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CONFLICTS OF CONSCIOUSNESS
THE STATE, INKATHA AND ETHNIC VIOLENCE IN NATAL

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Declaration

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration. It does not exceed 80,000 words including footnotes but excluding bibliography. It is not substantially the same as any other submitted for a degree or diploma of any other University.

Movindri Reddy

**Conflicts of Consciousness: The State, Inkatha and Ethnic Violence in
Natal**

The literature on the South African political and economic system is expansive, yet theoretical analyses are surprisingly underdeveloped in relation to the plethora of descriptive studies concerned with the state. This dissertation situates the violence and the operation of Inkatha in a larger theoretical framework that focuses upon state-society relations.

A significant part of the dissertation centres on an attempt to answer the question: why is it that certain Zulu choose to join Inkatha, while others do not, and some choose to join the African National Congress? Ultimately this rests on the question of what makes a Zulu a Zulu? The main argument here is that dislocation of old communities creates a chasm in cultural evolution and production, raising questions about morality, duty, respect, the acquisition of adulthood and the status of men and women under new conditions of living. It is this debated ethnicity, that lies as the heart of my explanation of Inkatha and violence in townships.

Despite the fact that with each new political transformation of the state, numerous new revelations regarding corruption within the state and the malefic exploits of Inkatha are exposed, the contention of this study has not been to unravel current political events as they unfold. Rather, an attempt has been made to provide a structural explanation as to why an organisation like Inkatha thrives in the South African context, and why it is that such an organisation is not only open to manipulation by the state, but also exhibits a tendency towards violence when other political movements attempt to organise against the state.

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Glossary of Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
ARMSCOR	Armaments Development and Production Corporation
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organization
BC	Black Consciousness
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement
BPC	Black People's Convention
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DPSC	Detainees' Parents Support Committee
FOSATU	Federation of South African Trade Unions
GWU	General Workers' Union
HNP	Herstigte ('Purified') National Party
ISCOR	Iron and Steel Corporation
JORAC	Joint Rent Action Committee
KLA	KwaZulu Legislative Assembly
CP	Conservative Party
MAWU	Metal and Allied Workers' Union
MDM	Mass Democratic Movement
NECC	National Education Crisis Committee
NP	National Party
PAC	Pan African Congress
PFP	Progressive Federal Party
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADCC	Southern African Development Coordination Conference
SADF	South African Defence Force
SAIC	South African Indian Congress
SANLAM	South African National Life Assurance

SASO South African Students' Organization

UDF United Democratic Front

UWUSA United Workers Union of South Africa

Introduction

This dissertation is a study of emerging ethnic violence in Natal. It is about the components and circumstances that constitute the underlying fabric of Zulu violence. In the attempt to untangle the complexities that underpin the chaotic and bloody conflict, the nature of the South African state, its origins and evolution, has been explored. The theme that runs parallel to discussions about the state is about the nature of ethnicity, its character and substance. This analysis represents a move away from state-centred or society-centred approaches that dominate the field, and instead places the debate firmly in the quadrangle of state-society relations. Prominence is given to the way in which ethnic identities are constructed, and the impact of these outcomes on the politics of civil society. It is argued that one of the most significant features of ethnic identity in Natal is that it is a deeply contested issue between generations, gender and status. More specifically, it is not merely a politically motivated construction, but is created and developed through daily interactions within and between the civic and state institutions. Vicious battles between Inkatha and the African National Congress are analysed against this background, and it is argued that violence in Natal is not just concentrated in internecine conflict, but is prevalent at a number of different levels. Violence is intrinsic to the institutions of the state in South Africa, and afflicts those civil institutions that are tied to the state.

Chapter one centres on the peculiarities of the South African state, with special focus on the state-society dynamic. I try to show why many theories of the state have to be modified in order to understand South Africa. Significance is given to the space which an intrusive and arbitrary state makes between its own structures and an ill-articulated civil society of voluntary political associations. In particular, attention is focussed on the incoherent nature of state institutions and the conflicts that are prevalent between them. This makes for arbitrary enforcement of state policy, which in turn

influences the outcome of reform initiatives and the kinds of civic organisations that develop.

Chapter two is divided into two parts, the first concentrating on Natal colonial history, while the second sets the contemporary South African background for the bloody conflict. It is argued that colonial Natal created the backdrop upon which subsequent segregationist and apartheid policies were developed. Many of the socio-political problems that beset contemporary black politics, have their roots in colonial Natal. The demarcations of reserves and the removal of Africans from urban areas, provided the basis for the homeland policy, and opened up the possibility of extreme contradiction and tension within these structures. In the second part, the ramifications of apartheid and the quest to reform the state are investigated. Conflicts within the state and the way in which this hampered the reform programme of P.W. Botha, are highlighted.

In chapter three, ethnicity and the intricate debates associated with ethnic identities is explored. Since ethnic allegiances now carry with them life-threatening choices, an attempt is made to target the complexities surrounding these allegiances. It looks at the unfolding of gender relations in the past and its expanded and recreated form that presently exists. Ethnicity is not just state structured, but also reflects the way in which people attempt to make sense of, and cope with, daily life under oppressive conditions.

The complexities and contradictions inherent within the institutions of Inkatha are the focal point of chapter four. Confusion regarding membership claims and the ability of the organisation to mobilise significant and committed support is examined. The strengths, weaknesses and anomalies in the Youth and Women's Brigades are assessed in an effort to gain an understanding of the structures constituting Inkatha. A central aspect of the discussion is the role and function of chiefs within the overall structure. At this point, the legacy of the colonial past is particularly significant and the way in which Zulu customs and values were re-created and compromised is emphasized.

The final chapter deals with the violence in Natal, and examines the various dimensions of the conflict. It is argued that violence operates at many levels within the

state and in the townships. The nature of the South African state has created the need for civil society to organise in specific ways that compensate for the absence of the state in certain vital areas. On the other hand, the intrusive and oppressive state, operating through chiefs and KwaZulu ministers, creates a system in which both patronage and apartheid politics operate, resulting in a complex and conflictive environment. The part played by Inkatha in the bloody battle in Natal, is analysed against this background. Violence forms an intrinsic aspect of the the state and civil society, and even if these macro-structures are altered, the violence that operates in the domestic spheres between men and women, young and old, and people of different ethnic and racial groups, will continue to remain a disturbing problem.

The significance of a study on ethnic violence in South Africa, is the possibilities it opens up for comparative studies with a vast sector of the world. The characteristics of a society dominated by an oppressive and extractive state has parallels in Africa, South America, the former Soviet Union and Asia. The case material is varied and rich, the theories and explanations intriguing and challenging. This contribution to the field is innovative, in that, it not only offers an original perspective on contemporary ethnic violence in Natal, but it also explores a number of issues that have either been neglected or have not been integrated in the manner I propose. In this endeavour, material from the vast ethnographies of anthropology, the case studies offered by historians and the analyses of psychologists, have been exploited. This research will make a positive contribution to debates on ethnicity; identity formation in societies undergoing rapid political transformations and the nature of violence and terror implicit in authoritarian states, and the counterpart it creates in civil society.

Chapter 1

Theory of the State and Civil Society

Before exploring the various dimensions of ethnic violence in Natal, an understanding of the nature of the South African state is essential. The characteristics of the state has a direct bearing on the way in which civilians organise themselves, the kinds of groups they create and the issues they deem important. In order to see why ethnic identities can become significant in civil organisations, a study of the way in which the state governs, its legislation, rules, laws and ideological attitudes, need to be exposed and highlighted. People operate in a space which is ultimately structured by the state, and if ethnic violence gains prominence, it is because there are certain features of the state and the space it creates, that allows or encourages ethnic separateness and violence.

This chapter shows that the various theories of the state are inadequate for an explanation of the South African state. They are too abstract or too general and fail to grasp the essential nature of the apartheid state. I propose a new way of conceptualising authoritarian states, and argue that it has characteristics of intrusiveness and absence peculiar to them. This goes a long way towards providing the reasons for the types of conflicts prevalent in Natal. This chapter also explores theories relating to civil society and ideology. An attempt is made to move the locus of contention away from explanations revolving solely on either the state or civil society, but rather to focus on inter-relations between the state and civil society. It is argued that it is at this point that ideology is significant, as it serves as the medium through which state-civil society relations are enacted. This chapter examines existing theories on the subject, and then offers a new approach that takes on board the peculiarities of despotic states and by extension, the apartheid state. It provides the structural backdrop for the analysis on ethnic violence in Natal.

Peasants avoid it, urban workers despise it, military men destroy it, civil servants rape it, and academics ponder the short- and long-term results.¹

What is the state? Crawford Young explains that in 'contemporary understanding the term refers usually to the modern state, a particular form which originated in Europe in the fifteenth century, evolved into a nation-state by the end of the eighteenth century, and became diffused throughout the globe by Imperial conquest and anti-colonial revolt or defensive adaptation.'² However the question of what the state is, and what constitutes it, is far more perplexing. Perhaps Max Weber's ideal-type definition is a good starting point. He saw it as an 'Organisation, composed of numerous agencies led and coordinated by the state's leadership (executive authority) that has the ability or authority to make and implement the binding rules for all the people as well as the parameters of rule making for other social organisations in a given territory, using force if necessary to have its way.'³ But this definition tends to underplay a significant factor: that the parameters of control and jurisdiction of the state are not easily definable. The endeavour to grasp the essential nature of the state, its area of control, legitimacy, power and authority, makes for complex and varied ways of looking at it. Young begins by attempting to tabulate its constituent elements: 'a bureaucracy for the routine implementation of tasks; political legislative and executive agencies for choice and decision; police and judicial structures for enforcement of its commands and adjudication of disputes; military force for its external defence and ultimate internal security; a host of ancillary agencies for the delivery of services, education of the young and discharge of economic functions.'⁴ Poggi suggests that : 'the state is designed and is intended to operate, as a machine whose parts all mesh, a machine propelled by

¹ R.Lemarchand, 'The State, the Parallel Economy, and the Changing Structure of Patronage Systems' in *The Precarious Balance. State and Society in Africa*, ed. by D.Rothchild and N.Chazan, (London: Westview Press/ Boulder, 1988),p. 149.

² C.Young, 'The African Colonial State and its Political Legacy in D.Rothchild and N.Chazan, *The Precarious Balance*, p. 29.

³ Cited in J.Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States. State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 19.

⁴ C.Young, 'African Colonial State', p. 30.

energy and directed by information flowing from a single centre in the service of a plurality of coordinated tasks.⁵

Although there are many ways of conceptualizing the state, I think it is essential to recognise three characteristics intrinsic to it:

Firstly; What is clear is that the state is made up of a body of people with a common self-interest that distinguishes them from everything outside it.

Secondly, the state is a set of relationships, structured and controlled by its institutions and partly influenced by civil society.

Thirdly, the state includes a particular relationship with what we can loosely call capital, which requires that the state organises the social system in order to facilitate the process of accumulation.

Despite being such a diverse and multi-faceted entity, it is nevertheless viewed by the people it governs as a coherent and recognizable body. That is, the state manages to present itself as a cohesive unit that is distinct from and is dominant over all other organisations in society. In the endeavour to give the impression of a convergence of interests between all state elements, it creates its personalized emblems, icons, architecture, myths, histories and normative doctrines. 'States render their images concrete through monumental architecture,' says Young, 'they breath life into their abstractedness by self-celebratory ritual.'⁶ Likewise, all other symbols specific to particular states, not only represent a specific historic period, but also a specific set of values, norms, and world views perpetuated by both the state and civil society, and the state itself is immortalized as a recognizable unit that existed during a specific time.

The fact that the state attempts to present itself as a coherent unit belies the conflict and contradiction and struggles inherent in the relationship between its institutions and with civil society and capital. The state can be viewed as a large organisation which develops its own dynamic according to the circumstances and characteristics circumscribing particular points of contact between state departments, personnel, civil

⁵ G. Poggi, *The Development of the Modern State*, (London: Hutchinson of London, 1978), p. 98.

⁶ C. Young, 'African Colonial State', p. 31.

society and capital. The result of such contact may be a clashing of interests, an accommodation of strategies and interests, or an alteration in the structures determining the relationship. That is, the state is fluid and ever-changing. It evolves and develops marginally differently in different parts of its structure, at different points in time, generally operating within the parameters of an overarching ideological perspective.

In order to assess the impact of the state, on the people it governs, it is important to have a clear idea of way in which civilians organise themselves. The strategies employed by people through various civic organisations, to cope with and to challenge the state, are also influenced by the kind of state in power. How can we conceive of civil society? Existing theories, though interesting, fail to capture the diverse nature of civil society. Joel Migdal argues against the use of this term as it assumes the existence of a normative consensus or hegemony among social groupings. But it seems to me important to have a concept to establish what is not of the state and the ways in which individuals outside the state articulate with it. It must be made clear that, civil society is not a coherent, hegemonic entity. Instead, individuals constituting civil society have diverse interests, ambitions and world views, pulling in different directions and at times converging on certain issues. Civil society can then be thought of as those groupings or organizations outside the state that come into constant contact with it, are controlled by it, manoeuvring in the space determined by it. Or as Alfred Stepan puts it: 'civil society is an "arena" where manifold social movements ... and civic organisations from all classes ... attempt to constitute themselves in an ensemble of arrangements so that they can express themselves and advance their interests.'⁷ He distinguishes between the institutions of 'civil society' - neighbourhood associations, Women's groups, religious groups - from the institutions of 'political society' - political parties, elections, legislatures, in which the polity arranges itself for contestation over state power. Civil institutions are in part structured by the state, in that they are created within the framework defined by it. And they develop, in part, because of it, that is, they are

⁷ A. Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 3-4.

created so as to increase their bargaining capacity in order to pressurize the state into increasing the space within which they are forced to operate and to increase their share of the benefits accrued by the state. I will be using this conception of civil society throughout this dissertation.

The difficulty in categorizing teachers, nurses, post-office clerks etc, all those on the periphery of the state, adds to ambivalence at these levels of the state. Although these individuals work in state institutions, they may actively oppose its policies, join opposition extra-parliamentary civil institutions or carry out individual acts of subversion. Hence, they are active members of civil society, their home lives taking precedence over their working lives. It is this dilution of central policy and ideology at the very points at which the state makes most frequent contact with civil society, which contributes to the overall fluidity characterizing the state.

The relationship the state has with capital is not a straightforward one. Capitalists generally operate at the point of intersection between three important boundaries: public and private sector, state and civil society, the domestic and external sphere. Here too, one should not make the mistake of viewing the capitalists as a coherent class or grouping. As Robert Vitalis argues, there are only restricted circumstances where a class of capitalists would even be compelled to try to act collectively. In other spheres of politics and the economy, business as a whole has no definable collective or homogeneous position.⁸ Different sections of capital make different demands on the state at different points in time. Although there may be overall convergence in ideology, there are nevertheless deep fissures within this broadly defined group.

It is important at this point, to explore the question of how the state and civil society articulate with each other. It is here that some of the most aggressive battles are fought, and it is here that the both the state and civil-society have there greatest impact on one another. It is also at this point that civil society may opt for ethnic specific organisations to best increase their bargaining position in society and with respect to the

⁸ R Vitalis, 'Analysing Business and Politics in the Third World', (unpublished paper for workshop: State, Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World, University of Washington, 16-17 December, 1989).

state. In this section, I find it necessary to focus on those theorists who have attempted to respond to this question. I will specifically highlight the work of Joel Migdal, Naomi Chazan, Michael Bratton, Victor Azarya, and Vivien Shue. Although they may be useful in conceptualizing the relationship between African civil society and the state, I find them limiting when applied to the South African state-society dynamic. They also fail to provide a suitable explanation for the local scenario of ethnic violence.

Two approaches are distinguishable. State-centric approaches have stressed the centrality of the state as an historical actor, the key collective agent of macropolitical processes. This perspective views the state as the central organ for the extraction and distribution of resources, the determination of binding principles for society, and the maintenance of external and internal security, social harmony, and political and economic well-being.⁹ The notion of state autonomy rests on the neo-Weberian assumption that all states have some potential for autonomous action. But, asks Michael Bratton, 'Should theorists be "bringing the state back in" to theory precisely when African political leaders, to the applause of international donors and backers, are "taking the state back out" of the economic policy arena?'¹⁰ Moreover, this top-down approach tends to neglect the wide arena of conflict and contradiction, confrontation and accommodation, autonomy and interdependence, alliance formation and construction of social hierarchies that takes place between and within the state and civil society. In contrast are the society-centred approaches which 'have sought to focus more squarely on survival strategies in changing economic and political circumstances ... how social groups define their identity and interests, how they mobilize their resources, and construct alliances to pursue their goals, and how they cope with their fickle environment.'¹¹ Exclusive focus on society results in an inadequate understanding of the complexities of the state, which may appear, in this perspective, to be a mere reflection of the dynamic specific to civil society.

⁹ N.Chazan, 'Patterns of State-Society Incorporation in Africa, in D.Rothchild and N.Chazan, *The Precarious Balance*, p. 121.

¹⁰ M.Bratton, 'Beyond the State: Civil Society and Associational Life in Africa', *World Politics*, Vol XLI, no 3, April (1989), p. 408.

¹¹ N.Chazan, *Precarious Balance*, p. 122.

The focus on state-society relations in Africa has provided the impetus for a novel approach. As Michael Bratton explains, this approach enables the analyst to recognise that political power resides at numerous locations throughout society and therefore state elites do not automatically enjoy a monopoly of political power, but must bid for it in competition with many other formal and informal social organisations.¹² Joel Migdal is more specific: 'We believe that theoretical approaches treating the state as an organic entity and giving it an ontological status frequently have obscured the dynamics of the struggle for the domination in societies ... We argue that in order to glean the patterns of domination, one must focus on the cumulation of struggles and accommodations in society's multiple settings. Such a focus is possible only by conceptually breaking down states and societies and the functions between them.'¹³ In the attempt to move away from the state-society dichotomy, Naomi Chazan likewise attempts to analyse the dynamic process implicit in the formation of civil society in Africa and to explore its implications in understanding the structure of states, societies and politics in the continent. Her main argument is that the development of civil society in Africa has paralleled processes of state formation. She concludes that power, autonomy and capacity of states are a function of the relative autonomy of civil society.

One of the flaws in Chazan's thesis, is that in her endeavour to move away from what she calls a 'mechanistic' view of state-society relations, she fails to supply an adequate definition of the state. The state appears to be a spin-off from the dynamic relation between it and civil society. This criticism is true of many analysts using this particular perspective. Emphasis is placed on the historical context in which social associations evolved, the characteristics of these networks, the direction and interaction with other institutions at international, state and societal levels. The state is viewed as one social formation within society that coexists and interacts with other formal and informal organisations, distinguishable from other organisations in that it seeks

¹² M. Bratton, 'Beyond the State'.

¹³ J. Migdal, 'The State in Society, An Approach to Struggles for Domination', (Unpublished paper, University of Washington, February, 1990), pp. 1-2.

predominance over them and attempts to institute binding rules regarding their activities.¹⁴ Exemplified by Migdal who argues: 'There has been an unfortunate tendency in social science to treat the state as an organic, undifferentiated actor. As a result, the dynamics of the struggles for domination in societies, in which components of the state have played differing roles in various arenas, have been obfuscated. These struggles have not only been about who seizes the commanding political heights in society. They have involved alliances, coalitions, and conflicts in multiple arenas among social forces, some of which have been components of the state.'¹⁵ The outcomes of the state rarely reflect the aims and wills embedded in them. The results have been mediated through the struggles and accommodations in society's numerous arenas. Although we begin to get an idea of the complexities surrounding the conceptualizations of the state, we are still not given a clearer definition of it. Instead, the primary focus appears to be on the state-society dynamic, the points of intersection or non-interaction.

Migdal goes a long way in providing clearer indicators as to how the state can be conceptualized: 'The ultimate form of the state (democracy or some other type of government), its goals, its capabilities, its scope, its domination by particular social forces or its autonomy, as well as the form, systems of meaning, capabilities, and autonomy of other social forces, all these have been determined through these critical struggles and accommodations in the multiple arenas of society and the relationship among arenas.'¹⁶ However, Migdal's definition is not adequate in providing an analytical framework for a South African type state system. All these theories are far too general and are unhelpful in providing an explanation for ethnic conflict in Natal. What's more, most of these theorists have neglected to consider: 1/the ways in which state *ideology* serves to mediate the relationship between state institutions, state and civil society, and state and capital. 2/ the inequalities inherent in the relationship. The

¹⁴ V.A. Azarya, 'Rendering State-Society Relations: Incorporation and Disengagement' in *The Precarious Balance*, ed. by D. Rothchild and N. Chazan, p. 408.

¹⁵ J. Migdal, 'State in Society', p. 39.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

way in which ideology operates, and the impact it has on civil society is significant in an analysis of ethnicity and ethnic conflict.

In looking at ideology, I have found John Thompson's definition interesting. He conceptualizes ideology in terms of the 'ways in which the meaning mobilized by symbolic forms serves to *establish* and *sustain* relations of domination: to establish, in the sense that meaning may actively create and institute relations of domination; sustain, in the sense that meaning may serve to maintain and reproduce relations of domination through the ongoing process of producing and receiving symbolic forms'¹⁷.

Thompson explains, ideology is 'a creative and constitutive feature, a social life which is sustained and reproduced, contested and transformed through actions and interactions which include the ongoing exchange of symbolic forms.'¹⁸ That is, although the state has certain policies and legal rules that determine the parameters within which state personnel operate, it is the dominant ideology that mediates or allows for different ways of interpreting and implementing central policies.

Intrinsic to Thompson's discussion of ideology is the emphasis on inequalities determining the state-society relationship. As Thompson explains, we need to make clear that 'relations of power' are 'systematically asymmetrical, when particular agents or groups of agents are endowed with power in a durable way which excludes, and to some significant degree remains inaccessible to other agents or groups or agents, irrespective of the basis upon which such exclusion is carried out.'¹⁹ He goes further to tabulate five general modes through which ideology operates: *legitimation*, which I will look at in some detail later; *dissimulation*, where relations of domination may be established and sustained by being concealed, denied, obscured, deflected; *unification*, domination may be established by portraying a collective identity; *fragmentation*, where domination may be established by fragmenting groups or individuals capable of mounting an effective challenge to the dominant group; *reification*, where domination

¹⁷ J. Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture. Critical Social Theory in the Era of Mass Communication*, (England: Polity Press, 1990), p. 58.

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 10.

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 59.

may be established by portraying a transitory, historical state of affairs as if it were permanent, natural, outside of time.

I will elaborate on the way in which legitimation serves as a mode for the operation of ideology. Thompson begins his discussion on legitimation by looking at the types of grounds on which it is based as conceptualized by Max Weber: Rational grounds (appealing to the legality of enacted rules); Traditional grounds (appealing to the sanctity of immemorial tradition); and Charismatic grounds (appealing to the exceptional character of an individual person who exercises authority). Claims to legitimacy on such grounds may be expressed in symbolic forms by means of certain typical strategies of symbolic construction. For example - rationalization, whereby the producer of the symbolic form constructs a chain of reasoning which seeks to defend or justify a set of social relations or institutions, and to therefore persuade an audience that it is worthy of support. Or the strategy of narrativization - stories told in daily life. By telling stories and receiving the stories told by others, we may be drawn into a symbolic process, which may serve in certain circumstances, to create and sustain relation of domination.²⁰ Thompson argues that 'whether the symbolic forms thereby produced serve to sustain relation of domination or to subvert them, to bolster up powerful individuals and groups or to undermine them, is a matter that can be resolved only by studying how their symbolic forms operate in particular socio-historical circumstances, how they are used and understood by subjects who produce and receive them in the socially structured contexts of everyday life.'²¹

I think that Thompson doesn't succeed in portraying ideology as a dynamic, fluid, changing concept. He does not allude to or adequately indicate the points at which ideology is weakened, so as to allow challenging ideologies to break through or to begin to make a more lasting impression. It is this sense of movement with respect to ideology that is of fundamental significance to the politics of the Third World.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 61.

²¹ Ibid, p. 65.

Thompson's idea of ideology is also limiting, in that he sees it primarily as a mechanism that *establishes* and *sustains* domination. He bases his discussion on the notion that state leaders, 'want citizens to comply with its authority not from the inertia of unreasoning routine or the utilitarian calculation of personal advantage, but from the conviction that compliance is right.'²² An underlying assumption in this perspective is the notion of hegemony. For Gramsci, hegemonic rule is rule through consent. According to Femia, this concept is based on the hypothesis that 'within a stable social order, there must be a substratum of agreement so powerful that it can counteract the division and disruptive forces arising from conflicting interests.'²³ The dominant ideology moulds desires, values and expectations in such a way that stabilizes an unequalitarian system. The masses are confined within the boundaries of the dominant world view, which 'unambiguously serves the interests of the powerful, by mystifying power relations, by justifying various forms of sacrifice and deprivation, by inducing fatalism and passivity and by narrowing mental horizons.'²⁴ Intrinsic to this argument is the notion that politics has a dialectical nature. This dual perspective is explained by Gramsci as: 'Two fundamental levels, corresponding to the dual nature of Machiavelli's Centaur - half-animal and half-human. They are the levels of force and of consent, authority and hegemony, violence and civilisation, of the individual moment and of the universal moment, of agitation and of propaganda, of tactics and of strategy.'²⁵ In other words, the political is not defined only by one of its attributes of force or consent, but by both force and consent, authority and hegemony, and violence and consensus. If we interpret this as an equation, then in South Africa, it would be appropriate to assume that the state relies on force rather than consent, and thus the concept of hegemony tends to lose its meaning in this context.

²² G. Poggi, *Development Modern State*, p. 101.

²³ J. Femia, *Gramsci's Political Thought, Hegemony, Consciousness, and the Revolutionary Process*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 39.

²⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 44-45.

²⁵ A. S. Sassoon, *Gramsci's Politics*, (London: Groom Helm, 1980), p. 112.

But even if the fundamental desire of the state is to rule via consent of civilians, one needs to inquire as to whether the ideology of the state ever achieves its desired ends? Is it not more true to say that it is the *assumption* of its ideological dominance, rather than actual dominance, that gives the state its coherence and provides it with a basis from which to work? It is this assumption that provides the impetus to take decisions at the macro-level which ultimately determine the social and political agenda of civil institutions. Specifically looking at the South African case, does state ideology compel the oppressed people of the country into unconsciously or consciously thinking that their oppression is right and reasonable? And if it fails to accomplish this, why hasn't a revolution or economic and social collapse or disintegration occurred? Or is it the case that in order for the state to sustain its own existence, it has to continually alter the parameters of control and dominance, and to simultaneously alter its ideology to camouflage these changes, attempting to deliver different messages to different audiences. For the international audience, liberal elements within its own electorate and capital, it aims to present itself as a progressive, coherent unit that is open to change and is capable of responding positively to the struggles from civil society. For the more conservative sections of its own electorate, and black opposition civil movements, it aims to present itself as an intransigent, united and strong institution that is unlikely to crumble in the face of attack from any source. This strategy may have the desired effect on certain sectors of the population, but it would be incorrect to assume a generalized consensus. It is this partial consensus that I would pinpoint as the essence of ideology. It is this partiality that contributes towards a level of coherence in any system. The changing state ideology ultimately determines the pace and momentum of extra-parliamentary politics, that is, it determines the parameters within which civil society can mobilize and the social and political issues that are highlighted.

Ideology itself must be conceived as an ever-changing, fluid phenomenon, that is constantly clashing with, accommodating to or altering itself in its relations with civil society and capital. Although the ideology of the state has available to it, the means to dominate a social system, in terms of access to the media, mass communication

systems, education, religion; it does not have the means to ensure that its values, moral order, interpretation of things are incorporated into the world views of the individuals it sets out to dominate. Its influence on the personal perspectives of civil society is far more tenuous and transient than Thompson makes it out to be. But, its role in determining the equality in relations between it and civil society is significant, clearly defining the space within which civil society operates. In this dissertation, I will be using the concept of ideology to mean the above. I think that the focus on the state-society dynamic is imperative, but it needs to be situated within the context that is ultimately determined by inequalities and mediated by ideology.

These ideas about the state, civil society and ideology are employed to formulate a theory to conceptualise the apartheid state. It also provides an analytical structure through which it becomes possible to understand the nature of civil society and ethnic organisations. I think that the peculiarities of the South African state can be found in what I propose as a paradox specific to despotic states: That is, these are states that are *simultaneously* largely *absent* from the daily lives of the people they govern, and yet are, simultaneously, also highly *intrusive*. Or to put it another way: as the state becomes more despotic or authoritarian, civil society becomes more removed from it, yet is more controlled by it. At one level, the state is overtly authoritative, employing repressive policies and laws to maintain its predominance and control. But on the other hand, it is largely absent from the lives of people, providing little in way of welfare, protection, education and justice. Moreover, given the numerous battles and tensions that are prevalent in and between the state institutions, the way in which central policy is interpreted and implemented is variable, producing an arbitrary enforcement of its policies.

The quest for survival, together with the history of apartheid, has forced people to identify with smaller ethnic, racial and other networks in times of crisis. Although the state broadly determines the parameters within which social networks operate, the extent of their operations and daily workings are determined by local forces. Specific socio-economic histories of people residing within an area or locality are important in

determining the type of networks that are likely to operate. Significant elements that contribute to the kinds of networks formed are, the economic stability of residents; dependence on migrant labour; their relationship with tribal chiefs; whether or not they constitute a relocated population; the duration of stay in a particular locality and the distinctions made between settled and squatter residents. Some of the networks in operation are: shopkeepers who offer credit, taxis who work on monthly or weekly payment, landlords and moneylenders, bulk-buying clubs, burial clubs, vigilante protection groups, sewing clubs and so on. With little or no recourse to a police force or law courts, debt payments, feuding, theft and other problems related to life in a township, have historically been sorted out by using force, employing local strongmen, or gangs or strong family members, threatening death or destruction. Furthermore, in the homelands, all aspects of life have been infiltrated by the overwhelming authority and jurisdiction of tribal authorities, who are responsible for the allocation of housing, land, access to essential services, work permits, permission to receive pensions or disability grants.

Chiefs play a pivotal role in homeland governments, perpetuating patronage-client relations and governing according to central state directives. It is here, in the homelands and townships, that the black people experience the paradox of the state most starkly. Administration and paternalistic forms of control, play a dominant role in organizing markets and structuring access to resources. As 'minor' deputies of an administration which is often hostile to the interests of the black people, the chiefs are by definition no longer the representatives of the people. The power to appoint and expel chiefs is now the prerogative of the state president, although the system of hereditary succession is allowed to operate provided it does not challenge the government. The line of command between central administration and the chiefs appears to be riddled with tensions, requiring bargaining and accommodation. It is this dynamic that offers an explanation for the intensity of the conflict among blacks in the townships.

At one level, black administrations are run along the lines of patronage-client links, the state deciding on who would have the resources and authority to offer

effective strategies for survival. At another level, in order to enter employment in the white urban areas, Africans have to be screened and permitted by central state administrations and labour bureaux, which control the number and duration of stay in these areas. African civil society encounters this dual system, the basis of a complex, conflict ridden and contradictory society.

The homeland system has its roots in the form of administration developed by the colonial office in Natal. This policy of institutionalizing the system of chieftainship, eliminating all checks and balances on their power, and the deployment of power to homeland authorities provides the basis for the resilience and tenacity of Inkatha in KwaZulu. Another significant and contradictory development, was the emancipatory role of the missionaries during colonialism. They created among Africans the desire for greater participation in the colonial government and economy. By preventing them from taking a more active role in political and the socio-economical system, the colonial government created the conditions for deep resentment among the Christianised Africans. The Kholwa, as they became known, formed the core of highly vocal political pressure groups which later coalesced into more militant organisations like the African National Congress. The contradictions that were prevalent in colonial Natal, were to intensify under apartheid. The next chapter is about Colonial Natal and about their techniques of administration and policy that were to form the basis of segregationist politics. Part two of the chapter shifts to the twentieth century and the nature of the South African state and the reform initiatives, are highlighted. The tensions within the state, the economic recession and increasing militant action of black political groups, forms the background for contemporary internecine conflict in Natal.

Chapter 2

Continuity in Natal and Change in South Africa

Part 1: Colonial Natal

The policies developed in colonial Natal set the precedent for segregation and apartheid in South Africa. Many of the laws, designed to keep African families out of white cities, were made more sophisticated by subsequent governments, and more rigid and all-encompassing by the Nationalist government. The creation of reserves, of controlling the movement of Africans, of keeping them on the periphery of industry and prosperity, had its basis in colonial Natal. This dual system of government was to become a central feature of the apartheid state.

The policy of including chiefs in the administrative structure, was one of the hallmarks of colonial government. An administrative system was created that was full of contradictions and tensions. The chiefs played a pivotal role in the perpetuation of patronage politics, which operated alongside the larger system that was based on a market economy. These structures are still in operation in contemporary politics and many chiefs have become embroiled in Zulu violence in Natal. Mission education was at the heart of the split between the Kholwa and the 'traditionalists' in colonial Natal. Many of the Kholwa were among the first Zulu political leaders to challenge the colonial government. The character of black resistance has its roots in Natal, and many of the early political groups were to later organise themselves into more militant organisations. Acute land shortages, poverty, unemployment, the increasingly corrupt rule of chiefs, the repressive aspects of colonial rule, all contributed towards the discontent and anger of black people. The institutionalization of apartheid by the Afrikaner Nationalists not only served to exacerbate tensions in black civil society, but also tended to ignite black protest, both radical and conservative. The bloody conflict between the Zulus was one such consequence. This chapter looks at the system of

administration that developed in colonial Natal, and the kind of black resistance and protest that arose to challenge the government.

A small group of English speaking traders, missionaries and hunters settled in Natal from 1824 onwards, on the land granted to them from Shaka, and after his assassination in 1828, by his brother and successor, Dingaan. Between 1810 and 1828, Dingiswayo, chief of the Mthethwa tribe and after him, Shaka, chief of the Zulu, consolidated a powerful kingdom out of the many small tribes that inhabited territory between the Pongola and Umzimkulu rivers. Although it was British Government policy not to annex Port Natal, the arrival of the the Dutch Voortrekkers in 1837 from the Cape altered the situation, causing concern for both the British Government and the Government of the Cape Colony. The Voortrekkers attempted to stake their claim to Natal land, and in 1840 attacked Chief Ncaphayi, killing people, seizing cattle and children. The Volksraad passed a resolution on 2 August 1841 to remove by persuasion or force the entire population of Natal, except those who were there when the trekkers arrived, to the region between the Mtamvuna and Mzimvubu rivers. Contrary to instructions of the Colonial Secretary Lord Stanley, the Governor of the Cape Colony Sir George Napier, ordered a military detachment from the Cape to remain in Port Natal. Napier argued that as a consequence of British policy, the Boers had massacred 'the native tribes, the course of the emigrants having always been traced in blood, much of which might have been saved had the hand of the government directed and controlled an emigration which it was impossible to prevent.'¹ Stanley approved the actions of the Napier and sanctioned the annexation of Natal in December 1842. Formal annexation as a district of the Cape did not take place until Letters Patent were issued on 31 May 1844, and these were given effect by a Cape Proclamation dated 21 August 1845. The district was bounded by the Tukela and Mzinyati Rivers, the Drakensberg Range and the Mzimkulu River. To the north stretched Mpanda's independent Zulu state, and southward lay the territory over which Faku, the Pondo chief asserted vague claims.

¹ David Welsh, *The Roots of Segregation. Native Policy in Colonial Natal, 1845-1910*, (London: Oxford, University Press, 1971), pp. 8-9.

By making Roman-Dutch law the legal code of the District in 1845, a system was created that was to cause numerous problems for Africans. Not only were they at a disadvantage with respect the larger and foreign judicial system, but they also had to contend with 'Tribal Law' that was in operation under the rule of chiefs. It seems particularly significant that earlier in December 1841, Napier argued against Natal becoming a dependency of the Cape because if Roman-Dutch law was extended to Natal:

It would follow that all the Kaffirs, Zulus, and other natives living within the territory thus annexed, would by that very annexure become amenable to laws, of the principles of which they can form no conception; they would be rendered liable to be convicted of, and punished for, the commission of crimes which in their eyes are not considered as such; and all the difficulty and oppression of applying to a barbarous and uncivilised community the laws which govern civilised men, would spring and the annexure of this colony of a tract of country, one of the main reasons of annexing which was to prevent the oppression of the natives of Her Majesty's service.²

Napier's objection was overlooked, and although the proclamation annexing Natal specifically excluded it from the purview of laws, customs or usages at the Cape, Roman-Dutch law was established to the exclusion of all other legal systems. The problems highlighted by Napier were to surface throughout the country's history.

In order to circumvent the problems associated with assimilating Africans into the Natal socio-economic system, Henry Cloete, appointed as Her Majesty's Commissioner, made a distinction between aboriginals and refugees. Cloete claimed that only 2000 to 3000 Africans were aboriginal inhabitants having an incontestable claim to land. The remaining 100 000 were considered intruders, refugees from Zulu country. Later research shows that before 1812, a dense population of 94 tribes had inhabited the Colony. Although Shaka's wars dispersed a large number, 43 survived in their original form, while the remnants of some coalesced to form new tribes. Of the 59 tribes settled in Natal in 1843, only 7 had moved in after 1812. These people were

² Ibid, p. 10.

tribesmen returning to their ancestral home.³ A Locations Committee set up in March 1846 took a harsh view of Africans:

Their universal character, as formed by their education, habits and associations, is at once superstitious and warlike; their estimate of the value of human life is very low; war and bloodshed are engagements with which their circumstances have rendered them familiar from their childhood, and from when they can be restrained only by the strong arm of power...⁴

The commission recommended the adoption of the location system, and they also suggested that customary law be recognised and that chiefs should be incorporated into the administrative structure. On 21 June 1849, Lieutenant-Governor West proclaimed the Royal Instructions, and two days later Ordinance 3 of 1849 was enacted providing that the Lieutenant-Governor 'shall hold and enjoy over all the chiefs and natives.... all the power and authority which, according to the laws, customs and usages of the natives, are held and enjoyed by any supreme or paramount native chief, with full power to appoint and remove the subordinate chiefs, or other authorities among them.'⁵

In 1846, the man who was to almost single handedly re-structure Natal and to create the controversial reserves, came to Natal as the diplomatic agent to the tribes. Theophilus Shepstone had served for 7 years in a similar capacity at Fort Peddie in the Eastern Cape. He believed that the monarchy had instilled in the Zulu 'notions of implicit obedience to their rulers' of which the administration could take advantage. Shepstone was able to cajole and shepherd large numbers of Africans into the reserves. As Ngubane says:

Shepstone's reserves varied in size, one of them ran to 400 000 acres. They were carefully chosen to interfere as little as possible with the existing cluster of farms. They separated traditionally hostile clans and they also served as buffers. Natives were packed into the vacancies in the South, where they formed a belt between Natal and AmaMpondoland... In all, Shepstone moved some 80 000 Natal Kaffirs about the

³ H.J. Simons, *African Women. Their Legal Status in South Africa*, (London: C. Hurst, 1968), p. 16.

⁴ David Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p. 12.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

complicated ethnic chessboard of Natal, and only twice in three decades did he have to resort to force.⁶

Shepstone strongly believed in the efficacy of the policy of 'divide and rule'.

With the task of constructing a system of African administration in Natal, Shepstone used the following strategy:

Instances constantly occurred of individuals, families and sections of tribes becoming dissatisfied with their hereditary chiefs and desiring to have them severed. I observed that these malcontents were not unwilling to be placed under headmen of hereditary rank, all they cared for was that their new headman should enjoy the confidence of the government... These unborn chiefs being commoners, have no interest in supporting hereditary pretensions.... they are looked upon as interlopers by the chiefs of ancient descent and weakeners of their power and influence. It is by the gradual and judicious extension of this system.... that I think can be found the shortest and safest means of breaking down the power of hereditary chiefs, without losing the machinery as yet indispensable to us, of tribal organisation.⁷

Shepstone's policy of administering tribal law directly and through the chiefs was criticised by Colonial Secretary, Earl Grey. He warned that the long term results of such a policy lacked foresight, and that that type of administration 'ought always to have been considered as merely provisional, and requiring to be superseded by a better as soon as possible.'⁸ The administration adopted by Sir George Grey in the Cape after 1854, was different to that of Natal, and Grey's belief in a multi-racial system based on potentially equal rights for all, gained the approbation of colonists, missionaries, humanitarians and a sceptical British Treasury. The Locations Commission of 1846, also recommended schools and industrial training, freehold tenure for progressive individuals, and the appointment of superintendents who would apply as much of the tribal law as was compatible with the principles of European law, until all were brought under the European code. To improve the society, and the status of women, tribal marriages and divorce had to be remodelled to ensure them a greater

⁶ H. Ngubane, *Body and Mind in Zulu Medicine. An Ethnography of Health and Disease in Nyuswa - Zulu Thought and Practice*, (London: Academic Press, 1977). For details see D.R. Morris, *The Washing of the Spears*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1966).

