to death. The blending of traditional and Christian beliefs emerges in the frequency with which pagans cite biblical analogies to illustrate their beliefs, such as the biblical story of Adam and Eve's eviction from the Garden of Eden, volunteered by a doctor diviner to explain how the snake (*inyoka*) became a familiar of witches to work evil.

The doctor diviners, being gifted with the power to smell out witches and sorcerers, as well as to interpret the symbolism of dreams and the wishes of other people's ancestors, are called in to diagnose the cause of illness or other misfortune. They also prescribe remedies, ordering sacrifices if illness be attributed to the displeasure of ancestors, and advising on the treatment of patients or victims of misfortune in the same manner as do herbalists. Among staunch Christians, misfortune is invariably attributed to natural causes; they do not believe in witchcraft nor in sorcery, although they do concede that poisons are sometimes used by the so-called sorcerers. On the other hand, to many other baptised and confirmed Christians, even including regular church goers, the fear of witches and sorcerers as a cause of

<sup>1</sup>In Pondoland "the people of the river" are clan ancestors, but this connection was not made plain by informants in Keiskammahoek District.

misfortune is still very real, and they will consult diviners and employ herbalists whenever misfortunes occur.

The reason why belief in witchcraft and sorcery flourishes, not only among pagans but also among many Christians, is that it offers an explanation of untoward events or unequal fortune. Witchcraft and sorcery can be made to account for unusual or abnormal behaviour on the part of people who previously behaved normally; they serve to explain why death, and illness or misfortune, should befall one individual, while others are spared; they suffice for the conservative, lazy or ignorant to explain away the greater economic prosperity of more industrious neighbours. Although people are likely to think of witchcraft and sorcery as soon as misfortune befalls, they are less inclined, today, to rationalise unequal economic fortune in terms of witchcraft and sorcery. When misfortune occurs, the victim will immediately think of someone with whom he or his family has quarrelled, and who would therefore be likely to bewitch or use magic against him. Beliefs concerning the independence of action possible to witches' familiars enable a diviner to smell out the familiars' owner, even when the victim of misfortune is unable to think of any enemies who might have wished him harm; anyone in the homestead or neighbourhood who, because of anti-social behaviour is reputed to be a witch, can always be accused, even though the witch and victim had no quarrel.

In the past, once a diviner had invoked witchcraft or sorcery to account for illness or death and had established the identity of the culprit, the witch or sorcerer was put to death, the body being impaled with a stake and secretly buried on the veld. This gave inordinate power to the diviner and put people in such mortal fear of being smelt out as a witch or sorcerer that their natural precaution was against diverging from the norm of social behaviour or appearing in any way conspicuous in economic effort. Men who have better and bigger crop yields than their neighbours are always, even today, in danger of being accused of using medicines to prosper their fields, or of owning the familiar *uMamlambo*, which "fills a man's storehut with abundance and makes his stock increase." A teacher told indignantly how, after he had bought good seed at some cost and had taken the trouble to plough his field twice, he heard that people were attributing his successful yield to the use of medicines.

Today the killing of witches and sorcerers is treated by the European authorities as murder, and accusations against people of

witchcraft and sorcery are punishable offences. Although their power is thus greatly diminished, nevertheless diviners continue to invoke witchcraft and sorcery in accounting for death and disease, often being consulted by people who come from considerable distances in the belief that a diviner living afar off would feel freer to reveal the identity of the culprit. Villagers complain that witchcraft and sorcery are more prevalent today than in the past, because of the culprit's immunity from punishment. On the other hand, their immunity makes people less fearful of acting in an anti-social manner, or becoming conspicuous in production. In practice today, beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery are more important in hampering the acceptance of scientific knowledge than in deterring men from being conspicuous in production. As long as the success or failure of a crop, or the well-being or loss of stock can be explained in magical terms, there is little need to seek a more rational system of cause and effect. It is usually among staunch Christians, who scoff at witchcraft and sorcery, and who are better educated and wealthier than others, that innovations in agriculture and animal husbandry are most readily accepted. Those, however, who have better crops, more stock, more furniture or material equipment than others are believed to be in danger of arousing the jealousies of witches or sorcerers, and thus falling ill, dying or otherwise becoming victims of their malpractice.

To cause a witch or sorcerer to desist from malpractice, the victim or a member of his family will stand outside and shout a warning, usually without mentioning names. For instance, a grand-mother shouted from her hut door to the witch who was believed to be harming her grand-child and who lived across the valley: "We know who is harming our child, release this child we tell you!" After such shouted warning, the patient may be treated medicinally, and as a further safeguard may be taken very secretly to the homestead of a relative or friend some distance away; hidden thus, the patient is believed to be less exposed to the malpractice of the witch or sorcerer during convalescence. Informants claimed that only a witch could retaliate directly against another witch, ordinary people could not do so because they do not have familiars. But attempts at retaliation by means of sorcery are sometimes made, and herbalists employed for the task. A case was encountered of a man who was reputed to have employed a herbalist to send lightning against his brother's son. When the homestead was struck, the brother's son and his family emerged unscathed, although visitors present were killed.

The brother's son, a herbalist of some repute himself, then decided to use sorcery against his uncle, and put medicated pegs along a path much used by his uncle. The latter is still alive, but his son-in-law, the first to cross the path, took ill the same day and died.

It is the ancestors who are believed to protect their descendants from the attacks of witches and sorcerers, but that they are not always successful is shown by the number of cases in which illness and death are attributed to witchcraft and sorcery. However, the failure of the ancestors can always be rationalised as indication that they were, for some reason, displeased with their descendant and had "turned their backs" or withdrawn their protection.

There are no clearly formulated beliefs about the world of the shades. The ancestors are usually believed to live underground, but under the influence no doubt of Christianity, some believe that "they live up in the sky." While the ancestral spirits are ordinarily invisible they are believed to be constantly about the homesteads of their descendants and to accompany them when they move, in order to advise and protect them. Only elderly men and women, who, before death, would already have had authority in the homestead, become ancestral spirits (*amathongo*) to their descendants. Most informants were unable to say what happens to children and other younger people in after life, although a few suggested that they lived together with the ancestors; however, such people have no power over their descendants, for death accords them no status higher and no power greater than they enjoyed during their lifetime. Christian influence encourages the belief among some that only men and women who were kind and good during their lives become ancestral spirits; the mean and wicked go to Satan. Other informants hold that all people who reach a venerable age in life become ancestral spirits after death, even if they were mean, selfish or bad tempered on earth. Such a person does not undergo a change of character so much as a change of aim after death; he no longer has time to be concerned with himself or his own selfish ends, being too busy with the affairs of his descendants. The dominance of men in the world of the living is projected into the world of the dead, for male ancestral spirits have special power over their descendants in the male line. However, an elderly woman may also become an *ithongo* to her own or her son's children, or to members of her own agnatic group and their descendants in the male line; nevertheless, a woman is "not a strong ancestor" to her son's children, since they are specifically under the influence of their paternal ancestors.