⁷ Shula Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion. The 1906-1908 Disturbances in Natal*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 34.

⁸ David Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p. 25.

significance than under traditional law. The contemplated establishment would have cost £5,500 a year, that is about half the revenue from the African hut tax levied in 1849, but the Natal colonial office could not, and the British would not, find the money.⁹

By 1864, at least 10 000 Africans were in service at any one time, and 20 000 annually engaged in hired labour. Migrant labour was already in progress, and the social and political tensions associated with this system were already beginning to surface. The views of the colonists towards Africans was captured in a document published by a 1852 Commission of Inquiry to investigate 'the past and present state of the Kafirs in the District of Natal.' This document formed the basis of much of colonial policy:

When not effectually restrained and directed by the strong-arm of power, the true and universal character of the Kaffirs, as framed by their education, haunts, and associations, is as once superstitious and warlike. Their estimate of the value of human life is very low; plunder and bloodshed are engagements with which their circumstances have rendered them familiar from their childhood; they are crafty and cunning at once indolent and excitable; averse to labour; but bloodthirsty and cruel when their passions are inflamed... they... show the most servile compliance to the rule of a despotic chief... Cupidity is another strongly developed feature... possessing but a confused, indistinct idea of a future state, and of the existence of a Supreme Being, they cherish a belief in the most degrading system of witchcraft.¹⁰

Although the system of chiefship was institutionalised, their duties and rules of office were not regularised. This opened the space for manipulation, corruption and nepotism that reached a highpoint in vigilante action and ethnic violence in contemporary Natal. This was largely the result of Shepstone's policy of administration and his reluctance to regularize and document chiefly duties and rules of office. Unarmed with any constitutional authority to enforce his judgements, Shepstone heard between six and ten cases a day in 1846, mainly disputes dealing with cattle, lobola (bridewealth) and assaults. A Royal Instruction on 8 March 1848, was issued to regularize these proceedings and stipulated that there was to be no

⁹ H.J. Simons, *African Women*, p. 19.

¹⁰ David Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p. 33.

interference in the traditional power of chiefs, nor abrogation of tribal law, except as far as it was repugnant to all the civilised world. Shepstone said he abided by these instructions except insofar as he had divested the chiefs of their former absolute power and supremacy by prohibiting them from exercising certain prerogatives like the holding of the first fruit ceremonies, the summoning of regiments, the conduct of smelling out witches, and 'eating-up' the property of an accused subject.

By the early 1850s, missionary work was firmly established. It was from here that the real challenge to Shepstone's authority emerged. Christianised Africans were to resist and protest against many of the early attempts at segregation. The largest missions were controlled by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. In 1851, it had 14 missionaries, 17 assistant missionaries and 3 African helpers in eleven missions and six out-stations in Natal.¹¹ Other societies included the Berlin Society, the Hermannsburg Mission, the Norwegian Missionary Society, and the Wesleyan Missionary Society. By the turn of the century, there were some 40 000 communicants and 100 000 adherents to Christianity. At one level, colonists and missionaries converged in their dislike of Shepstone's system of administration. The colonists opposed this system because it enabled Africans to continue living as farmers, largely independent of white employers. At another level, the colonists did not agree with the mission policy of uplifting and educating Africans, because by producing a literate and Christianized class, they manifested an independence which the colonist distrusted. By 1865 there were 34 schools for Africans with a total enrolment of 1683 pupils, costing the government £2,009 annually.¹² Missionaries had great difficulty making converts among Africans. Many were put off when they found that it would interfere with their customs and traditions. The missionaries found that 'Polygamy and witchcraft are so directly opposed to Christian institutions, that these two evils alone have placed the Kaffirs in a position of the greatest hostility to the

¹¹ Ibid, p. 43. Shula Marks suggests that by 1850, the American Board had 19 missionaries at twelve stations. *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 53.

¹² Ibid, p. 49.

Gospel.¹³ The 1852-3 Commission report seemed to sum up the opinion of most missionaries:

So long as Kafirs live in large communities, where their own customs and usage operate with the greatest vigour, and where the power and influences of the chiefs are felt with the greatest intensity, so long will missionary exertion be comparatively ineffectual, and just in proportion as the Government can arrange to lessen the size of these communities, to break up the nationality and clanship thereby engendered, and to bring a youthful Kafir population in the capacity of free servants into daily personal contact with the civilised inhabitants, will be the success of the missionary.¹⁴

The conversion to Christianity of some Africans did not supersede past customs and beliefs. Instead, the new religious ideas and lifestyles were adapted to incorporate past values and customs. As Mazrui proposes, it was colonialism, which broke up communities and disrupted kinship allegiances, rather than Christianity that 'converted' Africans:

The invocation of the spirits, special rites for the dead and unborn, special bonds of kinship and the fear of violating these bonds, theories of causation based on spiritual factors, and a system of punishment and reward partly based on transcendental convictions have all survived the massive normative challenge posed by missionaries, transistor radios, western education systems, and the demonstrative effect of the outer world.¹⁵

The missionaries could never be a viable alternative as long as the government prevented Africans from full political participation, education, acquiring property or upward mobility to enjoy the fruits of a western way of life. Without this, Africans had to always fall back on past customs and values as a form of long-term security. But the endeavour of the missions to promote social change among Africans was considerable. A small, but growing number of Africans were given an elementary education and embraced the Christian faith. Known as the Kholwa, this group not only found segregation distasteful, but also began to look upon the traditionalists with disdain.

¹³ Reverend W.C. Holden of the Wesleyan mission in Ibid, pp. 44-45.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 45.

¹⁵ Ali.A. Mazrui, 'Black Vigilantism in Cultural Transition: Violence and Viability in Tropical Africa', in *Vigilante Politics*, ed. by H.Jon Rosenbaum and P.C. Sederberg, (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1976), p. 196.

As more Africans were educated and became more ambitious, the colonial authorities made it more difficult for them to break with the past. The system of reserves and the rationale behind it, went against widespread assimilation of Africans. The government moved to make it more difficult for Africans to slip through the system. When Natal became a separate colony by the Charter of 1856, any British subject could claim a vote if he owned unmovable property worth £50 or rented it to annual value of £10. Law 11 of 1865 placed new regulations on potential African voters. Besides qualifying on a number of levels, the final decision as to the enfranchisement of each applicant was left to the discretion of the Lieutenant-Governor.¹⁶ Only two voters had their name on the voters role in 1903. As Simons says, it seemed that the 'settlers spurned the educated, Christian, civilized African, yet continued to protest that their constant aim and endeavour was to emancipate the heathens from the evils of polygamy, bartering of wives, drudgery of women, and witchcraft.'¹⁷

The system of chiefship that was created by Shepstone was later modified and re applied by the National Party under the apartheid system of rule. Many of the contradictions inherent in the recreated and institutionalised chiefship remain to plague contemporary politics. The use of chiefs in administration was necessitated by the small number of civil servants available to rule the African population. By 1871, there were only 7 magistrates to administer 300 000 Africans. In Natal, tribes were small, many chiefs were appointed by Shepstone and the power of hereditary chiefs was diminished. As he remarked, 'our most considerable chief in Natal would not be able to raise more than 5000 men.'¹⁸ Between 1881 and 1882, of the 173 chiefs and headmen in charge of 102 tribes, 99 were hereditary, 46 were created or appointed, and 28 ranked as headmen.¹⁹ Shepstone looked to the gradual elimination of the

¹⁶ To qualify, Africans had to have been in residence for 12 years in the colony. They must have been exempted for 7 years from customary law. A certificate was required, signed by 3 European voters testifying to the applicants loyalty. The certificate was to be endorsed by a justice of peace or a resident magistrate. They had to abide by the ordinary property qualification under the Charter of 1856.

¹⁷ H.J. Simons, *African Women*, p. 24.

¹⁸ David Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p. 111.

¹⁹ Ibid.

chiefship, 'I believe that the power of the chiefs will become extinct from the force of circumstance; as a rule, their people precede them in civilisation...' He encouraged the gradual fragmentation of tribes and the formation of new ones: 'I would without anxiety let the hereditary house crumble and their chiefs lose power so long as the material does not become confused rubbish, but can be built into other, smaller edifices....' But he did not advocate the elimination of the chiefship: 'For a long time to come, because we can substitute no system of management half so effective even at ten times the cost.'²⁰ Shepstone's system of rule effectively removed the checks and balances on the abuse of chiefly power that existed in pre-colonial times. The possibility that a disaffected section of the tribe might hive off was a powerful check on chiefly rule. Chiefs were careful not to dissipate their power, measured in terms of the number of subjects, by alienating a section of their people. In colonial Natal, this process of splitting away was carefully regulated, and permission to do so depended on Shepstone's assessment of the balance of forces. Although the people themselves were discontented, they preferred to stay in Natal, rather than in Zululand, where they could be attacked or killed.

The system of *isibalo*, the power of the Supreme Chief to call upon Africans to labour on public works in the colony, contributed greatly to the unpopularity of the chieftainship. The proportion of men to be called out from the locations was one in eleven huts or 15 percent of the adult males. This meant about 3000 men were called out every six months. They were paid £1 a month and given rations of maize. The *isibalo* was detested by both commoners and chiefs, the latter finding themselves in the awkward position whereby their power was being undermined by the government, yet they were forced to enlist men for the *isibalo*. A chief explains to Shepstone:

In these days, I am no longer their chief, you have put my people over my head, they are greater than I; if any of them do wrong and I attempt to punish them by fine or any other means they acknowledge the justice of it, but as it is impossible to please two parties in a case, the losing one runs off to the magistrate, and I am told that I have no right to

²⁰ Ibid, pp. 114-116.

punish or to fine, and that I must restore the fine. When you want labourers for the harbour works or the public roads, then I am a chief, then I have people.....²¹

Chiefs were also able to use *isibalo* as a form of patronage. John Shepstone told the 1881-2 Commission that he had heard cases where chiefs promised young men immunity from *isibalo* for rendering small services. Chiefs also forced some men out of lucrative employment. Some chiefs took steps to prevent young men from getting work passes in order to fulfil their quotas when called upon to do so. Chiefs also removed young boys from mission schools to prevent them from acquiring a Christian education. There were many criticisms over the quality of justice dispensed by chiefs. Loss of prestige and social power, and loss of jurisdiction meant a loss of revenue in times when tribute paid by tribesmen to chiefs was visibly declining. In 1889, the magistrate of Mapumulo said:

Many of the Natal chiefs of today are by no means the intelligent self-respecting, and dignified men, that persons holding such a position generally were a few years ago. In many instances the Chief of today is an avaricious mediant, in addition to being a tool in the hands of his Indunas. Bribery, nepotism and arbitrary justice were the hallmarks of contemporary chieftainship.²²

After nearly 25 years of agitation by colonists, provision for the codification of customary law in the Native Administration Law of 1875 was established. Shepstone, who was more aware of the negotiation and bargaining that is intrinsic to customary law, was reticent to codify it, and declared that it was impossible to put Tribal law in writing. The 1878 Code was amended in 1891, and the reaction in a Zulu-English newspaper described it as 'an abortion... Its omissions and commissions are so numerous that we cannot enumerate them in our present space.'²³ The Code attempted to regulate traditional practices, for example, herbalists and medicine men and women were prohibited from practicing unless licensed by an Administrator of Native Affairs. The Code seriously undermined the status of women. By Section 94, women were considered minors without independent power. They were bound to hand over their

²¹ Ibid, p. 124.

²² Ibid, p. 279.

²³ Inkanyiso, 24/03/1893 in Ibid, p. 168.

earnings to the head of the family, they could acquire and hold property for the use of their respective 'houses', but they could neither inherit or bequeath property. In the past, Zulu women did have the right to acquire and hold property independently of their fathers or husbands.

About 2000 men and 5000 of their dependents were exempt from Tribal law under Law 28 of 1865 which allowed Christian Africans to petition the Governor for exemption. Common law regulated their marriage, estates and personal affairs, while all other Africans were subject to tribal law and the Codes. However, under the administration of Shepstone not a single grant of exemption was made. Africans complained that the codification of customary law froze a traditional legal system without allowing it to adapt to changing social conditions. J. Gumede said in Inkanyiso in 1894:

Native Laws were made by men, who died many years ago. These men lived quite a different life from ours; and never saw a streak of today life. They quitted the world and left us with their laws, which were only convenient to them. We find these laws inexpressibly weighty... We find it very inconvenient to give our consent to their rules and principles. The circumstances of the world have changed and our opinions change also!²⁴

So confusing was the Code that it did not make judgements any easier, and Mr Justice Boshoff of the Native High Court informed a 1903-1905 Commission that the time had arrived for the Code to be amended or removed from the statute book altogether and to be replaced by another Code. The system of legal dualism was inevitably problematic and conflict ridden. Unexempted Africans could have civil matters dealt with only in terms of the Code. Further problems arose in situations which were neither encompassed by the Code nor by Tribal law.

Land allocation in Natal exacerbated disparities between the Africans and Europeans. Inequalities in the distribution of land formed the backbone of the segregation policies of the Union government and the apartheid policies of the Afrikaners. The early Voortrekkers had allotted two farms of 3,000 morgen each to the

²⁴ Ibid, p. 173.

first-comers and the British government continued with these extravagant grants in order to keep the trekkers within their jurisdiction. In addition, large tracts of land were tied up by absentee landlords, for example, the Natal Land and Colonisation Company which had its headquarters in London, possessed 250 000 acres.²⁵ Of the 12 million acres of land in Natal, over 7 and three quarter million acres had been allocated to Europeans. Of the remaining area, 2 and a quarter million acres had been set aside as Trust land for the occupation of the African population. The reserves which were set aside for Africans between 1846 and 1864, were neither added to, nor improved by the Natal Native Trust from 1864 onwards. By 1900, the reserves were overcrowded and overworked. As a result more than half the Africans of Natal lived on private land belonging to Europeans, despite high rents and exploitative labour contracts. In addition, there were also about 174 000 acres of land set aside as Mission Reserves that was transferred to the Natal Native Trust in 1903 under the Mission Reserves Act. There were many African squatters on Crown land, while a few bought Crown or private land as it came on the market.

The reserves could not support the African population, and gross inequalities in land allocation were already causing tension and social upheaval. By 1880, Durban had an African population of 3,567 men, 150 women and 100 children. The central issue among the colonists was the demise of traditionalism. The magistrate of Pietermaritzburg reported in 1880 that 'the bulk of the Native women have abandoned kraal life, and have adopted prostitution and petticoats'. In 1881, he said that the stern discipline of the rural home had, in the urban setting, degenerated into 'unbridled licence'; their sobriety had given way to the 'wildest dissipation'; hard and constant labour had been replaced by a 'state of idleness which must lead to mischief'. Marriage ties were ignored. 'Native society [is] in the absence of heads of kraals, Indunas and chiefs a dead letter; these women are simply emancipated from all control'.²⁶

²⁵ Shula Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, p. 120.

²⁶ David Welsh, *Roots of Segregation*, p. 223.

Despite their reservations about chieftainship and its decreasing legitimacy, the colonists saw its continued existence as a bulwark against the decline of the traditional order. A committee who looked into drunkenness among Africans in 1902 said:

We view with feelings of apprehension the weakening of the power of chiefs over members of their tribes... The comparatively sudden and violent breaking away from old habits and customs, and from the somewhat severe control of the Chiefs and Headmen, naturally leads to an abuse of liberty, and to licence.²⁷

The government ignored the resentment that was building up among Africans, and unlike Shepstone who kept a close eye on discontent, in the 1890s a department regulation was introduced which required that chiefs should obtain a permit from a magistrate before visiting the Secretary of Native Affairs. This implied a long wait for permits, unlike the situation under Shepstone who encouraged chiefs to discuss grievances with him. By the early 1900s, the distinctions between the Kholwa Africans and traditionalists were clearly visible, each section having different ambitions and perspectives on future African society. C. Kunene, a Kholwa criticised the government for the failure to promote the development of the Africans. He argued in the *Natal Mercury* in 1909 that the disintegration of traditionalism was irrevocable:

So far as the natives are concerned, the old order of things has changed, and a new one has been substituted.... They may not wish for a recrudescence of the arbitrary rule of their own chiefs and the autocracy of their own Kings, yet they do not feel 'at home' with their new masters, because their inclusion in the body politic has been insincere, being only effected for the purposes of self-aggrandisement or gain.²⁸

For the traditionalists, the shortage of land was eroding the vitality of their social system. An aged chief Mafingo in 1905:

We have to pay, pay. That is all the interest the Authorities show in us. They do not help us in kraal matters and the management of our wives and families. Our sons elbow us away from the boiled mielies in the pot when we reach for a handful to eat, saying, 'We bought these father', and when remonstrated with, our wives dare to raise their eyes and glare at us. It used not to be thus. If we chide or beat our wives and children for misconduct, they run off to the Police

²⁷ Ibid, p. 281

²⁸ Ibid, p. 299.

and the Magistrate fines us with the result that our families defy us and kraalhead control is lost.²⁹

Tensions and contradictions were inherent in a rapidly changing society that was nevertheless stifled in many ways. As patterns of living, working and social exchange altered, so the policy of the colonial government to maintain African within a traditional frame, proved ineffectual. The tensions that developed during this period were to increase tenfold in subsequent years, sometimes erupting in rebellion and protest, sometimes in internecine violence. By 1908, the mid-Victorian objective of turning Africans into Black Europeans had been given up and the prospect of educating them towards self-government was relegated to the distant future. The new tendency was towards segregation, rather than assimilation.

The general election of 1910 was won by the South African party led by Louis Botha and Jan Smuts. The Native Land Act of 1913 was the hallmark of the African policy of the Union government. The impact of the act was to restrict African ownership to the 'scheduled areas', some 10,5 million morgen representing about 7,3 percent of the total land area of South Africa. The measure also envisaged the release of additional land, which was only carried out in 1936. The 1913 bill put an end to leasing arrangements by Africans in the Orange Free State and forbade the practice of tenant farming. Africans on white owned farms had few choices: they could accept labour service with white farmers for a minimum of three months; seek a share of communal land in the overcrowded reserves; or migrate to the African locations outside cities and engage in unskilled or semi-skilled work. After 1910, Africans could not subsist on the reserves alone, which were being transformed into reservoirs of cheap, unskilled labour for white farmers and industrialists. In 1936, 447 000 Africans out of an officially estimated 3,410 000 were temporarily absent from the reserves.³⁰ Almost every African man with a home in a reserve went out to work on a white farm or town for a period of time. By the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, control of Africans in urban areas was streamlined. Municipalities were empowered to establish 'locations'

²⁹ Ibid, p. 301.

³⁰ Leonard Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 164.

for Africans outside or on the edge of white residential areas. These locations were under the control of white superintendents, but provision was made for setting up Native Advisory Boards. The legislation authorized influx control, since municipalities could define the categories of Africans who were permitted to live in urban areas.

The votes of white workers brought Hertzog's Afrikaner Nationalist party into power, in alliance with white labour in 1924. Numerous bills were passed entrenching white supremacy and extending discrimination to the workplace.³¹ As soon as the coalition government of the Nationalist Party and South African Party came into power in 1933, a Joint Select Committee of Parliament tabled two measures: the Representation of Natives Bill and the Native Trust and Land Bill. The first provided for the exclusion of future African voters from the common roll while allowing the 11 000 Africans already on the roll to remain there. Later the government proposed that a separate roll on which qualified Cape Africans voted for three white members of the House of Assembly and two white members of the Cape Provincial Council.³² In addition, a Natives' Representative Council was to be created to act in an advisory capacity. The second bill released white-owned land for purchase by a government trust, which was to have control over all reserve and scheduled lands, increasing land for African occupation to 13.7 percent. An extract from a pamphlet by Selby Msimang describes the reaction of Africans:

My friends and countrymen, let us now admit, both publicly and in our conscience, that Parliament and the white people of South Africa have disowned us, flirted and trifled with our loyalty. They have treated us as rebels, nay, they have declared we are not part of the South African community.... we have to belong to some other authority other than the present, or we shall have to admit that we are slaves and outcasts in our fatherland....³³

³¹ The Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924 established the machinery for the negotiation of labour disputes, but excluded 'pass-carrying natives' from its provisions. The Wages Act of 1925 allowed the government to determine wage rates, but excluded those in agricultural and domestic work. The Mines and Works Amendment Act of 1926 made the colour bar legal in the mining industry.

³² This roll was abolished in 1959.

³³ Extract from pamphlet, 'The Crisis', by Selby Msimang in *From Protest to Challenge. A documentary History of African politics in South Africa, 1882-1964*, eds. by Thomas Karis and Gwendolen M. Carter, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1987), p. 57.

On 26 May 1948, the victory of Dr. Daniel F. Malan's Reunited Nationalist Party heralded the era of an Afrikaner dominated government. On June 1, 1948, when Malan arrived in Pretoria to a tumultuous welcome, he said: 'In the past we felt like strangers in our own country, but today South Africa belongs to us once more. For the first time since Union, South Africa is our own. May God grant that it always remains our own.'³⁴ The new government proceeded to systematically tighten and extend the forms of racial discrimination against blacks. Some of the bills passed included the Population Registration Act of 1950 which aimed to give everyone a permanent racial classification, the Group Areas Act classified all areas by function and race and the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949) and the Immorality Act (1950) which prohibited marriages and sexual relations between races. The Tomlinson Commission for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bantu Areas, submitted to the Cabinet in October 1954, laid the groundwork for advancing beyond the establishment of Bantu authorities towards the creation of Bantu Homelands. The Commission posed a clear choice between a path of ultimate integration or one of complete separation between Europeans and Africans. In 1951, the reserves were regrouped into eight territories (eventually ten). Each territory became a homeland for an African nation, to be administered by Bantu authorities consisting mainly of chiefs.

In 1961, obtaining a narrow majority in a referendum of the white electorate, the government transformed South Africa into a republic, completing the process of disengagement from Great Britain. They continued to make rigid and more sophisticated controls on black people. Their policy was bluntly stated in 1967 by the Department of Bantu Administration and Development:

It is accepted government policy that the Bantu are only temporarily resident in the European areas of the Republic for as long as they offer their labour there. As soon as they become, for one reason or another, no longer fit for work or superfluous in the labour market, they are expected to return to their country of origin or the territory of the national unit

³⁴ Leonard Thompson, *History South Africa*, p. 186.

where they fit ethnically if they were not born and bred in their homeland.³⁵

As the apartheid policies became more overwhelming, and alienating, blacks began to get more organised and militant. The discriminatory and unjust practices of the government contributed towards conflict and unrest and by 1978, the apartheid state was in trouble. The state now moved towards reform. The colonial administration had created the conditions for African hostility and initially exposed the need for reform. The prospects of change always makes oppression more visible. A reformed *ancien regime* always opens up new contradictions and fissures, and it is to this subject that we now turn.

Part 2: The South African state and reform

Using the case study of the Chinese state in 1949 when the Communist Party confronted a civil society which was frayed, discredited and poorly integrated, Vivien Shue proposed that where civil-society is relatively weak, that is when civil organizations are weakly constituted and do not present a substantial threat to state power, states may be able to rise and consolidate their power quite effortlessly. But she goes on to say, 'the regime thus made may also tend to be brittle.... Although such states may appear strong, and may be classified as dictatorial and they do appear to exert power over and against society, the scope of their dictatorial ambitions may mask "crippling incapacities"'.³⁶ In order to assess the strength of a state, its capacity for social control, to elicit participation and legitimize its dominance there is a need to assess the discourses between the various state institutions and between state and civil society. By discourses, I mean, communication, articulation and the language employed in the interaction. Although these discourses are determined ultimately by ideology, there are other more immediate determinants at play, like the frequency and duration of interaction, the reasons behind interaction, the protocol that governs such

³⁵ Ibid, p. 193.

³⁶ Vivien Shue, 'State Power and Social Organisation in China: From Revolution to Reform', (Unpublished paper, Workshop: State Power and Social Forces, Domination and Transformation in the Third World, University of Texas, Austin, February 9-11, 1990), p. 4.

interaction and the specific power relations at play. These discourses are determined largely by the way in which parliamentarians and officials react to pressures from various social forces: peers, staff in other agencies, supervisors, state employees that are directly or indirectly supervised and domestic and foreign political and social forces. The formulation and implementation of its policies can be viewed as a series of different actions based on the particular calculus of pressures that each component of the state faces in its particular environment of action. State operations are carried out by human agents.

The South African state is made up of a number of institutions. At the centre are its political institutions, parliament, local government structures, Homelands administrations, the bureaucracy, and then there are the military and police, mass media, public health and welfare services, education and a rigid ideological framework. This massive conglomerate of institutions cannot be conceptualised as a coherent and unified body, rather contradictory and asymmetrical relations exist between the matrix of departments and organizations which condition and are conditioned by struggles in the political terrain.

State institutions have faced numerous pressures from within the parameters of its structure and from both white and black civil societies. To counteract these attacks on its legitimacy, it embarked on the strategy of reform. These reform policies have woven the underlying fabric of contemporary politics in the country, laying the basis for extra-parliamentary black political organisation, and providing the impetus for the internecine war in the country. The primary objective of reform was to restructure the apartheid system, altering the boundaries to incorporate and co-opt a significant section of the Indian and Coloured population, to remove the barriers to the social mobility of an emergent black petty bourgeoisie, to incorporate a layer of skilled black workers into the labour aristocracy and to eliminate the racist Clauses in the petty-apartheid administration without fundamentally changing the system. More recently, the seemingly radical measures taken by President De Klerk have added a new dimension to the politics of reform. The evolution towards more progressive deviations from

traditional apartheid ideology and the effects it has had on the white electorate and the black population is the subject of the next section.

'By 1988, the state had arrived at a point where political reform had ground to a halt, and "crisis-management" had become its primary concern. The state was now operating within a terrain of ongoing struggles, conflict and contradiction generated by tensions between its own institutions and by challenges and pressures emanating from without'.³⁷ Major white interests had become alienated and signs of significant disaffection were evident among white business leaders, students, churches, academics, the press, political parties and even within the National Party circles.³⁸ The distance between the state and civil society, both black and white, had become almost unbridgeable. Pressure to reform the state emanated from three sources: capital, black civil society and liberal elements within the state.

Far from relieving the crisis, the reform initiative added new dimensions to it. The Afrikaner community, once a largely coherent and nationalistic grouping, has been plagued by an ideological crisis that has reverberated through all segments of the society. In the effort to placate two contradictory audiences, the white electorate and the black majority, the government instituted a diluted version of reform, ultimately further alienating large sectors of both groupings. The result has been; increasing ideological dissent in both the white and black communities.

I will first look at the pressures experienced by the state from the various sectors of capital. Relations between the state and capital are determined by the specific historical circumstances of any given period. For example, the requirements of different sectors of capital; the influence of the strongest sector of capital over the state; the number and extent of direct state links in capitalist enterprises, the relative importance of capital in the general socio-economic environment, and the extent to which capital is able to act as a single force in relation to the state. Generally, there is a tendency for the

³⁷ M.Swilling and M.Phillips, 'The Emergency State: Its Structure, Power and Limits', in *South African Review* 5, ed. by G. Moss and I Obery, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989), p. 68.

³⁸ H.Gilliomee, 'Afrikaner Politics 1971-87: From Afrikaner Nationalist Rule to Central State Hegemony', in *Can South Africa Survive?* ed. by John Brewer, (London: Macmillan Press, 1989), p. 110.

capitalist state to act continually on behalf of the capitalist class in order to maintain the conditions necessary for capitalist accumulation. In South Africa, this tendency has often been interrupted by the need to placate and appease the white electorate who have gained from an ideology which has long been internalized as the living doctrine of a nation. Sanctioned by religious scriptures, apartheid has served as the cultural backdrop for the Afrikaners. However, political institutions are financially largely constrained by national as well as global capitalism. To this extent their autonomy from the capitalist elite is restricted given that the state is indirectly dependent on the accumulation process for its revenue. Ultimately it is in the interest of the state to act in the interest of capital.

In South Africa, the concentration of capital in fewer and fewer hands, made capital considerably stronger in relation to the state. The onset of an economic crisis, the upsurge of popular protest from the black majority and the rise of the independent trade union movement have all contributed to the need for a new legitimization rationale. Monopoly capitalism has been in the forefront of attempts to influence state reform.

The South African economy is dominated by government enterprises on the one hand and a few large conglomerates on the other.³⁹ The ownership and control of capital by a few corporate companies has occurred mainly because of tight foreign exchange controls which have prevented local mining houses and financial institutions from investing surplus funds abroad. In 1981, 8 private conglomerates and state corporations controlled over 70% of the total assets of the 138 largest companies. The largest cartel, the Anglo-American Corporation controlled assets worth more than the combined Gross Domestic Products of the 9 Frontline states. At the end of 1982 the top 100 industrial companies in SA had total assets of R41 billion. Of these the combined assets of the first 20 were worth R25 billion or 61% of the total. Of this R25 billion, 39% was accounted for by companies associated with Old Mutual, 28% with Anglo American, 10% with Sanlam and 8% by state firms. The remaining 15% represented

³⁹ M. Murry, *South Africa. Time of Agony, Time of Destiny. The upsurge of Popular Protest*, (London: Verso Publishers, 1987), pp. 130-131.

independent companies.⁴⁰ In 1983 an estimated 7 companies controlled 80% of the value of shares listed in the Johannesburg stock exchange. Anglo American and its subsidiaries alone make up 56% of the Exchanges total share value of R90 billion. Other big share holders are Barlow Rand (7,4% of the total), Anglovaal (3,2%); Rembrandt (2,1%); Sanlam (9,4%); Old Mutual (0,8%) and Liberty Life (1,1%).⁴¹ The South African Transport Services (SATS) is the largest state corporation and the largest single employer in the country with nearly 275,000 employees. Other state companies include the Iron and Steel Corporation (ISCOR) which controlled more than 75% of the SA iron and steel production in 1982 and the Armaments Development and Production Corporation (ARMSCOR) which was established in 1964 to circumvent the threatened arms boycott and has become largely responsible for supplying the military.⁴² Capitalist interests are politically represented via a number of large business associations like the Associated Chamber of Commerce (ASSACOM), the South African Federation (SAF), the Chamber of Mines and Steel and Engineering Industries Federation (SIEFSA).

What is the potential strength of the black labour force? In 1980, official statistics proposed that 6,523 million Africans were economically active, 19% of whom were in agriculture, 12% in mining, 17% in manufacturing, 34% in services and 11% were unemployed.⁴³ These figures exclude the large numbers of blacks who engage in other forms of casual labour, illegal part-time or temporary employment. They also exclude the thousands who reside in the homelands and work in white cities. A more realistic figure for unemployment rate in 1980 is 25% among urban blacks (39% of black households had one person unemployed). Only a minimum growth of 5,3% a year can stabilize the unemployment rate. In the homelands the situation is far worse, for example in the Transkei, where the annual increase in the labour supply is 25 000, the

⁴⁰ Financial Mail, 24/06/83.

⁴¹ Financial Times, 11/08/83.

⁴² M.Murry, *South Africa*, pp. 130-132.

⁴³ M.Lipton, *Capitalism and Apartheid in South Africa, 1910-1985*, (England: Wildwood house, 1986), p. 403.

annual increase in the number of jobs available is only 7800. In Boputhatswana, 84 000 Tswanas commute to work outside the homeland and nearly 63 000 are migrant workers.⁴⁴ This structural problem of unemployment, has been worsened by sustained economic recession, township unrest and trade union activity. At the height of the 1984-86 urban revolts, unemployment in Port Elizabeth reached 56%, resulting in seething townships and massive outward migration to blighted cities.⁴⁵

The high level of unemployment is coupled with a high rate of inflation. In 1982 the 16,5% inflation rate compared with an annual rate of 6,8% in the United States and 10,4% in Britain.⁴⁶ The rising cost of living has directly contributed to increasing poverty. Estimates based on National Income Data in Soweto suggested that in 1981 a black family needed a minimum income of R260 per month for healthy lifestyle. However their wages only rose by 25% to an average of R220 a month.⁴⁷ These conditions have made South Africa a highly precarious economic investment, cutting sharply into the profits of business and monopoly capital.

Since the mid-1970s the Afrikaner business community, through their principle business association, the Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut (AHI), began to urge the government to alter apartheid policy. They expressed concern that: 'The black stream to the cities will ... become stronger and exert pressure, despite all our laudable efforts and incentives for decentralization and homeland development...Economic integration of blacks is inevitable and unstoppable if work and welfare is to be created and maintained.'⁴⁸ Essentially they called for altering policy that controlled and prevented Africans from training as skilled workers. They suggested that the 'African ... be given a "stake" in the system, some form of ownership, such as housing, which can be a "stabilizing" influence on black urban communities.'⁴⁹ They argued for a shift in the

⁴⁴ The Sunday Express, 4/05/80.

⁴⁵ London review of Books, 13/10/88.

⁴⁶ The Star, 29/05/82.

⁴⁷ The Star, 2/7/81; 3/6/81.

⁴⁸ S.Greenberg, 'Ideological Struggles within the South African State', *The Politics of race, class and nationalism in twentieth - century South Africa*, ed. by S.Marks and S.Trapido, (England: Longman Group, 1987),p. 396.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 397.

locus of power from the state to the private sector, and for the extension of the political system to incorporate blacks.

The corporate president of Anglo American, Harry Oppenheimer, has also been critical of the state and its reluctance to reform the apartheid system. In 1981 in an interview he said: 'In SA..we are suffering from the effects of thirty years of keeping the races apart. We cannot live forever isolated and condemned by the great western democracies. The dangers we face internally and externally call for major and rapid changes in our policies...' ⁵⁰ He warned the governments that if a 'share in decision-making in national government structures continues to be denied' to black people, 'they will inevitably direct their industrial power more and more to political objectives'. ⁵¹ The pressures for reform from capital progressively increased. Frustrated with the limited measures instituted by the state, certain sectors of capital began to actively support alliances with moderate black organizations, initiate dialogue with the exiled ANC and to provide financial aid for the development of black education and the upliftment of townships.

The state also experienced intense pressure from black civil society. These challenges operated at two levels. At one level, a significant set of civil organizations attempted to mobilize people on the basis of radical political objectives. These organizations included the UDF, Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), the Black Consciousness Movement, the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and numerous other student, community and worker organizations. Outside the country were the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). At another level, were those organizations that participated in separate government structures. These organisations included Inkatha, the South African Black Alliance (SABA), the Coloured Labour Party, and the the South African Indian Council.

⁵⁰ Rand Daily Mail, 20/7/81.

⁵¹ Rand Daily, Mail 21/7/82.

The 1980s were marked by fervent and sustained popular protest, occurring against a background of increasing complexity and intense political rivalry among the many black political groups. In the context of an acute economic crisis and increasing poverty and unemployment, the upsurge of popular protest and the high level of state repression, contributed towards an increase in militancy and radical action by black civil society. The actions taken by the UDF which organized opposition to the newly created tricameral parliament, set the stage for more organised protest against the state reform initiative. One of the main consequences of popular protest was the international outcry it provoked. The growing lobby for the imposition of sanctions, and the international campaign of the ANC contributed towards sustaining interest in South Africa, exposing it as an undesirable investment for 'morally minded' capital and governments.

The pressures exerted by black civil society on the state have been extensively documented, and I will not be going into it in great detail here. Finally and importantly for the subject of this dissertation, the state moved progressively towards reform to counteract the growing tensions and discord within its structures, between its personnel, various factions, institutions and departments, and between it and black civil society and capital.

The many institutions of the state display varying degrees of autonomy from the centre of government. By and large, in most state institutions the upper echelons constituting these structures display a substantial degree of coherence with central government. But as one moves away from the centre towards the periphery, a substantial degree of autonomy is recognizable. Lower echelons of the state apparatus tend to have differing political allegiances and ideological perspectives, which serve to mediate between official state policies and implementation of these policies. Since it is at these levels that most contact between the state and civil society takes place, it is also at these levels that the state encounters the most sustained pressure for improved services from the labour movement and community organizations. Ironically, it is at these levels, where state policy is relatively weak that its legitimacy is most severely attacked. In the following section, I will look at the various state institutions and their

attempt to institute the reform programme, in the context of the above argument. The main points for my purposes are the conflict between the state structures, contradictions between the state and local support in the homelands and problems associated with urban unemployment and economic recession. These contradictions will be highlighted in the rest of the chapter.

The conflict between liberal and conservative element within the state, implies that central state policy can be applied in varying degrees. The overt and covert support given to Inkatha is largely dependent on the political agenda of the departments and personnel with whom they negotiate. In order to better understand the divisions within the state, it is necessary to explore the nature of political institutions. Due to the apartheid policy, manifest in the pursuit of 'separate development' for the different racial and ethnic groups, political institutions have to be replicated at parliamentary level, local government level and in the homelands. The numerous departments, committees and councils that deal with various government issues; like social welfare, health, transport etc, need to be replicated for each race. This has resulted in a massive bureaucratic system that is the single largest employer of Afrikaners in the country. These political institutions are so overwhelmingly large that efficiency is impeded, as the former president of the AHI said in an interview: 'We will have to scrap the many unnecessary regulatory measures and laws, decrease and consolidate the unnecessary (government) departments and councils, make public services more efficient and better remunerated, better utilize and decrease the number of officials... We make too many laws to protect and regulate with the result that we are increasingly enslaved to our bureaucracy which controls and regulates us...' ⁵²

It has been this large bureaucracy that has fettered the National Party's program of reform. The upper echelons of the state bureaucracy tend to have a clearer understanding of the necessity for reform. Having access to a more realistic account of the extent of the political upheaval in black townships, the huge costs of the border

⁵² S. Greenberg, 'Ideological Struggles', p. 399.

wars and the pressure from international capital and governments, they are acutely aware of the strategic need for reform. However, on the other hand it is also in their interest for the government to maintain the present level of employment amongst Afrikaners and to continue with a state directed economy rather than one left entirely to market forces. This places them in an ambivalent position, 'pulled by conflicting affinities and by a contradictory ideological posture requiring both an elaborated and depoliticized South African state.'⁵³

'Total Strategy', as the reform programme was called, was considerably weakened by the battles going on within the central state, between Prime Minister P.W. Botha and the various ministers and departments. For example in May 1986, while the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning (DCDP) under minister Chris Heunis was beginning to open negotiations with black political groups, Botha, together with the National Security Management Systems (NSMS) bombed three capitals of the Frontline states, and moved to smash black opposition by declaring a national state of emergency activating the NSMS at all levels. Although these moves eventually resulted in the consolidation of the President's Office as the epicentre of state power, tensions and struggles within the central state continued, with the eventual ousting of Botha and the instatement of F.W. De Klerk. Overall, at the centre of parliamentary institutions, there seems to be quite a high degree of coherence and unity of action, despite the varying ideological underpinnings.

The lower echelons of the bureaucracy, largely isolated from the ideological discourses at the top, tend to disregard any idea of a legitimization crisis, and having benefited immensely from apartheid, refuse to see the need for de-racialisation of the system. This results in strained relations between the upper and lower levels of the bureaucracy. It is the lower level bureaucracy that implements the reform programme with respect to civil society, and it is here that it is impeded. I will highlight one

⁵³ Ibid, p. 404.

example to show exactly how the bureaucracy succeeds in circumventing some of the more progressive aspects of reform.

By the Bantu Administration Act of 1971, African workers with Section 10 rights could live and work in 22 larger Bantu Area Administration Boards (BAABs), each with its own labour bureaux.⁵⁴ In 1979 the government had conceded that all Africans with Section 10 rights should have the opportunity to bring families to live with them provided houses are available; to change jobs within the board area in which rights were granted, without having to constantly get permission from the labour bureaux; and the right to transfer their Section 10 rights to other board areas. The right to remain in an area for more than 72 hours depends on: a firm offer of employment; availability of approved housing and non-availability of local work seekers. It is at this level, that the bureaucracy has most space for interpretation of these laws, since it is the labour bureaux officials who decide on who should be allowed to reside in a white area.

What resulted, despite the new measures, was high unemployment within the urban area among Africans with Section 10 rights, since the local bureaucracy in other board areas refused them permission to look for employment. Partly because of the housing shortage, but also because, in many areas, officials were implementing the 'preference for local labour' clause. Lipton argues that this clause has been too narrowly interpreted and in her research she found that officials had an unofficial hierarchy in accordance to which jobs and houses were allocated. For example, they first gave preference to local labour; then to workers from the immediate environs; then to those from elsewhere within the BAAB, even though legally, all groups should have had equal access. They also had an elaborate hierarchy of preferences between source areas or 'zones'. For example, the Bantustans had first preference over the border countries like Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Official attitudes still remain

⁵⁴ Section 10 [1] of the Bantu Urban Areas Act of 1945 provided that blacks may not remain in white areas for longer than 72 hours unless they a) resided there continuously since birth, b) worked with some employer, lawfully, continuously for 10 years or for more than one employer for 15 years. Section 10 [1] [c] of the Act proclaimed that the rights of a worker with a) or b) might be extended to include his wife, unmarried daughter or son under 18 years of age. Blacks without a, b, c might only work and reside in white areas legally with permission. Technically, they were all considered migrants. M. Lipton, 'Migrant Labour in South Africa', *Optima*, Vol 29, No 2/3, 28 November 1980.

submerged in past policies. An official interviewed by Lipton said: 'I am still 100 percent against bringing in the families. We want people to live in their own communities, based in the homelands.'⁵⁵

Thus by continuously enforcing hierarchies of preferences, this supposed privileged class of Africans with Section 10 rights were immobilised and even unemployed, while contract workers were brought in. This ultimately defeated the governments purpose, by swelling the numbers of Africans in white areas. Lipton concludes that: 'This illustrates how... the bureaucracy is adept at thwarting changes it opposes; and why many whites believe, on the basis of policy declarations and legal enactments, that changes have been made, while many blacks, on the basis of their everyday experiences, view such declarations and legal enactments as cosmetic.'⁵⁶

Afrikaner intellectuals began to argue for a reduction in the role of the state in the economic sphere. Opposing the centrality of the state, they argued for limiting the scope of intervention in society so as to remove it as the object of social conflict. As Jan Lombard wrote: 'The more the functions and power of decision are delegated to government, the more important it becomes to BE the government, or at least to CONTROL the government and its administration'.⁵⁷ With the diminution of the political, academics argued for the elaboration of the economic over the political. New job opportunities were to be created for blacks in the metropolitan areas and in the Homelands, not by the state but by private enterprise. Moreover, market forces left to themselves, would bring about an equitable division of labour specialization, often stifled by state intervention. They also argued for the need for individual equality, freedom and material advantage in order for the black population to identify with society and the state.

I will look at one example to illustrate how battles within the state resulted in a restructuring of power relations. From 1985 onwards, many government officials and

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 195.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ S. Greenberg, 'Ideological Struggles', p. 54.

departments became embroiled in arguments and battle over what was to replace the Total Strategy, which had failed to take the country out of crisis. According to Swilling and Phillips, the three most important institutions that planned the alternatives were the Office of the State President (OSP), the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning (DCDP) and the security establishment.⁵⁸ A significant change in the relative strength and power of these institutions occurred in the ensuing battle. Although the DCDP had been the main planner of Total Strategy, the OSP under P.W. Botha, had sided with the security establishment instituting policies based on the assumption that the state needed to defend itself by means of 'counter-revolutionary warfare'. The resulting political configuration was that the OSP became the focal point of state power, whereby no decision is taken without the president's personal approval or direct involvement in its formulation.

The OSP involved a number of committees, advisers, secretariats and ministries dealing with public administration, public expenditure priorities, constitutional affairs, economic policy, socio-economic development (welfare), propaganda and national security. Between 1987 and 1988, the power and significance of the OSP became more pronounced, giving the President absolute power to alter the functions and hire and fire civil servants of any government institution. This can be illustrated by the way in which the president unilaterally reconstituted the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) in mid-1986. Prior to 1986, the EAC included members from business, academics, top officials and cabinet ministers and was chaired by Simon Brand of the Development Bank. P.W. Botha suddenly announced that officials and academics were to be excluded from the EAC and that he would personally appoint business representatives. The OSP effectively 'emerged as the lynchpin of key strategic thinking and action. By 1988 this office and its incumbent had become the most decisive decision-maker in the state - a level of power centralisation not uncommon in societies going through a violent interregnum.'⁵⁹

⁵⁸ M. Swilling and M. Phillips, 'Emergency State'..

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 80.

The details of the reform package is particularly important in setting the background for my topic. Divisions within the state, and the growing strength of hard-line Afrikaners, seemed to prompt Botha into adopting a programme of reform. The reform package opened up new contradictions, and exposed more starkly, the oppressive and exploitative aspects of the state. The rise of organised radical and militant protest and resistance from a new generation of political activists, dominated the political scene. It was this militant activity, directed against the state, that triggered off the violent reaction off Inkatha in Natal. The UDF and COSATU were successful in mobilising across ethnicity, and this eroded some of the traditional support of Inkatha. Moreover, by failing to include Africans in the government, Buthelezi and the KwaZulu government seemed to be fast losing their legitimacy. The inadequacies of the reform programme elicited a different response from different sectors of the African population, and set the backdrop for the internecine conflict in Natal.

Some of the main changes initiated in the programme were: acknowledgement and acceptance of multi-nationalism and minorities in SA; acceptance of vertical differentiation with the built-in principle of self-determination on as many levels as possible; division of powers among white, Coloured and Indian people with a system of consultation where matters of common interest are involved; the pursuit of the creation of a constellation of Southern African states and maintenance of a free enterprise system as a basis of economic and financial policy.⁶⁰ Total Strategy in the words of the government was 'the comprehensive plan to utilize all the means available to a state according to an integrated pattern in order to achieve the national aims within the framework of specific policies...'⁶¹ It represented an attempt to move away from the notion of a 'Total Onslaught' that epitomized the government of B.J. Vorster. The aim of reform was to put together new economic, political and ideological policies in

⁶⁰ The Star, 30/4/80.

⁶¹ D.Posel, 'The Language of Domination, 1978-1983', in *Politics of Race*, ed. by S. Marks and S. Trapido, p. 422.

order to reconstruct the basis for economic stability, by defusing mass struggles and incorporating a specific strata of the black civil society into a new 'historic bloc'.

In an attempt to institutionalize worker conflict, that is to incorporate the black trade union movement within a clearly defined machinery of negotiation and control, the state instituted some of the recommendations of the Wiehahn commission. Appointed in 1979, the commission proposed that the Industrial Conciliation Act be extended, the crucial alteration being the extension of the legal definition of *employee* to include Africans, so that their union could be officially registered if certain conditions were met.⁶² The new legislation sparked off a rigorous debate in the independent trade union movement, dividing them along the lines of those who favoured registration and those that did not and subsequently along ideological lines of those that followed a workerist perspective and those that favoured participation in community based political action. By 1981 the debate over registration became less significant when the state unilaterally amended the Industrial Conciliation Act, making all but one of its requirements applicable to all registered and unregistered trade unions.

Reform also aimed to make economic concessions to a burgeoning African petty bourgeoisie, by granting them urban rights. African townships were given fully autonomous municipal institutions, the Black Local Authorities (BLAs), which had extensive urban powers to allocate houses, trading rights etc. But these changes created new contradictions. Because it attempted to isolate and encourage a group of permanent urban dwellers, it required an intensification of influx control. To facilitate this, the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Person's Bill of 1982 was proposed. Furthermore, the BLAs had to be self-sufficient in their finances, yet they were excluded from access to rateable commercial and industrial property by the Group Areas Act.

⁶² Once registered, the union became subject to a variety of controls over its finances, constitution and membership. It was also subject to state supervised compulsory industrial training for leaders, a ban on any connection with political organizations, an Industrial court arbitrates on all labour related matters, a tripartite National Manpower Commission oversees the system. J.S. Saul and S. Gelb, *The crisis in SA*, (USA: Zed Books, 1986), p. 128.

The proposals for the Constellation of Southern African States (CONSAS) was initiated by Botha at a meeting of politicians and businessmen on 22 November 1979. The main aim was for business to become actively involved in strengthening economic relations with Southern Africa states. CONSAS was envisaged as a formation of African anti-communist allies right up to the equator to protect the long term survival of the apartheid government. In opposition, nine independent Southern African states formed the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference, (SADCC). The prospects of SADCC ever forming an independent and viable economic option is highly unlikely. South Africa has a gross national product which is more than double that of the nine SADCC states put together. It also has a highly developed industrial base and infrastructure, for example, it accounts for 87% of all African steel production and about 53% of continental steel consumption. On the other hand, for SA, trade with SADCC countries is not important. Less than 7% of its exports go to the rest of Africa. Imports are even lower and accounts for less than 4% of the Republic's total imports, implying a highly asymmetrical relationship. Moreover SADCC countries are dependent on SA for basic food, capital for the construction of railways and hydroelectric power plants, on its transport network for trade links outside the continent and most importantly, for employment in mining, manufacturing and private households.⁶³ With the increasingly aggressive stance taken by SA towards the Frontline states, in the form of military invasions, support and finance of counter insurgents and assassination squads, the ability of these states to counteract the reform initiative in any substantial degree remains limited. However, with the formation of SADCC Botha had to rely on the 'Bantustans' to carry through his reform initiative, a rather diluted version of his original plan.

Perhaps, one of the most visible aspects of the reform programme was the transition to a new constitution. The failure to include Africans in the central decisions making process, served to alienate many of the Bantustan leaders. The new system was

⁶³ R. Leys and A. Tostensen, 'Regional Co-operation in Southern Africa: The Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference, *Review of African Political Economy* (ROAPE), No 23, 1982, pp. 52-71. In 1978, 325 000 labourers in SA were from neighbouring countries.

a complex matrix of checks and balances that ultimately ensured the continued dominance of whites in parliament. 'The Republic of South Africa Constitution Act, was introduced during the 1983 session of Parliament. The revised bill was passed in a special parliamentary session during August 1983 and approved by the white electorate in a referendum in November. It marked South Africa's final break with the Westminster tradition of responsible parliamentary government.⁶⁴ Under the new constitution, the Senate, created in terms of the South African Act in 1909 as the local counterpart to the House of Lords at Westminster, was abolished. The new constitution instituted a single Parliament with separate chambers for Whites, Coloureds and Indians. The number of Parliamentary members is in a ratio of 4 Whites (representing the 4,4 million whites), to 2 Coloureds (2,5 million) and 1 Indian (800 000), giving the white chamber a majority even if the other two unite on certain issues.⁶⁵ The Executive President is elected by the electoral college composed of members elected by the controlling party in each of the three chambers of Parliament. Since the three races are represented in the same proportion in the college as in Parliament, the candidate backed by the white chamber wins.

The chambers of each racial group legislates on 'own affairs' while all three have to consider any legislation on 'common affairs'. Unresolved disputes between the joint committees of the three chambers, are referred to a President's Council whose members are elected by the three chambers on a 20:10:5 basis for the White, Coloured and Indian chambers. But the President himself has the right to choose 25 councillors and to add to the elected 35 without any consultations. This implies that as long as the NP remains the largest single white party, even if it has just 34% of the seats in the white chamber it will be able to exercise full power. Also to separate the executive from Parliament implies that 'the government will be able to continue to govern notwithstanding parliamentary turbulence.'⁶⁶ The President therefore has supreme power, playing off

⁶⁴ C. Charney, 'The Politics of Changing Partners - Control and Co-optation in the new SA Constitution', *ROAPE*, No 29, 1984, p. 123.

⁶⁵ Ibid

⁶⁶ Ibid

the various parties against each other on certain issues if his own party lacks the majority.⁶⁷ This has been a source of strength for F.W. De Klerk enabling him to push through reforms despite opposition from within government structures, and the electorate.

By embarking on the programme of reform the National Party effectively alienated a significant sector of its electorate. They were considered as the party that had betrayed the principles of Afrikanerdom, as is illustrated by this article in *Die Patriot*: 'A party once described by Dr Malan as the "Political national front of the Afrikaner" is now visibly associated with the traditional enemy of the Afrikaner, namely Hoggenger, to form a relationship against fellow Afrikaners. Such a relationship can destroy the ways of the Afrikaner volk.'⁶⁸

Terrorist attacks on verligte (liberal) Afrikaners has escalated, prime targets being the academics who have initiated and formulated the reform programme. Organizations like the Witkommando have stepped up their offensive, bombing offices of leading Afrikaner academics.⁶⁹ Two of the academics who have been attacked are Prof. Jan Lombard, an economist who aroused anger in some nationalist circles with his controversial plans for a multiracial Natal and Prof. John Dugard of the University of Witwatersrand who was the victim of a smear campaign by an anonymous right-wing organization called Delta 4.⁷⁰ Others threatened have been Professor Nic Wiehahn who formulated the controversial trade union legislation and Prof. Floors van Jaarsveld who was tarred and feathered by right-wingers for questioning the true meaning of the Day of Covenant.⁷¹ Addressing a festival in Kempton Park in Johannesburg in 1980 to

⁶⁷ This is the respect in which the new constitution represents the 'de Gaulle option' citing how a politically invulnerable President de Gaul formed shifting coalitions in the French Parliament during the first years of the Fifth Republic. Ibid, p. 126.

⁶⁸ *Die Patriot*, 23/07/82.

⁶⁹ *The Times*, 13/02/81.

⁷⁰ The Witkommando claimed responsibility for the bomb attack on Prof. Lombard. It was reported that out of an estimated 1600 crimes of violence committed against the government by right-wing terrorists since 1964, only two men have been prosecuted. The unsolved crimes include murder, assaults, burning of churches and private homes, destruction of cars and property. *The Times*, 12/12/80. Delta 4 is the group thought to have taken its name from a French terrorist organization that fought against Algerian independence.

⁷¹ *Sunday Express*, 17/08/80. The Day of Covenant is the 16 December when the victory of the Boers at the Battle of the Blood River is commemorated.

celebrate the day, Mr F.W. De. Klerk who was Minister of Internal Affairs warned that 'South Africa could turn into a land of blood, hate and revolution and crisis if solutions are not found for the country's problems.' He also made pointed reference to upheavals that have rocked the Afrikaans community, '...can we allow political differences to create tension in the church, to threaten our education and to paralyse our cultural organizations? Internal white political debate is often far from constructive, peppered with personal prejudices, whispering campaigns and heated emotionalism'.⁷²

Most of the extreme right-wing organizations are openly antagonistic towards the government, for example, the Kappiekommando's underground women's movement proposed publicly that it was prepared to use violence against the state if it continued with reform. The national convener, Mrs Van Zyl said in an interview that they were not against English speakers or blacks, but mainly against Afrikaners who had forsaken national and religious traditions. The Afrikaanse Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) formed a para-military blitz commando in 1981 as part of its programme which envisages a military dictatorship in South Africa. Such organizations and movements have gained increasing support. In 1981 the AWB leader, Eugene Terre Blanche addressed about two meetings a week in the Transvaal and Free State, having sold about 20 000 tape recordings of his racially charged speeches.⁷³

The creation of the Conservative Party in 1982, further divided the Afrikaner vote. Similarly, rifts occurred in the Broederbond. The Broederbond was established in 1918 to rally Afrikaners against British rule. It gained control of almost all Afrikaner institutions including the church, the civil service, banks, building societies and industrial concerns. Splits and fissures at the seat of Afrikaner identity and culture has had serious repercussions throughout the society, exacerbating tension between the

⁷² The Star, 16/12/82.

⁷³ Sunday Express, 16/08/81. With the growth of the right-wing, many new parties and political movements have developed. There are seven white political parties: The Blanke Volkstaat Party (PVP) which is the party of the AWB; The South African Party (SAP), still registered although defunct since its MPs joined the NP; NP; The Progressive Federal Party (PFP); Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP); National Convention party (NCP). Political movements and non registered parties: Afrikaanse Weerstandsbeweging (AWB); Kappiekommando (KK); National Front (NF); Anglo Afrikaner Bond (AAB); Witkommando (WK); Delta 4; Aksie Eie Toekoms; Forty Percenters (which is English speaking and not right wing).

extreme right wing groupings and the state. The result has been that the NP has suffered a sharp loss of support among the white electorate from its 55% level in 1981 election to 44% in two polls taken in April 1982. In the Transvaal, the Conservative Party commands the allegiance of more than 38% of Afrikaners against just over 44% for the governing party. On a national basis, 43% of all voters supported the NP, while 18% supported the CP.⁷⁴ In the Germiston Transvaal by-election in August 1982, the NP won by just over 300 votes, but polled considerably fewer votes than the combined total of the CP and HNP, that is, 60% of the vote went to parties to the right of the NP.⁷⁵ The loss of support was alarming and the NP began to adopt a conciliatory stance towards farmers. Concessions worth million of rand were made to farmers hard hit by drought and high interest rates. In July 1982, a government announcement that financial aid for certain vital agricultural schemes was to be discontinued was hurriedly rescinded after angry protests from farmers and the SA agricultural union.⁷⁶ At the NP conference in 1982, Botha made it clear that dissension was threatening the foundations of the Afrikaner nation: 'There are some whites who are a greater threat to the survival of civilization in SA than tens of thousands of Coloured people could be.' He warned critics to show 'patience, restraint and a sense of responsibility' as 'one match in the hands of a fool is enough to set this country on fire...Make no mistake the alternatives are chaos, conflict and revolution'.⁷⁷ However despite set-backs, a referendum held in November 1983 to decide on implementation of the constitution proposals received a 'yes' majority of 668.646 (63%) from a total of more than 2 million votes cast.⁷⁸

But discord in the Afrikaner community remained, with the church rejecting the new constitution on the grounds that it would create more violence and disunity. They claimed that the new constitution carried the germ of much more painful injustice and therefore forfeited all claims to Christian and biblical motives, created justified

⁷⁴ Die Rapport, 2/05/82; Sunday Tribune, 2/05/82; Guardian, 4/05/82; Africa Confidential, Vol 23, No.10, Miramoor, 12 May 1982.

⁷⁵ Guardian, 20/08/82.

⁷⁶ The Sunday Express, 22/08/82.

⁷⁷ Sunday Express, 1/08/82.

⁷⁸ Sowetan, 4/11/83.

bitterness among black Christians because of their exclusion and held danger for the progeny of all races.⁷⁹ The church issued a warning in *Die Kerkbode*, the official publication of the NGK: 'Although the church may not be directly involved in the conflict which is taking place at the political level, it is indirectly involved because many of its members are divided into different camps in this conflict. The church must seriously warn against the sin of fraternal strife...'⁸⁰

The need to alter the parameters of apartheid in order to alleviate the economic and subsequent political crisis was the driving motivation of reform. Changes in the labour requirements of capital, the need to placate an increasingly impatient and militant black population, the growing influence of the ANC on international opinion and the constant threat of sanctions contributed towards the urgency of the task. Reform itself conditioned and was conditioned by popular black protest. The state demarcated the new parameters of struggle, it set the new boundaries of extra-parliamentary politics.

It was reform that initiated the wave of sustained black protest in the 1980s. The anti-President's Council campaign served as a platform to unite the various black racial groups under the broadly based political programme of the UDF. Previously engaging in sectarian politics, Indians, 'Coloureds' and Africans were able to forge an alliance that had been systematically discouraged by the government through its policy of separate development. UDF activities and political strategies led to the revival of the 'Freedom Charter' and popularity of the ANC. A new generation of charismatic leaders was born, and the manner and momentum of black political action took on an unprecedented level of militancy. The aggressive stance adopted by the government to control the upsurge of popular protest, added new dimensions of violence to the scenario. Infighting among the black political movements on ideological grounds led to bitter and violent battle. The lines for a new level of political protest were being drawn.

The specific aims of reform failed. Its urban policy was unsuccessful. By mid-1985, most BLAs had collapsed because of mass resignations or because councillors

⁷⁹ The Rand Daily Mail, 3/08/83.

⁸⁰ The Sunday Tribune, 17/07/83.

had been killed by local residents. Since councils were compelled to finance development in townships, increasing rental and service charges had only resulted in a nation-wide popular rebellion. The desire to divide urban and rural dwellers by intensifying influx control proved hopeless. One of the most significant challenges to this policy were the squatter struggles, in which rural dwellers, attempting to escape poverty, illegally invaded urban areas and proceeded to fight for urban residential rights.

There has been a steady economic decline in white supremacy and prosperity. Between 1910 and 1960, whites constituted 20% of the total population, but it began to shrink with respect to the black population to 15% in 1985.⁸¹ By 1981, the percentage of whites in medium level employment dropped from 82% in 1960 to 65%.⁸² Declining incomes, high inflation and growing tax burdens have caught many whites in a vicious squeeze. With the annual inflation rate of between 15 and 20%, the average civil servant in 1986 was worse off by 20 - 28% compared to 1974.⁸³

Although reform seemed to highlight the notion of free enterprise, political leaders had 'not yet faced up to the contradictions of depoliticising and universalising a state that, in practice, remains deeply mired in the market and that continues to represent racial and class privilege'.⁸⁴ With deepening economic crises, and political upheaval, the NP began to rely largely on the use of force and violence rather than on consensus to maintain some degree of stability. The use of the army to quell township unrest, the widespread detention of trade unionists, community leaders, student activists, and young children caught in the forefront of the unrest, has become commonplace in South Africa.

President De Klerk had been leader of the Transvaal section of the party since 1982 and minister of education in Botha's cabinet. From October 1990, he released many political prisoners, many of whom had been serving life sentences since the early

⁸¹ H.Gilliomée, 'Afrikaner Politics', p. 112.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid, p. 115.

⁸⁴ S.Greenberg, 'Ideological Struggles', p. 414.

1960s. He unbanned the ANC and PAC and allowed large political rally's throughout the country. He has also entered into negotiations with black leaders, but still the fixation with white supremacy, racial categories and groups continues. 'We want to build a new South Africa, in which all the people will participate in decisions affecting their lives at all levels of government,' he said, 'but in such a way that no one group will be in a position to dominate others.'⁸⁵

The state remains structurally remote from a number of strategically significant social groups. It is restricted to bureaucratic and authoritarian forms of intervention and lacks the mechanisms necessary for the deployment of more selective and sensitive interventionist strategies.

This chapter has set the background for the analysis of ethnicity in contemporary Natal. The characteristics of the apartheid state, its contradictions and weaknesses affects the way in which civil society organises itself. In Natal, Inkatha has attempted to mobilise support around Zulu ethnicity. Not all Zulus are Inkatha members, and some Zulus choose to join the ANC. The next chapter explores the question of what makes a Zulu a Zulu.

⁸⁵ L. Thompson, *History of South Africa*, p. 242.

Chapter 3

Ethnicity and Inkatha

In Natal, the Zulus are at war. *Wathint'u Sheng' udakwe yini?* ¹You have touched Shenge Buthelezi. What have you been drinking?² The battle cries reverberate across the land and in its wake, the great spectacle of combat and death. It is 'Blackness (that) echoes the real blues; Blackness (that) chunks out the death and fear in ... streets'.³ The darkness, *umyama*, is pierced by the sound of *Siyakhala eMgungundlovu, We Are Crying In Maritzburg*, transmitting the agonals of the Zulu.⁴ Zulu attitudes formed through the years of bloody combat on the battlefields, have been internalised as rigid moral values. Oklova! an ugly monster is Inkatha, 'steeped in Zulu tradition had to be destroyed'. Armed with *intelezi* and pistols, the comrades sought to:

wipe out the enemy or else they would just keep on attacking us.⁵ Thinking back, I feel honoured that I had the opportunity of fighting in defence of my home, my family and my township... I enjoyed the excitement of battle: the sight of a sea of burning shacks and desperate men running for dear life. I loved it all. But I could never do it again. (comrade Oscar Gumede).⁶

..we are Zulu. That is our birthright. We need to keep our culture pure... our country, Natal and Zululand. (An indweller of Dube Hostel, Soweto).⁷

By Zulu law if you committed a crime once, you must be killed. These criminals of now would have been killed in

¹ Buthelezi holds many positions among the Zulu and each has its own title. As head of the Buthelezi tribe, Buthelezi has his own specific title, *Amashenge*, and is usually called *Shenge*. As commander-in-chief of the Zulu armies and as Prime Minister, he merits the title, *Induna Nkulu*. As President of Inkatha, he is referred to as *Umkhosi*. As son of a Zulu Princesses, he is sometimes called *Mntwana*, meaning *Infant* or *Prince*. From B. Temkin, *Gatsha Buthelezi. Zulu Statesman*, (Cape Town: Purnell, 1976), p. 404.

² Weekly Mail, 30/05/1991.

³ A. Sitas, Traditions of Poetry in Natal, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 16, No 2, 1990, p. 314.

⁴ J. Fairbairn, *Flashes in her soul. The life of Jabu Ndlovu*, (Cape Town: Buchu Books, 1991), p. 55.

⁵ Weekly Mail. 30/05/91. *Intelezi* is a muti (medicine) that is supposed to turn bullets into water.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

Shaka's day... We must show them Shaka's rage.' (An eighty-year old farm labourer).⁸

What is it to be a Zulu? Something acroamatical? A cosmos of ideas, images, sounds, impressions and thoughts. The distance between the worlds of the 'seen' and the 'unseen'; *uMvelinqangi*, Lord-of-the-Sky, and the ancestors; of rural identities, values and the vibrations and codes of the city, an architecture of sounds and images trapped by daily experiences and behaviour. A space of intense struggles, a contested terrain, in which identities are carved out, recreated and reshaped. The experiences of migrants, new city dwellers, old rural inhabitants, when the spaces between the urban and rural becomes blurred, is a universal experience. Referring to the tensions between migration and wanderings, between custom and modernity among the Luo of western Kenya, David Cohen found that: 'Everyday life for the Luo outside Siaya is affected by connections with and images of Siaya; everyday life inside Siaya is affected by the fact of the diaspora'.⁹ Southall writes of the frequency and inevitability of transformations of past societies: 'Not only have many of the individuals whose ancestors lived in "tribal" societies become rural peasants or urban labourers, as well as professional men and national leaders, but in these new contexts, and especially the urban one, they have formed new organisations which to some extent take their inspiration and definition from the old'.¹⁰ Adapting and harnessing chapters from past 'tribal' solidarities, they equip themselves for new tasks.

The quantum leap from the 'shadows of the past' to modernity requires imagination and ingenuity, an anfractuious journey involving the subtle interplay of old ideas and images and new experiences. Past views of the world, its origins, the intricate interplay of the elements, the passage of life and death, include graphic, colourful descriptions and complex theories. For example, the elements, so tightly tied

⁸ A. Sitas, 'Class, Nation, Ethnicity in Natal's Black Working Class', (Paper presented at the Workshop on Regionalism and Restructuring in Natal, University of Natal, Durban, 28-31 January, 1988), no page numbering.

⁹ D. W. Cohen and A. S. A. Odhiambo, *Siaya: The Historical Anthropology of an African Landscape*, (London: James Currey, 1989), p. 4.

¹⁰ A. Southall, 'The Illusion of Tribe', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol v, No 1-2, January and April, 1970, p. 45.

up with the well-being of the land, which determines prosperity and poverty, life and death, are conceived as things with life, to be grasped by the human mind, to be controlled by a few qualified men, but always to be feared and revered. Among the Zulu, *inyoni yezulu*, lightning, which brings terror and fear to the vast rural landscape, is a bird whose 'feathers are white, in flame. The beak and the legs... red with fire... the tail... burning green, the colour of the sky'.¹¹ Sent to earth by *uMvelinqangi*, lightning is the instrument through which He expresses His anger or bad temper. A distinction is made between *Elenduna*, the deep, long drawn out benevolent male thunder¹² and *elesifazane*, female thunder, sudden and cracking, 'like the tongue of an angry woman who speaks fearful things...' Female thunder is accompanied by forked lightning, heavy downpours and hail, striking people, animals, homes and fields, burning and killing in its flight. Those men qualified to protect people from the dangers of lightning and violent storms, are Abelusi *bezulu*, heaven herds, and *isinyanga zezulu*, experts on the sky. A heaven-herd, who is always a male, is like 'aumalusi, herds' man, tending the sky as a herdsman looks after cattle'.¹³ For a candidate to qualify as a heaven-herd, he must be able to refer to an occasion when he narrowly escaped being struck by lightning, or has seen lightning enter a house, or can prove that the sky has allowed him to become a heaven-herd.¹⁴ Heaven-herds are few and far between and are known and respected throughout the land.¹⁵ Armed with a stick of *umuNka*, (*maerua angoliensis*), like that which herdsmen use to herd cattle, and a flute

¹¹ A. -I. Bergland, 'Heaven-Herds: A Study in Zulu Symbolism', in *Religion and Social Change in Southern Africa*, ed. by M. G. Whisson and M. Wear, (Cape Town, David Philip, 1975), p. 37.

¹² *Elenduna* is not accompanied by lightning and hail, and frequently, rain follows. Also known as 'the playing of the sky', people say: 'The sky is good this year because he (the Lord-of-the-Sky) is just making noise and not destroying'. Ibid, p. 35.

¹³ Ibid, p. 35.

¹⁴ A novice to a heaven-herd described his experience with the lightning bird: 'It ran quickly, saying nothing, simply grasping those whom it was taking. Then it touched the grass (thatching) with its fire. It disappeared through the door again. On this occasion, two children and an old woman died. Ibid, p. 37.

¹⁵ Bergland could only find three heaven-herds in Natal. Laduma Madela, who lives in the Cesa Mountains, is a renowned heaven-herd, blacksmith and herbalist. 'X' lives North-East of Kranskop overlooking the Tugela Valley. 'X' receives clients from beyond Zululand, Pietermaritzburg and Greytown, from far afield as Port Shepstone on Durban south coast. 'W' lives in Louwsburg, Ngwibi in northern Natal. Although all three heaven-herds have heard about each other, they have never met.

of reed (*umtshingo*), the heaven-herds use *umuti* (medicine) and sound to cool the anger of the sky.

For the Zulu, the pathways of life and death are interconnected. The spirits of the dead wander among the living, protecting and determining life chances, actively interceding in daily life. It is believed that the Supreme Being or God *uMvelingquangi* lives up above, *ezulwini*, and is rarely invoked; while spirits of the dead live below. 'Those of below', *abaphansi*, are divided into three sections; the unborn spirits, the recently deceased, and the ancestors. When a women conceives, the biological event occurs in conjunction with the entry of a spirit from below, from the section of unborn spirits. During the first year of life, a baby has a sacrifice, *imbeleko*, performed for it, which places the baby under the protection of the parents' ancestors.¹⁶ Soon after death, the spirit is said to be in a wilderness, *endle*, and 'in-between state', *esithubeni*, a lonely and unhappy phase. At the end of the prescribed period of mourning, a sacrifice is performed to integrate the spirit with the rest of the ancestral spirits. This completes the cycle, the spirit achieving the desired full status of spiritual being, now empowered to bless or punish descendants.¹⁷ The passage of spirits from below to this world is affected by women, and likewise when death occurs, the chief mourner is always a married woman, mourning the death of her husband, child, mother-in-law or daughter-in-law. As wife and mother, a woman is an outsider in her husbands lineage, and she is associated with spirits that are powerless, the unborn, and the sprits of the recently deceased, both having not reached the completed spiritual state.

The ancestors are spoken to, directly or obliquely, by way of admonitions. At Gogoda's funeral, a man addressing the corpse, said: 'Gogoda, when a man goes away, he does not forget his family, nor does he strip them bare. Don't take away the cattle... the goats...fowls.... maize... kaffir-corn...money. Look after your son...' ¹⁸ It

¹⁶ An illegitimate child of a woman is placed under the protection of its maternal grandparents ancestors. The child becomes theirs, the mother becomes a sister.

¹⁷ The period of mourning depends on the social status of the deceased: one year is prescribed for a married person; six months for an unmarried adult; and three months for a child or baby. During this time the chief mourner observes mourning behaviour.

¹⁸ A. Vilikazi, *Zulu Transformations. A Study of the dynamics of Social Change*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 1965), p. 91.

was a plea for them to be good, protective and not forgetful of the sufferings of their kinsmen. To be heard in the world of the living, ancestors may choose to possess certain individuals, speaking through them. Ancestral spirits possessing an *isangoma*, diviner, return to the world through a daughter, riding on her shoulders and whispering in her ear.¹⁹ She hears voices and in this way receives her clairvoyant powers. Possession by spirits outside patrilineal descent is regarded as evil. These alien spirits reside in and supersede the identity of the possessed. *Indiki* are wandering spirits, spirits that were never joined with the body of other spirits. They make the possessed deranged, cry in a deep bellowing voices and speak in strange languages.²⁰ Considered to be a male spirit, the *indiki* can be exorcised by a diviner, who then replaces it with an ancestral male spirit which would protect the patient from future attacks. Whereas *indiki* is contacted by chance, *ufufunyane* or *izizwe* spirit possession is primarily due to sorcery, chance may be a secondary cause. By taking soil from many graves, a sorcerer captures numerous spirits and places them in the part of the victim. Hysterical, frenzied, violent and aggressive, a person with *ufufunyane* is said to be possessed by thousands of spirits from different races. When exorcised by an *isangoma* or *inyanga* ethno-doctor, the spirits roam the land attacking those unfortified, causing neurosis and mental confusion.

The changing status of a woman is closely associated with ancestral worship. As a woman grows older, she becomes progressively more identified with her affines and less with her own people. After her menopause, she is not expected to observe the avoidance (*hlonipha*) laws.²¹ Most significantly, she is allowed to eat the special portion of meat, the third stomach (caecum), of the sacrificial animal which is set aside

¹⁹ H. Sibise, The Place of Spirit Possession in Zulu Cosmology, in M.G. Whisson and M. West, *Religion and Social Change*, pp. 49-50.

²⁰ Ibid. People who come to work in South Africa may become *indiki*, unaware of their deaths, families do none of the rituals necessary to place the spirit in its proper position in the spirit world.

²¹ These laws will be explained in greater detail in chapter 4. *Hlonipha* is an act of respect. One of the laws prohibit married women calling her father-in-law or grandfather-in law by their names or from using words that sound similar to their names. For example, if a woman's father-in-law is Thomas, she never calls anybody who is Thomas by his name. In addition she will avoid using words such as Tom, tomorrow, massive etc. She usually invents special names for things and those who live with her gradually learn her vocabulary.

for the ancestors. After her death, she is brought back by a sacrifice as a mother and never as the daughter of her own people. By this time the transfer from her group of ancestors to that of her affines is complete. The spirits of old women are often specially invited to eat a sacrificial meal, as these spirits are said to be spiteful, malicious and capable of much harm. In old age, a woman is respected by her family, who hastily perform the *ukubuyisa* sacrifice which integrates her with the body of ancestors. Failure to perform this sacrifice can result in malicious action from her. Zulu ideas about authority and status are closely tied up with spiritual beliefs, and in new contexts, while the beliefs remain largely intact, notions about authority become skewed.

Old ideas, customs and manners are constantly reformulated, reshaped and recreated to meet the demands of newer environments. As Barrington-Moore says: 'cultural and social continuity... have to be recreated anew in each generation, often with great pain and suffering'.²² When some sectors of the community begin to feel threatened and become fearful of the changes occurring, or others realize the potential unifying strength of an older shared culture in providing a basis for political mobilization, resistance to changes and translations become a conscious and intentional strategy. A world view of a different time and space, becomes hardened and hermetic.

'Using the building blocks of past history, language and 'custom', twentieth century ethnic consciousness has been the product of intense ideological labour by the black intelligentsia of Natal and the white ideologues of South Africa, designed to confront new and dangerous social conditions'.²³ This argument forms the underlying thread of Shula Mark's analysis of Zulu ethnic consciousness. Like Nicolas Cope, she pivots her discussion on the ambitions, desires and decisions taken by Zulu leadership that led to the formation of the Zulu Society and Inkatha.²⁴ Although she professes not to make so 'ludicrous' a suggestion that the Zulu leaders were directly responsible for

²² B. Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*, (Hamondsworth, 1967), pp. 485-486.

²³ S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness, in *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, ed. by L. Vail James, (London: James Currey, 1989.) p. 217.

²⁴ N. Cope, 'The Zulu Petit Bourgeoisie and Zulu Nationalism in the 1920s: Origins of Inkatha', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 16, No 3, September 1990.

drumming up support for the anti-Indian riots of 1949 and the contemporary 'ethnic' violence or that the 'perpetrators... were, and are, not innocent bystanders or gullible dupes of the state and the intelligentsia', she fails to explain what the elements of the 'popular consciousness' were that shaped, and in part, was shaped by, the Zulu leadership.²⁵ I think she has neglected an important aspect in any analysis of ethnicity, how ordinary people navigate the journey between old cultural codes, values, images, worldviews with new social, economic and political environments. How has the Zulu individual adapted and modified his or her beliefs and cultural moral order in the journey through time, within the overwhelming system of apartheid? How are Zulu identities created? Is it not a dynamic process involving conscious choices and decisions, and the subconscious adoption of new trends, language and customs? Does it not entail a strongly debated relationship with Zulu leaders, despite the coercive institutions that structure these relations? We need to highlight the different interlocking, overlapping, multiple and alternative collective identities.²⁶ It is only within this perspective that it becomes possible to explain why all Zulus have not joined Inkatha, and why some Zulus choose to join the ANC and, or COSATU.

The formation of new identities, is a slow and agonizing process. In the context of a powerful, intrusive state, and competition from others at work and at home, identity formation requires a dynamic rearrangement of relations and customs, a contested terrain of intense arguments and struggles. Dislocation of an old community creates a chasm in cultural evolution and production, raising questions about morality, duty, respect, the acquisition of adulthood, the status of men and women under new conditions of living and so on. It is a debate about ethnicity among people sharing the same ethnicity, what Lonsdale calls, 'moral ethnicity' as opposed to 'political tribalism': 'Moral ethnicity creates communities from within through domestic

²⁵ S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy', p. 233.

²⁶ A. Southall, 'The Illusion of Tribe', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol 5, No 1-2, January and April, 1970.

controversy over civic virtue. It ascends from deep antagonism to the very forces on which political tribalism thrives, class closure and overbearing state power'.²⁷

The illusion of tribe²⁸

The manipulation of ethnic identities by those in positions of power, is not specific to South Africa or Africa. Ethnic nationalisms have long histories, standing 'over the passage to modernity... As human kind is forced through its strait doorway, it must look desperately back into the past, to gather strength whenever it can be found for the ordeal of "development"'.²⁹ Once a tribal society has lost its political isolation, it can no longer continue to be a tribal society, even though 'many of its members may retain a vivid and even nostalgic memories of its former full existence and may continue to be strongly influenced by the values belonging to this former state...'³⁰ Political tribalism, the recreation of traditional customs, myths, moral codes into a hierarchy structured along patronage-client networks, by individuals in power, is distinct from informal ethnic groupings which operate outside the official framework of the state. Even though both are political phenomena, the latter is more widespread, dynamic, and reflective. A study by Glazer and Moynihan found that in New York city, most organisational life is to a large measure lived within ethnic bounds.³¹ The Hausa of southern Nigeria overcame technical problems associated with trade by developing an ethnic monopoly over the major stages of the trade.³² The Ndebele who live in the Pedi homeland of Lebowa in South Africa, used ethnicity via intermarriage and links with the chief, to gain access to scarce resources.³³ A similar phenomenon is also prevalent

²⁷ J. Lonsdale, 'The Moral Economy of MauMau', in *Unhappy Valley*, by B. Berman and J. Lonsdale, (London: James Currey, 1992), p. 206.

²⁸ A. Southall, 'The Illusion'.

²⁹ T. Naim, *The Break-up of Britain, Crisis and Neo-Nationalism*, (London: NLB, 1977), p. 348.

³⁰ A. Southall, 'The Illusion', p. 29.

³¹ A. Cohen, *Customs and Politics in Urban Africa. A Study of Hausa Migrants in Yoruba Towns*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 191.

³² Ibid.

³³ D. James, 'A Question of Ethnicity: Ndzumdza Ndebele in Lebowa Village', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 16, No 1, March 1990. Unlike other ethnic groups whose identity was reinforced by the state, the Ndebele were not recognised as an ethnic group until very recently. They were accommodated alongside other ethnic groups in different homelands.

among the Lebanese and Syrian communities in West Africa, the Indian immigrant communities in East and Southern Africa and so on.

In South Africa, there are several political processes at play with respect to the use of ethnic identities. At one level, tribal structures have been frozen and incorporated into the macro-state structures. At another level, certain members of the black intelligentsia have sought to manipulate and strategically employ a recreated tribalism in the political arena. And then there are the individual Zulus, who, finding themselves in new political and social circumstances, adapt and reshape tribal identities to cope with the new stresses and strains of living.