Cattle are believed to be the link with the ancestral spirits, and sacrifices of cattle and goats necessary to provide food for them. On marriage, a woman may be given a cow or heifer by her father as a link with her own ancestors, for she remains under their influence as well as coming under the influence of her husband's ancestors. A necklet (*intambo*) woven from the tail hairs of this "beast of the ancestors" is believed to be efficacious in the event of illness or sterility and during pregnancy. Illnesses of her children are sometimes diagnosed as requiring the intercession of her ancestors, and the patient will be given a necklet from her "beast of the ancestors." From among the husband's cattle also, one is usually selected as a beast of his ancestors, and necklets from its tail hairs are often worn by members of the family during illness, by children when they are being weaned, and by boys when they are being initiated. The wearing of a necklet, sometimes accompanied by a sacrificial offering of a goat when the necklet is put on, is a method of appealing for the intercession of the ancestors; Christians are even known to wear such necklets, sometimes sewn into a black cloth. The special beast is not ceremonially dedicated in any way; should necklets from its tail hairs repeatedly prove inefficacious, another animal will be chosen; the special beast is usually a cow or heifer, but among some people a cow for the women and an ox for the men are selected, and occasionally a white goat for the children.

When a beast is to be sacrificed, all the cattle of the homestead are driven into the courtyard, and the one to be slaughtered is believed to stand of its own accord in front of the hut of the head of the homestead. That beast is then driven into the cattle byre; as soon as it is stabbed, it should bellow, as a sign that the offering is acceptable to the ancestors. Stabbing of animals is through the aorta, usually with a special spear used only on ritual occasions. The position of the slaughtered animal, lying on its right side with its head pointing towards the gate of the byre, marks the occasion as a sacred one; even if the occasion is one on which the ancestors are not necessarily invoked aloud, they "know that the meat is for them." On some occasions when a beast is the sacrifice, a portion of fat is cut off and roasted as soon as the animal has been flayed; this is said to be for the ancestors, and it may not be eaten by anyone. On some occasions, too, the bones of the beast, and also of a goat sacrificed, are collected and burnt, and must not be left for the dogs to scavenge. Portions of sacrificial meat given to kinsmen attending the occasion must not be taken

away but must all be consumed at the homestead at which the killing has taken place. Some of the more important rituals extend over three days, the first being the "slaughter day," the second the "feast day," and then the "day on which the bones are burnt."

Beer, while always less important than the sacrifice, is regarded as an essential part of the ritual offering on certain occasions. Beer for the ancestors (*amanzi kamfi*—lit. : "water of the dead") is prepared and handled differently from beer brewed for hospitality: water used in the preparation of the ancestors' beer must be specially fetched, and any surplus must not be used for other purposes but must be spilled out, and porridge made to start the beer may not be eaten as on other occasions; the beer should be made of kaffir-corn, not mealies, and if the offering is acceptable it will bubble and splash over the pot when opened. The *entla* portion of a hut, which, like the cattle byre, is known as "the place of the ancestors" (*indawo yabantu abadala basekhaya apha*), is where a tin of beer is left for the ancestors, and where a newly sacrificed carcase, blood of the slaughtered animal, and ritual medicines for a patient, are left overnight on certain ritual occasions.

The day after the funeral of any members of the family, a goat should be sacrificed in a ceremony known as *ukusezwa amanzi* (lit. : "to be given water to drink"), in order that the gravy of the meat may alleviate the thirst created by the fear and horror of the bereavement. The head of the homestead was at one time always buried in the back wall of the cattle byre, branches being removed for the burial and replaced over the grave; the byre is never extended on the side where the graves are; it is known as "the place of the ancestors." Some time after death, a ritual killing is made to mourn (*ukuzila*) the departed, "to accompany him away from the homestead," or "to accompany him to the ancestors." For the head of the homestead, a beast will be sacrificed at this *izila* killing; the only other people for whom such sacrifice will be made, and normally of a goat rather than a beast, are the mother of the head of a homestead, his wife, and his elderly sister if she lived in his homestead. After a year of mourning the death of the head of the homestead, an ox must be slaughtered in order to bring back the shade to the homestead to protect and advise his descendants. If this killing (*ukubuyisa abadala*—to bring back the ancestors) is not undertaken, it is believed that the deceased's family will also perish.

There are many different occasions of ritual, and the detail of their procedure, even the content of the ritual offerings to the ancestors, varies sometimes between the Mfengu and Xhosa, among different clans, and sometimes even among different lineages; a diviner may also introduce changes in a client's customary ritual. Of all ritual occasions, among the most important are the sacrifices to mourn, or accompany an important person *away* from the homestead and to *bring back* the shade. In cases of grave illness it is also considered important to appeal to the ancestors by sacrificing a beast at a ritual known as *idini*, and using ritual medicines of the patient. Sometimes in illness, or if a person's behaviour is unbecoming, or he shows signs of mental derangement, the aid of the ancestors is sought by the wearing of the necklet made from the tail hairs of the "beast of the ancestors," together with the slaughter of a goat. If a woman is sterile, it is her own ancestors who must be appealed to with the sacrifice of the goat. Often when illness occurs and the family of the patient does not own a beast and cannot afford to buy one for some time, a goat may be slaughtered—"to say, wait for us until we have a beast; we have heard what you want." The goat is killed "so that the ancestors should not get angry." Even when the patient does not recover, the efficacy of the ritual is not usually questioned; its failure is often attributed to its not having been performed in time, "the ancestors were angry because their warnings were not heeded." If a person is believed to have been "called by the people of the river," the slaughter of a beast is believed to propitiate them, and cause them to deliver their victim alive.

Most other rituals mark some phase or change in the lives of individuals. Sacrifices of goats, usually white ones, are made shortly after the birth of a child (*imbeleko*, described on page 111), in the course of a boy's initiation to manhood (*ukugcamisa* and *ukojiswa*, described on pages 206-12) and when a woman is married (*ukudliswa amasi*, described on pages 78-9). When a diviner is initiated, a white goat is slaughtered for his or her ancestors; if he is believed to be initiated by the "people of the river," an additional sacrifice will be made to the latter, as well as to the ancestors. When people have been delivered from some danger, such as the believed malpractice of witches or sorcerers or other supernatural evils, or when people have come safely through some experience such as a tour of work in the towns, a ceremony of thanksgiving to the ancestors is usually held (*ukusulela abadala*—"to thank the ancestors"), with the sacrifice of a goat.

If the rules of exogamy are violated by a couple marrying or having sexual relations within the forbidden clans or lineages, it is believed that the wrath of the ancestors can be propitiated by the slaughter of a beast "to break relationship" (*ukuchitha ubublobo*).

For a man the animal to be slaughtered is always provided by the father or his heir; however, when a woman marries, or when her illness is diagnosed as having been caused by an ancestor of her husband, he provides the animal. The hides and skins of the animals are usually sold; the owner of the animal may retain the proceeds, but in some cases he buys brandy, tobacco, sugar and coffee or tea for a subsequent small feast at the homestead where the ritual had been performed. Before a ritual killing may take place, it should be sanctioned by the leader of the lineage remnant; if his permission is not obtained the sacrifice is said to be "spoiled" or unacceptable to the ancestors. The leader is responsible for performing the rites, or supervising them, at the homesteads of any members of his lineage remnant. Invocations of the ancestors are usually undertaken by the leader of the lineage remnant, and he supervises the sacrifice, the preparation of beer, the collection of tail hairs from the "beast of the ancestors," the donning of the necklet, the preparation and administering of ritual medicines and the disposal of bones, porridge from the beer and excess medicine. On the more important occasions, the leader appoints a steward (*injoli*) from among the male members of the lineage remnant, and a stewardess (*injolikazi*) from among their senior wives, to supervise the allocation to kinsmen of the sacrificial meat and beer.