At the level of the state: 'white rulers, wittingly or unwittingly, reconstructed loose African ethnicities as restrictive tribal control'³⁴ They standardised local dialects, economic geographies, political administrative units and discreet tribal entities that debilitated and burdened the formation of new identities. As Young says, 'The colonial state was self-consciously alien; an African role was to be available only through the subordinate instruments of "native administration"', based on bounded groups, distributed on an ethnic map.³⁵ The National Party in South Africa, expanding on the agenda of the Natal colonial administration, was explicit about its usage of ethnic identities in the control and administration of Africans. The reasoning behind these policies were spelled out by the minister of Native Affairs in 1950: 'The natives of this country do not all belong to the same tribe or race. They have different languages and customs. We are of the opinion that the solidarity of the tribes should be preserved and that they should develop along the lines of their own national character and tradition. For that purpose we want to rehabilitate the deserving tribal chiefs...'³⁶ Racial oppression created the situation in which race became 'the modality in which class is

³⁴ J. Lonsdale, 'The Moral Economy of MauMau', p. 62.

³⁵ C. Young, 'Ethnicity and the Colonial and Post-Colonial State in Africa', in *Ethnic Groups and the State*, ed. by P. Brass, (London: Groom Held, 1985), p. 68.

³⁶ P. Harris, 'Exclusion, Classification and Internal Colonialism: The Emergence of Ethnicity Among the Tsonga-Speakers of South Africa, in *The Creation*, L. Vail, p. 103.

'lived', the medium through which class relations are experienced, the form in which it is appropriated and "fought through".³⁷

Formation of Inkatha

For Elisabeth Colson, 'tribal groupings... are largely the conscious creations of intellectuals and other active leaders who have had the greatest opportunity to participate in the larger political and social world'.³⁸ Referring to Colson, Marks argues that the formation of *Inkatha Ya Ka Zulu* in 1922-23 was the product of three groupings in Natal: the black intelligentsia; the Zulu royal family centred around Solomon KaDinizulu, the son and heir of the last Zulu king; and the white ideologues of South Africa. With the conquest of the Zulu kingdom in 1879, the Zulu nationalism of the twentieth century was 'reconstructed', rooted within the context of increasing land hunger and rural poverty, accelerating labour migration, declining influence of tribal authorities, and the influence of Christianity and western education. Marginalised by the state, the Zulu petty-bourgeoisie foresaw a 'thorough 'modernisation' of Zulu society as a discrete 'nation' according to ethics of individual accumulation and private property, leading to a larger more secure middle-class'.³⁹

When Dinizulu begot *Maphumuzana* or *Nkayishana* (Solomon), a spirited, daring, fearless man, and *Nyawana* (David), he said, 'I have found the feet (*inyawo*) that will walk for me, and the one who will give me rest (*phumuza*) from the burden I have borne for so long'.⁴⁰ Solomon's position in Natal was always ambiguous. A king whose position was not fully recognised by the state, and whose duties and power among the Zulu people was ambivalent and ill-defined. When the government tried to get Solomon to recruit men for the South African Native Labour Contingent serving in

³⁷ H. Wolpe, 'Class Concepts, Class struggles and Racism' in *Theories of Race and Ethnic Relations*, ed. by J. Rex and D. Mason, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 122.

³⁸ See E. Colson, 'Contemporary Tribes and the Development of Nationalism', in *Essays on the Problem of Tribe. Proceedings of the 1967 Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society*, ed. by J. Helm, (Washington: Seattle, 1968). S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism, and the State in Twentieth-Century Natal*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 23.

³⁹ N. Cope, 'The Zulu Petit Bourgeoisie', p. 451.

⁴⁰ M. Fuze, *The Black People and Whence They Came. A Zulu View*, (Durban: University of Natal Press, 1979), p. 90.

World War 1, he was met with 'rowdy refusal': 'We are no longer free agents. We belong body and soul to the Gold Mining Companies and the government'.⁴¹ Solomon was extravagant and was often in debt to local store keepers, bottle store owners and car dealers, and extorted several thousand head of cattle from the peasantry. The sentiments among many commoners were expressed by an elder, Titose Ntshangase: 'The King was subject to the will of the people. Tshaka became powerful through the efforts of his people - not through his own efforts..... In ancient times an unworthy king lost his throne at times...' ⁴² Inkatha was closely associated with raising of a Zulu National Fund, alleged to have £3 000 banked in Vryheid in 1923 and was used to pay the royal debts and for land purchases and welfare purposes.⁴³ The organisation became defunct when the emissaries embezzled the funds they had collected

One of the key figures behind the formation of Inkatha was John Dube, chief spokesperson of the Christian African community, the *amakholwa* (the converted).⁴⁴ The nucleus of Dube's constituency was a small group of about 1500 landowners in Natal, who by the 1900s owned 102 000 acres between them.⁴⁵ By the beginning of the twentieth century, most of the larger landlords, and members of the African Kholwa elite were involved in a network of political organisations, vigilance associations and welfare societies. One of the most important of these was the Natal Native Congress, later incorporated into the South African Native National Congress, which fought for the acquisition of the franchise on the same terms as whites and freehold land tenure, an inclusive, liberal-democratic nationalism. Dube's presidential address to the South African Native Congress in 1912 clearly expressed the thinking of the petty-bourgeoisie:

⁴¹ S. Marks, *The Ambiguities*, p. 34.

⁴² Ibid, p. 35.

⁴³ Ibid, p. 69.

⁴⁴ Born in Natal in 1871, the son of Reverend James Dube of the American Zulu Mission, Dube was educated at Inanda and Amanzimtoti Theological School (later known as Adams College). In 1887, he accompanied a missionary, W.C. Wilcox, to America, studying at Oberlin College over five years. With money collected from the United States between 1896-1899, Dube was able to establish a Zulu industrial school in the Inanda district in 1901 and the Zulu-English newspaper, *Ilanga lase Natal*. He was a founding member of the Natal Native Congress in 1901, and Inkatha Ya Ka Zulu in 1922.

⁴⁵ S. Marks, *The Ambiguities*, p. 50.

Upward! Into the higher places of civilization and Christianity
- not backward into the slump of darkness not downward into
the abyss of the antiquated tribal system. Our salvation is not
there, but in preparing ourselves for an honoured place
amongst the nations.⁴⁶

In 1913 attacking the the new Land Act, Dube argued: 'The system of tribal segregation may have suited very well a period when barbarism and darkness reigned supreme.... but it had the fatal defect of being essentially opposed to all enlightenment and Christianity'.⁴⁷ It was the Land Acts that distanced the long-standing established *kholwa* landowners and the evicted peasantry, and in 1917 Dube was ousted from the presidency of the national organisation. He then turned towards the Zulu royal family and the possibilities opened by mobilizing ethnic nationalism.

The influence of Christianity on the ambitions and aspirations of people, the education it offered, the kind of lifestyle it extolled, the values it stood for, were not only at odds with the oppressive conditions under which people lived. Not only were Christians themselves frustrated, but they also faced antagonism from non-Christians, and from those educated Christians who adopted a more radical political stance. These tensions are intrinsic to the debate on Zulu ethnicity, surfacing at both leadership and grassroot level from the time of early white domination. The contempt of radical Zulu political activists for the ambitious Christian petty-bourgeoisie is vividly expressed by the Zulu poet Muzisi Kunene:

We erred too, we who abandoned our household gods,
and raised theirs with soft skins and iron flesh,
... then to follow helplessly the babblings of their priests,
we emulate their ridiculous gestures and earned their laughter.⁴⁸

Referred to as *Ositshuzana*, the 'excuse me' people⁴⁹, Christian morality and aspirations have always been marked by the need to make concessions within the white politico-social system and in the African community. *Ngashiya abakithi*, I have left father and mother, the new source of cohesion became the church and the spiritual

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 53.

⁴⁷ Ibid, pp. 53-54.

⁴⁸ A. Sitas, 'Traditions of Poetry', p. 311.

⁴⁹ A. Vilakazi, *Zulu Transformations*, p. 78.

brotherhood of all Christian believers. But in his study of the Makhanya of Natal, Reader concluded that a 'Christian had to be very westernized, and in particular company, before he will repudiate his own *isibongo* and disavow membership of the Makhanya tribe'.⁵⁰ Ngubane also concluded that in spite of Christianity the permeating influence in the Nyuswa reserve, on the outskirts of Durban, was based more on Zulu culture than on westernized ideals. This was mainly because the laws enforced by the chief's court are Zulu laws based on Zulu traditions and beliefs. For example: if one is accused of sorcery, which is confirmed by a diviner and a court, one is liable to be exiled and denied citizenship of the chiefdom, irrespective of whether one is an Anglican, a professional or a non-Christian. A Christian on a reserve, is forced to deal with the *ababusi bomhlaba* or *iziphathi mandla*, the rulers of the land or those who wield power - the chiefs and headmen. There is a constant need to negotiate and engage in reciprocal relations with these authorities over matters dealing with land, cattle, the dipping tank, paying taxes, making arrangements about government pensions and obtaining a travelling pass or a work permit.

Over and above the structural determinants that modify the beliefs of Christians, they also have to create a space that would take on board the resilience of traditional beliefs intrinsic to the language, way of life, mythology and cosmology of the Zulus, *sigcina isiZulu*, doing things the Zulu way. Harriet Ngubane says that 'In most aspects of daily life, outlook and habits, I am Zulu in spite of my mission background. Above all, Zulu is my mother tongue'.⁵¹ Vilakazi was disdainful of the teacher who '...gives a lesson on Christianity and conducts prayers while he wears on his wrist a goat's *isiphandla*, which is a sign that he has slaughtered a goat to his ancestral spirits. Many teachers I have spoken to do not seem to realize that there is something incongruous about this...'.⁵² Although a Christian might call an *inyanga* (ethno-doctor) in broad daylight, they are called in private at night, or people travel to another town or

⁵⁰ D.H. Reader, *Zulu Tribe in Transition. The Makhanya of Southern Natal*, (Manchester University Press, 1966), p. 340.

⁵¹ H. Ngubane, *Body and Mind in Zulu Medicine, An Ethnography of health and disease in Nyuswa - Zulu thought and practice*, (London: Academic Press, 1977), p. 5.

⁵² A. Vilakazi, *Zulu Transformations*, p. 135.

province, since western medicines do not always understand *ukufa kwabantu*, disease of the African peoples. With ancestors buried in the grounds around them, Christians are also heavily affected by religious sanctions. Writing in 1966, Reader proposes that a tribesman of the 1850s visiting 'Makhanya today might be confused with certain practices, but not totally dismayed. This is mainly due to the ability of the social system to absorb foreign social institutions and make them compatible with indigenous ones provided that they are not enforced too powerfully or too quickly'.⁵³ Some Christian beliefs and ideas have been adopted by non-Christians, for example, it is not unusual for a Zulu traditionalist to define *uNkulunkulu* (the maker of the earth and everything in the world) as *umninimandla onke*, the omnipotent 'and even to speak of Jesus Christ; and of *uNkulunkulu* as the source of all virtue and goodness'.⁵⁴ The inter-communication and exchange of ideas and values between Christians and traditionalists is a dynamic process, and one which has been significant in the formation of political institutions which aim to increase the bargaining position of Zulus, specifically those more ambitious individuals, the educated Christian elite. Their motives are despised by others who attempt to represent the working people, as the poet Gwala categorizes them as 'non-whites' and a 'fuck burden' to blacks.⁵⁵

By 1930, John Dube had changed his ideas, and before the Native Economic Commission, his reply to the question of how he could reconcile the tribal system with progress, he replied: 'Well, it is the only thing we have and I think that if it were properly regulated, it would be the best. The tribal system has many advantages and I cannot get away from it. It is under the tribal system that the land is held by our Natives... If I want land, I must associate with the the tribal system...'⁵⁶ The move towards the manipulation of ethnicity was brought about by many factors: Increasing

⁵³ D.H. Reader, *Zulu Tribe*, p. 343.

⁵⁴ A. Vilakazi, *Zulu Transformations*, p. 87.

⁵⁵ A. Sitas, 'Traditions of Poetry', p. 315.

⁵⁶ S. Marks, 'Patriotism and Patriarchy', p. 221. By the 1913 Native Lands Act, the amount of land available for African ownership, was limited to 'scheduled areas', that is about 13% of the total land area in South Africa, which included existing reserves and African owned land. Between 1916 and 1926, although the amount of land privately owned by Africans decreased, the number of people on it increased by 39 000 to 81 000. S. Marks, *The Ambiguities*, p. 65.

labour militancy in Natal organised by Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU) led by George Champion. Marginalisation of the Christian African petty-bourgeoisie by the state via their segregationist policies. The realisation that the Zulu royal family could play a role in pan-Zulu nationalism. The desire for an organisation to promote African business in urban and rural areas, and a means through which commercial agriculture could be established by the purchasing of land by a 'tribe'. (Non-tribe syndicates were practically outlawed after the 1913 Land Acts). Changes in petty-bourgeois ideology paralleled changes among whites during the 1920s who were slowly moving away from Victorian universalism and liberal democratic ideas. The local black elite were influenced by American Black Consciousness leaders like Booker T. Washington (socio-political equality to be got by black education, industry, self-improvement), James Aggrey (black self-advancement), W.E.B. DuBois ('Africa for Africans', advocated stirring of black nationalism to fight white domination) and Marcus Garvey (not so much for social equality, as for black race purity and dignity). The declining moral order, especially with respect to the new status and role of women, was beginning to alarm the intelligentsia. The formation of Inkatha was fraught with tensions between Christian ideas of self-worth, civilisation and ethics; the personal ambitions of the intelligentsia, unable to make headway and to maintain their anti-traditional ideas in the face of isolation and antagonism from their white rulers and the ambivalence experienced in having a strong and powerful Zulu past, culture and history and a newer, underdeveloped Christianity and western way of life. These ambiguities pushed the leadership towards recreating Zulu ethnicity as a means of entering and competing in the white world.

In 1937, another organisation was created to harness Zulu ethnic allegiances. The Zulu Cultural Society, founded by the Natal Bantu Teachers' Association, had as its main objectives, the fight for state recognition of Zulu royalty, and the preservation of Zulu tradition and custom. The disruptive affects of colonialism on Zulu family cohesion were beginning to take its toll. As early as 1906, African Chiefs, headmen and homestead heads complained bitterly before the Natal Native Commission that: 'our

young people are getting out of hand, instead of recognizing and obeying their fathers and guardians they disobey and sometimes disown them. Sons who should be working for the house, appropriate all their earnings for themselves, daughters flaunt their elders to their face, and duty disowned, claim a right to go to towns or mission stations'.⁵⁷ In Natal, the rapid growth of manufacturing industry and the increasing demand for labour resulted in growing urbanisation among Africans: In 1921, there were 46,000 men and just over 8400 women in Natal's cities and towns; by 1936 this had risen to 90,400 men and 37,600 women, and in 1946, there were 139,000 men and 69,000 women.⁵⁸ A significant task of the Society was the collecting of Zulu folklore and traditions for publication, and in this they were supported by the Chief Native Commissioner for Natal, H.C. Lugg. In the founding manifesto or Charter, the Zulu Society asks:

Where is the original Zulu dancing on festive occasions that is in some quarters forbidden and what has been substituted for it? What has been devised to ensure that the Home Discipline of Father and Mother may be permanently engraved in the minds and hearts of youth? And what substitute has been provided for the time-honoured custom of *ugunlonipa* etiquette which requires that a woman shall not utter the name of her husband or her male relatives.⁵⁹

Underlying the drive towards the maintenance of Zulu traditions, was the individual aspirations and ulterior motives of small landowners and petty entrepreneurs seeking to use the organisation to expand and assist their economic ambitions. Albert Luthuli, one of the founding members revived the Grootville Cane Growers' Association and founded the Natal and Zululand Bantu Cane Growers' Association, organisations that fostered the interests of the small-scale African sugar growers and negotiated on their behalf with millers. The chairperson of the Zulu Society, A.H. Ngidi wanted the organisation to promote commercial ventures that would increase the competitiveness of African capitalists, using ethnic mobilization: 'Religious, political, professional, vocational, agriculture, industrial, commercial, educational, economic and

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 220.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 220.

⁵⁹ S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity. Natal and the Politics of Cultural Nationalism', (paper presented at the Workshop in Regionalism and Restructuring in Natal, University of Natal, 28-31 January, 1988), p. 5.

social must be dealt with under clear cut AFRICAN NATIONALISM'.⁶⁰ The organisation's conciliatory stance towards the Native Affairs Department, its readiness to accept the education of African children in the vernacular, and its support for 'betterment of the reserves' alienated many leaders including A.W.G Champion and John Dube. The society was fatally weakened in 1948 when the royal family backed Cyprian as heir to Solomon kaDinizulu, and not Thandayipi whom the Society had been grooming for office.

'The Black Lion is Beginning to Raise its Voice'. Buthelezi takes centre stage:

So astonished was Chief Mathole when he was given the news that his tenth wife, Princess Magogo Constance Zulu, had given birth to a son on the 27 August 1928, he felt the story must be a lie of the *Usuthu*, the Zulu Kings own regiment to which Magogo belonged. He named the child '*Mangosuthu*', a lie of *Usuthu*'.⁶¹ Gatsha, a pet name given by one of his grandmothers, means 'a twig that grows out from the main stem of a tree', 'a branch'. He was christened Gatsha Mangosuthu Ashpenaz Nathan Buthelezi. At the age of nineteen, he entered Fort Hare University to read for a BA degree, majoring in Bantu Administration. While at university he joined the African National Congress Youth League, and was expelled in 1950 for the part he played in the Congress-led boycott of the visit of the Governor-General of the Union of South Africa, Brand van Zyl. He took his exams at the University of Natal, but graduated at Fort Hare. An interview with Dr W. Eiselen, secretary for Bantu Administration, as a prospective candidate for chiefship of the Buthelezis, encouraged him to keep out of radical politics, and he joined the Department of Native Affairs.

In March 1953, Buthelezi was installed as acting chief by the tribe, taking over from the regent, Chief Maliyamakhanda, and four years later his position received government confirmation in terms of the Native Administration Act of 1927. From this

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 223.

⁶¹ Chief Mathole was quite old when he was requested by King Solomon KaDinizulu to marry his sister Princess Magogo. After two years of marriage, the Princess failed to get pregnant, hence the surprise expressed by Mathole when a son was born. Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi. Chief with a Double Agenda*, (London: Zed Books, 1988.), p. 69.

particular chieftainship, Buthelezi's great-grandfather, Chief Mnyamana was appointed the premier chief of King Cetshwayo, and Buthelezi's father held a similar position under King Solomon. According to his biographer, Ben Temkin, Buthelezi saw it as his role to help 're-establish the paramountcy of the Zulu King', a significant objective of the earlier Inkatha led by John Dube, and a move, if duplicated, could help widen the political horizons of the young Chief.⁶² Buthelezi quickly attempted to consolidate his position within the structures available for upward mobility. The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, provided for the establishment of a 3-tiered system of local government in the homelands. At the lowest level, the 'Tribal Authorities', including chiefs, headmen, tribal councillors, had administrative, executive and judicial powers. The 'Regional Authorities', chosen from members of two or more tribal authorities, functioned to establish and maintain services in townships. The 'Territorial Authorities' had executive control over two or more areas for which regional authorities had been established. At the apex was the State President, Supreme Chief by the Native Administration Act of 1927.

In 1965, a tribal authority was established for the Mahlabatini tribal area, consisting of Buthelezi and 67 councillors. In 1968 when the Paramount Chief of the Zulus, Chief Cyprian Bhhekuzulu died, Buthelezi became head of the Mashonangashoni regional authority in the Mahlabatini district. On 9 April 1970, a meeting of chiefs agreed to establish the Zululand Territorial Authority (ZTA), and Buthelezi was unanimously elected chief executive officer.⁶³ In his acceptance speech, on receiving a cheque for R12 200 from the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, he said: 'Humanity is so much on the march today, when the moon itself has become merely man's next stop of call, that we cannot be expected to move towards self-determination and self-realisation at ox-wagon pace'.⁶⁴ Soon after, addressing students at University of Zululand, he appeared to espouse radical ideas despite occupying a

⁶² B. Temkin, *Gatsha Buthelezi*, p. 46.

⁶³ At this stage, there were 188 tribal authorities, out of 282 recognised tribes, and 22 regional authorities. G. Mare and G. Hamilton, *An Appetite for Power. Buthelezi's Inkatha and South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), p. 38.

⁶⁴ Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi*, p. 80.

government sponsored platform: 'In my opinion, to say that we have "accepted" apartheid, by serving our people within the framework of the South African government policy would be as nonsensical as to say that when great African leaders like the late Chief Albert Luthuli, Dr Z.K. Matthews and others, served their people within the framework of the United Party Government... "accepted" apartheid...Nothing could be further from the truth'.⁶⁵ Gazetted as Proclamation R69 on 30 March 1972, by the Bantu Homelands Constitution Act of 1971, the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly was created to replace the ZTA.

Buthelezi was outspoken and critical of apartheid policies, and he publicly located himself in the space created after the banning of the African National Congress (ANC), Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP). In a speech to the Scandinavian Institute for African Studies in Stockholm, Buthelezi spoke of the intolerance of the South African government for 'the militant way in which they (ANC, PAC and SACP) articulated the wishes and aspirations of their people.... There was a void, which lasted for ten years, on the African political scene as no politics are allowed except within the framework of the policy of Separate Development. Operating as I do with my reservations clearly spelled out, I therefore do not believe that... I have in any way sold my soul to the devil...'⁶⁶ He was invited to open the congress of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), and in 1971, to share a platform with Steve Biko of the Black People's Convention (BPC), during a conference at Edendale Ecumenical Centre in Pietermaritzburg. Ambivalence regarding Buthelezi's politics is captured in a South African Student Organisation (SASO)⁶⁷ newsletter, which condemned the system of bantustans but continued: 'What is most painful is that Matanzima and Buthelezi are perhaps more than anybody else acutely aware of the limitations surrounding them. It may also be true that they are extremely dedicated to the upliftment of Black people and perhaps to their liberation. Many times they have

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 81.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 82.

⁶⁷ The South African Student Organisation (SASO) was formed in 1968, and in 1972, the Black Peoples Convention was launched. In the same year, the Black Allied Workers Union (BAWU) was formed.

manifested a fighting spirit characterizing true courage and determination. But if you want to fight your enemy you do not accept from him the unloaded of his two guns and then challenge him to a duel'.⁶⁸ In the words of his *izinbongi* (praise poet), Buthelezi is the 'Buffalo that stared fiercely at the constitution of the KwaZulu government./ all were afraid to challenge'.⁶⁹ But within a short while, criticisms of Buthelezi's political stance became widespread, and was most bluntly stated by Steve Biko during the 1976 SASO-BPC trial: 'We believe they are puppets, puppets to those who work against our interests for the interests of White society..... Buthelezi (is) certainly as black as I am in colour, and possibly in aspirations, but (he) operates within a system which is created for him by the White government and in that sense he is an extension of the System'.⁷⁰

Mangosotho Buthelezi announced the revival of **Inkatha Yenkululeko Ye Sizwe** in May 1975. It was to be a social organisation based in Natal, designed to operate outside the confines of the KwaZulu government: 'After a period of more than five years of operating within the framework of policy, we have decided to get out of the defensive and reactive roles. We have decided to mobilize ourselves by reviving our National Liberation Movement'.⁷¹

Some of the reasons why Zulu ethnicity was again being mobilized, can be found in the economic, social and political conditions of the times. The 1960s were not only dominated by the suppression of the nationalist movements and the imprisonment, banning or exile of a generation of politicians and trade unionists, but also during 'the decade the government worked systematically to reverse the flow of African urbanisation and to restructure the industrial workforce into one composed principally of migrant labour'.⁷² Over a million labour tenants and farm squatters and 400 000 city dwellers were resettled swelling the Bantustan population by 70% in the 1960s⁷³ and

⁶⁸ M. Mare, *An Appetite*, pp. 119-120.

⁶⁹ S. Marks, *The Ambiguities*, p. 122.

⁷⁰ D. Woods, *Biko*, (New York: Paddington Press, 1978), p. 136.

⁷¹ B. Temkin, *Gatsha Buthelezi*, p. 333.

⁷² T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, (London: Longman, 1983), p. 321.

⁷³ Ibid.

between 1970 and 1980 the overall homeland population rose by another 57%.⁷⁴ In addition, 327 000 people were brought directly under the control to the Bantustan authorities as a result of townships being incorporated within the boundaries of neighbouring reserves.⁷⁵ A new category of commuter migrants were created, 'a nation of sleep-walkers'. Whereas the average population density in the homelands between 1918 and 1950 was 50 to 60 persons per square mile, this doubled to 125 persons per square mile by 1970.⁷⁶ The homelands became overwhelmingly dependent on migrants, for example in KwaZulu, in 1960, 54% of its Gross National Income was earned outside the homeland. This rose to 74% in 1970 and 80% in 1976.⁷⁷ 'These were the years symbolised by the notorious General Circular 25/1967 of the Department of Bantu Administration, which defined as "surplus" the "aged, the unfit, widows, women with dependent children" - and which promised to leave no stone unturned in making the bantustans the rural receptacles of the nation's unemployed'.⁷⁸ The rationalisation of influx control in 1952, and the introduction of the 'reference book' which controlled employment, pension payments, housing, schooling and mobility in streets, Section 29 of the 1945 Urban Areas Act under which those Africans deemed 'idle' or 'undesirable' in urban areas could be endorsed out, and the establishment of Tribal Labour Bureaux in the bantustans, were some of the numerous laws that facilitated the mass relocation of Africans to the reserves.⁷⁹ The effects of the pass laws are summed up by a worker: 'When you are out of a job, you realise that the

⁷⁴ H. Giliomee and L. Schlemmer, *From Apartheid to Nation-Building*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 101.

⁷⁵ T. Lodge, *Black Politics*, p. 321.

⁷⁶ H. Giliomee and L. Schlemmer, *From Apartheid*, p. 101.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

⁷⁸ C. Bundy, 'Land, Law and Power: Forced Removals in Historical Context', in *No Place to Rest. Forced Removals and the Law in South Africa*, ed. by C. Murray and C. O'Regan, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 9.

⁷⁹ All African males of 15 years and over had to register with a Labour Bureau before they could be recruited for work in the cities. Here, he was classified for a particular category of work and could not leave his area without permission. Labour Bureaux contracts were mainly fixed term, and could not run for more than one year by the Bantu Labour Regulations Act. No woman was permitted to register with a Labour Bureaux, and until 1986, women were considered illegal urban workers or residents unless they received the rare permission of the Director of Black Labour and the consent of her guardian, her father or husband. E. Unterhalter, *Forced Removal. The Division, Segregation and Control of the People of South Africa*, (International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, 1987), p. 20.

boss and the government have the power to condemn you to death. If they send you back home... its a death sentence. The countryside is pushing you into the cities to survive, and the cities are pushing you into the countryside to die'.⁸⁰ ⁸¹ Joe Lelyveld described KwaNdebele as 'a squalid rural ghetto, besmeared with metal shanties and mud houses in an almost unbroken sea of resettlement sites'.⁸² Desmond, describing Limehill in Natal in the 1970s after seeing the resettlement camp in 1967: 'Facilities in Limehill remain rudimentary. There is a Bantu Affairs Department office, a water supply (with one tap for every 35 families), corrugated iron privies served by a bucket system, two overcrowded primary schools... a clinic (without a telephone), two general dealers and one cafe/store where prices are higher than in town.... Unemployment rates are high... In particular, very few adult women are in wage employment.... There is a general feeling of hopelessness among the residents in Limehill'.⁸³ This feeling of hopelessness, apathy, despondency among the urban and rural dwellers alike, and the political malaise experienced by Africans, was the backdrop for the rise to prominence of the Black Consciousness (BC) philosophy among the young black middle classes.

The objectives of BC were 'political from the start, but in the interests of their own survival, its propagators chose to mute its political thrust and publicly emphasize its more cultural and intellectual side'.⁸⁴ SASO saw the immediate problem to mobilising black resistance as psychological. They proposed to enhance the idea that the black person could rely on his or her own initiatives: 'Liberation... is of paramount importance in the concept of BC, for we cannot be conscious of ourselves and yet

⁸⁰ Following publication of its *White Paper on Urbanization*, the government passed Act 68 of 1986, Abolition of Influx Control, which enabled a policy shift to 'orderly urbanization', planned and indirect forms of control, such as incentives and restrictive measures, legislations and ordinances. .

⁸¹ M. Sutcliffe, A. Todes, N. Walker, 'Managing the Cities: An Examination of State Urbanization Policies Since 1986', in *No Place to Rest*, C. Murray and c. O'Regan, p. 56.

⁸² J. Lelyveld, *Move Your Shadow*, (London: Jonathan Ball, 1986), p. 125.

⁸³ C. Desmond, 'Limehill Revisited: A Case Study of the Longer-term effects of African Resettlement, (Department of Economics, University of Natal, Development Studies Research Group Working Paper, No. 5, 1978), quoted in E. Unterhalter, *Forced Removal*, pp. 98-99.

⁸⁴ G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa. The evolution of an ideology*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978,) p. 291.

remain in bondage. We want to attain the envisioned self which is the free self'.⁸⁵ Since white liberals were considered incapable of identifying fully with black political and social aspirations, they advocated exclusive black organisations, eschewing any links with white political groupings. They sought to instil black self-confidence and to lessen the material reliance of blacks on white-controlled resources. They sought to do this through economic cooperatives, literacy campaigns, health projects, cultural activity and a general workers union.⁸⁶ Donald Woods explains that 'the idea behind BC was to break away almost entirely from past black attitudes to the liberation struggle and to set a new style of self-reliance and dignity for blacks as a psychological attitude leading to new initiatives'.⁸⁷ Even though it had 41 branches, the BPC did not develop into a mass organisation, 'probably not exceeding the membership of SASO which claimed 4000 subscribers to its newsletters'.⁸⁸ This period culminated in the Soweto uprising, which began on 16 June 1976 and ended in October 1977 with the banning of all Black Consciousness organisations. Although the uprising was organised independently of BC, by high school pupils, the high profile of the movement in the press and the publicity of the SASO-BPC trial which gave prominence to the militant statements made by Steve Biko, definitely influenced the action taken by the pupils. As Sam Nolutshungu says: '...the real contribution of Black Consciousness to the revolt was in the demon it had roused: the defiant attitude among the youth in the face of police violence, and the solidarity which emerged among blacks in the year and a half of the revolt'.⁸⁹

What was significant about BC was that its leaders understood the complexity of feelings and emotions engendered through subservience:

⁸⁵ S. Biko, *I Write What I Like*, (London: Heinemann, 1978), p. 49.

⁸⁶ In two important respects, BC differed from the Africanists (PAC): Firstly, although they treated the white community as homogeneous, they recognised divisions in the black community and consistently moved towards a class analysis. Secondly, 'blacks' were not ethnically defined as African, but included Indians and 'Coloureds'.

⁸⁷ D. Woods, *Biko*, p. 30.

⁸⁸ T. Lodge, *Black Politics*, p. 323.

⁸⁹ S.C. Nolutshungu, *Changing South Africa.. Political Considerations*, (Manchester University Press, 1982), p. 185.

But the type of black man we have today has lost his manhood. Reduced to an obliging shell, he looks with awe at the white power structure... In the privacy of his toilet his face twists in silent condemnation of white society but brightens up in sheepish obedience as he come out hurrying in response to his master's impatient call... His heart yearns for the comfort of white society and makes him blame himself for not having been 'educated' enough to warrant such luxury.⁹⁰

As Tom Lodge says, because its exponents and identifiable followers were from the relatively socially privileged strata and formed a minority in the community, did not mean that they were not popularly influential. 'The student advocates of Black Consciousness were to become school teachers, priests and journalists, and its basic themes were taken up in the popular press, in township cultural events, and even, though at a later stage, in African consumer-oriented advertising'.⁹¹ BC transgressed the boundaries of politics and infused African culture with new social assertiveness, poignantly expressed in the poetry of the seventies:

Now I'm talking about this;
'Shit' you hear an old woman say,
Right there, squeezed in her little match-box
With her fatness and gigantic life experience,
Which makes her a child,
'Cause the next day she's right there,
Right there serving tea to the woman
Who's lying in bed at 10 a.m. sick with wealth,
Which she's prepared to give her life for
'Rather than you marry my son or daughter'.⁹²

During the 1960s, much foreign capital was invested in South African manufacturing, and by the 1970s, local industrialists required larger markets. The possibility of converting the rest of Africa into a market for South African manufactured goods, was limited mainly because of the political hostility of the latter. In order to compete with foreign goods, South African products had to be cheaper, requiring higher levels of labour productivity, that is a more skilled and technically competent workforce. The resulting higher wage structure would mean more capital intensive production, and hence an increase in unemployment, and a more affluent black labour

⁹⁰ S. Biko, *I Write*, p. 28.

⁹¹ T. Lodge, *Black Politics*, p. 324.

⁹² Mongane Serote, 'What's in this Black "shit"?' quoted in T. Lodge, *Black Politics*, pp. 324-325.

force would antagonise white workers. Economic uncertainty was also created by the sharp movements in the gold price. In order to raise the price of gold from its fixed convertibility to the dollar (\$35 per ounce until 1970), South Africa began to restrict the gold supply, resulting in a six-fold price increase between February 1973 and December 1974, to \$800.⁹³ This was followed by a sharp fall in the price when the US began to sell off its reserves on the private market, and an economic recession in South Africa followed. The collapse in 1974 of the Portuguese authority in Angola and Mozambique, made South Africa vulnerable to guerrilla insurgencies.

Economic recession, the increasing rate of inflation and spasmodic contractions in the job market formed the backdrop to the Durban strikes in 1973. During the 1960s, the number of African workers involved in industrial disputes had never been higher than 10 000 per year. In 1973, 100 000 Africans took part in 160 strikes, concentrated in Durban, spreading to East London and the Rand.⁹⁴ The strikes had certain distinctive features making them unique in South Africa's labour history: The strikers refused to elect a leadership; they avoided all formally constituted bodies; they relied on sharp demonstrative shock withdrawals of labour, avoiding long protracted negotiations with employers. The aim of the strikers in almost all cases was to gain better wages.

Why the strike wave originated in Durban is difficult to decipher. As Gramsci said: "pure" spontaneity does not exist in history, it would come to the same thing as "pure" mechanicity....⁹⁵ Durban is the second largest industrial complex in South Africa, next to the Witwatersrand. Low wage levels were not unique to Durban: 20 percent of Africans in the Durban-Pinetown area earned less than R10 per week compared to 85 per cent in Bloemfontein, 48 per cent in East London, 42 per cent in the Vaal Triangle, and 20 per cent on the Rand.⁹⁶ What did distinguish Durban from the rest of the country were a number of incidental factors that have proved quite

⁹³ H. Giliomee and I. Schlemmer, *From Apartheid*, p. 76.

⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 119.

⁹⁵ A. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, (London, 1971), p. 196.

⁹⁶ I. Dekker, D. Hemson, J.S. Kane-Berman, J. Lever, L. Schlemmer, 'Case Studies in African Labour Action in South Africa and Namibia', in *The Development of an African Working Class: Studies in Class Formation and Action*, ed. by R. Sandbrook and R. Cohen, (London: Longman, 1975), p. 223.

significant. With inflation running at 9.1 per cent, the cost of living had increased dramatically and calculations on how much an African urban household required for the bare essentials (the so-called Poverty Datum Line) showed that between 60 and 75 percent of African households received incomes below this line.⁹⁷ A 16 percent rise in transport fares and rumours of an impending bus boycott, could have helped trigger off the strike wave. Other significant elements were: the atypical influence of the bantustan leadership on Zulu workers; the impact of press publicity given to poverty analysis by the 'Wages Commission' of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS)⁹⁸; the effect of the first strike at Coronation Brick and Tile which resulted in wage increases being granted to workers in surrounding factories and the Frame Textile Group, known for its poor wages, high rate of turnover and bad labour relations, had factories in all the main industrial complexes of the city. It was workers in these factories that led the strike movement in each area.⁹⁹ From the strike action, an African trade union movement developed, having as its nucleus, worker advisory organisations founded mainly by white students, and people drawn from the African section of the Trade Union Congress of South Africa (TUCSA).¹⁰⁰

The way in which the strike spread throughout Durban without a coordinating body exemplifies the close physical interconnections between work and home. Single

⁹⁷ Average monthly incomes for Africans between 1969 - 1970 in manufacturing, construction and central government employ and mining were R52, R49 and R52 respectively. The correlating average white wage varied from R293 to R341 per month. *Ibid*, p 209.

⁹⁸ NUSAS activity was concentrated in the four English-medium universities of Witwatersrand, Cape Town, Durban, and Rhodes (Grahamstown), the first three accepting black students after 1959 only with ministerial permission, which was required until 1986. Between 1960 and 1967, students in the black universities of Turfloop, Ngoye and Fort Hare, clashed with university authorities in their attempts to affiliate to NUSAS. By 1967, black students, especially those on white campuses, were disenchanted with NUSAS. Its white leaders failed to adequately articulate political issues which particularly concerned black students. The influence of the American-derived Black Theology on the University Christian Movement gained significant following among black students on white campuses. During 1968, black students from NUSAS and the University Christian Movement began to discuss the establishment of an all-black movement. The result was the formation of SASO, which held its inaugural conference at Turfloop in July 1969.

⁹⁹ T. Lodge. *Black Politics*, p. 327.

¹⁰⁰ The General Factory Workers Benefit Fund, was formed by University of Natal students, and the Urban Training Project was based in Johannesburg. TUCSA was formed in 1954, and excluded African trade unions from direct affiliation but created for them a liaison committee. Members of this committee had to eschew politics and in return for their cooperation the corresponding white trade unions in the same industry would negotiate on their behalf. This strategy was known as "parallelism". *Ibid*, p. 190.

sex hostels, compounds, transport networks, beer halls, were all points at which information was exchanged, subjects intensely discussed and argued. And although picketing and incitement was illegal 'much the same effect was gained by the presence of thousands of workers pouring out of factories and moving en masse down past neighbouring concerns chanting the old war cry of the Zulu armies, "Usuthu"',¹⁰¹ The strike first started at Coronation Brick and Tile, the factory visited by King Goodwill Zwelithini ka Bhekuzulu in the latter part of 1972. Reports about the event expressed ambivalence as to whether the king had indicated that management had agreed to raise wages or whether the king expressed willingness to negotiate with management on behalf of workers.¹⁰² Although there was nothing unusual about the king addressing workers, there was not a precedent where the king intervened in matters pertaining to wages or working conditions. Buthelezi had refused to assist the dockworkers in 1972¹⁰³, and this appeared to be the official stance of the KwaZulu government.

The strike started on 9 January when the entire workforce of 2000 assembled at a football stadium, and when asked by management to elect a committee, a worker shouted: 'Our terms are quite clear. We don't need a committee. We need R30 a week',¹⁰⁴ Only the intervention of King Goodwill on the 10th broke the deadlock, and workers agreed to allow him to negotiate on their behalf, but only after Prince Sithela Zulu stated that 'if they could not trust the Chiefs word, this would lower [his] dignity'.¹⁰⁵ Buthelezi advised the king not to get involved in the strike action as it would tarnish the Royal House, and the king did not meet with management as

¹⁰¹ L. Dekker and others, 'Case Studies', p. 221.

¹⁰² B. Hirson, *Year of Fire, Year of Ash. The Soweto Revolt: Roots of a Revolution?*, (London: Zed Press, 1979), p. 135.

¹⁰³ With fluctuating labour requirements of the port, dockworkers in Durban were employed on a daily basis, the employers having to compete for their services during busy periods. In the course of a series of bitterly contested struggles, dockworkers were by 1959 brought under a centralised labour supply company which eliminated competition between employers and confined workers in a single compound. When dockworkers continued to make new wage demands and refused to work overtime, the entire workforce was deported and replaced with new workers from the Zulu reserves. In October 1972, dockworkers stopped work in demand for more pay (they were earning R8.40 per week). Although workers, most of whom were migrants, called Buthelezi to intervene, he did not respond. T. Lodge, *Black Politics*, p. 192.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 136.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 136.

arranged. Workers of Coronation Brick and Tile returned to work with only a R2.07 rise in weekly wages. By failing to enter the political arena, the King and Zulu royal family remained tied to and dependent on the KwaZulu government.

Another member of the KwaZulu government who intervened in many strikes, was Barney Dladla, Executive Councillor for Community Affairs in the KLA. For example, he marched at the head of more than 5000 striking workers from the Pinetex Mill to the headquarters of the Frame Group, and proceeded to negotiate on their behalf.¹⁰⁶ In September 1974, a communique from the secretary of Bantu Administration to the KLA warned against intervening in labour matters, to which Buthelezi replied: 'We cannot see ourselves turning a deaf ear to any pleas from our people for intercession as our people have no proper machinery for negotiation and we cannot be insensitive to any alleged exploitation of our people'.¹⁰⁷ Dladla gained enthusiastic support from workers. A letter written to the Rand Daily Mail:

All African workers... have the greatest regard for that great son of KwaZulu, the Hon. Barney Dladla... to Chief Gatsha I say: inject more men of the calibre and conviction of our hero, Barney Dladla, and you will not need to do all the thinking and talking on KwaZulu. We as workers are looking forward to have in the KwaZulu Parliament men of conviction and men who will not sit silently through the session not knowing what to say.¹⁰⁸

But Dladla was effectively silenced, accused of not having consulted the cabinet before participating in the strikes, and exceeding his prerogatives which fell within the jurisdiction of the KwaZulu urban representative, Solomon Ngobese. He was moved to the Justice portfolio, and then removed from the KLA in August 1974. On 28 June 1974, Dladla issued a press statement explaining three points of difference between him and Chief Buthelezi: Firstly, the relationship between the KwaZulu government and trade unions. Secondly, the political stance of the KLA in relation to the policies adopted by the rest of Africa towards South Africa. Dladla believed that Buthelezi was playing down the possibility that change could come about in South Africa through

¹⁰⁶ Rand Daily Mail, 30 and 31/01/1974.

¹⁰⁷ B. Hirson, *Year of Fire*, p. 141.

¹⁰⁸ Rand Daily Mail, 15/05/74.

armed struggle, and his emphasis on non-violence alienated the rest of Africa in its support for the political program of the exiled ANC. Thirdly, the involvement of the Bantu Investment Corporation (BIC) in KwaZulu. BIC was established to increase the economic viability of the homelands by creating a middle class, and at the same time, controlling the flow of capital in specific and carefully selected direction. By 1969 BIC had granted loans to 653 African traders and business, only 245 of which were new enterprises. BIC also agreed to grant a loan of R76 000 for the construction of a residence for the Chief Minister.¹⁰⁹ The arrogance of BIC officials and their malpractices were exposed by Dladla, for example, they demanded that property owners transfer ownership of their land to BIC, as a condition for the granting of a loan. As Dladla said: 'When these people came from Pretoria, we were told that they were here to help us. But now their tasks are done here, we discover that they had stolen our wealth and were sending it back to Pretoria'.¹¹⁰ Buthelezi suggested that problems with BIC would be allayed by the establishment of a KwaZulu Development Corporation through the initiative of BIC. Relations between Buthelezi and Dladla were uneasy and were severed after the 1973 Durban strikes.

Buthelezi's attitude towards trade unions was made clear in September 1974: Even though we do not share adequately the fruits of the economy, we are the last people to want to destroy the economy of South Africa. I do not believe for a moment that the trade unions are instruments for organising strikes. I regard them as machinery for negotiation.¹¹¹

Although twenty two unions started by mid-1974, with a membership of 30 000 workers, they still only constituted 8% of the African workforce in Durban.¹¹² Most workers appeared to believe that actions taken by Barney Dladla on their behalf to be essentially those of the KwaZulu government. In this way they saw Buthelezi to be supportive of their action, and in 1975, in a survey done by researchers Eddie Webster and Judson Khuzwayo, 87 per cent of Durban workers interviewed named

¹⁰⁹ Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi*, p. 168.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 169.

¹¹¹ B. Hirson, *Year of Fire*, p. 141.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 142.

Buthelezi as their leader.¹¹³ Hence the conflict between Barney Dladla and Buthelezi was seen merely as a power struggle and not an indication of Buthelezi's anti-strike political stance.

The 1970s was marked by massive dislocation among Africans. It was the time when the government embarked on far-reaching measures to ensure that rural areas remained white. African tenants living on farms for generations were forced to take up wage labour or face evictions to resettlement camps in the homelands. The number of tenants fell from 163 000 in 1964 to 27 000 in 1970.¹¹⁴ Some three-quarters of a million Africans left the farms between 1960 and 1975, many settling in informal settlements around the cities.¹¹⁵ Half a million people settled in Inanda adjoining Durban, 250 000 settled in Edendale-Zwartkop near Pietermaritzburg, and 300 000 settled in Winterveld near Pretoria.¹¹⁶ The lack of housing was exacerbated by a decision in 1968 to abolish the 30-year leasehold, to 'freeze' existing townships, and to deproclaim existing townships within 75 km of a bantustan.¹¹⁷ The decision to suspend any building programmes in the townships, except in favour of development in Bantustans was reflected in the states African housing pattern: in 1967 R14.4 million was spent in 'white' areas (townships outside the homelands, and squatter settlements), and R5 million in the homelands; but by 1975, only R7.8 million was spent in 'white areas', with R67 million being spent in the homelands.¹¹⁸ It was this apartheid policy decision that was directly responsible for the subsequent urban housing crisis. By 1989, according to the government, there were 1 310 813 squatters in South Africa, excluding the ten homelands, but other estimates put the figure at around seven million.¹¹⁹ During the mid-1970s and 1980s, another form of migration occurred within the homelands. Migrants moved with their families into parts of the bantustans

¹¹³ Mzala, *Gaisha Buthelezi*, p. 173

¹¹⁴ H. Giliomee, and I. Schlemmer, *From Apartheid*, p. 77.

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 78.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

¹¹⁷ W. Cobbett, 'Trade Unions, Migrant labour and the Struggle for Housing', in *South African Review 5*, ed. by G. Moss and I. Obery, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989), p. 324.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 324.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 324.

Buthelezi as their leader.¹¹³ Hence the conflict between Barney Dladla and Buthelezi was seen merely as a power struggle and not an indication of Buthelezi's anti-strike political stance.

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¹¹³ Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi*, p. 173

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¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 324.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 324.

offering easier access to the cities. In Molweni, a settlement on the border of KwaZulu, the population increased from 33 012 in 1985 to 61 896 in 1987, an increase of 87 percent. In KwaNdebele, the population grew from 50 779 to 261 875 between 1975 and 1984. Fifty-five percent came from white farms to establish migrant networks and educational facilities, and a further 29 percent came from Bophuthatswana to escape harassment from the homeland authorities.^{120,121} The viability of these lands for agricultural subsistence was minimal: The Nqutu district in KwaZulu was surveyed in the 1950s by the Tomlinson Commission. The commission estimated that the district could support 13 000 people in subsistence agriculture. In 1979 there were 200 000 people living in the area.¹²² In the Ciskei, only 6 percent of Ciskians live on land big enough to provide a basis for a subsistence agriculture. At Thornhill and Zweledinga in the Ciskei, 50 000 people have been settled on sheep farms which were once home to 17 white families.¹²³

Employment in the homelands is limited. The Tomlinson Commission estimated in 1955 that by the mid-1970s, the homelands would have to create 1,6 million jobs. Since then, only 280 000 jobs have been created or 17 percent of the required number.¹²⁴ The number of jobs available outside homelands steadily dropped from the mid-1970s onwards, for example, the number of workers from the Transkei employed in white South Africa dropped from 425 230 in 1976 to 341 553 in 1979, a decline of

¹²⁰ E. Ritchken, 'Rural Politics', p. 391.

¹²¹ Intimidation, physical assault and torture are commonly used in Bophuthatswana to suppress any opposition to the authorities, and to deter people from trying to exercise their limited options in terms of the Constitution's Bill of Rights, notably their right to defend themselves in court. The 'squatter' trial of Bosplaas (Winterveld) residents, which lasted from May 1984 to October 1985 is a good example of the mechanisms employed by the homeland authorities. In August 1983 the Bophuthatswana government amended its Land Control Act in such a way as to provide it with the supposedly legal means of evicting the estimated 1,500,000 non-Tswana residents from the homeland territory. When the affected people decided to defend themselves in court, the authorities resorted to security police harassment, assaults and torture of both the accused and 'passers-by', with the object, as stated by a senior police officer, of 'teaching people a lesson about what happens to people who get lawyers and go to court'. Many innocent people fled the area, while others unwittingly paid admission of guilt fines. J. Keenan, 'Counter-Revolution as Reform: Struggles in the Bantustans,' in W. Cobbett and R. Cohen, *Popular Struggles in South Africa*, (New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1988), p. 144.

¹²² C. de Beer, *The South African Disease. Apartheid Health and Health Services*, (CIIR, 1984), p. 53.

¹²³ Ibid, p. 52.

¹²⁴ Ibid, p. 53.

20 percent in three years.¹²⁵ A significant proportion of people in the reserve areas have neither land to farm nor family members in employment. If they are lucky, a pension, unlikely to be more than R40 per month, is the main stable source of income. For survival, they have to rely on charity, theft, prostitution, and forms of economic activity that do not require any capital outlay. The wages of migrants are in most instances the main source of income. In the late 1970s, an average worker from the Ciskei who worked illegally in Pietermaritzburg for nine months, and spent three months in jail, would have improved his standard of living by 700 percent. In 1975 it was estimated that an average family of seven in KwaZulu could survive on R120 per month. In the Nqutu district in KwaZulu, 70 percent of families had incomes less than R40 per month.¹²⁶ Although the lack of accurate information masks the extent of the problem, it is estimated that some 30 000 thousand children die each year of malnutrition.¹²⁷ Kwashiorkor, marasmus, respiratory ailments (such as pneumonia), measles and gastro enteritis (diarrhoea) are some of the most common illnesses directly linked to having too little to eat. Undernourished children are more susceptible to infections, and although most children get measles, only malnourished children die from it. In KwaZulu's Edendale Hospital near Pietermaritzburg, 40 children die of Kwashiorkor and Marasmus every month.¹²⁸ The lack of adequate hospitals and clinics to service the homelands, disproportionate health budgets, and a serious shortage of doctors add to the endless misery and suffering of residents.¹²⁹

Living on the faultline: urban and rural identities

¹²⁵ Ibid, p. 53.

¹²⁶ Ibid, p. 54.

¹²⁷ Ibid, p. 55. Dr. Loening from the Department of Community Medicine in Natal estimates that 73 percent of all infant deaths in the more remote parts of KwaZulu go unrecorded. A survey conducted by doctors for the Ciskei government in 1978 found that half of all two and three year olds were undernourished.

¹²⁸ Ibid, p. 56. In Gazankulu, between 120-200 out of every thousand children born in the territory die before they reach the age of one. In Transkei, 140 deaths occur in the first year of life for every thousand births.

¹²⁹ A report by the head of the Department of Community Medicine at Natal Medical School, stated that in 1981, KwaZulu had 28 hospitals, 119 fixed clinics and 277 mobile clinics. It was suggested that another 200 clinics were urgently needed. The entire KwaZulu health budget in 1982 was R60-million, which is about the same as money spent each year on the massive Johannesburg Hospital. Only 3 percent of practicing doctors in South Africa are in the bantustans. In 1981, KwaZulu had vacancies for more than 70 doctors. Ibid, pp. 58-59.

People coming from different social and cultural environments, having different religious beliefs and practices, different world views, have to find ways of coping with life in urban slumyards in close proximity to strangers, sharing a living space and poverty. What are the elements of the new social order, the new morality and norms?

Gramsci says:

There is no human activity from which every form of intellectual participation can be excluded... Each man finally outside his professional activity, carries on some form of intellectual activity, that is, he is a 'philosopher', an artist, a man of taste, he participates in a particular conception of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, that is to bring into being new modes of thought.¹³⁰

The ways in which people cope with new environments and social experiences, is to transform some of their old beliefs and attitudes, by expanding some while eliminating others, they also assimilate and adopt some of the beliefs and attitudes of others, so creating a new social order. The developing culture, a subjective and objective process, is an expression of the 'attempt to find a secure location within (the) relation(s) of dependency', with respect to the capitalist system, the state and new neighbours.¹³¹ It is in such environments that individuals, recently settled, may try to reactivate old ethnic networks, and to recreate ethnic identities. Given the competitive environment, the breakdown of past kinship and community networks and the new demands placed on individuals at work and at home, the allure of ethnic networks is magnetic. Those who speak the same language, share a common culture and have similar social mores and manners, operate within a system of known social codes and accepted norms. The recreation of ethnic networks can occur mainly to increase economic competitiveness. For example, owing to the increasing number of settlers in Yoruba towns in Western Nigeria, the Hausa migrant communities 'developed and maintained their tribal exclusiveness... they built an internal organisation of political functions: communication, decision-making, authority, administration, and sanctions,

¹³⁰ A. Gramsci, *Selections*, p. 9.

¹³¹ E. Kock, 'Without Visible Means of Subsistence: Slumyard Culture in Johannesburg 1918-1940', in B. Bozzoli, *Town and Countryside in the Transvaal*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983), p. 155.

and also political myths, symbols, slogans, and ideology'.¹³² Some migrants join ethnic groups only as an early temporary measure to help them learn and adapt to the new environment. For example, the Western Ibo Union in Ibadan has aimed not at ethnic exclusiveness, but to promote the successful adaptation of its members to modern urban conditions.¹³³ In some cases, new migrants submerge themselves in the prevailing culture, not necessarily ethnic in character, as a way of adapting to new urban settings. For example, in the slums of Johannesburg, 'the only way of fitting into town life was to get into *marabi*...'¹³⁴ Marabi is the generic name that the slumdweller had for the culture that permeated these urban slumyards. It was also the name given to the peculiar music that developed in these areas, the 'term came close to describing the whole way of life of a people, the way they earned a living, the class position they adopted, the music they played and the way they danced'.¹³⁵

Certain competitive communal activities can also serve to forge new identities or reinforce past ethnic identities. For example, an important element that contributed to the popularity of boxing in the 1920s and 1930s in the Bulawayo Locations in Southern Rhodesia, was its compatibility with the preceding culture. Migrants associated boxing with wrestling matches (*tsimba*) that herdboys indulged in and the battles with sticks (*zuvara*) that took place when one group of herd boys drove a rival group away and took charge of their cattle, to the enjoyment of the old people who looked on. It also had a powerful cathartic function: 'The strong emotional... and social identity it provokes in tribe and boxing gatherings, the relief it affords from the isolated and monotonous daily round in an alien household or store...'¹³⁶ In Salisbury, boxing was organised in 'tribal' clubs: the WaKorekore, the WaManyika, the WaZezuru, the WaBudjga, and the MaBlantyre. Each had its distinctive colours and symbols; the MaBlantyre, which had a predominantly Malawian membership, wore black and red

¹³² A. Cohen, *Customs and Politics*, p.184.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

¹³⁴ E. Kock, 'Without visible means', p. 158.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

¹³⁶ I. Phimister and C. Van Onselen, 'The Political Economy of Tribal Animosity: A Case Study of the 1929 Bulawayo Location "Faction Fight"', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 6, No 1, 1979, p. 32.

vests with a 'V 8' badge which symbolized association 'with the power of the Ford'.¹³⁷ New immigrants may also need to join forces, along ethnic lines, to defend themselves against more established workers in a township, hostel or at the workplace. This was the case of the fighting between Ndebele and Shona, who were more recent migrants in 1929 in the Bulawayo Location.¹³⁸ Ethnicity is the medium through which inequality, solidarity, and competition is played out.

Taking their definition and inspiration from the old, urbanised dwellers effectively adapt and harness these identities to the new tasks, 'although their charters still derive from "tribal" solidarities, whether of the "genuine" traditional or the "illusory" transformed or colonially induced variety'.¹³⁹ Rural ethnic identities were likewise transformed, the accepted 'tribal' norms and values shadowed the past. Migrant labour was particularly disruptive. As Cohen says: 'Changes in land tenancy, service, marriage, household organisation, inheritance, livestock keeping, land management, and community governance were consequences of the demographic effects of migration. Migration challenged the authorities of rules and the ideological models of lineage and extended family. And migrations held the potential of constituting active and residual regional and ethnic organisation'.¹⁴⁰ Migrant labour, which generally removed the males from the homestead, transformed ethnic identities, both in the rural and in the urban setting.

In a harsh, competitive and alienating environment, many new workers try to enter those jobs, industries or sections that tend to employ members of their own ethnic group. For example, a Pondo worker, Beinart called 'M', said he worked at East Rand Proprietary Mines (ERPM) near Boksburg, since most Mpondo migrants were employed there: 'I wanted to work underground..... I was offered work as a clerk. I refused because clerks are paid low wages and you don't mix with your own people. I

¹³⁷ Ibid, p. 32.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ A. Southall, 'The Illusion of Tribe', p. 45.

¹⁴⁰ D.W. Cohen and E. S. Odhiambo, *The Historical Anthropology*, p. 16.

don't know why, I liked staying with my people in the compound'.¹⁴¹ Although his sense of identity operated at many different levels, a number of these involved attachment in varying ways, to a specifically Mpondo identity. He joined an *Indlavini* group, rural associations which took on a new sense of cohesion for young men far from home finding themselves in the company of men. 'M' explained how the group operated: 'They were the same *indlavinis* as in the rural areas. We had been recruited to work in the mines and when they were there they formed these groups. We used to have competitions with other compounds - we sing, we play and all that. From our area, Bizana, we had our *inkosi*, our *indlavini* chief. But when we are going to have competitions then we vote for one chief from the whole of Pondoland'.¹⁴² There is an internal dynamic to changing ethnicity.

Being a Zulu

One view:

I want to be a man. A proper man. I want to respect my chief. I want others to respect me. On the one hand I am an organised worker, on the other I am a captive of this Zulu propaganda. Despite my respect for the figureheads I am practically challenged by the forces of revolution in the townships. I am surrounded by conflict and the capitalist system is hammering me... I am harassed... then the chiefs are doing nothing about my situation... they drive big cars and demand total obedience and the children are saying that all this respect is fokall. The whole thing is being torn apart.¹⁴³ (Hlatshwayo, COSATU's Cultural Coordinator and oral poet)

Another view:

I am an Inkatha member and a Zulu from Zululand. I have nothing against the Pondos... They are very proud and arrogant.... If the Pondos are calling the Zulus Shaka's people, why did they then take out the KwaZulu membership cards to become KwaZulu citizens? They were fond of saying that Zulus are uncircumcised descendants of Shaka. This angers the Zulus. After all these people are living on land belonging to Shaka and other Zulu Kings.¹⁴⁴ (A Zulu view of the violent attacks against the Pondos in KwaMakutha, a

¹⁴¹ W. Beinart, 'Worker Consciousness, ethnic particularism and nationalism: the experiences of a South African Migrant, 1930-1960', in *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, ed. by S. Marks and S. Trapido, (UK: Longman, 1987), p. 291.

¹⁴² Ibid, p. 292.

¹⁴³ A. Sitas, 'Class, Nation', no page numbers.

¹⁴⁴ F. Meer, *Resistance in Townships*, (Durban: Madiba Publishers, 1989), pp. 167-168.

shack settlement off the Durban South Coast in Umbogintwini.¹⁴⁵)

To be Zulu is a potent and compelling identity that grips the lives of the vast majority in Natal. It is a legacy of powerful leaders and courageous, fierce warriors, a proud people, daring and fearless, who fought against the colonists, a spirited, defiant sense of community, strong social norms and stringent sanctions, coherent religious beliefs and taboos, a complex mythology, culture and language. The colonial and apartheid state separated people from the land and dislocated communities. Relocations to homelands and forced removals, separated people from their ancestors, the land and trees planted by their fathers to take root in the soil - symbols of permanence. The migrant labour system disrupted rural communities and distorted developing urban societies. Limited possibilities to escape from poverty and few chances of upward mobility were perpetuated through poor education, health services and living conditions. The need to hold on tenaciously to some source of continuing identity in these circumstances is indeed compelling. This does not mean that the Zulu ethnic identity is 'unthinking conformity'. On the contrary, it is the 'arena for the sharpest social and political division'¹⁴⁶ The fervent, and often aggressive and violent internal disputes among the Zulu has resulted in the production and recreation of divergent and contradictory ethnic identities for different individuals. These internal disputes revolve around the burning questions of what makes up a Zulu ethnic identity; which customs, values and manners one should adopt in order to be considered a Zulu; which aspects of the culture, if any, need to be altered, adapted or scrapped; how and whether to restructure past social systems to meet the requirements of new social environments and the extent to which certain political and social structures from the past are relevant to present circumstances. These questions are constantly argued among men and women at work and at home.

Inkatha revisited:

¹⁴⁵ In November 1984, clashes between Zulus and Pondos left 5 people killed. During Christmas, continuous clashes took 67 lives, and by the end of January 1985, the death toll was 100, and 10 000 houses were burnt. The Pondos fled the area. Ibid, p 165.

¹⁴⁶ J.Lonsdale, 'The Moral Economy', p. 4.

When the formation of Inkatha Yenkululeko Ye Sizwe was announced by Chief Buthelezi at the KwaNzimela Diocesan Centre in Northern Natal, more than 100 delegates were present. They represented 18 of the 26 regional authorities in Natal, the KwaZulu executive councillors, most of the members of Ubhoko (an interim preparatory body) and prominent Zulu women. Ubhoko had been formally constituted in February 1974, a year before Inkatha was formed, and in the KLA Buthelezi presented the group as a vehicle of the KwaZulu cabinet to liaise 'with the Zulu public and access to all those celebrities to advise us on any matter informally in the interests of the Zulu nation'.¹⁴⁷ Members of Ubhoko included church leaders such as Bishop Zulu, members of the royal family such as Prince Gideon Zulu, academics such as Otty Nxumalo of the University of Zululand and Professor C.L.S. Nyembezi, business representatives and professionals.¹⁴⁸ Ubhoko decided to adopt a revised version of the Zambian United National Independence Party (UNIP) constitution for Inkatha.

Exactly why the KwaZulu leadership decided to launch Inkatha at this particular time is a complex question. Although the ANC hadn't been active in the country since it was banned in the early 1960s, the spontaneous eruption of the strikes in Durban, and the consistent media coverage of the highly vocal Black Consciousness Movement, were definitely two factors that would have encouraged the formation of a new political grouping that supposedly operated outside the confines of the KwaZulu government. Forced removals, increasing inflation, job shortages, poor living conditions, loss of land, low wages, and the alienation people suffered during this period would have contributed to a feeling of restlessness among them. It was becoming increasingly obvious that people were wanting more affirmative political action. The need to keep the homeland government independent of any extra-political activity, to maintain its legitimacy and legal communication links with the central state, and to ensure its continued existence within the state system by maintaining its un-threatening stance,

¹⁴⁷ G. Mare and G. Hamilton, *An Appetite*, p. 55.

¹⁴⁸ E.J. Langner, *The Founding and Development of Inkatha Yenkuleko Yezwe*, (Masters Thesis, University of South Africa, 1983), p. 18.

demanding that if the leadership were to move into the wider political arena of social mobilisation, it had to create another organization 'independent' of the homeland government.

To recall the arguments in the first chapter, the state was largely absent from the lives of the Zulu people, in terms of providing social services, welfare, health or protection, but was also highly intrusive because of influx control, labour bureaux, police monitoring, alienated civil society. Coupled with the limited capabilities of the homeland government¹⁴⁹; the only way in which the KLA Zulu leaders could enter the extra-parliamentary arena was by creating Inkatha. By including those who constituted the Zulu hierarchy, chiefs and indunas, into the new organization,¹⁵⁰ they were able to create a line of patronage that bound people together. These personalized politics worked to act as a buffer between the central state, the KwaZulu government and the people. Using ethnic allegiances, the KLA leaders were able to forge a strong tribal association.

At a press conference after the launching of Inkatha, Buthelezi spelt out the objectives of the new movement:

Inkatha plainly declares itself to be an instrument of liberation...I have always known that we need structures that spurn rural and urban areas and which spurn provinces. This kind of structure now exists in the form of Inkatha... The era of action has dawned in Southern African, and nothing, not even military might, can succeed in snuffing it out... I believe that now the Whites must see the 'writing on the wall' and must now realise that the country must move towards majority rule.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ Attempts were made to alter the boundaries of apartheid from within. In late 1973, all the bantustan leaders met in Umtata, in the Transkei (Venda and QwaQwa were not represented), deciding to request a meeting with Prime Minister B.J. Vorster, and to ask for a greater share of the taxes generated in 'white' areas, and the repeal of the influx control legislation. After a meeting with the Prime Minister in 1974, it was reported that Vorster did not agree to any of the major requests, but minor concessions were made, such as the inclusion of Africans on the boards of bantustan development corporations. Likewise a similar meeting with Vorster in 1975 proved fruitless, and one author actually saw this as the last straw which led directly to the formation of Inkatha eight days later. Ibid, p. 33.

¹⁵⁰ Article 7 of the Inkatha constitution stated: *Ingonyama* as the King of the Zulu people and his successors, shall be the Patron-in-Chief of the Movement, and likewise all chiefs and deputy chiefs shall be patrons of the Movement in their respective regions, areas or wards; the chairman of Regional Authorities are automatically patrons of each Regional Authority area.

¹⁵¹ Mzala, *Gatsha Buthelezi*, pp. 119-120.

'Liberation', 'majority rule', the language of the ANC and BCM. Was Inkatha to follow in the footsteps of these radical organisations? Was it the organisation that would fulfil these promises? How did it differ from the former organisations? Most importantly, it differed in its programme of recruitment. Whereas both the ANC and BCM attempted to mobilize across ethnic boundaries, to include all classes and sought to highlight a **black** nationalist sentiment, Inkatha concentrated on Zulus, mobilizing support around a recreated Zulu ethnicity. Buthelezi was particularly adept at rekindling the Zulu past, reasserting the glories of King Shaka who first established a Zulu coherence which Buthelezi now calls, 'Zulu nationhood': 'King Shaka had already achieved what other leaders also sought to achieve by the time the British arrived.... The Zulus were already a closely-knit political unit which had reached a state of nationhood which no other black group had reached in the whole of South Africa. In fulfilling the destiny of this country for all its people, the importance of Zulu coherence must never be underestimated by any one'.¹⁵² The emphasis on Zulu nationhood, and reliance on the legends of King Shaka and subsequent Kings, including the present King Goodwill Zwelithini, and Buthelezi's link to the royal lineage is central to the Inkatha agenda. The mobilization of ethnicity around enduring ethnic symbols, provides a powerful basis for recruitment in a country compartmentalized along ethnic lines. Approximately 20 percent (or 6 301 000) of the population of South Africa lives in Natal, 5 049 900 of whom are Africans. More than 90 percent of these Africans are Zulu speaking, and 75 percent of all Zulu speaking people in the country live in Natal. In other words, Africans account for 73 percent of the entire South African population, and 80.1 percent of Natal's population, of which 90 percent are Zulu speaking.¹⁵³

Referring to the Belgian Congo between 1920 and 1959, and the proliferation of patron client networks under colonialism, Jewsiewicki says: 'It was... in city-country space... and in the face of the authoritarian state, that there arose and grew the political

¹⁵² Speech in 1979 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Ulundi, quoted in *Ibid*, p. 120.

¹⁵³ J. Grest and others, 'The Politics of Regionalism: the Natal Option', (presented at the Workshop of Regionalism and Restructuring in Natal, University of Natal, Durban, 28-31 January 1988), p. 5.

culture of ethnicity on the one hand, and specific social practices, holding as much to patronage as to class solidarity, on the other'.¹⁵⁴ Given an authoritarian state, that siphons civil society, providing little in return, there exists a great space for the organisation and manipulation of patronage networks along ethnic lines by those placed in a favourable position: the new petty-bourgeoisie, cabinet ministers, civil servants, business people and professionals, those who have access to the limited resources made available to them via the homeland system. Taking up leadership positions in Inkatha, this strata of society, sought to use ethnic allegiances to perpetuate their favourable positions by attempting to maintain a strong hold over the Zulu people, to act as a buffer to the harsh central state and to extract any surpluses from the population under the cloak of ethnic solidarity. As Inkatha ideology matured, the organisation was also employed to counteract any political action against the central state, and by extension, the KwaZulu government and those in power. This ideological stance was the polar opposite to that of the black leadership of the ANC, COSATU and the Black Consciousness groupings who sought to mobilize people to attain majority rule in South Africa. For them, the existence of homelands was a constant reminder of the apartheid state, and these were the precise institutions that needed to be scrapped in a non-racial system. In the political space created by the central state, mobilized ethnicity is Janus-like: on the one side, it shows the powerful face of resistance, on the other, it shows the face of conservatism and oppression.

Ethnic identity is something very personal and in certain circumstances very public. A creative, imaginative process, the formation of an ethnic identity is an individual thing. Even when it is made rigid by the state, there is still much room for manoeuvre in the state-civil society relationship to allow for a more flexible and variable process of identity formation. But when an organisation attempts to specifically use ethnicity to gain access or sustain such access to scarce resources, then a conversion

¹⁵⁴ B Jewsiewicki, 'The Formation formation of the Political Culture of Ethnicity in the Belgium Congo, 1920-1959', in *The Creation*, ed. by L. Vail, p. 339.

from 'negotiable ethnicity into competitive tribalism' takes place.¹⁵⁵ Then ethnicity carries with it certain rigid characteristics, codified norms and values, specified political and ideological beliefs, easily identifiable by others outside the group. A major part of the debate over moral ethnicity is removed from the realm of ordinary individuals and is instead debated and frozen at leadership level. Ethnic identity is no longer a personal and private thing, but a public statement, carrying with it well known social and political sentiments.

Left on its own, ethnic identities have a dynamic that evolve spatially and through time. It is only when people begin to interrelate with others that their ethnic identity may actually be realized. For example, the Tiwi, according to Hart and Pilling, 'did little as a member of tribe. Only when an outsider turned up did he need to think of himself a member of his band, thought of his band as his people, and of his band territory as his country', and since the bands were flexible and a 'constantly shifting collection of individuals', the Tiwi can appear to be something of an illusion.¹⁵⁶ On the other hand, tensions and latent debates about moral ethnicity may take on new dimensions under different circumstances, like that which occurred among the Kikuyu and MauMau in colonial Kenya. As John Lonsdale argues, the Kikuyu were not politically or in any other sense a tribe, their social order was established by debate over the cultural and moral pluralism of ethnicity.¹⁵⁷ Kikuyu identity, a contested terrain, rigorously debated between those household heads who vested their identity and those of their children in the propertied confederation of subclans, *mbari*; and those unable to inherit land, who put their trust in the tribal collegiality of age or generation, *riika*. These arguments were intensified by the influence of state power and the emerging property relations which hardened *mbari* divisions and subverted *riika* solidarities.¹⁵⁸ MauMau

¹⁵⁵ J. Lonsdale, 'Moral Economy', p. 61.

¹⁵⁶ See C.W. Hart and A.R. Pilling, *Tiwi of North Australia*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964). A. Southall, 'The Illusion of Tribe', p. 41.

¹⁵⁷ J. Lonsdale, 'Moral Economy', 1991.

¹⁵⁸ Ever since the 1860s, external markets had strained internal *mbari* alliances. The relations between landowners and stockowners fell apart, as trade links developed trade with the Swahili and later the British. General friction also grew, the market agreements made by elders served to alienate junior warriors. *Mbari* concentrated on their inner most core, while junior warriors strengthened individual *riika* loyalties on oath, when they decided to disavow their seniors. Ibid, p. 82.

represented an uneasy alliance of several movements representing squatters, townsmen, small farmers or middle class clerks and businessmen. 'The hooligan child of the moderate politicians', it represented a 'renewed battle for Kikuyu authority', against the background of developing capitalist class relations, and an oppressive, extractive state. In the new social circumstances where neither *mbari* nor *riika* could be relied upon to deliver adult rights to all, MauMau, recruiting mainly from those on the periphery of society, raised the question of who was morally qualified to take over the lands captured from the whites. Kikuyu did not know how civic status could be achieved in social practice and how to allocate and control authority. Few 'kikuyu before the 1940s will have had to reflect quite so bitterly on the human tragedy of solidarity betrayed which they pictured in the saying, "Birds which land together fly up separately" or: "helpful age-mates become rival households"'.¹⁵⁹ The most intimate rivals for virtue and power were fellow tribesmen. In this instance, a 'tribal' organisation, formed within the context of intense rivalry and contention over moral virtue, was a camouflage and an effort to sustain a sense of solidarity amidst competing 'tribal' entities, an intrusive state, and novel social circumstances in which old values, norms and structures no longer had the same meaning.

The problems of Zulu ethnic allegiances and identities only seemed to have become a volatile political issue after the strikes organised by the Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU) in May 1985 at the Sarmcol factory in Howick, Pietermaritzburg. The factory, owned by British Tyre and Rubber (BTR), employed 1,300 workers most of whom lived in Mpophomeni, a township that was created in 1969 and which fell within the boundaries of KwaZulu.¹⁶⁰ The primary cause of the strike was the failure of MAWU and BTR Sarmcol to conclude a full recognition

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 59.

¹⁶⁰ Before the construction of Mpophomeni, Sarmcol workers lived in Howick's (a 'white' town) developing shack areas of Hohabe, George and Zenzele. In 1966, Howick was proclaimed a white group area, and African residents of George were removed, while Indians and 'Coloureds' were moved to another group area proclaimed for them in 1979. Zenzele was destroyed under 'urban relocation' legislation in 1967, which de-proclaimed African townships which fell within urban areas. The residents of these areas were moved to Mpophomeni, 15 km from Howick. For a detailed analysis, see D. Bonnin and A. Sitas, 'Lessons from the Sarmcol Strike', in *Popular Struggles*, ed. by W. Cobbett and R. Cohen.

agreement after two years of negotiations. Dispute revolved around procedure regarding retrenchments. Management refused to accept the union's proposal of the 'Last In- First Out' principle, severance pay and an adequate period of notice. In February 1985, the union held a strike ballot in which all workers voted in favour of the strike. The strike started on April 30 and by May 3 all the workers had been dismissed. Violence started when the company brought in an alternative labour force from Imbali, Edendale and Sweetwaters. On 24 June 1985, a crowd stopped a bus and stoned and killed two workers, one of whom had been a Sarmcol employee. Several homes belonging to scab workers were set alight over the weekend. Police patrolled the streets of Mpophomeni escorting buses into the townships, and a 21 day ban on all meetings was imposed in the area. With the backing of the community and the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU), a stay-away was organised in July in Pietermaritzburg to support the striking workers. 92 percent of black workers in the capital observed the stay-away, giving the strikers national and international coverage.

On 1 May 1986, Inkatha formed its own trade union, the United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA).¹⁶¹ COSATU, launched in November 1985, represented a broad shift of key trade unions away from exclusive concentration on factory issues, towards public identification with the national liberation struggles. As one of the leaders explained: 'As a representative of our working class, COSATU is seized with the task of engaging the workers in the general democratic struggle, both as an independent organisation and as an essential component of the democratic forces in the country'.¹⁶² UWUSA was in direct organisational and ideological opposition to COSATU, and tensions were initially reflected in the Sarmcol dispute. In December 1986, nineteen months after the sacking, Mpophomeni was attacked by members of Inkatha and UWUSA. Residents claimed that an Inkatha impi took over the community

¹⁶¹ Within eight months, UWUSA claimed a membership of more than 80 000 workers, and was recognised by major employers such as PG Wood, Mondi Timber, Tongaat Milling, Hultans and Bisonboard and BTR.

¹⁶² R. Lambert and E. Webster, 'The Re-emergence of Political Unionism in Contemporary South Africa?' in *Popular Struggles*, ed. by W. Cobbett and R. Cohen, p. 31.

centre, kidnapped four people and assaulted them. The next day, three of the people were found dead in a car. They were Phineas Sibiya, chairman of the BTR Sarmcol shop-stewards' committee; Filomena Mnikathi, an active voluntary worker for the health committee and Simon Ngubane, a shop-steward and a cultural worker. Inkatha invaded the community the next day, killing another man, and attacking the houses of MAWU shop-stewards. The battle lines were clearly drawn and BTR Sarmcol became known as 'Blood, Tears and Repression'.¹⁶³ Ethnicity became a fervently debated issue, decisions about which side to support carried with it the possibility of death. Violence and terror became the essence of township life and with death came the promise of transcendence.

we shall remember
your smiling and simple faces

there
 stark against
 our sorry faces
 of regret and hopelessness

Your smiling and simple faces
that drove other men
to
 rape our unity
to
 raid our camps
and to kill our pride

you-you...
your smiling and simple faces
meant sleepless nights
to bosses, rulers and their puppets

Your smiling and simple faces
gave hope to Sarmcol workers' struggle
to our liberation struggle
your death now
comrades
proclaims our earthly triumph.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ J. Fairbairn, *Flashes in her Soul*, pp. 50-51. Three years later, an inquest magistrate found that 9 Inkatha members, including the national organiser of the Inkatha Youth Brigade, Joseph Mabaso, were responsible for the killings. In 1991, no-one had as yet been prosecuted.

¹⁶⁴ D. Bonnin and A. Sitas, 'Lessons from Sarmcol', pp. 56-57.

Chapter 4

Inkatha Institutions

Cultural liberation as a philosophy can only be adopted by people who, after analysing their situation have realised that their domination is not only a political one, but that it covers the various aspects of culture such as the educational, economic, political and spiritual areas. It is at such a point that the oppressed people decide to bring about a cultural liberation of their country on various fronts.¹

(Professor S.M.E. Bhengu, the first Secretary-General of Inkatha)

Inkatha views its primary task as the need to employ its membership 'in what each can do best in his or her circumstances',² to bring about 'total change' and 'cultural liberation'.³ Inkatha has focused on and included within its organisation those aspects of African society that were created and developed because of the character and structural formation of the apartheid state. Within a system that fails to provide essential services, protection and welfare, people rely on local social networks to assist them in their struggle to survive. Instead of providing alternatives, Inkatha attempts to co-opt these existing networks. Bulk Buying Clubs, Burial Clubs, Rotating Credit Clubs and Youth and Women's groups have been encouraged and incorporated into Inkatha structures. Patronage-client networks between chiefs and their subjects form the backbone of Inkatha. Consequently, strong-arm tactics employed by chiefs, landlords, shacklords and others who wield power through control of land and housing resources, are also features of Inkatha. The contradictions specific to Inkatha become apparent when it is recognised as part of the KwaZulu government.

Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who is both Chief Minister of the KwaZulu government, and President of Inkatha, exemplifies the inherent contradictions in both organisations.

¹ G. Mare, 'Class Conflict and Ideology among the petty bourgeoisie in the Homelands: Inkatha - A Study', (Paper presented at the Conference on the History of Opposition in Southern Africa, University of Witwatersrand, January, 1978), no page numbering.

² Buthelezi, Annual General Conference, Ulundi, 4 July, 1987.

³ 'By 'total change' Inkatha seems to mean greater participation and power sharing on a number of levels. The homeland governments should be represented at the apex of the central state system; workers should have a greater share in profits and decision-making via tripartite agreements; black business should play a more active role in the overall economy; capital should participate more fully in the homelands; and a more equitable distribution of wealth accrued within the capitalist system.

Although he occupies the most senior position in the homeland government, he denounces its very existence. He is often scathing in his criticism of the homeland system: 'The whole world must be told that we despise what some people euphemistically call "a separate development" or "separate freedoms", which we know to be nothing more than white baaskap (domination)'.⁴ Yet instead of denouncing the policy of 'separate development', and rejecting homeland governments, Buthelezi chose to play an active part within them, and to use that platform to bring about change.⁵ He legitimized homeland government and apartheid by taking up a position of power, but simultaneously rejected their very existence. The sophistry of his arguments permeate Inkatha, becoming manifest as contradictory politics and tactics. All KLA members are also Inkatha members. A professional officer at the Inkatha Institute provides a reason for the confluence between the KLA and Inkatha:

Inkatha can only survive through government resources. Inkatha lives on the KwaZulu government. It supplies a base, a platform for Inkatha to operate in a deprived community. It cannot survive on membership fees only.⁶

By operating from a government platform that institutionalises ethnic separation, Inkatha's political program suffers from similar limitations. As Shula Marks explains: 'the construction of an ethnic "answer" to the problems of urbanisation and modernity - whether by the Zulu society or Inkatha, hampered the growth of the kind of radical vision which could have disputed the chauvinism encouraged by the state'.⁷

⁴ W.De. Kock, *Usuthu! Cry Peace*, (Cape Town: The Open Hand Press, 1986), p. 115.