Although Christians strenuously deny any connection between their feasts and occasions of pagan ritual, it is believed by pagans, at least, that the feasts are in fact a substitute for pagan sacrifices. Christians usually hold a "baptismal dinner," all the initiation feasts, a "bride's dinner" and sometimes a "dinner of mourning" (*idinala yokuzila*) after the death of an elderly man or woman in the family. Also a son who has returned safely from the towns may provide money to purchase food for a "thanksgiving dinner." On all these occasions, a goat, a sheep, or even a besat may be slaughtered to provide meat. Church members even sometimes undertake ritual killings in cases of illness, in addition to wearing necklets made from a beast's tail hairs. To pagans, it makes no difference if an elderly man or woman dies as a staunch Christian, they are still regarded as becoming ancestral spirits.

## Appendix B

### MALE INITIATION<sup>1</sup>

#### I — INTRODUCTORY

Neither school education, nor Christian teaching, nor prolonged contact with Europeans in migrant employment has changed the view of the Xhosa and Mfengu people that circumcision is essential to the attainment of manhood.<sup>2</sup> However, the ritual is modified in the cases of individuals who are influenced by European standards of hygiene, by Christian teaching, or by the discipline of European employers and secondary schools. Since the Mfengu tend to be more educated and more of them than of the Xhosa are Christians, many of the differences observed in the circumcision custom can be interpreted as being not so much tribal differences as differences between sophisticated and conservative peoples. The common form of initiation, which will later be described in detail, is that performed by the Mfengu people, tribal variations in the Xhosa custom being specified.

The differences between Mfengu and Xhosa custom in the initiation ceremonies are slight, but the fact that the Mfengu and Xhosa people in certain villages initiate their youths separately is symptomatic of a consciousness of their tribal difference. However, even the separation is not altogether rigid. In Burnshill the initiates are divided into two groups, one Mfengu and one Xhosa, who are secluded in huts situated at opposite ends of the village, but if there has been tribal intermarriage, an Mfengu youth may be found in a Xhosa group, or vice versa. At the coming out ceremonies observed, there were in one group four Mfengu youths in the charge of an Mfengu guardian (*ikbankatha*), and in the other four Xhosa youths and one Mpondo

<sup>1</sup>This account of tribal initiation is based on observations made by Mr. M. E. Elton Mills, who attended both Mfengu and Xhosa ceremonies in Burnshill village during the winter months of 1950, and also discussed the customs with the older men of the village.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. R. Crozier has reported upon his observations near Healdtown (Fort Beaufort District) during 1945 — 1949, to the effect that only the Xhosa, who are deliberately conservative, uneducated and un-Christian, take the circumcision ritual seriously and set a standard for the Mfengu to follow. The latter, who are more educated and Christian, hardly take the ritual seriously and are not scrupulous about details. Nevertheless, Mfengu public opinion insists that circumcision be retained, and it would be disgraceful for a woman to marry an uncircumcised man.

in charge of an Mfengu guardian who was related to the Mpondo. However, recounting his own initiation, one Mfengu man in Burnshill told of a mixed group of four Mfengu and three Xhosa youths.

It is realised that the present form of the initiation ceremony is of much shorter duration than the traditional one, and even the shorter ceremony of the present day may be greatly modified to suit the convenience of a boy attending school. For clarity of description, the initiation ritual may be considered in eight distinct and successive stages, which will be described subsequently in their common form, but which may be mentioned here in connection with the modifications to which they are sometimes subject. The majority of people prefer the ritual to be carried through properly, and even many of the educated people insist that all the stages be completed according to custom. When modifications are introduced, the comment tends to be *Alilo siko elo*—"that is not the custom." If the modification has been extreme, the men who have been circumcised in this way are apt to be treated as though they have not truly attained manhood, being taunted as cowards, subjected to the ridicule of other men in public, prevented from speaking at the village council (*inkundla*) or from sitting with the men at a meeting, and rejected with scorn by the girls of the village.

The first stage is that of preparation, which may differ for each individual. Those boys who have already been out to work usually return home with the express object of undergoing the initiation ritual. If a boy is back from a completed period of contract labour on the mines, he may prepare to take his initiation leisurely over a period of two or three months. If he is on leave from industrial employment, he may have barely a month on hand. If he attends school in the village, he may await the school holidays. If he attends a secondary boarding school, he has only the June or December holidays during which to be initiated. Some secondary schools gate the boys, and others go so far as expelling them, if they return late to school after the holidays. Since the June holidays are only of a month's duration, it is necessary for secondary school pupils to prepare for an initiation ceremony cut to the barest essentials. Winter is considered the proper time for initiation, for it is then that there are dry mealie stalks in the land, available for the building of the lodge (*ibuma*) in which the circumcision candidates (*abakhwetha*) will spend their period of seclusion. However, since the December school holidays are the longer, many scholars arrange to be circum-

cised at that time, forgoing the building of a lodge and preparing to spend the days in the hills, returning home at night to sleep in an unused hut. The more educated people approach the day of circumcision quietly and without display, but the illiterate youths, particularly those who have been out to work in the towns, advertise their intentions by their riotous behaviour in the village during the days preceding their circumcision.

The second stage is the *ukungcamisa*, a ritual killing, usually performed the day before circumcision, followed by festivities. Not all boys have the ritual killing performed for them, but when it is done it takes place at the boy's own home. While church people may hold a feast, they usually serve no beer, and consider it sufficient for the initiates to have singing and enjoy themselves (*ukomwabisa*.) The less educated and pagan people hold an all night dancing session (*umguyo*) in which the initiates join.<sup>1</sup>

The morning after the *ukungcamisa* ritual, the initiates are circumcised, and it is in connection with this stage and the subsequent healing of the wound that modification is most generally introduced and later ridicule may be directed against an individual that he departed so far from the custom as to have failed to "become a man in the true way." According to custom, there are four stages, all of which are undergone in a secluded place in the bushes, at or near the site of the initiates' lodge. Each village has its customary area next to the fields, or on the top or slopes of a hill, and sometimes there will be two such sites, widely separated, one for Mfengu and the other for Xhosa candidates.<sup>2</sup> Each season a hut is erected on this site, although not on exactly the same spot every time, and is burned on the occasion of the coming out ceremony which succeeds the period of the boys' seclusion. As a rule, all those interested will build one big hut, and all the boys who are circumcised that year, singly or in small or large groups, will pass through the lodge, like a "winter school."

The first of these four stages is the actual severing of the foreskin by a surgeon (*inchibi*), who uses an unsterilised knife. This is followed by a period, normally ten days, of pain and privation. The boys' wounds are roughly dressed with *izigqutsu* leaves from the *izichwe*

<sup>1</sup>Even among the educated and supposedly Christian peoples, however, an *umguyo* may be held. One informant told of the initiation of himself and his brother who is a teacher at the local school and is supposedly a church man: when the *ukungcamisa* was held, there was a big *umguyo* and singing and dancing went on all night.

<sup>2</sup>As in the case of Burnshill village.

plant, probably having certain styptic qualities and which are said to help relieve the pain, and are bandaged with mealie husks. During this period, the boys partake of nothing but a coarse and hard porridge; they are forbidden liquid altogether, and they moisten their parched lips with a white clay mixture. The next stage is the *ukojiswa* ritual, said to have as its objective the releasing of the boys from their abstinences from soft foods and liquid. A goat is slaughtered and a feast held, at which the boys are admonished to behave themselves during the remainder of their period of seclusion, which normally lasts two or three months. As their wounds finally heal, they paint their bodies with clay, which is not only an adornment but is a substitute for washing, since initiates are not allowed to go anywhere near streams; and they also devote much time to visiting, and hunting, or working in the fields.