⁵ In 1970, the KwaZulu Government was founded as part of the 'homeland' system. The homelands were intended to become 'independent' states that would cease to be part of South Africa. There are 10 homelands in South Africa. Four are considered independent. (Transkei, Ciskei, Venda, Bophuthatswana). 6 are 'self-governing' homelands which have not excepted independence. (Lebowa, Ndebele, Gazankulu, Kangwane, Basotho-QwaQwa, KwaZulu). The main difference between those that are 'independent' and those that are not, is that residents in the former category loose their South African citizenship and become citizens of the independent homelands. Eight million Africans from independent homelands are now considered foreigners in South Africa. There are dramatic consequences with respect to the supply of welfare and social services. For example, in Taylor Bequest Hospital at Matatiele in Natal, 98 percent of patients are from the Transkei. Dr.Clark, in charge of hospital services complained that, 'Natal's biggest health problem is that every one of our hospitals is bursting with foreign blacks.' C.de. Beer, *The South African Disease. Apartheid Health and Health Services*, (Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1986), p. 60.

⁶ C. McCaul, *Towards an Understanding of Inkatha Yesizwe*, (Unpublished Honours dissertation, University of Witwatersrand, 1983), p. 14.

⁷ S. Marks, 'Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity. Natal and the Politics of Cultural Nationalism', (Paper presented at the Workshop in Regionalism and Restructuring in Natal, University of Natal, 28 - 31, January), 1988, p. 37.

This chapter explores the various aspects of Inkatha membership and its institutions, specifically, the Women's and the Youth Brigades. Like the character of the organisation itself, Inkatha institutions are not clearly demarcated, nor can they be neatly categorised. One of the implications of migratory labour, and the frequent movement of people between the rural and urban areas, is that the numerical composition of Inkatha institutions is variable. With the proximity of violence, allegiances change and organisation is also disrupted, making it difficult for political categorisation. What will be made clear in this chapter, is that Inkatha is an organisation that is embedded in Zulu society. It exists within the ethnic space created by the state, and has permeated all aspects of that space, articulating the ethnic ideas of those within.

Inkatha membership:

Inkatha membership is predominantly Zulu. The leadership rationalizes it in the following way:

It always amazes me when people tend to imply that it would be a disgrace if Inkatha were predominantly Zulu. Even if the 1,3 million members of Inkatha were all Zulu, Inkatha would still be a powerful movement in its own right... The Zulus themselves are a product of revolution. Shaka welded them into a nation from a number of tribes... They thus passed the state of tribalism a long time ago, in the 1820s. That's why Zulu today are not a tribe.⁸

In a KLA debate, Buthelezi stated that 'all members of the Zulu nation are automatically members of Inkatha if they are Zulus. They may be people who are inactive members as no one escapes being a member as long as he or she is a member of the Zulu nation'.⁹ King Goodwill Zwelethini emphasized this point in a speech delivered on Soweto Day on 16 June 1986:

I command you my people to rout out but not to persecute (the ANC, UDF and COSATU). I command you to eliminate from your midst all those disgusting usurpers of our dignity without a shed of malice in your beings.... Rout them out only to make them one of us. Thrash them, if necessary, only into becoming better Zulus.¹⁰

⁸ Dr Oscar Dhlomo, past Secretary-General of Inkatha in W.De. Kock, *Usuthu!*, p. 58.

⁹ G. Mare, 'Tradition and Control: The Pressures of the past in Natal', (Paper presented at the Workshop on Regionalism and Restructuring in Natal, University of Natal, 28 - 31 January, 1988), p. 5.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 6.

The emphasis on ethnic identity cuts across class categorisation. Under the banner of Inkatha, urban and rural workers, women, youth, professionals and businessmen can find a home on the basis of ethnic allegiance. The distinctions Inkatha makes are along the lines of age, gender, wealth and prestige. This kind of categorisation tends to stifle radical and militant organisation and protest. For example, an organisation like the Women's Brigade which recruits across class and job categories, lumps together a wide range of specific grievances and requirements under a single all-encompassing body. With petty-bourgeois leaders, the indistinguishable mass of followers have little option but to follow the suggestions of the leaders. Organisation around specific issues relating to work or the home are discouraged, and the leadership is unlikely to articulate the desires of specific categories of its membership.

In his survey in 1978 Schlemmer found that 95 percent of Inkatha membership was Zulu and of its 1000 branches, there were only 36 outside Natal and 203 in urban areas.¹¹ In 1982, John Kane-Berman found that 30 of the 1200 Inkatha branches were in Soweto, the majority still being in rural KwaZulu.¹² Both seemed to suggest that Inkatha support was mainly female, and comprised of school children, civil servants, chiefs, professionals and business men. Southall ascribed to Inkatha a petty-bourgeois class character, indicated by the drawing back on the commitment to majority rule, the espousal of non-violence, and the favourable orientation towards enterprise.

Contrary to conclusions drawn by these academics, in his sample among urban proletariat in KwaMashu, John Brewer found that Inkatha was successful in mobilising some degree of support among African working classes and educated groups. His surveys equipped him to conclude that:

The urban support of Inkatha is not charismatic or traditional in nature; it does not ignore pragmatic policy issues; it does not possess an ethnic ambivalence; members in the urban areas are not older and more conservative or coerced into

¹¹ L. Schlemmer, 'The Sturring Giant: Observations on Inkatha and other black political movements in South Africa', in *The Apartheid Regime*, ed. by R. Price and G.C. Rosberg, (Berkeley, 1980).

¹² J. Kane-Berman, 'Inkatha, the paradox of South African politics', *Optima*, Vol 30, No 2, February 26, 1982, p. 154.

joining. Nor is there an absence of members from the urban proletariat.¹³

Of 225 respondents, 105 or 41.2 percent admitted to being Inkatha members. Nearly two thirds of those who supported Inkatha were under 40 years of age, the bulk being between 21 and 40. Inkatha members were considerably younger than non-Inkatha members, 51 percent of whom were over 40 years. Non-Inkatha members were slightly better educated¹⁴. Inkatha members generally completed high school, but had no tertiary education. Brewer suggests that this educational distribution implied that 'Inkatha respondents came from a wide range of occupations, covering all the socio-economic groups but with a tendency towards the urban proletariat'.¹⁵ The proletarian character of Inkatha support was reflected in the monthly income: 84 percent earned below R200 per month, and just over half earned less than R150 per month. Of those who earned more than R251 per month, 29.2 percent were Inkatha members.¹⁶

McCaul drew up a yearly Inkatha membership profile from various conference reports:

1976 - 30 000
1977 - 120 000
1978 - 175 000
1980 - 300 000
1981 - unknown
1982 - 411 000
1983 - 750 000
1984 - 900 000
1985 - 1 million¹⁷

¹³ J.D. Brewer, 'The membership of Inkatha in KwaMashu', *African Affairs*, Vol 84, No 334, January 1985, p. 134.

¹⁴ Only 35,3 percent of those at degree or diploma level supported Inkatha. Ibid, p. 121.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 121.

¹⁶ Ibid, p 122. There is also a tendency among Inkatha members to be unemployed or to have experienced unemployment in the last year. 44,2 percent of Inkatha members were unemployed, the corresponding figure for non-Inkatha supporters was 33,3. While 70.5 percent of Inkatha support had been unemployed for some part of 1984, the same was true for only 58,7 percent of non-Inkatha support.

¹⁷ C McCaul, *Towards an Understanding*, p. 7.

Official Inkatha figures from the Inkatha Institute are: ¹⁸

	1985		1987		1989	
Youth Brigade	438 936	38%	586 951	22%	718 875	41%
General Members	323 466	28%	1 544 609	37%	555 258	32%
Women's Brigade	392 732	34%	556 060	21%	464 048	27%
Total	1 155 134		2 687 620		1 738 181	

Membership figures have often been exaggerated, and show wide variations. For example Kane-Berman's estimates show that by the end of 1978 there were 350 000 fully paid-up members. By the end of 1980, despite a gain of 61 000 new members, there were only 187 000 paid up members. That is, only 36 percent of members had renewed their membership. But Kane-Berman says that Inkatha calculates membership on original joining fees and 'membership does not lapse with failure to pay the annual subscription and resignations... have been negligible. In Inkatha's view, 350 000 added to 61 000 would give a more accurate reflection of membership in 1980'.¹⁹ In a letter to all branches in 1979, Buthelezi complained that only 5 percent of Inkatha members were paid-up. He attacked the thousands who, when I return from abroad or address meetings, mob me with shouts of "Buthelezi Our Leader" and yet fail to pay their membership'.²⁰ In the same year, the Mayor of Umlazi, Mr.K. Ngubese said that membership in the township had dropped: 'when we started off, I could say... three quarters of Umlazi was supporting Inkatha... a person that does not hold a current membership is no member, because I think we are now talking about people who joined us sometime back and when the membership, you know, went right up to something like 150 000 as the chief always says...'²¹

¹⁸ S.A.A. Hassim, *Black Women in Political Organisations: A case study of the Inkatha Women's Brigade, 1976 to the Present*, (Masters thesis, University of Natal, Durban, June 1990), p. 7.

¹⁹ J. Kane-Berman, 'Inkatha', p. 155.

²⁰ G. Mare and G. Hamilton, *An appetite for Power. Buthelezi's Inkatha and South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), p. 72.

²¹ Interview with Mr. K. Ngubese, Killie Campbell Oral History Project, Durban, 28 November 1979.

Given the variability regarding membership claims, I think that what the figures do in fact show is the approximate revenue accrued by Inkatha in any year. However, actual support for and allegiance to Inkatha is not dependent on or tested by whether or not one has paid ones membership dues. The test is far more ominous, a life-threatening test of allegiance: whether one is open to recruitment for defensive or offensive action against others.²² These demands form the backdrop to the trauma and agony associated with debates over the concept of 'Zuluness' and allegiance to Inkatha. Membership figures do not reflect who is prepared to fight on behalf of Inkatha, you will have people who haven't paid their membership dues, but will fight, and some who have paid and will not fight.

The Inkatha structure includes branches, regions, a national council and a general conference.²³ It has also created a number of organisations responsible for development, information and propagation. These include the Inkatha Institute which is a research unit under the directorship of the sociologist, Professor Lawrence Schlemmer, the Inkatha Development Office is an aid organisation for community development projects and Isizwe-Sechaba (PTY) LTD, an overseas information office. Khulani Holdings was created by Inkatha and Inyanda (the Natal and kwaZulu African Chamber of Commerce), and according to the managing director it aimed to give 'small black shareholders an opportunity to invest in the free enterprise system'.²⁴ Despite the

²² This will be discussed in detail in chapter 5.

²³ Branches have a minimum of 30 members and a branch executive consists of 6 members. The entrance fees for new members is R5, annual fees are R3 for adults and R1 for the youth. There are about 2500 branches, 90 percent of these are in Natal and KwaZulu. From the branches, members are elected to 20 regional committees throughout the country. The Youth and Women's Brigade are the most significant institutions at this level. The national council is the policy making body of Inkatha. The Central Committee has 103 members and is the main controlling body of Inkatha. The president is elected every five years at the general conference, and has the power to appoint members to the Central Committee. Inkatha membership fees vary for different categories. Members of the KLA and the Central Committee have to pay a monthly fee equal to 5 percent of their salaries, exclusive of allowances. Special annual levies between R11 and R20 are prescribed for chiefs, doctors, lawyers and social workers. Affiliated bodies, like the Farmers' Association, Teachers' Association, Inspectors Association, pay an entrance fee and annual levee which varies from R50 - R100. For more details see E.J. Langner, *The Founding and Development of Inkatha YenKululeko Yesizwe*, (Masters thesis, University of South Africa, January 1983), p. 71.

²⁴ S.J. Mhlungu who is also a director of the KwaZulu Finance and Investment Corporation, a KLA member, Inkatha Central Committee member, a member of the Mashonangashoni regional authority and a member of the regional board of Barclays Bank. G. Mare and G. Hamilton, *An Appetite*, p. 113.

diversity of Inkatha institutions, a substantial part of the organisation is taken up by the chiefs.

Ababusi bomhlaba, the rulers of the land: Chiefs and Indunas:

In the past, chiefly prestige and status came above all from efficiency, fairness, benevolence, trustworthiness, and provision of good government.

The chief maintained the coherence of the clan. As Harris explains:

He administered a form of justice that was entirely based on the moral community of the clan and the chieftom, protected the army with his war medicines and generally regulated production strategies. The chief gave his followers a sense of belonging and unity by using symbols of office that were believed to invest him with special powers and by organising various rites that were limited to clan members....²⁵

A chief was believed to be in partnership with the community, even though he had powers superior his people. This was symbolised on his death, when all men would shave their heads as women do on the death of their husbands, for the chief was regarded as the husband of all the men in his community.²⁶ The chief 'depended on the general body of tribesmen for his armed force. He was responsible to his councillors and people. Coercion could stretch no further than their consent. He ran the risk of being deposed or assassinated if he abused his authority beyond the point of their endurance'.²⁷ The erosion and undermining of the 'partnership', and the diminishing influence of the clan or community in providing checks and balances against abuse of chiefly power, initially occurred under colonial rule, and was regularized under the National Party government. As part of the state bureaucracy, chiefs were used to collect taxes, supply labour when it was required, control scarce resources and to maintain the judicial moral order of the community. Migrant labour detached men from the land,

²⁵ P. Harris, 'Exclusion, Classification and Internal Colonialism: The Emergence of Ethnicity Among the Tsonga-Speakers of South Africa', in *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, ed. by L. Vail, (California: James Currey, 1989), p. 90.

²⁶ M.M. Fuze, *The Black People and whence they came*, (Durban: University of Natal Press, 1979), p. 27.

²⁷ H.J. Simons, *African Women. Their Legal Status in South Africa*, (London: C. Hurst and Co, 1968), p. 58.

weakened family and community ties, relegated the role of chiefs to the administration of the elderly, unemployed, unemployable, women and children.

The changing status of chiefs, the disrespect they now encountered, the lowering of their power in relation to the community, contribute to their conservative attitudes and reluctance to comply with the changing demands of the times. They have failed to encourage education, upward mobility among Africans, and the emancipation of women. The chiefship itself is not inherently conservative. The battle to maintain past power, status and prestige in the situation where all elements of the past have been restructured, eroded or replaced, ignites fiery debate. Chiefs have had to go through the painful process of coming to terms with overnight changes in their roles and personal status. The result has been a hardening of attitudes, extreme reluctance to alter the status of others, a conservative attitude that has further alienated them from the people they attempt to rule.

The debate in the KLA over the repeal of Section 28 of the Natal Code of Bantu Law exemplifies the emotive struggles taking place amongst chiefs. The Select Committee on Legal Disabilities of Zulu Women was set up in May 1974 to investigate and make recommendations about certain sections of the Natal Code regarding the legal status of African women. By the Code, 'Women... have no legal capacity... They cannot own property in their own right, inherit, or act as the guardian of their children. They cannot enter into contracts, sue or be sued, without the aid of their male guardian. Regardless of their age and marital condition, women are always subject to the authority of men'.²⁸ The committee recommended that Section 27 of the Natal Code be repealed,²⁹ which makes redundant Section 28 which provided for the emancipation of women. It also proposed that women subject to the recommendations of the local chief or councillor be guardians of their children; that lobola be regarded as custom and not law, the amount to be decided by the parties concerned; that all marriages should be in

²⁸ Ibid, p. 187.

²⁹ Section 27 (2). Subject to the provisions of section twenty-eight a native female is deemed a perpetual minor in law and has no independent powers save as to her own person and as specially provided in this Code. Ibid, p. 202.

community of property; that widows be allowed to inherit their husbands' estates and that they should be joint executors of the estate together with the eldest child.³⁰ A heated debate followed in the KLA over the recommendations. Councillor Chief Maci expressed great concern about the possibility of men losing their superior status in the community:

Woman was created a number of days after man had been created and man was bequeathed with the authority over the woman, and also the animals that were created together with man. Even the Bible says explicitly that the man will rule over the woman.³¹

Mr A.T. Kanyile related the reformulation of the code regarding women, directly to the role and lifestyles of chiefs:

It is something very special for a man to have a son, because then he knows that he has an heir to his estate..... our chiefs... like to have many children and a lot of women, and they regard this as the old way of living luxuriously, and why must we interfere with them.³²

Of considerable concern to the chiefs was that if an emancipated 'daughter of a chief becomes a chief and subsequently marries a man with a different surname, then her son will become chief after her death'.³³ This would initiate a new line of succession via the female line, undermining the patriarchal character of Zulu society. Despite this conservative trend in the debate, the KLA agreed to request the central state to repeal Section 27 of the Code. It was only in 1981 when KwaZulu became self-governing, that legislation was passed altering the legal status of women.

The desire to preserve some semblance of hierarchy and status in the community, has been at the centre of the struggles among chiefs and commoners. In the new environment, under novel conditions, precisely what contributes to a chief's prestige

³⁰ Report of Select Committee on Legal Disabilities of Zulu Women, KLAD, Vol 7, 1976, p. 829. Section 28 of the Natal Code allowed for emancipation of unmarried, widowed or divorced women. If a woman is the owner of immovable property or by virtue of good character, education, thrifty habits or any other good and sufficient reason, she can be emancipated and freed from the control of her father or guardian by order of the native commissioner's court. In terms of the Bantu Administration Act, African marriages were contracted out of community of property. If a man died intestate, the estate dissolved according to customary law and the nearest male relative became the heir. The Code fixed lobola at 10 cows or R100.

³¹ Chief Maci, *KLAD*, Vol 9, 1976, p. 541.

³² Mr.A.T. Kanyile, *Ibid*, p. 545.

³³ Executive Councillor for Justice, *Ibid*, p. 559.

and status is unknown. With decreasing and inadequate resources to operate patronage networks, the constant movement of people towards the urban areas, and the increasing dominance of the city culture and values, many chiefs have attempted to gain prestige by resorting to strong arm tactics. Violent methods have been employed to rid their communities of non-Inkatha members, to prevent the spread of progressive ideas that would undermine chiefly power. The resilience and strength of their armies, their ruthlessness in handling the assumed enemies, and the fear which they have created in the community are some of the new elements constituting status. But these new statuses also carry the trauma and anxiousness associated with questions about morality, justice and religion. How do chiefs explain to the ancestors their brutal treatment of their own people, killing their sons and daughters? The chasm between the living and the dead has never been wider for a group which attempts to narrow that distance. The struggles within individual chiefs are devastating and painful.

The South African state and chiefs:

By the Native Administration Act, later known as the Black Administration Act, the State President became the Supreme Chief of all Africans in the Republic of South Africa. Section 2(7) of the Act gave the State President absolute power to depose or appoint a chief:

The State President may recognise or appoint any person as a chief of a Black tribe and may make regulations prescribing the duties, powers, privileges and conditions of service of chiefs so recognised and appointed. The State President may depose any chief so recognised or appointed.³⁴

As Unterhalter says, the Act intended that the chief 'should be a local functionary, carrying out those functions required to secure control of the areas within his jurisdiction and to provide for the routine administration of these areas, but only on the basis that a chief shall enforce within his area all laws and orders of the government relating to administration of blacks'.³⁵ But the powers of chiefs are not so neatly

³⁴ D. Unterhalter, 'Legitimate Expectation and the Law of Chiefs', in *No Place to rest. Forced Removals and the Law in South Africa*, ed. by C. Murray and C.O'Regan, (Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 223.

³⁵ Ibid, p 223

demarcated and specified. Old tribal laws and structures have continued to the present in deformed and convoluted ways. Pivotal to chiefly power is his control over land tenure which provides the basis of patronage. He has judicial powers over specified matters within the tribe, can impose taxes, penalties and fines, and can expatriate an individual or group for anti-social behaviour, including confirmed accusations of sorcery.³⁶ One of the temporal obligations of chiefs is to care for the spiritual welfare of the tribe, acting as supreme religious intermediary on the tribe's behalf in conjunction with the great *inyanga* to communicate with the royal ancestors. The chief represents supreme dominant descent-group headship, giving the office-holder the immediate tribal powers of high judge and controller of land rights, with the command of political allegiance which that implies.

KwaZulu has its own enactment, the KwaZulu Chiefs and Headmen's Act 8 of 1974. Although chiefs are still appointed in terms of Section 2 of the Black Authorities Act, the power to do so rests with the KwaZulu cabinet. Primary importance is given to control and policing areas against anti-government activity. Section 6(d) and (e) state that a chief or headman³⁷ shall:

Maintain law and order and report to the government, without delay, any matter of import or concern, including any condition of unrest or dissatisfaction;
to exercise within his area, in relation to any resident-
(1) The powers of arrest conferred upon him, in his capacity as peace officer...
(2) The powers of search and seizure, relating to stolen stock, liquor, habit forming drugs, arms, ammunition and explosives...

They are also ordered to promptly report:

The holding of any unauthorized assembly or armed persons or any riotous or unlawful meeting or gathering.³⁸

³⁶ D.H. Reader, *Zulu Tribe in Transition. The Makhanya of Southern Natal*, (Manchester University Press, 1966), p. 255.

³⁷ The word *induna* is a generic term meaning almost any kind of leader: an officer of the state or army, a judge of cases, a headman or councillor. Few authors differentiate between *induna yesigodi* (ward *induna*), *induna yamabutho* (regimental *induna*), *induna yamacala* (*induna* of cases), and a loose, general usage indicating headman or a King's or chief's councillor. *Indunas* are commoners in the tribe, men of inferior kinship standing who would have no political power if the chief-in-council, and hence the tribe, had not allowed it. Ibid, pp. 264-266.

³⁸ From the KwaZulu 'Zulu Chiefs and Headmen's Act (8) of 1974 in G. Mare and G. Hamilton, *An Appetite*, pp. 230- 232.

They are officially barred from becoming a member or to 'take part in any activities or in any manner to promote the objects of any organisation of which are the unconstitutional overthrow of the Government and shall not encourage disobedience to or resistance against the law'.³⁹ However, there are no guidelines for chiefs clearly stating procedures, rules and regulations of office. Broad definitions of power and ambiguity regarding the parameters of chiefly power contribute towards arbitrary rule, patronage politics and violent mechanisms of control and rule-enforcement.

With changing environments, constituencies and social circumstances brought about by influx control measures, relocation, migrant labour and resettlement schemes, the powers and functions of chiefs have had to change accordingly. During a KLA debate in 1976, chiefs complained bitterly about the insolent, violent and 'hot headed disobedient people' they had to contend with. Some wanted the fines imposed by chiefs to be increased from R4 to a maximum of R100, which was equivalent to the price of a cow. The central state gave permission to increase the fine to R200. But a member of parliament recognised that increasing fines 'would not change the insolent behaviour which exist in the community because we normally find that people who are disobedient to their chiefs are the poor people', for whom corporal punishment might be necessary.⁴⁰ Later in the debate, a suggestion was made to empower chiefs to eject undesirable persons and or families from their areas, and that a place be made available by KwaZulu for such people. Another suggested that 'communists and house breakers can be given a separate place where they can be kept'.⁴¹ As conditions became more removed from any sense of past community, so the relations between chiefs and the people become more difficult, widening the space for corruption, nepotism and dishonesty.

By incorporating chieftainship into a rigid structure, and by appropriating the power of hiring and firing, the state effectively disempowered and alienated African

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid, pp. 89-90.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 90.

people from evaluating and assessing the performance of chiefs. Relations of power were distorted and chiefs now functioned in an artificially created environment. For example, the Tshidi of Bophuthatswana differentiated clearly between the office of chiefship and its holder, which contributed towards a dynamic system in which the distribution of power was the object of a constant competitive process. Although chiefs are entitled to honour and respect, the Tshidi recognise that as human beings, they were fallible and can be powerful or weak, thus earning respect or becoming the object of scorn. As Comaroff says, most significantly 'his performance is often debated, assessed and openly criticised in public, despite the fact that formal Tswana usage suggests that an incumbent is the embodiment of the chiefdom'.⁴² As a primary rule, the heir is the eldest son of his father's principal wife. Many secondary rules permit manipulations of status and legitimation of rival claims. One of the most significant secondary rules is referred to as *go tsena mo tlung*, to enter the house, according to which any man who dies without an heir should have one raised in his name. This is undertaken by a younger brother or close agnate who cohabits with the widow of the dead man. Another rule allows for the bearing of children on behalf of a barren woman, a younger sister, who cohabits with the husband. These two rules, which admit the possibility that biological and jural parentage need not coincide, provide the basis for much argument over the relative status of members of the ruling lineage. Counter claims to chiefship may be made by other royals, and if he gets enough support, the presiding chief is deposed and the new chief takes over.⁴³ Likewise among the Zulu, disputes over chiefship provided the basis for dynamic politics, and competition and debate in the community. In Zulu law, the first son of the Chief Wife

⁴² J.L. Comaroff, 'Chiefship in a South African Homeland. A Case Study of the Tshidi Chiefdom of Bophuthatswana', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 1, No 1, 1974, p. 38.

⁴³ To maintain the rules governing chiefship, the Tshidi get round the practice of deposing supposed chiefs, by firstly supporting the claims to chiefship made by other royals. The presiding chief is then considered to be a regent, usually appointed when the heir is still a minor, who must hand over the chiefship when the tribe decides that the heir is ready to assume office. If the regent rules ineptly, or refuses to relinquish his position when required, he may be removed in favour of the heir of another regent. Ibid.

is the rightful heir to chiefship, 'but who the chief wife is, is germane to many of the disputes surrounding hereditary positions'.⁴⁴

Bophuthatswana became a 'self-governing' Homeland in 1972, and the chiefship was incorporated into the formal structures of the government. The precessual dynamics of the indigenous system were ignored and the office and the office holder were not inseparable. A chief was appointed according to recorded ethnology, and once in office people were powerless to oust him via counter-claims to the office, competition and debated legitimacy. One of the results of interference in the indigenous political process was that some chiefdoms have been left with unpopular office-holders who cannot be removed. Although they enjoy little internal legitimacy, they are supported from the outside. The new political structure transformed the indigenous system whereby incumbency was regulated by public evaluation, and policy was determined by negotiation and accession by popular support. Those who ruled became removed from the people, the debates intrinsic to political and social decision making were taken out of the hands of the latter. As one Tshidi aptly describes the process:

We cannot see it [the government of Bophuthatswana]. It does nothing for us. There are men in Mafeking, it is true. But who are they? We do not know their faces and until they show us what they are doing, we will not know them.⁴⁵

There is an interesting twist to the tale: When the Tshidi failed to remove chief Kebalepile Montshiwa by a petition sent to the local Bantu Commissioner, the chief was so upset and shocked by the behaviour of his subjects, that he turned to alcohol and pethedine.⁴⁶ Unable to remove the chief, the Tshidi resorted to mystical explanations to account for his inability to provide good government. According to the first explanation, an ancestor, Chief Montshiwa (1849-96), had buried a brandy bottle in the royal cattle-byre, uttering an injunction that if any of his descendants drank European liquor they would be unable to rule effectively. Another suggested that

⁴⁴ Buthelezi, Symposium of Faction Fighting, Umlazi division of the University of Zululand, 3 April, 1987.

⁴⁵ J. Comaroff, 'Chiefship in a South African Homeland', 1974, p. 44.

⁴⁶ The petition was based on the claim that Kebalepile's father had not been the legitimate heir of the previous chief. Kebalepile became a registered pethedine addict.

Kebalepile was cursed by his father as a punishment for his aggressive and wilful behaviour. In the 1960s a council administration system emerged among the Tshidi, and Kabalepile moved upward in the homeland structure. The tribal secretary who was a popular man, assumed leadership of the administration. But this still did not achieve good government as the Tshidi conceptualised it. For as Comaroff says, 'good government does not simply connote bureaucratic efficiency; it embodies an integrated set of ideas concerning consultative decision-making and participation in executive processes'.⁴⁷ What's more, the council administration eliminated an essential aspect of Tshidi politics, it closed the channels of competition for power.

But what is it that distinguishes the Zulu from the Tshidi? Why did Zulu chiefs turn to violence when their rule was threatened. I offer some tentative suggestions. Unlike the Tshidi, Zulu chiefs form an integral part of Inkatha and hence the KwaZulu government. Since Inkatha is a socio-political organisation that supposedly operates outside the confines of parliament, it is in competition with other such organisations that operate in the same space. Having access to weapons licensed by the KwaZulu government and control over land, chiefs have the capability to mobilise formidable armies. As the largest ethnic group in the country, the Zulu's have a substantially larger base from which to recruit. Remembered for their resistance to colonial rule, Zulu chiefs have a wealth of history from which to draw upon in order to substantiate the war-like stance they choose to adopt.

The chiefship is such an essential part of ethnic identity, that even when it is transformed by external sources, people attempt to find internal explanations to account for these changes. The desire for continuity and stability in the face of overwhelming changes, lies at the heart of this reaction. Likewise, when people were forced to engage in migrant labour to meet new and higher living costs, they used the money to supplement their rural lifestyles, and not to change their way of life. But as more and more elements of the old structure and environment were eroded, the attitudes of some

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 49.

sectors changed. The educated, the young, migrant workers, Christians and the petty-bourgeoisie began to develop new identities. These identities reflected changing relations to the land, new relations of power and new relations between people. But these identities nevertheless retained significant aspects of the past. A Tshidi described the chiefship as being 'like an empty chair, and the important thing about an empty chair is that you can sit on it... or you can remove it outside'.⁴⁸ But, one needs to add that, it is far more difficult to remove the concept of it from the internal perspectives of those people who had experienced it in the past. For those generations that have only experienced old structures in their recreated and oppressive forms, ethnic identity has new elements and structures fashioned by new experiences. Nevertheless, this identity is bounded by the sense of community and continuity. The basic structure of the language, ways of seeing things and explaining them, ways of expressing oneself in art, preferred foods, the thirst for information about past social history and the quest for a common identity, constitute the elements of continuity between generations.

People on the land have had to deal with *iziphathi mandla*, those who wield power, for much of their lives. But the relationship between the chief and his tribesmen was one of mutual respect. 'Not even a chief', said headman Manqoba, 'can violate the *umuzi* (Kraal) of an *umnumzana* (tribesman)'.⁴⁹ Permission must be granted by a tribesman to an *inceku*, attendant of a chief, before a chief can enter a kraal. If he is invited in, he enters the kraal like an ordinary common, *umfokazana*, and must salute the head of the kraal. It is only then that the *umnumzane* reinstates the chief to his dignified position by saluting him, *ayikhulekele!*. Similarly, on leaving the kraal, a chief once again becomes a commoner and 'asks the way', *acele indlela*, asks for permission to leave, and only on the road does he become a chief again. Once this relationship is altered, and chiefship becomes an office controlled by the central state, the mutual respect intrinsic to the relationship is lost. The relations of power become

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 48.

⁴⁹ A. Vilakazi, *Zulu Transformations. A study of the dynamics of social change*, (Durban: University of Natal Press, 1965), p. 24.

skewed, and the chiefship is recreated as an office with special material resources that enables the office-holder to develop patronage networks far removed from reciprocity. Exploitation bribery and corruption become the order of the day. The constant movement of people and the changing relations to the land and capital, create new associations, networks and social systems. By rigidly maintaining the chiefship when all other aspects of the past system have been eroded, dismantled, or destroyed, the office is given a new meaning. It then functions as part of the oppressive state.

The changing relationship between people and the chiefs, has been mirrored by changing relations between men and women, and between women and the state. The painful, bitter struggles between husbands and wives about power and dominance in the domestic unit have been in existence through time, under all political and social systems. These struggles are over economic independence, property relations, the division of labour and the value it carries, the demarcation of separate social spaces, views on child rearing, relations to extended families, and expectations of public behaviour. These are struggles about the reinvention of normative codes and behavioural roles that constitute the domestic unit. In turn, these struggles influence the nature and characteristics of the political and economic spheres. They determine official attitudes towards each of the sexes. For example, in African society, the entire system of control over cattle in the form of bridewealth, constituted a pivotal feature which facilitated control over women. As Bozzoli says, such a system 'must be predicated upon the fact that the women were "able" to be controlled, exchanged and bought into the lineages from the outside'.⁵⁰ The outcomes of domestic struggles determined the respective roles of the sexes in colonial and capitalist systems.

To understand exactly how Inkatha manages to mobilise women, we need to know how the Zulu conceptualize women. Most authors emphasize modern forms of exploitation and gender problems, failing to highlight past Zulu conceptions of women, their status and role in society. This has a direct bearing on the way in which

⁵⁰ B. Bozzoli, 'Marxism, Feminism and South African Studies', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 9, No 2, April 1983, p. 142.

Zulu women were treated under colonial rule, and are treated in contemporary Zulu society.

'Mother of birth and death': Conceptions of Zulu Women

The continuities between the past and present are clearly evident in the ways in which women are treated, the roles ascribed to them and the level of respect they are given in African communities. Ideas about a women's status and role in pre-colonial and pre-capitalist African society, form the basis for much of the attitudes in contemporary Zulu society. Ideas about women are ultimately based on her abilities of reproduction. As 'mother of birth', *umdlezane*, and 'mother of death', *umfelokazi*, Zulu women are considered dangerous and impure.⁵¹ They are thought to be on the cutting edge between the living and the dead, between stability and disruption, marginal and yet intrinsic to the continuity of society. *Umnyama*, pollution, is a mystical force which reduces resistance to disease, and brings about ill luck and misfortune, rendering the inflicted disagreeable and repulsive to others. A woman who has just given birth is dangerous to herself, her baby and men.⁵² Men not only become vulnerable because of her pollution, she can also harm their virility if they eat food cooked by her or share her eating utensils. She is confined to her room for three days which is followed by seven days when she has to cover herself in a blanket whenever she goes outside. She is polluted and remains an *umdlezane* as long as she has the afterbirth emission. Not only is she dangerous to men, but she must also avoid cattle, cattle byres, food and plantation fields.⁵³ Although she ensures the continuity of the lineage, a woman is isolated from the family, and her inferior and peripheral position is once again reasserted. A menstruating woman also has a contagious pollution,

⁵¹ H. Ngubane, *Body and Mind in Zulu Medicine. An Ethnography of health and disease in Nyuswa-Zulu thought and practice*, (London: Academic Press, 19770, p. 88.

⁵² A baby is endangered because of the contamination which the mother can easily contract from the environment because of her polluted state of low resistance. In a sample of 161 cases of infant mortality in the Nyuswa district, 57 (36 percent) were attributed to the mothers vulnerability during gestation. As long as she is lactating, a women remains with some form of *umdlezane*, of reduced intensity. As protection, they usually smear red ochre on the soles of their feet. Ibid, pp. 79-99.

⁵³ After ten days, she smears red ochre on her body to protect her and others from danger. During this period she is believed to dry up the udders of the milking cows, she may shrivel up and wither away plants, groundnuts being the most sensitive. Ibid, pp. 78-79.

although not as dangerous as a *umdlezane*. Although she may mix with men, if she has sexual intercourse with them, she endangers their virility. She must avoid cattle and crops. In death, the corpse and chief mourner are highly polluted. The chief mourner is always a married woman. In her role in birth and death, women are associated with incomplete spiritual states, the unborn and recently deceased. Her impurity and marginality are expressions of her reproductive role in society.

Ubuthakathi, sorcery, is significant in Zulu life. It explains bad luck, ill-health and the break-up of homesteads, that is, all those things that threaten the continuity of the community. As outsiders to a lineage, married women threaten the core of Zulu society. The sorcerer, *umthakathi*, can engage in three types of sorcery. A night sorcerer was 'created with an evil heart', *wabunjwa ngenhliziyo embi*. Always a man, he rides naked on a baboon facing backwards, and in the night, he resurrects corpses transforming them into dwarfs, *imikhovu*, to till his fields at night, to bury noxious medicines in the homes of his enemies, or to scatter them on pathways to harm any member of the community. Economically successful, these men are considered selfish, malicious and dangerous to the community.⁵⁴ Day sorcery, carried out by both men and women, occurs in situations rife with competition, jealousy and rivalry, as in polygamous or extended family situations among wives and co-workers. The strongly proscribed *Uzalo* sorcery or, lineage sorcery (those who have a common grandfather), occurs in homesteads that have been segmented after the sons have moved out. In this case, an agnate is believed to have persuaded the ancestors to favour him and to abandon one or more members of the lineage. This is discovered at an *umhlahlo*, consultation with a diviner. The convicted person is exiled with his family, and his house is looted and burned.

Sorcery operates along structural lines, men practice sorcery that can harm the whole community, and other homesteads, while women practice sorcery in individual conflicts and personal animosities. A married woman's peripheral position in her

⁵⁴ In a sample carried out at the Nyuswa Reserve, of the five men who were sorcerers, four were ethno-doctors, *izinyanga*, and the fifth was the husband of a successful diviner. Together they owned 74 of the 352 cattle belonging to 100 homesteads, that is 21 percent. Ibid, p. 33.

husbands lineage is illustrated by the fact that although jurally and legally she is under the control of her husband and is partially protected by his ancestors; her own lineage ancestors continue to protect her as a daughter. If she becomes a diviner, she is possessed by her own ancestors. Thus, although her husbands family is sanctioned by religion against practicing sorcery to harm one another, no such sanctions apply to a woman. She can only be caught out if there is adequate evidence against her. Within an extended family, only a married woman can practice sorcery without fear of ancestral punishment, against co-wives and their children. In this way women challenge men, they can divide the homestead and the lineage. As Ngubane says: 'This is a manifestation of power which contradicts the ideology of submission and marginality associated with womanhood. It is this contradiction that is dangerous and is cast in terms of sorcery operating within the homestead'.⁵⁵

The Zulu do not place emphasis on witchcraft and sorcery as inherent evils specific to women. But the combination of sorcery with the notions of pollution and impurity that apply specifically to women, provide a powerful case against those women accused of witchcraft. Zulu women in a polluted state endanger men, cattle and crops. In times of scarcity and poverty or when the community experiences stresses outside their control, women become the targets of frustration and anger. Their perceived marginality in Zulu society becomes more apparent when the community is under threat. But their central role in reproduction, in the power they have to break-up homesteads through sorcery against co-wives and their children, contradicts this marginal status. The battleground between men and women is tense with conflict over this ascribed marginality. As Scott says, 'any hegemonic ideology provides, within itself, the raw material for contradictions and conflict'.⁵⁶ These conflicts take the form of petty acts of non-compliance, in deliberately prolonging easy tasks, in ridicule and jibes, in irony, in refusing to talk or converse, in escape by desertion, or in loud public

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 93.

⁵⁶ J. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak. Everyday forms of peasant resistance*, (New haven: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 336.

condemnation, divorce, public ridicule and indiscreet affairs. The domestic sphere is a domain of argument, tension, and debate over the perceived roles of men and women.

Shadows of shadows: Women in colonial society

When old customs are rigidly practiced in new socio-political environments and are robbed of their significance, stark forms of exploitation result. When such practices are codified into laws, they become a yoke to progress and independence. Men were recognised as the wage-earners in colonial society, women were relegated to the maintenance of the rural household by the new rulers, and by African men. At the political level, 'ethnic culture was and is a purely male culture'.⁵⁷ As Jewsiewicki says, in the colonial culture of the urbanised African male, she is either the 'villainess - the "free" woman who corrupts the race and is responsible for the fall in the birth rate... or the faithful, reproductive shadow of her husband, who is himself in turn depicted as the loyal, servant of the civilizing Europeans. The ideal woman is effectively a shadow of a shadow'.⁵⁸

Pre-colonial African society was far removed from equality between the sexes.

King Cetshwayo ka Mpande explains the tasks performed by men and women:

the man's work consists in making kraals, huts, digging corn holes, clearing the bush from the ground that is about to be cultivated, herding the cattle, making spoons, baskets and buckets, and very often, among the lower ranks helping his wife in hoeing and weeding. The woman's work consists in cultivating, reaping, getting wood and water, cooking, making matting for covering huts, making mats for sleeping on, making izilulu, that is: a large sort of grass receptacle for putting corn in, cleaning the house, and having everything to do with the food, and above all, cultivating and reaping.⁵⁹

Although the men did some of the heavy tasks, these involved long term, one-off projects, while women carried the daily load of running a household. Lewis calculated

⁵⁷ B. Jewsiewicki, 'The Political Culture of Ethnicity in Belgium Congo', in *The Creation of Tribalism*, ed. by L. Vail, p. 340.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 340.

⁵⁹ C.de, B Webb and J.B. Wright (eds), *A Zulu King Speaks, statements made by Cetshwayo Ka Mpande on the history and customs of his people*, (University of Natal Press, Killie Campbell Afrikaner Library, 1979), p. 259.

that rural women typically work 2 to 6 hours longer than rural men.⁶⁰ This contradicts Simons conception of the pre-colonial African system, when she argues that the Natal Code 'stereotypes a concept of feminine inferiority unknown to the traditional society...'⁶¹ This society had the ability to oppress women, to encourage polygamy, bride-price and forced marriages. Samora Machel, the late president of Mozambique, recognised the link between these customs, the village economy and exploitation of women:

Polygamy played an important role in the primitive agrarian economy. Society, realising that women are a source of wealth, demands that a price be paid for them. The girl's parents demand from their future son-in-law the payment of bride-price before giving up their daughter. The woman is bought and inherited like material goods, or any source of wealth."⁶²

The attitude towards daughters was dictated by two considerations: first, they will bring cattle into the kraal. Daughters are referred to as 'father's cattle', and Zulu proverbs discouraging young unmarried girls from cohabiting with men are:

'*ungazeneki izinkomo zikayihlo*, don't expose your father's cattle, or *ungasivuli isibaya sikayihlo*, don't open your father's cattle kraal so that some stray'.⁶³ The

second consideration is that daughters are regarded as non-permanent members of the family, who will not bear children to increase the patrilineage. To nurture them is to nurture something for strangers. A man with daughters and no sons, describes himself as one who is not blessed with seed, *angiphiwanga inzalo*, and his wife is considered barren as there are no sons to perpetuate his name.⁶⁴

With the spread of Christianity, a new religious moral order was superimposed on an existing one, creating numerous contradictions and anomalies. Although Christian women were regarded in a more positive light, the system of lobolo continued to operate. Even though women were not directly regarded as a source of

⁶⁰ B. Lewis, 'The impact of development policies on women', in *African Women South of the Sahara*, ed. by M.J. Hay and S. Stichter, (Longman Group Ltd, 1984), p. 170.

⁶¹ H.J. Simons, *African Women*, p. 26.

⁶² S. Urdang, 'Women in National Liberation Movements', in *African Women*, p. 159.

⁶³ A. Vilakazi, *Zulu Transformations*, p. 40.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

family wealth, lobolo was often used to stage lavish weddings, a public display of ones sophistication and standing in society. Christian woman too had a price.

Christianity also added new dimensions to the exploitation of women. The moral demands placed on women, the ideals they propagate created a vortex of conflicting ideas amongst women. On the one hand, they were given an opportunity to educate themselves and to acquire new resources and skills. On the other hand, Christianity imposed rigid codes of behaviour on them, curtailing these new ideas and experiences.⁶⁵ Lily Moya, a young Xhosa girl, explains some of the frustrations experienced in the rural areas by young Christian girls:

my experience only based on what our people say to our girls and what we ought to do, to be preserved, divinely devoted and single-minded, expecting ourselves to be the future mothers, the examples to be admired and to be selfrespective of ourselves. We are frequently mislead by minor misdeeds. We never use our intelligence... We have a thrilling audacity to do evil... Yes we are people surrounded by stumbling blocks, things which look inviting.⁶⁶

Christian missions emphasised high educational standards, a demanding ideology of respectability and puritanical sexual codes. The changing political structures, the migrant labour system, education and better communication links between urban and rural areas, added new sexual pressures on women. Young non-Christian girls and boys learn about courting and sex from siblings and elders. Amongst Christians, such discussions are taboo and are frowned upon. Owing to the complete lack of sex education from parents, schools and churches, Christian girls often encounter difficulties regarding sexual matters. Premarital pregnancies among Zulu women is considered ritually dangerous for the family, and the girls of the neighbourhood. It brings with it *umkhokha* or *ukhondolo olubi*, a train of unpleasant consequences, predisposing the women of the family and the whole neighbourhood to premarital pregnancy. The fine for such pregnancies are two head of cattle, which is

⁶⁵ For example, The Girl Wayfarers Association, a mission dominated equivalent to the Girl Guide movement, aimed to help its members adapt to civilised conditions, to teach them how to use their leisure time, to discipline them through teamwork and games, and to inculcate loyalty to authority and the idea of sisterhood in service. In S. Marks, *Not Either an Experiment Doll. The Separate Worlds of Three South African Women*, (London: The Women's Press Ltd, 1987), pp. 146-147.

⁶⁶ Ibid, pp. 11-12.

paid by the boy's parents to the chief who passes it onto the father of the girl or the head of the desecrated kraal. The punishment meted out to a Christian girl is more severe. She is excommunicated, is given a seat at the back of the church specially reserved for those who have sinned, and all other girls are forbidden to associate with her. Christian boys do not generally accept responsibility, and many escape to the cities.

The experience of women in rural areas and in cities:

The lack of adequate arable land, and the continual absence of a high percentage of working age men have contributed to the deterioration of the rural subsistence economy. The specific problems experienced by rural women include low productivity in food farming, lack of cash to invest in machinery, lack of time and money to provide adequate nutrition for their children, and extreme overwork and fatigue. Poverty and frustration dominate their lives, while tensed relations with in-laws, lack of opportunities to escape from the rural areas, reliance on infrequent migrant remittances, and the overwhelming ideology that works against them, worsens their predicament. As a Transkeian woman said:

Marriage is not worthwhile for us black women. It traps us. Men are having it all right in towns with their girl friends and money, while we must keep home on empty pockets and empty promises. We feel deserted. We feel lonely in this desolate place.⁶⁷

For men, migrant labour became like a rite of passage, a change in status and a test, which, if passed indicated growth or maturity into adulthood. It also represented the acquisition of knowledge and power, the survival kit in the capitalist economy and the white cities. When it became necessary to the whole existence of men, the separation between the sexes became more sustained, and the experiences of each, diametrically opposed. Women in the homestead lived in a space and time relatively isolated from the cities, and from change. Personal development has been stifled by the inability to travel, inadequate education, lack of jobs outside the homestead, and

⁶⁷ L. Clark and J. Ngobese, *Women without Men: A Study of 150 families in the Ngutu District of KwaZulu*, (Durban: Institute for Black Research, 1975), p. 22.

limited experiences. The distance between men and women and between towns women and rural women has grown so much as to cause major fissures in the society. The

anxieties they experience are explained by a woman in rural KwaZulu:

I sleep on the floor until by husband arrives. He is not pleased to see me. He is angry, embarrassed, he looks away but eventually tells me about this other woman... I can sense that it is this woman who has been eating the money that my husband should have been sending to me and our children. She is now fat and attractive. I am starved and ugly in my husband's eyes. I have become a burden to my very own husband.⁶⁸

While away from home, the migrant is not subjected to most of the structural constraints of his society. He is part of the urban working classes and as such, makes every effort to adapt to and master that environment. In the rural area, young men try to receive the distinction of being an *isoka*, a Casanova. Transposed to the urban area, men have affairs with townswomen as a measure of social competence, in some instances, as a means of getting accommodation in the city. As Vilakazi says, 'men find that city women are cleaner, smarter, and more enjoyable company than their wives'. As one man said: 'whereas country wives sleep in work-a-day petticoats, the city women sleep in well perfumed nighties'.⁶⁹ Country women refer to towns-women as *onohongwana*, the things that wash and make up every minute in order to attract men.⁷⁰

Although men are away from the rural area or Homelands for long periods at a time, they still attempt to control the lives of women in the homestead. A survey done in QwaQwa in the Orange Free State, found that all men interviewed opposed women engaging in most kinds of income-generating activities.⁷¹ They showed particular resentment towards shebeening (turning ones home into an illegal drinking house), even though they too frequented them regularly. To maintain their control over the homestead, migrants leave strict instructions on how to use remittances, threaten

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 23.

⁶⁹ A. Vilakazi, *Zulu Transformations*, p. 35.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ J. Sharp and A. Spiegel, 'Women and Wages: Gender and the Control of Income in Farm and Bantustan Households', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 16, No 3, September, 1990.

violence if their wives spend it on liquor or ingredients for home-brewing, and get other men to check on their wives to report possible shebeening. Women, on the other hand saw shebeening as the most accessible and convenient way of generating a cash income from the home. Since migrant wage remittances were uncertain and they had little independence over its usage, they often engaged in shebeening and concealed their activities from their husbands. As women move towards greater independence, men find that they have less control over their activities from a long distance away. The gap between men and women widens and with the lack of communication, more tensions and contradictions are created.

The provision of single-sex hostels for male migrant workers was based on the assumption that the migrant's family could subsist in the rural areas. This 'economic denial of the existence of women' had two important consequences in urban areas.⁷² Firstly, a structural imbalance in the sex ratios, and secondly, those women that do live in areas surrounding hostels or locations, live in a state of chronic financial deprivation and insecurity. Many turn to prostitution. Although prostitutes enjoy a higher income than many other women, their wealth is relative and precarious and can only be maintained by continuous effort. In an interview, a prostitute explains:

There are some men who don't pay women well... we call them *mabanga*, which means 'hard like a stone' or 'bad payers'. Yet, if we happen to have no opportunities and walk the streets without any man calling us, well, if we then give a thought about the food for the following morning, we can really go crazy, especially if it is already eleven in the evening.⁷³

Prior to the Nationalist government in 1948, there was no fixed consensus or consistent implementation of influx controls at the local level. The African population rose from 12.5 percent to 21.6 percent, the proportion of African women rose from 6.5 percent to 15.4 percent.⁷⁴ Despite the numerous legislative laws that proscribed

⁷² I. Phimister and C. Van Onselen, 'The Political Economy of Tribal Animosity: A case Study of the 1929 Bulawayo Location "Faction Fight"', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 6, No 1, 1979, p. 29.

⁷³ M.R. Cutrufelli, *Women of Africa. Roots of Oppression*, (London: Zed, 1983), p. 29.

⁷⁴ A.M. Mariotti, *The Incorporation of African Women into Wage Employment in South Africa, 1920-1970*, (PhD dissertation, University of Connecticut, 1979), p. 84.

male freedom of movement, women were largely excluded, and enjoyed the freedom to move from the rural areas to the cities and to stay there. The Native Urban Areas Act of 1923 was the central piece of legislation designed to regulate African urbanisation. An amendment in 1930 included an optional clause which allowed municipalities to issue special permits to women entering urban areas. This permission was to be conditional on a woman joining her husband or father who had been in continuous employment for two years, and if adequate housing was available. This legislation was never successfully implemented, but in parliament it opened up the debate over the influx of Africans into the cities.⁷⁵ By 1936, although 45 percent of all African men between the ages of 20 and 39 were in the cities, only 14.4 percent of all African women in this age group lived in urban areas.⁷⁶ But the actual number of women had increased drastically, and the 1936 Census statistics reveals that since 1921, the number of African women in towns nationwide had increased 142.3 percent (males 78.4 percent), and in Johannesburg alone, the number of women had grown to 245.3 percent (males 44.9 percent).⁷⁷ An amendment in 1937 proposed that women entering the cities for the first time be required to have a certificate from their chief giving them permission to leave the home district. Likewise, this legislation lacked any means of effective enforcement. It was difficult to distinguish between town-born women, long-term city dwellers and new residents, since African women, unlike the men, did not need to carry passes, registration contracts, tax receipts, birth or marriage certificates. The promulgation of apartheid legislation only really started in 1950 when the Population Registration Act was passed, requiring men and women of all races to have some kind of identification card. It was followed by the Native Laws Amendment Bill in 1952, which forced every African man, woman and child to have special permits to be in an urban area for longer than seventy-two hours. By the 1952 Natives Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents Act, all previous passes were replaced with

⁷⁵ For a detailed discussion, see, J. Wells, 'Passes and Bypasses: Freedom of Movement for African Women Under the Urban Areas Act of South Africa', in, *African Women and the Law: Historical Perspectives*, ed. by M.J. Hay and M. Wright.

⁷⁶ A.M. Mariotti, *Incorporation of African*, p. 84.

⁷⁷ J. Wells, 'Passes and Bypasses', p. 146.

a new reference book, mandatory for both men and women at all times. Difficulties with enforcement with respect to women still plagued the government. It was only in February 1963 that reference books became compulsory for women. This did not spell an end to the problems of the increasing urbanisation of women. Women slipped through the legal framework by engaging in work that fell outside the parameters of direct state control. They became domestic workers, petty traders, set up informal pavement businesses like dressmaking, sold cooked food, herbal remedies, crafts, home-brewed beer or became prostitutes.

For the men in cities, far removed from the communal lifestyles of rural communities, individualism and personal accumulation of wealth became very important. Male dominated associations ranging from recreation to mutual assistance, formed the ideological backdrop for the exclusion of women from the wage-earning class. Women felt unprepared to enter male-dominated employment sectors or business. Ms R. Mcoyi, a successful Zulu businesswoman, explains the difficulty she has in recruiting women into her business:

I'm still having that problem of getting women and especially married women - they are not really free to do this, they must get permission from their husbands and yet single girls, they don't have money to invest in this type of business. Well if I can't really find women to involve in my business, I'm forced to get men but that's against my will.⁷⁸

Working women have to cope with old Zulu attitudes that require wives to be submissive and deferential towards their husbands. Childcare and household duties are considered part of the exclusive domain of women, to do these chores detracts from a man's *isithunzi*, dignity and personality.⁷⁹ Jabu Ndlovu, a prominent trade unionist and political activist explains:

But the men are so staunch. They have a custom which says once you cook at home, it means you have been defeated by the wife. There is a Zulu custom saying a man musn't do

⁷⁸ Interview with Ms. R. Mcoyi, Killie Campbell Oral History Project, University of Natal, 8 June 1979.

⁷⁹ A. Vilakazi, *Zulu Transformations*, p. 37.

anything. He must just sit and relax, waiting for food. He waits for the wife to do the washing.⁸⁰

Ms Mcoyi also highlights the difficulties experienced by women in their ideological battle against male attitudes and ideas:

Black men are not flexible, they still want... to give permission to anything that a woman does..... You find that when a woman is working and a man is not... but still the man would like to have a say in her salary... You've got to go to work and come back and look after the children and after the home. Don't expect him to do the domestic work for you just because you are working. You are still a woman, even if you are a breadwinner.⁸¹

Educated, professional women are thought to threaten the unity and harmony of the family. The social duties of motherhood are accentuated and the conflict between the reproductive role of women and their participation in the production process become more problematic. An article in a women's magazine in Ghana, aptly describes the attitudes of men towards working women:

Women who talk of liberation seem to forget that they were born to be subordinate to men... Such is the case with a large number of educated women. You see them treat their husbands with a heavy hand, and keep the house and the purse strings under strict control: they actually dominate the man. His relations are kept at a distance, while they [educated women] become ever more arrogant.⁸²

Inkatha Women's Brigade

The Women's Brigade was launched in May 1977, and in the commemorative brochure of the inaugural congress, Fakile Mazibuko, a Community Development Officer neatly captured one of the central tenets behind the formation of the brigade:

When we emphasise the involvement of women in community development, we do not in any way undermine family roles of motherhood and wifedom. We have to integrate cultural and development roles. As women we have to look into... how we allocate our energies between home and community, as a

⁸⁰ J. Fairbairn, *Flashes in her soul. The life of Jabu Ndlovu*, (Natal Worker History Project, 1991), p. 37.

⁸¹ Interview with Ms R. Mcoyi, Killie Campbell Oral History Project, University of Natal, 8 June 1979.

⁸² M.R. Cutrufelli, *Women of Africa*, p. 5.

good balance must be achieved for satisfactory role performance in both these areas.⁸³

The key to the relative success of Inkatha's Women's Brigade is that it emphasised practical issues. It highlighted the problems specifically associated with the private domestic sphere and the particular difficulties associated with the running of a home. It proposed survival strategies and provided women with new social networks that acted like welfare institutions. By emphasising the role of women as mothers and wives, Inkatha was able to target a large category of women whose lives were dominated by these roles. Instead of talking about liberation and emancipation of women, and their roles in more egalitarian society, Inkatha placed most importance on the pragmatic side of womanhood. Inkatha then uses this platform to propagate its political programme. Some of these are that women should maintain the home and family, perpetuate Zulu 'traditions', control the youth and propagate Inkatha. Thus, instead of isolating a large majority of Zulu women by standing on an overtly political platform, Inkatha homed in on the domestic arena, offered help and advice with problems experienced by women in the home, and then used this platform to perpetuate its ideology.

A member of the Women's Brigade explained women's support for the Brigade in the following terms:

Most women are left behind by their husbands who go off to work... They are left folding their arms and waiting for money... The community garden's and sewing clubs help them to make ends meet. It gives them a sense of independence. Women who haven't joined see what it had done for their neighbour - maybe she comes home from meetings with something she has grown or sewn and so she also joins.⁸⁴

Inkatha managed to articulate the feelings of many of the women of the African petty bourgeoisie. They wanted to take a more active part in the capitalist economy, and wanted to assimilate certain aspects of western culture, but at the same time, they wanted to maintain their own culture and wanted to pass this on to their children. The

⁸³ F. Mazibuko, 'The Role of Women in Community Development', in the Commemorative Brochure of the Inaugural Congress of the Women's Brigade, 1977, p. 29.

⁸⁴ S. Hassim, *Black Women*, p. 63.

gap between generations, and the declining control that mothers had over their children, also contributed to the feeling of wanting to hold on to a past moral order and disciplinary codes of behaviour. Albertina Mnguni, a teacher and nurse, maintains that 'I may be civilised but I don't want to cut away from my customs and my culture'.⁸⁵ She was concerned with the decline of Zulu customs among the youth, but at the same time she was a proponent of birth control, a taboo among Zulu women, 'I have to hide it as much as I can because if he [her husband] can discover it then he can divorce me, he can beat me, he can do anything, you know'.⁸⁶ A similar attitude was expressed by Sibusisiwe Violet Makhanya in 1930, a teacher who trained in the United States. On her return to South Africa, she expressed the need to absorb 'foreign social institutions' and to make them 'compatible with indigenous ones'.⁸⁷ She organised a new youth movement called the Bantu Youth League under the chairmanship of John Dube. Its objectives included the encouragement of 'self-confidence in Bantu youths by the preservation of constructive ideals and customs of the Zulu people' and to "cultivate appreciation of the culture of other races and to encourage interracial co-operation".⁸⁸

The Women's Brigade places emphasis on self-help groups and a more organised attempt to promote them was instituted by the KwaZulu Development Corporation in 1980. The KDC set up a Sewing Circle Development Centre at Umgababa in KwaZulu. Nattrass found that 58 percent of the women registered in 1984 were enrolled in order to sew for the family and to generate additional income. A further 38 percent were doing the course in order to start a business. 69 percent of past pupils who responded to a questionnaire were using the skills they had learnt to earn money.⁸⁹ The Inkatha view of women is that 'they are pragmatic, persistent and reliable by nature. It is in the light of this that Inkatha provides women with the fullest

⁸⁵ Interview with A. Mnguni, Killie Campbell Oral History Project, University of Natal, 19 July 1979.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ S. Marks, *Not Either*, p. 34.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ N. Nattrass, 'Like Chalk and Cheese: An Evaluation of Two KwaZulu Development Corporation Projects in Natal', (unpublished master's thesis, University of Natal, 1984), p. 179.

participation and involvement in practical politics and in the welfare of their society'.⁹⁰ It is a view that has appealed to many women who have become active members of Inkatha.

Projects like sewing circles which help lower the cost of school uniforms, handicrafts, communal building projects, the running of creches and gardening lessons in rural areas are the main activities of the organisation. In urban areas, Bulk Buying Clubs and Burial Clubs have become important for survival. Nokukhanya Zibani who works in the Inkatha Institute said she contributed R150 every month to a Bulk Buying Club which had 60 members. With R9000, the club can buy staple goods at wholesale prices and provide its members with more goods at cheaper prices. During the violent upheaval in African townships Burial Clubs have provided a strong support system to many bereaved mothers. Members contribute about R100 per month, and clubs have about 100 members. Funeral costs are high, for example in 1991, the cost of a coffin was about R375 and money needed to feed guests and to supply grave-diggers with beer amounted to about R500. The Clubs pay for the funeral while club members provide refreshments.

Whenever it has been under attack, Inkatha has appealed to women to bolster up the movement and to control the youth. After the 1976 Soweto unrest, when many of the young people were leaving the country to join the ANC, Buthelezi made a plea to women:

It is your children that are expected to die on the borders. It is your children that are already dying on both sides of the borders... During this crucial time, the women of South Africa and the black women in particular have got such a distinctive role to play that it is difficult to over emphasize their importance.⁹¹

In 1986, at the height of the UDF - Inkatha conflict, addressing the annual conference of the Women's Brigade, Buthelezi said:

⁹⁰ Themba Nzimande, Public Relations Officer, *Umxoxi*, Vol 2, 1986, Bureau of Communications, KwaZulu Government.

⁹¹ Buthelezi, Annual General Conference of Women's Brigade, October, 1979.

All I am saying is that women have a particular moral responsibility which men do not have and that was fixed by the Creator Himself. It is the moral calibre of our women which will safeguard against our youth being misled. I know that where we have runaway violence, you will find that it is so because women in those areas have by and large reneged on their responsibilities as women.⁹²

The support of women is severely tested in times of political crisis when children choose more radical forms of opposition. The various sides in the political battle have been clearly demarcated, but the separation of women from their children cannot be a rigid or sustainable one. To side with Inkatha out of fear, does not make for lasting and loyal support.⁹³ Although The Women's Brigade has had a degree of success because it has focused specifically on practical issues, in so far as its political agenda goes, its success is far more ambivalent. The ramifications of the problems associated with the way in which Inkatha has chosen to mobilise women becomes clear if one looks at the relationship between Inkatha and the youth.

Inkatha Youth Brigade

The youth form one of the most alienated sections of the African population. Consistently in the forefront of protest politics, the most sustained campaigns initiated by the youth has been their protest over the inadequacies of 'Bantu' education. Expressing his views on the subject, a student explained that they saw the primary aim of 'Bantu' Education as their 'suppression. It doesn't give us the opportunity to prove ourselves as white education does... there are no proper facilities... The courses ignore our views of history and stress things like bantustans which we reject. The whites are given an education which relates to their own situation - Bantu Education ignores our situation'.⁹⁴ For every 100 African pupils who start school, 10 manage to take a matriculation exam and of these only half matriculate, and a small minority enter

⁹² Buthelezi, Annual Conference of Women's Brigade, October, 1986.

⁹³ The pressure for Zulus to join particular political groupings out of fear will be discussed in chapter 5. During the violence in Natal, allegiances have been severely tested, and likewise the relationships between parents, their children, and political organisations.

⁹⁴ B. Strachan, *'Never on our Knees', Youth in Apartheid South Africa*, (London: United Nations Association Youth, 1985), p. 47.

university.⁹⁵ In the 1986/87 financial year, per capita expenditure on an African child in 'white' areas and non-independent homelands was R476.95 as opposed to R2 508.00 for every white child (R1904.20 for Indians, R1021.41 for 'Coloureds'). The state spent 5.3 times more for the education of a white child as for an African child. The disparity is even greater for children in independent homelands, ranging from R279.55 in KaNgwane, to R413.32 in the Transkei.⁹⁶ In 1984, at least 78 percent of the 42 000 black teachers were under-qualified.^{97, 98} The problems associated with the disparities in education has been at the heart of much political protest from the 1970s. The youth form a significant part of the African population, and by the year 2000, it has been estimated that out of the 27.2 million urban Africans, 60 percent will be under the age of 20.⁹⁹ The economic recession of the 1980s and early 1990s, and high inflation has made poverty a widespread phenomenon in South Africa. In 1980, 50 percent of KwaZulu's population earned less than R130 a year and 50 percent of the urban dwellers earned less than R300 per year.¹⁰⁰ Unemployment is overwhelmingly concentrated in the younger age groups. About half of the unemployed in rural and urban areas are under 25 years of age.¹⁰¹

The Inkatha Youth Brigade was established in 1976. Through the years, as the youth began to get more involved in protest politics, Inkatha stepped up its recruitment program. One of the strategies it has employed to inculcate the ideas, objectives and aims of the organisation, has been the introduction of a compulsory subject in KwaZulu schools called Ubuntu-Botho.

⁹⁵ Weekly Mail, 22/01/87.

⁹⁶ Weekly Mail, 6/10/89.

⁹⁷ M. Murry, *Time of Agony, Time of Destiny. The Upsurge of Popular Protest*, (England: Verso, 1987), p. 247.

⁹⁸ In 1989, 98 percent of all African teachers outside the 'independent' homelands had no professional teaching qualifications. 48.3 percent were teaching without having matriculated themselves, and only 3.4 percent had university degrees. Amongst 'Coloured' teachers, 33.8 percent had not matriculated, and 12 percent had university degrees. 86 percent of all Indian teachers had a university education. Weekly Mail, 29 September, 1989.

⁹⁹ *London Review of Books*, 13/10/88.

¹⁰⁰ W. De Kock, *Usuthu!*, p. 179.

¹⁰¹ Brigid Strachan, *Never on our Knees*, p. 31. In November 1982, Professor J. Keenan of the University of Natal, estimated that over 25 percent of the African labour force was unemployed.

Ubuntu means 'being human', 'that great valuing of people as beautiful creations of God; that great love for your fellow human beings'.¹⁰² A central aspect of the Ubuntu-Botho syllabus is the emphasis on respect, *ukuhlonipha*, for elders, parents, leaders, and for laws and legislation. A passage from one of the prescribed books on the respect of women for men, clearly expresses Inkatha attitudes towards women:

This respect within the nation is found even among adults. In the family the man is the head. The woman knows that she is not equal to her husband. She addresses the husband as 'father', and by so doing the children also get a good example of how to behave. A woman refrains from exchanging words with a man, and if she does, this reflects bad upbringing on her part.¹⁰³

The practice of *ukuhlonipha* also includes avoiding the use of certain words which are associated with particular leaders. For example, the word *igatsha*, meaning 'branch', is seldom used since it is also Buthelezi's name. A woman must avoid using the name of her husband, his male relatives and ancestors. This was explained in detail in chapter three.

The syllabus aims to highlight the ideology and objectives of Inkatha. It emphasizes Zulu history, culture, ideas and customs and tries to show the specific role of Inkatha in perpetuating the Zulu ethnic identity in the wider political arena. In 1980, Buthelezi denied that the syllabus was a form of indoctrination:

It deals with all liberation movements - with the ANC, the PAC, with black leaders in the history of Southern Africa..... The political vacuum is.... explained... in the simplest possible terms and how that vacuum was filled: the emergence of Inkatha, how did it become the black voice, the expression of the aspirations of the people who were politically poor, and how they enrich themselves through Inkatha.¹⁰⁴

The introduction of the syllabus in schools does capture the imagination of a significant sector of the youth. Since 1985, the proportion of youth membership in

¹⁰² Buthelezi, Annual General Conference of the Women's Brigade, Ulundi, 11 October, 1986.

¹⁰³ From Book 2, p 30 in P. Mdluli, 'Ubuntu-Botho: Inkatha's "People's Education"' (Paper presented to the Workshop on Regionalism and Restructuring in Natal, University of Natal, 28 - 31 January, 1988).

¹⁰⁴ P. Teague, *A Study of Inkatha Yesizwe's Approach to the Youth, with specific reference to the movement's Youth Brigade*, (Honours thesis, University of Cape Town, 1983), p. 22.

Inkatha has risen steadily, from 38 percent to 41 percent in 1989 making it the largest representative body in the organisation. The situation in the late 1980s is in stark contrast to that of the 1970s, when Steve Biko could say:

Gatsha is supported by oldies, for good reasons, since Gatsha protects the stability that older persons need. But we are young, We do not look upon the solution to injustice as an expectation but a duty. Here lies the dilemma of the old: between duty and bread.¹⁰⁵

The introduction of Ubuntu-Botho to young Zulu children is a powerful form of propaganda. The fact that the adult male and female membership has proportionally declined since the 1970s, may point to the fact that Inkatha fails to sustain the support of its young members through to adulthood. In the situation where the choices are more varied, and in which Inkatha does not enjoy a monopoly, some adults choose to join more radical organisations.

To continue its programme with the youth once they have left school, Inkatha has created youth training camps. The camps aim to provide the organisation with disciplined regiments at the disposal of the leadership for community service and offensive and defensive action. Early in 1980, Buthelezi spoke about the need to move beyond protest politics and to organise the youth into a Youth Service Corps: 'I can envisage a camp in our rolling countryside where 10 000 youth will be mustered, drilling, learning, teaching and being taught, disciplining themselves to become fashioned steel for the struggle...'¹⁰⁶ The Youth Service Corps was modelled on the Young Pioneers in Malawi and the Zambian Youth Service, both of which emphasised military training for the youth.¹⁰⁷ In 1981, the first camp at Emandleni-Matleng was established. The chairman of the Youth Brigade, Musa Zondi, said that the camp was established to 'prevent recurrent militancy in the schools'.¹⁰⁸ In describing the camp, he emphasised that it was like a military operation: '... we realise that this undertaking

¹⁰⁵ *African Affairs*, No 2, January 1978, pp 12-13, Ibid, p. 19.

¹⁰⁶ Buthelezi, National Executive Committee of the Youth Brigade, 23 November 1980.

¹⁰⁷ Gibson Thula, the urban representative of KwaZulu in the Transvaal, was sent to Zambia in 1976 to study the Youth Service there. Members were also sent to Malawi and the Coady Institute in Canada. G. Mare and G. Hamilton, *An Appetite*, pp. 69-70.

¹⁰⁸ Sunday Post, 22/07/1981.

needed to be run along the lines of paramilitarism... To mobilise such members would be pretty difficult without the enforcement of discipline of some kind, similar to that of normal servicemen'.¹⁰⁹ The camp seemed to emphasise discipline, respect, self-sufficiency and skills training. Interviews with a few trainees from the camp revealed the kinds of skills that were encouraged and the success of the camps in winning the ardent support of these youngsters.:

We learnt the basics of agriculture, motor mechanics, building, community health and recreation... We had to get up at four every morning, girls and boys alike, and go running... We learnt self-discipline, we learnt how to work hard... we learnt hoeing and planting, how to drive a tractor... We had to do guard duty alone at night. I was terribly frightened, but learnt to overcome my fears. I feel that I have developed a lifelong commitment to Inkatha.¹¹⁰

Although Inkatha appears to be successful in maintaining the support of those young people that attend the camps, with those who do not and the few who go on to university, it has far greater problems. That tensions exist even in schools and colleges between Inkatha and the Youth Brigade is evident. Oscar Dhlomo remarked that the 'youth are pushing the leadership - we accept the militancy of the youth as a natural fact... it is difficult to say how far the leadership is willing to be pushed'.¹¹¹ In 1978, three members of the Youth Brigade were expelled by the central committee for wanting to push Inkatha into what Buthelezi described as 'spectacular mass actions and senseless violence'.¹¹² Buthelezi has always been wary about potential problems among the youth over the conciliatory stance of the leadership. At the Emandleni Matleng camp in 1985 he said,

There is a feeling amongst some of our younger that they must smash, they must burn and they must kill. That feeling is not our feeling... Armies who go out to conquer do not produce miracles; for the people they liberate hunger remains, sickness remains, poverty remains... You are the young liberators of our country... in the process to liberate South Africa as caring young people.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ P. Teague, *A study of Inkatha*, pp. 71-72.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p. 28.

¹¹² Mzala, *Gaisha Buthelezi. Chief with a Double Agenda*, (London: Zed Books, 1988), p. 10.

¹¹³ W. De Kock, *Usuthu!*, p. 145.

Not only does Inkatha fail to attract the support of the youth that aspire to more radical political programs, it has also used direct force to prevent militant action against the state or protest against 'Bantu' education. In 1980 when pupils in KwaMashu joined the nationwide school boycotts over black education, Buthelezi warned against such action:

Evil political forces thought that they could attack Inkatha by mobilizing children. There is total onslaught against Inkatha... We can identify the political riff-raff... We will shake them and drive them out from our midst, and if they are not careful they may find that they run the risks in what they do, one of which may be having their skulls cracked, as none of us can predict what form the anger they raise takes.¹¹⁴

Boycotting students were attacked by Inkatha, and as Haysom says, 'for the first time, township residents were to confront the large group of assegai - bearing men rallying to the traditional Zulu battle-cry of "usuthu" now very much a signal of the "Amabutho" - the conservative vigilante "warrior" mobs'.¹¹⁵ In October 1983, students from the university of Zululand, attempted to stop the celebrations to commemorate the centenary of King Ceteswayo's reign that was to be held by Inkatha on the campus. On the morning of the gathering, Inkatha supporters attacked the student hostels, leaving five dead and many injuries. A student describing the attack said:

I woke up very early on Saturday morning, at about 5.30 am. There were already a number of buses on campus. Inkatha people were in groups chanting slogans - 'We are angry, our hearts are full of blood'... They moved first down to the womens' hostels, and then to the mens'.^{116, 117}

¹¹⁴ G. Mare and G. Hamilton, *An Appetite*, 1987, pp. 185-186. On 12 May, 1980, a meeting of 1000 parents elected a parents' committee to support the boycotting pupils. By now the boycott had spread throughout all the schools in KwaMashu and five schools in Umlazi.

¹¹⁵ N. Haysom, *Mabangalala: The Rise of Right-Wing Vigilantes in South Africa*, (Occasional Paper No 10, Centre of Applied Legal Studies, University Witwatersrand, 1986), p. 84.

¹¹⁶ Statements made to the South African Institute of Race Relations, in P. Teague, *A Study of Inkatha*, pp. 60-61.

¹¹⁷ The official commission of inquiry into the violence noted that as a result of previous problems experienced when Buthelezi was on the campus in his capacity as chancellor, the date of graduation ceremonies had been moved to the mid-year vacation when the body of students was not on the campus which minimized the likelihood of a clash between students and members of the public. They concluded that 'From the evidence of Chief Buthelezi himself... it appears to the commission that, once the ceremony had been arranged the die was cast. Chief Buthelezi and the Inkatha movement could not, at that stage, allow it to be cancelled without losing credibility. The inference, therefore appears to be

The use of violence against non-members deeply shocked some Inkatha members. For example, Mr. N. Nkehli, director of the Bureau for Community Development and Youth Affairs, said that the violence at the university symbolised 'a move amongst the youth towards militancy... there were over 1000 Youth Brigade members there, and we were unable to control them'.¹¹⁸ However, Buthelezi attempted to strategically employ the incident as a warning against further attempts at opposing Inkatha:

I must warn South Africa that if the kind of provocation continues which we experienced on Saturday, Inkatha youth will demonstrate their strength and prowess... The peoples' [sic] anger is rising and the fervour with which we pursue our objectives will deepen.... The abuse of me must now cease. Continuing to label me as a sell-out is going to have ugly repercussions.¹¹⁹

In its endeavour to organise the Zulu youth, Inkatha has created a program that both attracts and alienates various sectors of the young. It is relatively successful in schools, in terms of short-term support. Inkatha youth camps are particularly crucial to capture those who finish their schooling or drop out. However, lack of resources and funding must curtail this strategy, preventing the organisation from effectively trapping a large majority in this category. Frustrated with the system, many school pupils turn to more radical organisations, and once caught up in protest action and struggles, they become more estranged from Inkatha and their parents. It is among the youth that Inkatha has encountered its most formidable challenge. Removed from the social sanctions of Zulu custom and values, having only experienced the exploitative aspects of chiefly rule, alienated from the state by inferior education, oppressive state mechanism, and poverty, many of the young are likewise far removed from the ethnic ideals of Inkatha and its conciliatory attitude towards the central state. Despite this, a significant section of the youth do find Inkatha attractive, and are prepared to fight for

justified that Inkatha supporters came to the ceremony prepared to fight if they had to'. From A.J. Middleton, *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Violence which occurred on 29 October at the University of Zululand*, Pretoria, 1985, quoted in G. Mare and G. Hamilton, *An Appetite*, p. 202.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p. 64.

¹¹⁹ Statement to members of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly on the events of the 29 October at the University of Zululand by the Chief Minister, 31 October, 1983.

it. But Inkatha does have difficulty in sustaining the support of young adults, and this is the sector that is of greatest significance to the ultimate strength of the organisation.

Chapter 5

Violence and Natal Townships

Terror as a collective social experience is the response to the collapse or feared imminent collapse of social order, of the intricate network of institutional structures and orderly patterns of interaction within which the work of social production and reproduction takes place even in the most repressive societies.¹

Inkatha has been at the forefront of violence and terror in contemporary South Africa. Exactly why the Zulus have resorted to ethnic violence is a complex question. I offer a few tentative suggestions. The Zulus in Natal have had the specific experience of a colonial administration that created reserves and migrant labour, re-created the chiefship and instituted a dual system of law. Christianised and mission educated Zulus challenged the authorities and protested against their discriminatory practices. The colonial rule prepared the stage for a division in Zulu civil society, with fissures along the lines of those who chose to participate the KwaZulu homeland government, and those who chose to join radical political organisations like the ANC. The chiefship formed the backbone of the homeland government and in Natal, a system that was intensified and entrenched under apartheid. The formation of Inkatha, which supposedly operated outside the confines of the KLA, in the arena of civil society, created the conditions for patronage politics, corruption and violence. Recreated Zulu traditions, the glorification of the Zulu wars and warriors, provided the cultural backdrop for vigilante formations and ethnic confrontation. Chiefly rule, coupled with Zulu ideas about death and contagion, and their attitudes towards the youth and women, are important aspects in understanding the reasons for violence in Natal. In this chapter, the various aspects of violence are explored in the attempt to show that it operates at a number of different levels in South Africa, and when coupled with the

¹ B. Berman and J. Lonsdale, 'The Shadow of MauMau: The Politics of Terror in Kenya, (paper presented at workshop on Constructing Terror; Violence and Decolonisation, Cambridge, March 1991), p. 1.

specificity of Zulu ideas and their political agenda, the result is terror and sustained conflict.

The lynchpin of Inkatha strategy has been its reliance on vigilantes. Aitchison aptly describes vigilante leaders or warlords as 'powerful local leaders who rely on the force of arms to maintain their power. They tend to gather a group of professional strong-arm men around them and they pay for their services by screwing the local populace. Now to that extent, you can say that they are no more and no less than gang leaders, but the key difference is that they are not motivated *exclusively* by the acquisition of personal wealth and power, but in addition they owe allegiance to a central power, namely Inkatha'.² Warlords may be shacklords, who rule the mushrooming informal settlements around Durban or strongmen who control sections of the formal townships around Pietermaritzburg.³ Kentridge divides the warlords into three categories. Firstly, the bully-boys, who have access to fire-arms and make their money through evictions, looting and protection rackets. One such warlord is Schizo Zuma of Edendale, chairman of the Harewood Inkatha Youth Brigade. In court, applicants claimed that from August to October 1987, Zuma subjected the community to 'a concerted campaign of terror, violence and intimidation. The acts committed during this reign of terror include murder, assaults, pillaging of property and the burning of houses'.⁴ They also claimed that Zuma had 'been orchestrating a deliberate and concerted campaign to recruit support for Inkatha and intimidate those who do not subscribe to it'.⁵ The second category consists of urban warlords like Jerome Mncwabe, Abdul Awetha and Patrick Pakkies, who are Inkatha town councillors in Imbali. They have access to arms through the KwaZulu government and control the allocation of housing, services and the granting of trading licences. The last group consists of rural warlords, mainly chiefs and indunas who adopt an aggressive

² M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial War, Inside the conflict in Pietermaritzburg*, (Cape Town: David Philip, 1990), p. 181.

³ *Weekly Mail*, 30/06/89.

⁴ *Weekly Mail*, 24/03/88.

⁵ *Ibid.* Zuma was granted bail and the case has been repeatedly postponed.

political stance, mobilise an army and begin to rule by force. David Ntombela who was the Inkatha branch chairman of KwaMncane and was recently appointed a KwaZulu MP for Vulindlela, typifies warlordism in rural areas. In the affidavit of Mandla Mkhize, he is accused of introducing a number of new customs in the community: '...if any member of the community [who] is not a member of Inkatha, wants to slaughter a cow, then he or she has to pay a R5 Inkatha membership fee.... If anybody should refuse to pay that fee then he or she is taken by Ntombela or his supporters to the Chief of the larger area and then fined R150. If, on the other hand, a member of Inkatha wishes to slaughter a cow, then the only requirement is that he or she has to report the slaughter to Ntombela'.⁶

Rosenbaum and Sederberg see vigilantism as 'simply establishment violence. It consists of acts of threats of coercion in violation of the formal boundaries of an established socio-political order which, however, are intended by the violators to defend that order from some form of subversion'.⁷ Vigilante activity disrupts the moral order of a community, plunging it into chaos and unregulated social behaviour. It provides a cover for anti-social elements and 'sadistic men can seize the chance to behave in ways which would normally put them outside the law...'.⁸ In the fighting around Pietermaritzburg the ranks of both the comrades and Inkatha have been infiltrated by the *comtsotsis*, gangsters and criminals, who licensed their illicit activities with political slogans.⁹ Inkatha warlords have also attempted to hide their illicit activities under the banner of the organisation. For example, Thomas Shabalala controls the sprawling squatter camp of Lindelani near Durban. He runs the settlement as his private fiefdom, allocating land, evicting people, pressurizing residents for protection money, insisting that they join Inkatha, and running a private army.¹⁰ Two

⁶ M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial War*, p. 184.