It is fairly generally maintained that it is the undergoing of the hardships and the bearing of pain (*ukunyamezela*: v.t., to bear, to endure) that are necessary to becoming a man. If a boy undergoes those, then his manhood is not disparaged, even though he was compelled to modify the custom either by the use of European medicines, ointments and bandages in order to promote quicker healing, or by having no lodge. Particularly when there is a shortage of *izigqut.su* leaves, even the boys who go through the leisurely ceremony in the lodge may treat their wounds with European ointments. Others use ointments and also gauze bandages in place of mealie husks, because they believe it promotes quicker healing. Secondary school pupils are particularly anxious to get the whole affair over quickly, but if they circumcise during the June holidays, their wounds are still unhealed by the time they return to school. Informants told of many cases of continuing treatment while at school, the boys going out into the bush to treat the wounds with leaves or other applications.<sup>1</sup> If scholars select the longer holidays in December for circumcision, they are able to undergo the normal routine except that they do not live out in the bush, there being no mealie stalks with which to build a lodge, but sleep at home in a hut set aside for them and spend the days in the hills. Many Christians tend to introduce these same modifications into the ceremony, retaining the bare essentials of the custom—food and water restrictions for ten days; abstinence from washing until their period of seclusion is over, then a ritual washing in the river; and avoidance of their mothers and women contem-

<sup>1</sup>In one case Meltonian shoe polish was used with the leaves.

porary with them. Staunch Christians sometimes go even further, considering it heathenish to follow the custom of painting their bodies with clay and going naked save for a blanket, and instead they spend their days in the hills clad in dirty old suits, which become uncomfortably odorous when these initiates also follow the custom of refraining from washing. Such modifications as the above are condoned, even though the boys are felt to lose something of the full significance of the ritual when they spend their days in isolation on the veld, rather than in the lodge which is regarded as a "winter school" where the boys, living together, learn about the dignity of manhood, and for the first time are given some instruction on sex. The dancing, which formed such an important part of the traditional ceremonies, has disappeared in Keiskammahoeck District.

It is very seldom that custom is flouted to the extent of the circumcision operation being performed in hospital or by a medical practitioner. It is known that there anaesthetics are used, so that the boy "does not feel the pain and thus does not become a man in the true way," and he may be branded as a coward. An operation in hospital is resorted to only when the time factor is urgent. As one informant said with a laugh: *Alilo siko elo*—"that is not the custom . . . but it is necessary to do it if you want to stay on at school." Normally therefore, no other part of the initiation ceremony is undergone by a boy who has had so little time at his disposal that he had the operation performed in hospital. One informant said of such people: "You were told that they were men, and did not hear of anything happening to them." Although subject to ridicule, they are accepted as men by most people, after the fact of their circumcision has been verified by the other men who require to see them washing naked at the river.

When a boy is undergoing the full initiation ritual, his period of seclusion usually lasts two or three months. Much depends on how long his parents take to collect the money necessary for the purchase of a new blanket and new clothing for his coming out. Either money for these has to be sent from the towns by relatives working there, or purchases made in the towns must be sent back to the village. Sometimes the coming out of an initiate from seclusion is delayed because these essentials do not arrive. During all the time of his seclusion, an initiate is regarded by the people of the village as a dirty outcast, neither boy nor man, whose only companions are the herd boys and mongrel dogs, though few boys lack the company also

of sweethearts whom they visit and even sometimes inveigle into going with them to the lodge.

At the coming out ritual, which is the next stage in the custom, the initiates wash at the river, emerge and return to the village as new beings, leaving behind their boyhood in the smoking ruins of their burning lodge. The final stage in initiation follows a day or two after the festivities of the coming out ceremony; the youths are formally handed over to their parents as *amakeywala* (*kywala*, v.i., begin to ripen *ikywala*, n., a youth entering on manhood). They don new and distinctive clothing, paint their faces with red ochre, carry long black sticks and spend their days herding cattle until such time as their passes are in order for them to go to the towns to work. There, as *amakeywala*, they undergo change, normally working in a different locality and in employment other than they had as boys, and they spend their money on dandified European clothing. When they return to the village, after anything from one to three years' migrant employment in the towns, and having discarded the typical dress of the *ikywala*, they take their place as "young men" (*abafana*) in the village. If an *ikywala* does not go out to work, but remains at home herding, or if he is a pupil at a secondary school, then at the end of the year in which he was circumcised, and provided he has obtained new clothing, he will also be admitted to the status of "young man" by consensus of the other young men of the village.

## 2—THE FORM OF RITUAL

### (a) Preparation

With the onset of adolescence, the prospect of circumcision is never far from the thoughts of a young boy. When a school boy talks of the importance of keeping the customs, he generally means the circumcision custom. As an *inkwenkwe*, he will often hang about initiates' lodges, learning their rites, sleeping with them and fagging for them. Teachers complain that attendance of boys at the village schools falls off during these months, because the boys spend so much time with the initiates.

Decision as to when he will be circumcised rests largely with the boy himself. It will normally be when he is 18 or 19 years of age, but may be as young as 16 or as late as at 23 years of age. The boy usually elects to be circumcised the same year as his close friends with whom he has grown up in the village section, in order that they

may go through the initiation together. He will approach his parents with the request that he be initiated that year. The parents' wishes and convenience enter into the decision, since they have to make all arrangements and see to it that an adult male member represents the family at all the ceremonies in connection with their son's initiation, but also because of the expense of feasts and the blankets and clothing which they must provide. When the decision to initiate is made, the headman is approached and told, merely as a matter of courtesy, that certain boys will be initiated together. The number of boys to be initiated at the same time varies enormously, from one to any number. It is not an affair of the village, nor are the boys necessarily related, but the group usually consists of boys from one village section who have grown up together, and with the inclusion sometimes of an odd boy from another village section who has no contemporaries.

The parents of the boys decide upon one man to be the master of the initiation ceremonies (*uSosuthu*—lit.: "father of the seclusion hut"). This man is usually the father of the boy in the group who is senior by hereditary status. From his home will come all the food for the initiates and he will become responsible for the proper performance of the ritual. A guardian (*ikhankatha*) for the initiates is also selected, usually from among the relatives of the boys. He is approached and asked to perform the office, which is not an enviable one: the duties will include the dressing of the wounds and searching for the *izigqutsu* leaves which will be used for this, the maintenance of discipline in the lodge and general responsibility for and instruction of the initiates. The guardian will not be paid for undertaking the work, but he will get a blanket from the initiates at the coming out ceremony and will receive thanks and usually a small sum of money from the *uSosuthu* and some of the other men.<sup>1</sup> The third official to be appointed by the boys' parents is the surgeon (*inchibi*), who

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Mills recorded the speeches made at the coming out ceremonies of groups of Mfengu and Xhosa initiates. At the former, the guardian (*ikhankatha*) was the first to speak:

"You asked me to look after the boys. I have done so. Today I have brought them back. . . ."

Of the nine men who addressed the Mfengu initiates, five commenced by thanking the guardian, and one added:

"The thing you have done is not small. Your boys did not steal. You kept them."  
Similarly, at the Xhosa ceremony, of eight men who made speeches, four addressed thanks to the guardian, and added: "This is not the first time we have to thank you. Whenever you are asked you are easy. You spend time with the boys and your cattle and goats get lost and wander into your lands. . . ." "Your work has been very nice. . . ." "We know that you have an eye to look after the boys. . . ." "Thank you for bringing the boys across the river. . . ."

will perform the actual circumcision operation. He is not necessarily related to any of the initiates, and may even come from a distant village, being a recognised skilled operator, whose services are paid for at a rate which may vary but is usually 2/6 per initiate.

The boys who are to be initiated will advertise their intentions by wandering around the village in groups, spending much time at the stores. They are usually distinctively clad in brief shorts and vests, and wear big goatskin anklets with bells (*amanqafela*). They are very rowdy and spend most of their time dancing, stick-fighting and generally making themselves felt in the village. As the day for the circumcision approaches, they have to make preparations for their seclusion in the lodge: poles and saplings are cut to form the framework, and dry mealie stalks are cut and hauled to the site of the lodge; women from the boys' homesteads collect the thatching grass with which the lodge will be completed; the boys collect supplies of white clay (*ifutha*) with which they will paint themselves during their seclusion; their guardian searches for the healing leaves of the *izichwe* plant, and if these are unobtainable, he buys ointments from the European doctor in Keiskammahoeck village.

(b) *Ukungcamisa*

Usually on the day before the actual circumcision a ritual killing is performed at the home of each of the boys, in order to prepare them for the ordeal before them and to ensure that everything will go well with them. When this ritual was witnessed, there were two initiates.<sup>1</sup> First the ritual was performed at the homestead of the one, and then the whole party moved across to the homestead of the other, where the ritual was repeated. Neighbours, friends and relatives gather to participate in the ritual, for it is said that there is no custom which can be performed without having people present (*akukho siko elinakho kuqhubeka abantu bengekho*).

Throughout the ritual, the initiates, discarding their everyday clothing, are clad only in blankets and carry long sticks. They gather in the cattle byre, where they sit wrapped in their blankets, apart from the men. A white goat is slaughtered, and it is not allowed to bleat while being killed. As soon as it is skinned, a strip of meat is cut from the right foreleg (the *intsonyama* portion) and is roasted on the coals

<sup>1</sup>One informant, telling of his own initiation, said that a goat was killed for each of seven initiates in the group, and that nobody wanted any more meat by the time the feast drew to a close.

until it is charred. In the meantime, the initiate from that homestead has his head shaved by his father; this hair is taken out of the cattle byre and is buried. When the ritual portion of the goat has been cooked, it is taken by the head of the homestead and cut into pieces: the first piece is given to the initiate from that homestead, other pieces to any other initiates present, then pieces are eaten by the head of the homestead and by the guardian if he is present. Everything is very informal: no prayers or supplications are made and nothing is said while the ritual meat is being eaten.

Thereafter, the goat's kidneys, lungs, liver and heart, with gall and salt poured over them, are cooked in a pot and are dished out to the men present on separate plates. Bread, sour porridge (*amayewu*) and coffee are also served.<sup>1</sup> The initiates receive nothing. The remainder of the meat is then put in a pot to cook, the right shoulder being cooked uncut. Towards evening, when this meat is ready, the young folk of the neighbourhood gather to keep the initiates company, and meat and other refreshments are served to all present, the initiates being given the goat's right shoulder for themselves. When all the meat is consumed, the men may retire, but sometimes they stay to keep an eye on the initiates and give them no chance for love making (*ukumetsa*). If an *umguyo* dance is held, it usually goes on all night, to the accompaniment of maximum noise, the initiates dancing naked amongst their friends. If there is no *umguyo*, the initiates who are going to be together in the lodge sleep in a hut set aside for them.

(c) *Circumcision*

On the day following the *ukungcamisa* ritual, the initiates are circumcised. Among the Mfengu, the operation as witnessed is performed before sunrise and the initiates do not go to the river to wash. According to Mfengu informants, the procedure among the Xhosa differs slightly, the initiates first washing at the river and the operation being performed in the afternoon: it was said rather derisively that the reason for the later operation is that the Xhosa fear the cold of the dawn. Any men who choose may accompany the initiates. At the circumcision of three initiates attended, nine men were present, including the surgeon (*inchibi*) and his assistant, the guardian (*ikban-katha*) and the master of ceremonies (*uSosuthu*).

<sup>1</sup>Beer would also be served at a pagan homestead. At the ceremony witnessed, the head of the homestead was a Christian, and although no beer was served at his homestead, it was available at another.

Before dawn the initiates are called from the *umguyo* dance, or are led from their sleeping hut by the men. Wrapped only in their blankets, which also cover their heads, the initiates are led to a secluded place near the site chosen to build the lodge. Their guardian accompanies them, carrying the leaves wrapped up in a bundle of grass to keep them fresh. From the homesteads comes a trilling and shouting of women, who are said to be rejoicing that more men are to be made today. All the women hitch their skirts above their knees.<sup>1</sup>

When the initiates arrive at the chosen site, one of the men collects hard antheap (*isigalane*) in a bucket, and mixes it with water. The initiates spread their blankets on the ground and sit down in a row, the son of the master of ceremonies being first. The surgeon unwraps from a leather sheath a long, pointed and very sharp knife, which he hides behind his back until he is ready to operate.

The surgeon approaches the first initiate, pulls the foreskin far forward, and holding it between his thumb and forefinger severs it from the penis in two sawing movements with the knife. He drops the severed portion on the blanket in front of the initiate and passes on to perform the same operation on the next initiate. During the operation, the initiates are visibly afraid, and they grimace as they are being cut, but utter no sound. After each initiate is cut, he is told to say "*ndiyindoda*"—"I am a man!"; the surgeon says to each "*wyindoda*"—"you are a man!", and makes a low growling noise in his throat. When all the initiates have been cut, all the men make the same noise in unison, and the master of ceremonies fires a pistol in the air; at this signal the women in the village set up a trilling which can be heard all around. The initiates are now told that they may cry or make any noise they like, and it will be no disgrace. They sit and let the blood drip onto their blankets, and as it starts to run off it is covered with soil. Each initiate is closely inspected by all the men present, who in turn remark that they are truly men. If one initiate bleeds more than the others, it is said of him that he has been drinking European liquor, excessive bleeding being a sure sign of brandy.

<sup>1</sup>No one was able to explain the significance of this phenomenon, but attention is drawn to the similar dress of girls at a traditional marriage ceremony (*Vide page 83*). The girls dance in a short costume with their thighs uncovered, while the young men stare "with watering mouths" (*bevujsa amathe*). The women point out to these young men that if they waste their money on trivial matters and do not buy cattle for *lebola*, they will never get such attractive girls.

The surgeon then takes some of the *izigqutsu* leaves and places them in front of each initiate. These leaves have a hairy undersurface and are joined together at the sides by saliva; they are wrapped around the penis, covering the wounded portion. This bandage is then wound about with a leather strap. The surgeon next takes the mixture of antheap and water, smears it over the face and chest of each initiate, and makes each take a mouthful. It is said to make their hearts hard (like antheap), so that they should not be cowards. Each initiate is then told to take his foreskin and the blood in his blanket and to hide it well, so that no one may find it and use it to bewitch him. They are told to go in opposite directions, so that they should be unobserved, and to stoop forward as they go, not attempting to walk upright. A fire is made for the initiates, they are told to cover themselves with their blankets so as not to catch cold, and they are left alone. As the morning wears on they become quite cheerful and talk among themselves of the ordeal they have undergone. About four hours after their operation, the surgeon redresses the wounds, using a fresh set of leaves. This time the leaves are covered with mealie husks, the whole bound about with the leather strap, and the tips of the husk sheath are gathered together with a piece of string and tied back to the thong around the waist; the banaged organ is thus held up erect. All this time the guardian is present, but he does nothing to the initiates except scold them and tell them how difficult things will be for them.

#### (d) Privation

Directly after the initiates have been settled around their fire at a little distance apart in the bush, the men turn their attention to the building of the lodge (*ibuma*). Many more men from the village help with the building of the lodge than attended the circumcision operation. Poles which have been previously cut are sunk into the ground around a circle which has been marked out amidst much discussion and argument. These poles are then pulled down and tied together to a centre pole. The pole frame once formed, is threaded through with thinner green saplings; a rough door frame is inserted, and mealie stalks are tied to the frame. Women take over the completion of the hut, finish tying the mealie stalks to the frame, and sew thatching grass (*ukufulela*) over the whole hut.

When the men have finished their part in the building, they retire to the home of the master of ceremonies, where breakfast is

served. At this meal the master of ceremonies or a deputy makes a speech of thanks to the men for attending the ritual and helping to build the hut. After everyone has eaten the bread and coffee provided by the host, they remain around the homestead to eat any remainder of the meat from the previous day's feast and to drink beer which will have been provided by the mother of one of the initiates. The women who help with the thatching of the lodge will each have brought something to add to the refreshments for all the people who congregate at the homestead.

When their lodge is completed, the initiates move in, and are served their first meal of the day. It is composed of roughly hand-ground mealies cooked without salt, fat or milk, to a very coarse and hard porridge. For about ten days the initiates will have no other type of food than this, nor may they drink any water, but only moisten their parched lips with wet white clay (*ifutba*). During these days of privation, the initiates remain in their hut, not moving around much. Their guardian is in constant attendance, changing the dressings on their wounds frequently during the first few days. This is an extremely painful process, since the leaves stick and the guardian rips them off roughly. Presently the initiates learn to dress their own or one another's wounds, and the guardian visits less frequently, merely keeping a watch on the wounds, bringing supplies of fresh leaves for the dressings, and keeping the boys under discipline. When the guardian approaches, he gives a shrill whistle, and the initiates in their lodge quickly arrange their blankets and start a chant, which sounds almost like a war cry; the phrase *iphi le mpi* occurs at regular intervals<sup>1</sup>. If their chant shows signs of slacking off, a shrill whistle from the approaching guardian serves to revive it.

It is said that ten full days must pass before the initiates are allowed to eat soft food or drink water. At the end of that time, when the wounds are beginning to heal, another ritual has to be performed, which is said to have as its objective the freeing of the initiates from their soft food and water abstinence.

(e) *Ukojiswa*.

When this ritual was observed, the initiates had been circumcised for only eight days, but so short a period seems to have been

<sup>1</sup>Asked where they had learnt it, the initiates said they had heard the other initiates using it while they were boys. They thought that all initiates used it. Literal meaning of the phrase is "where is the army (regiment)".

an exception, since it was explained that the *uSosuthu* had been called away to East London and had to perform the ritual before his departure.

The performance of the *ukojiswa* ritual at the site of the initiates' lodge (*ibuma*) is made known throughout the village, and any men who wish may attend. A white goat is taken to the lodge, and the initiates come out of their hut and watch it being slaughtered. A strip from the right foreleg (*intsonyama*) is cut off to be roasted, and half the goat is cut away to be cooked and eaten by all present; the other half of the goat is put aside for the later exclusive use of the initiates. The ritual portion of the goat (*intsonyama*) is roasted on a special fire on which are placed the green leaves of the sneezewood tree (*umthathi*) producing a thick acrid smoke, and the meat is then rubbed in the ash so that it is bitter and burned. It is cut into pieces and skewered on a thorny branch by the master of ceremonies and is given to the boys in the same order in which they were circumcised. Each initiate must reach for the meat from the thorny branch with his mouth, and as he does so the branch is twisted so that it pricks his face. While this is being done, green mealies from which the husks have not been completely removed are placed on the fire to roast, similarly burned and bitter from the smoke. Two each are given to the initiates, who are told to eat only the grain in the middle of the cob and not to touch that at the ends. The partially cleared mealie cobs are then taken into the lodge and stuck in the thatch, where they will remain until the hut is burned. Thereafter the initiates are told to go into their hut and roast themselves some mealies, but to refrain from eating from the ends of the cobs. The rest of the goat is cut and placed on the fire to cook, the entrails being cooked in a separate pot.

After the feast, the initiates are summoned and speeches made outside. The master of ceremonies rises and addresses the guardian: "I place the boys into your care for you to keep and look after properly. Don't let them go stealing or making a nuisance of themselves. Teach them to behave themselves properly." Addressing the initiates, he continues: "Boys, be careful what the youngsters who visit here bring into your hut. They must not bring anything that the guardian has not seen. Show everything to the guardian, and be careful that no stolen things come into the hut." The headman who was present at the ritual witnessed addressed the assembly in a religious vein, likening this ritual to the passover and fast, with the symbolism

of the bitter food. He said that these were their customs, that they were written in the Bible, and that they were performed to tie the children to their parents. He admonished the boys to be well behaved and to make no trouble in the village—"Be manly initiates!" (*Qingqa ubusutu bubundoda*). The guardian then addresses the initiates, instructing them to observe all the avoidance (*blonipha*) customs, to avoid the roads and homesteads, and to keep away from women.

(f) *Seclusion*

After the wounds have healed properly the initiates spend their time playing games in their lodge, hunting with the pack of dogs that live with them, and visiting other initiates elsewhere. Their food is brought to them, their fires made, their clay mixed and other chores performed for them by the young boys (*amakhwenkwe*) of the village who hang around. The initiates keep themselves painted all over their bodies with white clay, devoting meticulous care to the working of designs on their faces, and completing the adornment with washing blue. At no time do they wear any covering other than their blankets and their *izidla* attached to the leather thong around their waists. Their guardian visits them daily, keeping them under general discipline. He may, at the request of any relative of the boys, send them to work in certain fields. The initiates help with the harvesting of the mealies and ploughing of fields, but they always work alone, apart from any other people in the fields.

The initiates are expected to behave themselves during this period and to refrain from making nuisances of themselves in the village. When they come out from their seclusion, they will be heartily commended by the men if there have been no complaints against them of stealing or other misdemeanour. At the Mfengu and Xhosa coming out ceremonies attended, of a total of seventeen men who made speeches at one or the other, six referred specifically to the initiates' behaviour during their seclusion: "You boys did not steal . . ."; "Today there are no complaints . . ."; "There have been no people complaining of the loss of goats. Today it is a big thing that you have come through without stealing . . ."; "They (the initiates) have done nothing bad. They have been tempted by the goats around them, but have not stolen. . ."; "I thank you boys for one thing—you have not stolen goats or things from the lands . . ."; "We have heard nothing bad about these boys. There has been no

stealing. You (addressing the chief initiate) sent the small boys to ask for a fowl, but I was not here at the time, although the fowl is still here . . ."

(g) *Coming Out*

The coming out ritual for four Mfengu initiates was witnessed on 17th June, and six days later that for the Xhosa initiates, a group of five which included one Mpondo. The procedure, though essentially the same at both rituals, contained slight variations which will be noted.

The initiates spend the early morning painting their faces in clay designs, reminiscing over their initiation and discussing the ceremony for which they are preparing. They dread the thought of the cold water into which they will presently be made to plunge, for the men will keep them in it until they are properly clean. At about ten o'clock, the guardian announces his approach with the familiar shrill whistle, to which the initiates reply with their war-like chanting. He brings with him the initiates' new blankets, wrapped in a black kerchief (*iqhiya*), and he is followed by men both old and young<sup>1</sup> and a flock of inquisitive small boys who have come to receive the initiates' old blankets. When the men arrive, the initiates are called out of their hut, and their red blankets are stripped from them and thrown to the ground. The guardian has the right to select the best blanket for himself and to distribute the remainder among the small boys belonging to the same families as the initiates. These small boys are told to go and wash the blankets at the river, whereafter they must take them home and hang them up to dry in the cattle byre, away from the huts.

The initiates, lined up outside their lodge, are wearing only their *izidla* and the leather thongs around their waists. The guardian goes up to each initiate, cuts off the leather thong and tells him to remove the *isidla*. At this point, the Xhosa initiates are told to run to the river, and while they are away the hut is prepared for burning. The Mfengu initiates are not sent to the river until the guardian has collected their *izidla* and sticks and taken them to the hut. He brings out their spears, other articles of permanent value such as cooking

<sup>1</sup>At the Xhosa ceremony it was noted that there were 15 men (*amadoda*) and four young men (*abafana*) present. At one stage in the proceedings, the young men started fighting with sticks, and were sharply reprimanded by the older men and reminded that this was a solemn occasion.

pots, and also the new blackened sticks (*umnqayi*) which have been stuck in the roof of the lodge pending this occasion. The men shout to the initiates and start to chase them, encouraging the small boys with the blankets to join in the chase. Two men accompany the initiates to the river to see that they wash the white clay off properly; it keeps reappearing as the bodies dry in the sun, and the initiates are repeatedly driven back into the water to wash again with soap. They are jeered by the small boys who are washing the blankets at the same place or lower down the river. Shortly thereafter the small boys are chased away home.

As soon as the Xhosa initiates are clean, they are told that they may return to the lodge, and when they begin to run are ordered to behave like men and to walk with decorum. Lined up outside their lodge, and in silence, they are anointed by one of the men with melted butter; to the accompaniment of vociferous directions by all the men present the initiates then rub the butter all over their bodies. With the Mfengu initiates, this ceremony is performed on the bank of the river; unmelted butter is used and is dolloped over their heads, faces, stomachs and backs. The rubbing in of fat seems to have some significance as a turning point, and it is said that the butter is rubbed in to keep out all the evil spirits which people may send to harm the boys.<sup>1</sup> It is said that there are three officials important to the initiation: the man who cut (*inchibi*), the man who bandaged the wounds (*ikbankatha*) and the man who anoints the boys with fat. The latter must not be a wanderer (*ihilibili*) or drunkard; he must be sober, experienced and hardworking, so that the initiates will follow his example and be like him. The man who anointed the Mfengu initiates made a little speech while doing so, telling them that they must always look after their old fathers and mothers, and that when they left the lodge they were going to a new life and must throw away all the old things of boyhood and be men. He instructed them that when they were leaving they must not look back at the burning lodge, no matter what happened, for then they would be like the wife of Lot, and would never be proper men. When their skins are saturated with fat, the initiates file back to the lodge, led by one of the men and followed by the man who rubbed on the fat and who carries the remains of the butter. These remains are thrown on the lodge to be burnt, but

<sup>1</sup>One informant declared that when butter cannot be obtained, lard is used, but that in the old days butter would be made by shaking a calabash of milk.

at the Xhosa ceremony they were surreptitiously salvaged and only the container put to burn.

While the initiates have been at the river, the guardian has been collecting all the personal belongings which the initiates used during their seclusion, such as bandages *izidla* and sticks, and has set about collecting all the dead brushwood around and piling it on top of the hut. He is getting everything ready for the burning. Although some of the old men claimed that it is the custom for the guardian to lead the boys back to the village while their lodge is burning, at both ceremonies witnessed he remained to see that all was properly burnt at the lodge, and followed the initiates to the village later, in company with the other men, carrying the spears and cooking pot.

After the rubbing on of fat, the initiates are lined up outside their lodge and their new blankets, black kerchiefs (*amaqhiya*) and new, knobless, long, black sticks (*umnqayi*) are placed in front of them. On the heads of the Mfengu initiates, the men at this point tie the black kerchiefs, low over their eyes; the Xhosa initiates carry the kerchiefs back to the village in their hands, donning them just before the speeches commence. The initiates drape their new blankets well over their heads and faces, grasp their new, black sticks and are led off by one of the men to the village in single file, the chief initiate (*uSosuthu*) in the lead. A match is set to the lodge, and in no time it is ablaze. The initiates have been warned that on no account must they look back and none does so, nor do the men want them to look around, although they are tempted by shouts to turn and see what is happening—their hut is being burned, their goods are ablaze, there is a fire, the devil is in the flame!

On arriving at the village, the initiates are welcomed by the women with shouting and singing (*ukuyeyezela*). They are led to the cattle byre at the homestead of the master of ceremonies.<sup>1</sup> A grass mat is spread for them to sit on, either in the centre or at one side of the byre, and the men who are present range themselves around the edge of the byre in a semi-circle facing the initiates. The Mfengu initiates hold their sticks in their hands, and just before the speeches begin they remove their blankets from their faces, and the three spears are dug into the ground in front of them. At the same point in the proceedings, the Xhosa initiates are told to uncover their heads from

<sup>1</sup>At the Mfengu ceremony, the initiates were not assembled at the homestead of the *uSosuthu*. It was explained that there had been some jealousy, and he had refused to attend and that therefore his cattle byre could not be used. There was much biting comment from the older men on this irregular departure from custom.

the blankets and put on their kerchiefs, which have been lying on the ground in front of them and next to their sticks. No speeches can begin until the guardian arrives, and if he is delayed unduly at the burning lodge the men tend to become very restive and fling remarks about how the customs are being flouted and how the initiates will catch cold after their wash in the river if the proceedings are much longer delayed. A suggestion that the ceremony should proceed without the guardian is greeted with scorn: "How can we carry on without the *ikbankatha*? Where have you seen such a thing? Whom are we going to thank and talk to if he is not here?" When he arrives, he sits down next to the initiates.

The master of ceremonies takes charge of the proceedings,<sup>1</sup> inviting various men to address the initiates. All through the speeches there is constant bickering and argument among the men as to the proper sequence of events and the correct thing to do and say.<sup>2</sup> It is intended to be a solemn occasion, and when one of the initiates grinned on being addressed directly, he was sharply rebuked. The majority of speeches include thanks to the guardian for his work, commendation of the initiates for their good behaviour, and promises of small monetary gifts to the guardian and sometimes to the initiates as well. At the Xhosa ritual, one initiate was urged pointedly not to be ashamed of his people, and not to translate his name to another language.<sup>3</sup> Another man addressed the initiates on the subject of their ancestors and descendants and wound up with "You are in the land of Ngqika. Remember it, or you will be lost. Sandili came out as you are coming out." Except for these references to race, which were absent from the Mfengu speeches, at both the Mfengu and Xhosa ceremonies the speeches followed a similar theme. They mentioned the new status attained by the initiates and the behaviour expected of them as men, but by far the greater eloquence of the

<sup>1</sup>At the Mfengu ceremony, which was not held at the homestead of the *uSosuthu* (vide former footnote), the father of one of the other boys insisted on ruling the meeting, explaining that it was because of the refusal of the *uSosuthu* to attend that he could not be in charge of the proceedings.

<sup>2</sup>The older men would rage: "What sort of custom is this? You people are like children, you do not know the customs. The customs are being thrown away by you. Oh well, I suppose you have your own customs and must keep them. *Simanga kubwa kengwevu*—it is strange, even though there are a lot of grey heads here." The younger men would pass derogatory comments in asides to whoever would listen, such as "We do not answer the ravings of a drunkard."

<sup>3</sup>It is said that the Xhosa sometimes feel that the Europeans are more favourably disposed towards the Mfengu, and they tend to make a pretence sometimes of being Mfengu by adopting an Mfengu name.

speakers went into telling them in what concrete manner they must build their homes—by buying cattle.

Five men at the Mfengu ceremony and one at the Xhosa had little to say other than to thank the guardian for his work and the boys for their behaviour, and to promise small sums of money. The other four speakers at the Mfengu ceremony, and seven at the Xhosa, had also the following admonitions to deliver to the boys:—

*Elliot Sijako*: "I am talking to you, guardian, but the boys will listen to what I am saying. Do not ever allow there to be no manure in the kraal. When you left, Sitembiso (chief initiate of the Mfengu group), there was no manure and there is none now. I am talking to you Sitembiso, you are the only man here in this home. Go out and get cattle to put manure in the kraal."

*Joseph Kwa*: "These boys have been through the proper ritual and have stayed the proper time . . . I am talking to you now, the boy of Mfuno. Sitembiso! Today that house of Mfuno must be stood up. I leave you, Sitembiso—don't throw us away—we are the wives of your home. Now you see that when you admonish the son of a chief, Tsherry Tshaka, he is the one who comes last. My last word to you is that a person who has done a bad thing before this is forgiven; but after this it will be said that you are people of the gaols because you do not keep the advice of your elders . . . Today the home of Kwa has grass in the cattle kraal. Buy cattle!"

*Meshek Matula*: ". . . I heard that this boy was coming back today. Sitembiso—your grandfather is me. You come and ask for what you want from me. Don't get tired. Let us live in manure; a man makes that himself. Buy goats and cattle and make manure in the cattle kraal."

*Sam Tshaka*: ". . . I wish your father were here, Sitembiso; he was a strong man. I am circumcising a second time, now; my heart is sore—the last time, your father and I were together. If your father were here today, no one else would speak but us two. Sitembiso, look at the soil in your kraal. You are needed in the towns by Europeans; go and earn money and buy a cow, and the manure will revive. Your home was at Madakana and the hills were black with your cattle. When you go to Cape Town, buy a cow and not a bull, so that it will breed. You can build a beautiful home for yourself with zinc roofs and flower gardens, but if your home has no kraal it is not a home, and no

one passing on the road will come and ask for a place to stay with you."

*Phillip Mbaru* (Xhosa): "... We don't know, Patele (one of the initiates of the Xhosa group), whether you have thrown your bad things away. Look after your father and mother, so that you will live a long time. Remember that today you are going into a new stage. Do not shame the house of Heyana; you must "give respect to" (*blonipha*) your home. Today you are going to take your bag and go; you have your friends, but don't give them all you earn—you must send things home. Grandchild! I don't know what to say—today you have come to manhood, but you are still a boy. Don't play with your work. Think for yourself, Wikile (chief initiate), and see what to do for your home—keep your home together; think of the things you must provide for your home. You see this manure (*he picks up a lump of manure from the ground*)—it is not put there; it has been worked for. Today you are in manure, but keep it there. Look out for your friends—they will swallow it. Wikile! Wikile! as you sit there, think of what work you must work. Don't work for the bushes—work for your home. Look after your body . . . If you are going to sweat, you must work . . . Here is manure. I feel like crying, because it is as though you don't hear what we are saying. You are all carrying your sticks to show your new state. Dodge the places where there is beer and drink; I know you will drink—you must learn shame. If you drink, you will drink the manure in your kraal. And you, Qoce (Bangani) have come to manhood. I have watched you grow—you have grown up in manure. Look out! we will watch you work—you are still a boy . . ."

*Qove Lali*: "Get up tomorrow and break up this home, and see what you will be! You break up this home of Yane, and see what you will be and what will become of you! . . . The words we are talking will be lost in this manure, I know! . . ."

*Vos Nciza*: "... Today you boys have washed off all the old things. Today you are young men (*abafana*). (*Places lumps of manure in front of each initiate*). Make this stuff, and have kraals . . ."

*Jongi*: "Here is a thing in the home!—We are making new men! Look at the grey-heads; they were made like you. You Sanqe! boy! I heard that I must talk to you—look after the

old ones. Boys! What can we tell you? What is the use of showing you manure? You are addicts of the bottle and are wanderers (*mahilibili*). The women are the ones who are going to sink you. Do these things and see what will happen to you! . . ."

*Sam Yane*: "I am not getting up. Thank you five boys—thank you for one thing—you have not stolen goats or things from the lands. Go nicely like that to the places you go. Don't steal!"

*Pitwell Makoyi*: "... You boys have come to hard ground now. You have come to manhood. You must build a home. Buy a goat, and you will be a man; if you buy a suit or a bottle you will never *lobola*. You don't build a homestead with a suit of clothes. If you do bad things, you will hear of it. To be a man is not to go around wearing a suit of clothes, or drinking a bottle, or going around making women pregnant . . ."

*Majiza*: "To be a man is to show respect to a person who is above you. He must respect his home. Those sticks (*umnqayi*) are not to fight and kill—they are to protect your home from killers. When you carry it, there is something wrong. This stick is born by manure. If manure is present, all is well. The sticks are to keep out the crimes. You have brought no shame today—bring it tomorrow, and see what will happen!"

After the speeches, the men feast on beer and meat, while the initiates are led from the cattle byre to a specially prepared hut. There they sit down on a grass mat, and anyone wanting to come into the hut to visit or view the initiates has to pay entrance money. When the Mfengu initiates were observed, a sister of the master of ceremonies was in attendance, making the boys cover themselves properly with their blankets, and hitting them with a stick when they did not pull their kerchiefs far enough down on the forehead.<sup>1</sup> The boys made no effort to resist the blows she laid across their shoulders. All that day the initiates remain in the hut; they are given meat from the feast, but no special portion. In the evening they are taken down to the river to wash. They spend the following day also in the hut, being made happy and comfortable and then in the evening they are

<sup>1</sup>Kerchiefs are supposed to be worn low over the forehead in manner similar to the way a newly married bride wears hers. However, at the Xhosa ceremony, when the initiates had donned their kerchiefs, they were ordered to lift them up a little: "this is not a wedding you are at!"

led out by the guardian and taken each to his respective home, where he is handed over formally to his parents.

(b) *Ubukwala*

On his first morning at home, the initiate rises early and goes to the river to wash. He smears his face with red ochre and dons his black kerchief, wearing it low over his brow. He also dons the new clothing which his parents have provided, usually a khaki shirt and trousers and jacket. He is now an *ikwala*, and he always goes barefoot and carries trailing along the ground the long, black stick (*umnqayi*) which is the hallmark of his status. In his pocket he carries a towel, for each evening he goes to wash at the river, and in the morning paints his face afresh with red ochre. He spends all his days with the cattle, taking them out to graze and plough. As soon as he is able, he goes to the towns to work, and when he returns to the village he will have discarded the dress of the *ikwala* and will take his place as a "young man" (*umfana*) in the village.

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