⁷ H.J. Rosenbaum and P.C. Sederberg, 'Vigilantism: An analysis of Establishment Violence', in *Vigilante Politics* ed. by H.J. Rosenbaum and P.C. Sederberg, (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1976), p. 4.

⁸ C.P. Potholm, 'Comparative Vigilantism: The United States and South Africa', in, *Vigilante Politics*, p. 176.

⁹ M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial War*, p. 8.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 182.

Lindelani residents, Belinda and Simon Mfeka who brought an interdict application against Shabalala in 1986, claimed that he had threatened them with death and banished them from the area for failing to join Inkatha. He demanded a large amount of money from the residents for membership in Inkatha (R5); the Women's Brigade (R1,50); UWUSA (R3) as well as R2 for the Inkatha building fund and R3 subscriptions towards Shabalala's bodyguard fund.¹¹

Violence appears arbitrary, all-pervasive and unpredictable, creating an atmosphere in which death, destruction and overwhelming fear dominates life. Political allegiance to any of the organisations can result in death. As one resident explained:

It is dangerous to walk at night. Look, today I will be knocking off at 8.00 pm and how safe will I be? Where I stay (in a tribal area which is not under the control of the amaQabane, the comrades) you meet someone at night who greets you 'Quabane, Quabane heyta!' Whatever you do, you may receive a bullet hole. Some people who are not comrades now masquerade as comrades. But if you deny you are a quabane then you are in trouble if the strangers are in fact comrades. To be silent is also dangerous because either side interprets that as insolence. To say nothing is futile. It means you are impimpi (informant) for the other group.¹²

The perpetuation of terror has not only been targeted at political activists, but includes all members of the community. Even those at the periphery of the conflict become embroiled in it. An individual who is not a member of either of the political organisations faces death, if someone in the family is a political supporter. For example, Mr Thulani Mgaga of Mpumuza writes:

When we are at work we pray that the knocking off time does not come. When it is time to go home you drag yourself to the bus stop. As you alight at home you wonder and fear what will confront you. When the sun sets, you feel tears well in your eyes for you do not know whether you are next on the list or not.¹³

¹¹ Ibid. On 26 May 1986, the Mfekas were granted a court order restraining Shabalala from attacking or harassing them. Within hours of the application, their house was ruined by a group of about a hundred people. Shabalala was not prosecuted for breaching his restriction order, he was appointed to the Inkatha Central Committee. In 1988, he was called before a disciplinary committee and expelled from the Central Committee.

¹² *Frontline*, 29/02/88. UDF and COSATU activists are known as *amaquabane*, a Xhosa word meaning friend or comrade.

¹³ Natal Witness, /02/88.

A woman tells of the constant fear she experiences:

Life is an activity of constant anxiety. Death may come in many, many ways. You say to yourself, "Now I'm alive and later I may be dead," and that's all there is to say. I spend far too much time wondering whether I or my family is on someone's list and when they will get round to ticking our names off.¹⁴

The security and privacy of home life has been shattered. A statement made by a resident from Lamontville in Durban describes an attack on her home:

We were watching television with my husband when we heard an indistinct shouting from the outside. When I peered through the window I saw my son running away from home and two men... who were pouring something on the roof of my house - that thing turned out to be petrol. At the same time other people were throwing petrol bombs through the windows... A number of shots.... were fired right around the house, through windows and doors... My husband was shot eleven times. My daughter was shot in the body and stomach. My son was shot behind the knee...¹⁵

The activities of vigilante groups and the ways in which they operate is exemplified by a statement made by a participant in Umlazi, Durban:

When they come and call you, you must take any weapon you can find and join them. If you don't they put big eyes on you and you are a marked man. They will say that they are calling us together to protect our houses and our schools against the United Democratic Front. We get together, we sing, we shout our slogan "Usuthu".... We are ordered to collect at the stadium every day. We leave the meeting 12.30 pm or 1.30 pm. We patrol the streets and look after the schools in our own section, but when there is trouble to be done then we just mix up the sections: The gang for P section will go to K section and so on, and there we will attack families.¹⁶

Fear and stark terror is easily transmitted throughout a community when violence is arbitrary and continuous. As Clayton suggests, at this stage, it 'is not too difficult to persuade humans that an outgroup.... is malignant, essentially evil... Hatred, a usual concomitant of such fear and paranoia, can then grip a whole community.... the normal patterns of life and belief collapse or become distorted'.¹⁷

¹⁴ M. Kenridge, *An Unofficial War*, p. 46.

¹⁵ F. Meer, *Resistance in the Townships*, (Durban: Madiba Publications, 1989), p. 227.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 236.

¹⁷ A. Clayton, 'Cruelty and Terror: The Case of the May 1945 Setif Uprising in Algeria, (paper presented at workshop: 'Constructing Terror; Violence and Decolonisation', Cambridge University, March 1991), no page numbering.

Group violence deflects personal responsibilities and individuals quickly develop psychological attitudes conducive to the performance of grotesque levels of violence. The following abstract from the experiences of a UDF activist tells of the his mental frame of mind when he participated in the conflict in Natal. I have quoted a substantial portion of it because it so vividly describes the kinds of elements at play in combat in the townships:

The decisive battle... took place on February 11, 1990 - the day of Nelson Mandela's release. While we were holding a rally to celebrate his release at the local stadium, we spotted the impis (Inkatha warriors) descending down the hill.... Armed with whatever we could lay our hands on - I had two rocks - we took up positions behind those comrades who had guns.... Then the attackers started retreating. 'They have more bullets'... Before long we triumphantly entered Richmond Farm and our enemies were running for dear life, abandoning belongings and wounded compatriots.... 'Umkhonto has arrived', we shouted... Indeed, we felt we were cadres of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC. I had now acquired a litre of methylated spirits and concentrated on burning shacks, while other comrades finished off wounded Inkatha warriors. One man was literally chopped beyond recognition. His eyes were gouged out and his genitals cut off, while I looked on. An elderly man, seeing the blood thirsty mob running towards him cried helplessly: 'Forgive me my children, please forgive me'. 'Since when are we your children? Who among us looks like Klova?' came the unsympathetic replies as bushknives and axes descended on the man who was writhing on the ground with blood gushing from all over his body.... Thinking back, I feel honoured that I had the opportunity of fighting in defence of my home, my family and my township. I must also admit that I enjoyed the excitement of battle: the sight of a sea of burning shacks and desperate men running for dear life. I loved it all. But I could never do it again.¹⁸

There are two aspects of vigilantism that are important. Firstly, vigilantism is basically 'negative' since it essentially aims to eradicate any threat to the status quo. Secondly, vigilante coercion tends to be applied in an ad hoc fashion. It is 'disorderly; that is, it inhibits the development of reasonably accurate and stable behavioural expectations'.¹⁹ It becomes increasingly difficult for vigilante leaders to control rank and file members and many resort to violence and terror as disciplinary measures.

¹⁸ Weekly Mail, 30/15/91.

¹⁹ H.J. Rosenbaum and P.C. Sederberg, 'Vigilantism', p. 19-20.

Amongst the comrades, the offender is brought before a committee which recounts the infringement and then pronounces and carries out sentence. A guilty party could expect a severe beating which, on occasion results in death.²⁰ Continuous violent conflict not only disrupts the past moral order of a society, but political activists, in their quest to give definition to their power and authority, often impose a new set of codes on community members. The ad hoc and unstructured nature of these organisations results in the imposition of ambiguous and ever-changing rules. As Ranger says in reference to Zimbabwe: 'In place of the controlled, everyday argument in peacetime about moral character and sorcery came something uncontrollably monstrous in wartime: a campaign that was brutal and often arbitrary'.²¹ In Natal, township residents are disciplined and punished if they infringe the newly imposed standards of decent behaviour. For example, the comrades mete out punishment to 'all those who are disrespectful towards their elders, as well as to thieves and other "wrongdoers"... The new system of punishment is called "modelling". This is where a person is stripped naked and forced to parade, confessing his or her offence'.²² Necklacing has been replaced by modelling, but this humiliating form of punishment is thoroughly detested. The comrades argue that, 'modelling the offender acts as a rehabilitating exercise to deter crime'.²³ However, exactly what constitutes 'unlawful' behaviour is not clearly defined or known, by both the comrades and the community, resulting in arbitrary accusations, and individual interpretations. Inkatha uses threats of assault and murder; denial of houses, land, jobs and pensions against those who refuse to join up. A township resident tells of his experiences:

I live in township, man. To stay alive you learn. I drive the same streets, I have the guns waved in my face. In these areas, if you are not Inkatha you face thuggery. They pour

²⁰ M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial*, p. 68.

²¹ T. Ranger, 'The Meaning of Violence in Zimbabwe,' (paper presented at workshop 'Constructing Terror, Violence and Decolonisation,' Cambridge University, March 1991), p. 3.

²² *Frontline*, 29/02/88. The necklace method of killing involves placing a motor-car tyre around the neck of a victim, filling it with petrol, and setting it alight. There were some 400 necklace murders between 1984 and 1987, and another 200 people were burned to death. For more detail, see J. Cock, 'Political Violence', in *People and Violence in South Africa*, ed. by B. Mckendrick and W. Hoffmann, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 65.

²³ *Ibid.*

petrol over your head and flick a cigarette-lighter by your eyes.²⁴

Vigilantism in Africa 'ranges from the fear of opposition parties to the dread of impotence, from the declaration of a state of emergency to the agony of enforced circumcision'.²⁵ Daily living is so closely intertwined with sorcery and witchcraft, that vigilantism is often directed at suspected sorcerers and witches. In Nigeria, for example, a man was beaten to death because he was capable of making other men sexually impotent through his magic.²⁶ In South Africa, in a single 24-hour period, 20 old and infirm women from the village of Makgadi in Sekukuniland died by the necklace.²⁷ They were suspected of witchcraft. In an environment of terror and perpetual fear, people become more suspicious of each other, and often seek the causes for the general malaise in community life in helpless and weaker individuals. By ritually killing these individuals, they hope to have isolated and eliminated the causes of the conflict and purified the atmosphere.

Parallels can be drawn with Zimbabwe, where: 'people... related to the war in a patterned and mythic way and also [seemed] to have drawn heavily upon "tradition". As history, the war was a story of the remarkable, the miraculous, the mythical'.²⁸ Although relations with the ancestors are disrupted during conflict and upheaval, their influence on the living continues to operate. As was the case of Dzilo, who was killed by ZANU guerrillas for hiding his mother-in-law who was suspected of witchcraft. He became for his 'family and the people immediately around his home, what is called *ngozi*, a restless and vengeful presence, innocent yet wronged, aggrieved and dangerous to the living'.²⁹ Likewise among the Zulu, restless spirits taunt and terrorize their families who fail to perform the religious rites that integrate them with the body of ancestors.

²⁴ M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial*, p. 38.

²⁵ A. Mazrui, 'Black Vigilantism in Cultural Transition: Violence and Viability in Tropical Africa', in *Vigilante Politics*, p. 217.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

²⁷ J. Cock, 'Political Violence', p. 65.

²⁸ T. Ranger, 'The Meaning', p. 20.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9

Among the Zulu, a highly intensified form of pollution emanates from the corpse itself and from the chief mourner who is closely associated with the deceased. Death 'immediately taints all the members of the deceased's group and the vicinity with ritual impurity (*isinyama* or *umnyama*) and renders them all unfit for social participation, so that the normal rhythm of life must be suspended'.³⁰ The family must suspend normal duties and withdraw from society, as death makes them physically and emotionally weak and lowers their resistance to disease making them easy victims for sorcerers and their medicines. It also makes them *isigcwagcwa* or *isisila*, unpopular or disagreeable.³¹ The rituals performed at the funeral serve several functions. Before the deceased becomes an ancestral spirit, the living have the opportunity, at the funeral, to talk to it. Strengthening medicines, *Amakhubalo*, are eaten and close family members shave their heads. The rite that returns everything to normal for the family, is *xokozela* which takes place a few days after the burial. The purpose of this ritual is to 'wash' the hands of those who took part in the burial and to remove from them any 'mental depression' or 'darkness' produced by death in the kraal. After this, the family can return to their normal activities.³² The pollution that results from catastrophic death clings to the bereaved and causes further disasters and calamities, ritual impurity that is *umkhokha*.. As a special precaution against *umkhokha*, people who die in accidents or by drowning, in fighting or by murder, are never brought into the house, but are buried outside without ceremony. Taking a human life adds a further dimension to pollution: in addition to the pollution arising from catastrophic death, the killer is polluted for the rest of his or her life.

Given the turmoil and turbulence in Zulu society, relatives are often unable to perform the rituals associated with death and the removal of the pollution that

³⁰ A. Vilakazi, *Zulu Transformations. A study of the dynamics of social change*, (Natal: University of Natal Press, 1965), p. 90.

³¹ Workers in industries, domestic services and in mines insist on going home as soon as they hear of a death so that they may join the family and be cleansed and fortified before returning to work. As Vilakazi explains, 'they become accident-prone; are likely to be assaulted without reason or provocation; their masters at work may take a sudden dislike to them and thus dismiss them from their jobs, and anything unpleasant can happen to them.' Ibid.

³² Ibid, p. 92.

enshronds family members. Men, women and children in political organisations are often completely isolated from their families and ignorant of their whereabouts.³³ For example, a woman from Edendale, Pietermaritzburg, arrived home one evening and was told by her neighbours that her husband had been abducted by vigilantes that afternoon. In the days that followed, she made enquiries throughout the township, visited four hospitals and six police stations and mortuaries, but drew a blank. When eventually, a sympathetic policeman showed her photographs of all the bodies which had passed through the police mortuary over the past few months, she identified her husband. He had been given a pauper's burial since the police had failed to trace his family. It has also become increasingly difficult for the bereaved to notify relatives in other parts of the country. Zulus have been constantly on the move in the last few years, taking flight away from areas dominated by opposition political groups. Many become polluted without even realising it. Moreover, funerals have become the venue for violent confrontation between warring sides, making it difficult to carry out full burial rites.

The vast numbers of Zulu who have killed and the numbers that have been killed, makes for a highly polluted and unhealthy environment. People not only suffer the trauma of losing close family members and friends, but they are also unable to come to terms with these deaths. In Zimbabwe, after 1980, many people sought to relieve such trauma by discovering the bodies of husbands, sons and daughters, re-burying them and performing the appropriate rites to integrate them with the body of ancestors. Ranger writes of the anxieties experienced by those who had killed supposed witches, sell-outs and black policemen. 'Many guerillas and mujibas came out of the war fearful of the *ngozi* spirits of innocent men and women executed as witches or sell outs... Recent newspaper reports, more than 10 years later, record ex-mujibas paying compensation fines to the families of sell-outs they had denounced to the guerrillas, terrified into doing so by the wrath of the *ngozi*'.³⁴ The priests of the

³³ M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial*, p. 97.

³⁴ T. Ranger, 'The Meaning', p. 9.

High God cult in Southern Matabeleland, blamed the guerillas who had failed to return for absolution and cleansing after the war, for the drought and disturbances that ensued.³⁵ Likewise, in Natal, anxiousness, fear, death and intensive pollution hangs over the townships like a thick cloud, trapping and choking the people beneath.

The effect of the ongoing conflict on the youth has been devastating. As Leeb explains, 'Families who are forced to flee are already in a state of dissolution. Some families may have had as many as three houses destroyed, and some have moved up to five times. Members become disoriented because their roles lose definition, separation occurs and family intimacy is no longer possible. Some family members may have been killed, but the family is prevented from mourning together; and the children drift into isolation and alienated patterns of behaviour'.³⁶ Children live in a world where terror is central to daily life. A case study quoted by Thomas illustrates the violent experiences of an adolescent. In six weeks he had been present at the murder of a man, escaped death in a house which was petrol-bombed, was exiled from his community, had taken refuge in a centre which was invaded by armed police and had been beaten by the security police.³⁷ Leeb says, 'there are few children left in Pietermaritzburg townships - they turn into adults when they are 5 or 6 years old. The truth is while some of us agonise over pre-primary educational suitability for our children, these children have games which encompass visiting neglected bodies to see the degree of decomposition'.³⁸ Besides the immediate conflict, children are also routinely exposed to chronic levels of humiliation and deprivation. One third of children below the age of 14 are underweight and stunted for their age. Furthermore, 50 percent of all deaths in the black population occur to children under the age of 5, while for whites, 7 percent of all deaths fall into this category.³⁹

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ W. Leeb, researcher at the Centre of Adult Education, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, in M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial*, p. 112.

³⁷ A. Thomas, 'Violence and Child detainees', in, *People and Violence*, p. 446.

³⁸ Weekly Mail, 10/04/89.

³⁹ A. Thomas, 'Violence', pp. 436-437.

Psychologists have identified three side-effects from long-term exposure to violence and displacement. Firstly, as trauma becomes long term, the psychological consequences become more severe. Anger and grief often give way to depression, the victim becomes paralysed by impotence to change the situation. Secondly, the concentration span of children and youth decreases. They become restless, lack a sense of self-worth and are resentful of adults who are blamed for their predicament. Thirdly, violence is regarded as the norm, and is seen as a solution.⁴⁰ As Segel explains: 'In conditions in which violence is overwhelming, a culture of violence develops. By this is meant a situation in which violence becomes accepted as a norm rather than an aberration. It becomes so widespread that acts of violence do not produce any sense of outrage'.⁴¹ Hoffmann further adds: 'Desensitization leads to moral atrophy, whereby people no longer question violent actions because moral principles no longer apply, and the individual is absolved of the responsibility of making personal moral choices'.⁴² Violent behaviour becomes so much a part of life and yet, is at the same time so alienating representing starkly the disjuncture between normality and madness. The behaviour of people, especially children reflects these tensions. For instance, 'children... in their fears and frustration will sometimes actively seek confrontation... Young comrades who are in danger will suddenly and inexplicably seek out those who threaten them... the stress of being afraid becomes too much and there is a feeling of "let's get it over with"'.⁴³

The youth who have been caught up in the conflict can be divided into several categories. Those who are committed political activists, having high political ideals; those who are unavoidably caught up in violence but remain politically uneducated; those who joined organisations to defend their people and homes and became more politically aware through combat; and those who had joined street gangs after leaving school, and subsequently joined the conflict.

⁴⁰ M. Kentridge, *An Unofficial*, pp. 112-113.

⁴¹ T. Segel and D. Labe, 'Family Violence: wife abuse', in *People and Violence*, p. 255.

⁴² W. Hoffmann and B.W. Mckendrick, 'The Nature of Violence', in *Ibid*, p. 29.

⁴³ W. Leeb, in *Sash*, 31/05/89. (Newsletter of the Black Sash)

Due to migrant labour and single sex-hostels, the formation of male gangs has been a common occurrence amongst Africans. Between 1900 and 1936, young Zulu migrants constituted the *Amalaita* gangs in Durban. La Hausse says that 'the development by rural youth of independently organised dances such as the *umqongo* and their increasing involvement in faction-fighting and beer-drinking were, by numerous accounts, forms of youth association and activity unknown prior to the 1880s'.⁴⁴ The *Amalaita* activities had parallels with rural youths of the same age-set who engaged in *ngeweka*, stick-fighting. Solidarities of age-set and rural networks were expressed more fiercely in the urban setting, 'their mobilisation appears to have been part of a broader struggle which involved the utilisation of accessible cultural repertoires and rural forms to defend the integrity of the group in the face of competition from "outsiders"'.⁴⁵ In the 1920s, Vilakazi recognises a group of men called the *umqhafi*, migrants who spurned old traditions, wore a particular western style of dress, and represented the new city culture. He traces the origins of the *tsotsis* to the *abaghafi*. The term *tsotsis* referred to the 'narrow-bottomed' trousers which they wore but it soon came to stand for those who engaged in criminal activities in the townships.⁴⁶ In the Natal conflict, gang members who joined political organisations are called *comtsotsis*, and the leadership has had great difficulty controlling them as they continue to assault and rob people and shops. A UDF activist explains that some participants 'were always *tsotsis*.. They fought in gangs before the war started... later some went to Inkatha, some came to us... And they are good fighters when the violence starts, but when you are only a fighter a war is a good business. You can commit crimes and pretend you are still fighting the war'.⁴⁷

Other youths that participate in the conflict, are initially largely ignorant of grassroots politics but nevertheless become militant in combat. For example, in

⁴⁴ P. La Hausse, 'The Cows of Nongoloza: Youth, Crime and Amalaita Gangs in Durban, 1900 - 1936', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 16, No 1, March 1990, p. 85.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 94.

⁴⁶ A. Vilakazi, *Zulu Transformations*, pp. 76-77.

⁴⁷ M. Kentridge, *Unofficial War*, p. 67.

KwaMbiza, an 'army' of some 300 boys led by comrade Gadaffi defends an ANC area. Explaining their combat strategy, Gadaffi said: 'After dark we gather together in the forest... then we break up into regiments. We have divided the place into four areas - Moscow, Lusaka, Angola and Libya.' He views the enemy as the KGB or CIA. At nights the units have to patrol parts of the valley. When they hear something going on, they start blowing their whistles. 'Then all the other units will move towards where the action is... Last week they attacked, killing five of us. Then we retaliated'. Gadaffi worries 'about the young boys who are 6 and 8 years old and have been taught to kill. I think after the war is over, I will have to take the militancy out of these young ones. To do this we will have to establish a choir and a soccer club. We would also like to build a community hall'.⁴⁸ The possibility of many of these youngsters developing deviances which are inimical to society, is high.

Finally, there are those that are caught up in violence but are never fully integrated into a political organisation. As is the case of Lothe Nene, a 16 year old from KwaMgwagwa. He was attacked, stabbed and forced to flee from his home fearing that he would endanger his family. As a refugee, he lived in a mud hut, six meters square, with 6 other young refugees and between them, they had one bed, a couch, one blanket, no food or cooking facilities. He was killed and all 'he wanted was to go home and go to school'.⁴⁹ Some youths become more militant and tend to have a clearer idea of larger political issues: 'I do not see myself going back to school anymore. Firstly, I am 20 and too old to return to standard 8. Also, I do not think I can stomach to sit in front of a teacher for her to tell me that history began in 1652 with the arrival of Jan van Riebeck. Besides, what is the use of an education when I cannot get a job I want and cannot live where I want to.' For the future, he said he had decided to 'join the Azanian defence force after liberation. One does not need to write

⁴⁸ Weekly Mail, 5/05/89.

⁴⁹ W. Leeb, in M. Kentridge, *Unofficial War*, p. 112.

any aptitude test to become a soldier, I will have served my apprenticeship in the struggle anyway'.⁵⁰

Although political violence has dominated township life, there lies an underlying fabric of domestic violence, gender and child abuse. Vogelmann estimates that in South Africa, there are about 380 000 rapes per year, or an average of 1000 women are raped every day.⁵¹ There appears to be a general breakdown and erosion in traditional patriarchal power relations. Nearly 60 percent of all households are headed by women.⁵² Most African men suffer high levels of exploitation at work, having little power or control at the workplace. Many see unemployment as a personal failing and this manifests itself in resentment, boredom and a feeling of powerlessness. As Vogelmann says, 'passive acceptance, heightened dependence, and powerlessness, particularly because they run counter to a masculine sense of self, provide a strong foundation for frustration'.⁵³ Frustration often results in displaced aggression directed against women. Physical assault or rape offers short-term relief from frustrations and alters self conception positively.

According to Mazrui, rape is regarded with less severity than robbery in African society. For example, in Uganda, robbery is interpreted as a declaration of war on a community, while rape is interpreted at worst, as a challenge against the husband, or the parents of the woman, or her family. 'In Africa, rape symbolises the excesses of virility, while impotence is a deficiency in masculinity'.⁵⁴ Hence vigilantism is generally provoked by responses against threats to potency and fertility rather than by threats to chastity. Vogelmann found that he could make two generalisations about the rapists he interviewed. Firstly, they all had a strong desire to assert their power through coercion; and secondly, all were unable to perceive women as people.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Weekly Mail, 22/01/88.

⁵¹ L. Vogelmann, 'Violent crime: rape', in *People and Violence*. Vogelmann based his study on 9 rapists from Riverlea, a 'coloured' township in south-western Johannesburg. 5 had been convicted of rape, while 4 admitted to rape during the interviews.

⁵² T. Segel and D. Labe, 'Family Violence', p. 257.

⁵³ L. Vogelmann, 'Violent crime', 1990, p. 101.

⁵⁴ A. Mazrui, 'Black Vigilantism', p. 214.

⁵⁵ L. Vogelmann, 'Violent crime', p. 99.

Violence against women in the household also provides stereotypes for young boys and the conception of women as inferior, powerless and weak is carried through the generations. As Segel says, 'the feature of devaluing the feminine through violence is crucial in the understanding of the dynamics of violent interactions in the domestic setting. It is the thread which patriarchy, sexism, and racial inequality in gender relations weave through all violent interactions between men and women in the home'.⁵⁶

In the townships of Natal, 'war is a male affair, where issues of personal machismo come to the fore... Young men... fight a personal and egoistical battle as well as a political and ideological one'.⁵⁷ Women are generally on the periphery of battle, and yet are in the heart of the conflict. Not only do they have to maintain the home under appalling circumstances, but they also have to face the frustration and anger of their husbands, fathers, brothers and sons. Members of both Inkatha and the ANC tend to be distainful towards women. A young school teacher, when asked whether she participated in strategic political discussions with her male counterparts, replied: 'The only way those boys talk to women is between their legs'.⁵⁸ Another woman felt that it was her responsibility, 'to keep the household together, to make sure that we eat, to account for the whereabouts of my children, to try to bring some relief to my husband who suffers badly from ulcer and nervous tension. My children are not neutral - I respect that - but it makes it difficult to me as mother these days. Every time I speak to them it may be the last time. I have to be calm, to behave normally, and yet nothing in our lives is normal'.⁵⁹ In a community under siege, women are forced to take on the role of carer and comforter, of nurse and mother, of councillor and wife, doubling their workload while living beneath a blanket of anxiety and tension.

⁵⁶ T. Segel and D. Labe, 'Family Violence', p. 157.

⁵⁷ M. Kentridge, *Unofficial War*, p. 45.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 47.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 46.

The conflict unfolds

Instead of looking for a chronological sequence to the conflict in Natal, it seems more appropriate to focus on events that were significant in establishing routine violence. Attempts made by academics, journalists and politicians to show how the conflict developed and to pinpoint a progressive series of events, tend to give it a level of organisation that is misleading. The violence in Natal may have elements of planning and organisation,⁶⁰ but the way in which it unfolded in the townships was confused, chaotic and appeared uncoordinated. The momentum of the violence depended on the ability of individual strongmen, chiefs and shacklords, to muster up a following to terrorize township dwellers. It depended on the ability and capability of the UDF/COSATU to organise units for defensive and offensive action. Both organisations were facing the prospect of internecine war for the first time, hence both were unprepared and could not claim to have a highly trained, militarised membership to assist them in battle. Moreover, early on in the conflict, membership in each of the warring sides was fairly flexible and undemanding. It was only as violence picked up, that residents were forced to make clear their membership and hence offer themselves as soldiers for the chosen political organisation. Many remained undecided, but from fear, chose the side that was dominant in their particular areas.

Although Inkatha appears more organised and more capable of mobilising armed units, it too has suffered the consequences of poor organisation, lack of leadership training, bad communication links between leaders and members, and undisciplined leaders as well as members. Violence is extremely difficult to control, irrespective of the amount of planning and organisation that goes into it. Once started, it has its own momentum. Although this momentum can be accelerated or slowed down by external elements like the police, army, the availability of weapons and money, it cannot be premeditated or preplanned to such an extent as to predict the pace and extent of violent action. People do not always act in logical ways, but their actions are determined by a

⁶⁰ I will be discussing the role of the police and state in detail later in the chapter.

number of complex and contradictory processes influenced by a number of things, which cannot, in a situation of extreme terror, be easily identifiable. In this section, I will highlight significant events to show the chaos and anarchy involved.

The way in which Inkatha treated the pupils and students who participated in the 1980 school and University boycotts, reflected the kind of stance the organisation was to adopt in subsequent years. These early confrontations between Inkatha and the youth have been discussed in chapter 4. To recap, at the Inkatha General Conference in 1980, Buthelezi took an intransigent and threatening stance towards the students of the University of Zululand:

The time has come for us to be able to say that... the University of Zululand will forfeit its right to exist if it does not serve the people... If I find a conflict between Inkatha's aims and objectives and our means of implementing those objectives on the one hand, and the activity encouraged or perhaps even tolerated by an institution such as the university.... then I will question the authenticity of that university in our midst... We are serious in our political commitment and we will not tolerate those who make a mockery of the mass response to the South African situation which is found in Inkatha. These are fighting words and I seek a mandate from this conference to back these words up with action if necessary.⁶¹

There are about 4,7 million Africans in Natal, constituting 77 percent of the province's population. Although official statistics place the number of Africans living in Durban at 800 000, researchers propose that a more realistic figure would be 1,5 million.⁶² Urban townships, shacklands, and squatter settlements are overcrowded, and the problems associated with living under such circumstances have been exacerbated by the violence.

On 31 August 1983, the government announced its intention of incorporating Lamontville and Hambanathi into KwaZulu. These townships were in the Natal region and came under the jurisdiction of the Port Natal Administration Board (PNAB). Contrary to the situation in 1978 when the residents of Lamontville voted

⁶¹ P. Teague, 'A Study of Inkatha Yesizwe's approach to the youth, with specific reference to the movements' Youth Brigade', (unpublished BA Honours thesis, University of Cape Town, 1983), p. 76.

⁶² G. Mare and G. Hamilton, *Appetite for Power*, p. 8.

unanimously for incorporation into KwaZulu, in 1984, 87 percent rejected incorporation.⁶³ At a Joint Rent Action Committee (JORAC) meeting, an organisation originally created to fight rent increases, residents rejected incorporation on the grounds of losing their Section 10 rights. It was this issue that polarized Inkatha and UDF in Lamontville and Hambanathi, and it became possible to 'trace the tendency for township traders, businessmen, and civil servants and many teachers to support Inkatha and to become its urban leadership, just as there was increasing support for charterist politics among professional, intellectuals, clergy, students and youth'.⁶⁴ Political tension began in 1978 when Harrison Dube, an ex-ANC member who had served a term of imprisonment on Robben Island, won the Ward 3 seat in the Lamontville Community Council. Dissatisfied with the limited power of black urban councils, he began to set up extra-council organisations to challenge the PNAB. The most important of these were JORAC, the Joint Commuters Committee and the Lamontville Parents Education Committee, which organised residents around popular issues like increasing rent, transport and schooling costs. Dube came into direct conflict with Inkatha members on the council who supported PNAB. He was assassinated in 1983. Hostility between Lamontville residents and Inkatha began to brew.

Ian Mkhize, the Mayor of Hambanathi, took centre stage in organising protest against rent increases and incorporation into KwaZulu. He warned the government that rent hikes were being introduced at a time when residents were particularly volatile. There had been bus boycotts in Lamontville, protest over rents in Sobantu in Pietermaritzburg, and feelings had been inflamed by the hanging of three ANC members. When Alfred Sithole, a school teacher and community leader was murdered in August 1984, Mkhize resigned from the council. Inkatha began to attack families in Hambanathi. For example, in August:

⁶³ A survey was carried out by academics from the University of Natal. F. Meer, *Resistance in the Township*, p. 133.

⁶⁴ A. Sitas, 'Inanda, August 1985: "Where wealth and power and blood reign worshipped gods"', *South African Labour Bulletin*, Vol 11, No 4, 1986, pp. 95-97.

Two bus loads of allegedly Inkatha supporters and a combi load of impis invaded the township and attackers in armoured 4-wheel drive vehicles equipped with flame throwers set 10 houses alight, including that of Alfred Sithole, who was murdered.⁶⁵

The story of Mrs Gladys Tyaliti illustrates the kind of action Inkatha was prepared to take to rid the community of non-Inkatha supporters:

Some men not known to me dragged me out of the house and forced me to join the mob standing in the street... I was then forced to march with the mob to the community hall... Messrs Mandla Khumbuza of Ward One, Mthembu of White City, Ngonyama and Gwensa, also of White City called me aside and told me the community had already decided that by 5.p.m. I should no longer be in Hambanathi.⁶⁶

She was allowed to return home, but three hours later, 'a heavily-armed Inkatha mob stormed into my house and broke the windows and doors. While I was fleeing they hit me with knobkerries, sjambokked... slapped... and stabbed me.' She received a letter from the community council with the following message: 'In view of the sad situation and our vain attempt to bring about peace, we feel now, in the interest of all, that it would be advisable for your own interest to look for alternative accommodation'.⁶⁷

Proposed peace talks between JORAC and Inkatha in July 1985 never materialised. Buthelezi remained intransigent:

...there is no way in which we are going to accept being terrorised by other blacks, aided and abetted by misguided children and thugs. It is hogwash to present this thing as political thuggery, particularly if the anger of the people who are being terrorised expresses itself in action.⁶⁸

The murder of Victoria Mxenge, a Durban attorney and executive member of the UDF, sparked off a reign of terror across all the townships in Durban, and Inkatha

⁶⁵ Sunday Tribune, 26/08/85.

⁶⁶ Sunday Tribune, 26/05/85.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Natal Mercury, 7/07/85.

appeared intent on ridding the townships of UDF members and paralysing all political activity. As was the case on August 27 when Winnington Sabelo, an Inkatha Central Committee member, ordered all UDF supporters to 'get out of Umlazi' together with refugees who had fled from earlier Inkatha attacks in Lamontville and Hambanathi. He issued a warning that people 'harbouring them should see they leave or should leave with them'. All cars that did not have Umlazi registration plates were not to be allowed in the township.⁶⁹ A resident in Ntuzuma, KwaMashu said that groups of impis with sticks went from house to house trying to recruit people to join them. 'They are taking anybody. They say there are people they want to kill'.⁷⁰ These early conflicts in Natal were beginning to take on a familiar sequence and pattern, and demarcation along the lines of Inkatha and UDF members and supporters was becoming more significant.

Although the conflict was based on a larger political agenda, local social forces and circumstances were crucial in determining the timing and intensity of these efforts. In the township of Inanda in Durban, for example, land is privately owned and the causes of violence were embedded in local history. By the 1936 Land Act, Inanda was declared a 'released area', one that is isolated from white South Africa, to be incorporated into a neighbouring reserve in the future. By 1958, the shanty-towns of Inanda were becoming a popular place for those who were pushed out of Durban and who did not qualify or had refused housing in KwaMashu, a new township northwest of the city. Unprecedented economic growth between 1963 and 1973, attracted a large number of workers and tenants into Inanda and became a lucrative source of income for local landowners. Subsequently, the population of Inanda has continued to increase from 68 000 in 1977 to 250 000 in 1985.⁷¹ The majority of the tenants are semi- or unskilled workers, with low educational levels (most had about 6 years of schooling) and high unemployment (45 percent). In the early 1980s, there were 100 to

⁶⁹ Natal Mercury, 27/08/85.

⁷⁰ Daily News, 9/08/85.

⁷¹ H. Hughes, 'Violence in Inanda, August 1985', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 13, No 3, April 1987, p. 342.

230 people per hectare, and the average household size was 9,5 people.⁷² In 1982, the Urban Foundation, on the instructions of the Department of Corporation and Development, initiated a site-and-service scheme on South African Development Trust Land.⁷³ The township of Newtown was proclaimed in April 1982, and 25 000 people moved in. Many black businessmen, professionals and factory workers who could afford to buy the sites and houses, moved into the area and a potential conflict situation arose between the squatters and the new home owners.

Due to the nature of area, the instability of squatter settlements compounded by high unemployment, both Inkatha and the UDF found it difficult to mobilise significant support in Inanda. In August 1985, violence spread to Newtown, where the conflict was heightened by promises made by vigilante leaders that if the 'troublemakers' were flushed out of Newtown, they could move into their homes. What ensued was a fight between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. Residents of Newtown retaliated by closing off access to bus stops, water points, the clinic and schools. In December 1989, it seemed that those comrades who had fled were returning armed with more lethal weapons. In this instance, the endemic instability of the shanty-towns was compounded by rivalry with home-owners over Newtown's superior resources - and these social tensions became increasingly embroiled in the wider political conflict between Inkatha and the UDF.

In the late 1980s, the epicentre of the conflict in Natal became the Natal Midlands, with Pietermaritzburg as its locus. An organisation monitoring the violence in this region found that in 1987, there were 403 political killings, in 1988, 690 and in the first 10 months of 1989, 518. That is, over a period of 34 months nearly 1611 people were killed in political violence.⁷⁴ At least 10 000 people have, at one time or

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ The state had acquired this land from Indian land owners. The site-and-service scheme consisted of the Urban Foundation dividing the area into plots, providing a pit latrine, 1 tap for every 4 sites and new residents were provided with tents until they could erect shacks and later more substantial dwellings.

⁷⁴ J. Aitchison, 'The Pietermaritzburg conflict - Experience and Analysis, Centre of Adult Education', (working paper of the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1989).

another been refugees who have had to leave their homes for a period of time.⁷⁵ The region includes the city of Pietermaritzburg (and the township of Sobantu); the Edendale complex; the two townships of Ashdown and Imbali; and the Vulindlela area (previously known as Zwartkop Location). Other townships in the Natal midlands are those located near towns, like Mpumalanga near Hammarsdale, Enhlalakahle near Greytown, Mpophomeni near Howick, Bruntville near Mooi River and many other rural towns and villages. The five African townships of Pietermaritzburg are administered by five different authorities and only Imbali Stage one and two fall directly under KwaZulu. Imbali stage three is administered by the central government through a liaison committee. As a peri-urban area, Vulindlela falls under the control of KwaZulu through local chiefs. The Black Local Authorities Act made provision for the administration of African townships by local community councils. This system collapsed at Ashdown in 1983, when there was only one Inkatha candidate standing for elections in the whole township and in Sobantu in 1984/5, councillors were forced to resign by the community.

In 1985, clashes between Inkatha and COSATU over the BTR Sarmcol strikes, transported the violence to the midlands and demarcated the warring parties. In 1987, Edendale was one of the first townships to erupt in violence. Intense conflict continued and in 1990, an Inkatha attack was reported as follows:

On March 27, armed groups from the Inkatha controlled areas of Sweetwaters, Taylor's Halt and Elandskop swept down the hills into the top of the Edendale valley, attacking and burning various settlements. They seemed well organised... some observers estimated their number as high as 12 000, and they were heavily armed. Something like 130 people... were killed and hundreds of homes were destroyed.⁷⁶

Edendale is one of the few areas in the country where Africans have full ownership of land with freehold titles.⁷⁷ The land is owned by a small group of wealthy families, who then rent houses and land to tenants. With approximately 200

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Daily News, 15/05/90.

⁷⁷ Other areas in Natal are Clemont and parts of Inanda.

houses to one landowner, and an average monthly rental of R10, these landowners have been able to preserve a substantial degree of independence from the state.⁷⁸ The Edendale Landowners Association (ELA) was formed in 1973 to pressurize the state for a town board status which would codify their free-hold rights and allow for the development and improvement of conditions in the area. Landowners are constantly gripped by fear that the state could take away their free-hold rights. Since 1984, Edendale has been administered directly by a township manager who is an employee of the Department of Development Aid (DDA). The township was never a political stronghold of any political organisation. Neither Inkatha nor the UDF could claim majority support before 1984. Gwala proposes that violence was sparked off by Inkatha's recruitment campaign. Unlike in areas which fall under the KwaZulu administration, Inkatha did not have access to resources in Edendale to initiate patronage-client networks. Moreover, they had been unable to coopt the landowners who could make no gains from a KwaZulu administration that was underfunded and incapable of uplifting the township. Nor were there any guarantees that Inkatha would allow free-hold property rights to continue unhampered. Most significantly, since the relationship between landlords and tenants in Edendale is personal and non-bureaucratic, landowners do not require Inkatha's patronage networks. Hence, Inkatha has had to resort to violence to gain a foothold in the area. A young UDF activist describes what the conflict with Inkatha has done in Edendale:

Inkatha helped us achieve what some of us have long been wanting to achieve - the politicisation and galvanisation of the masses into action... Edendale has been a very quiet place politically, but now things are different. At first we thought Inkatha was part of the struggle, and part of the people. You see Gatsha took the organisation and plunged it into the wilderness. We did not agree with him, then he formed *amabutho*..⁷⁹

⁷⁸ N. Gwala, 'Inkatha, Political violence and the struggle for control in Pietermaritzburg', (paper presented at Workshop on Regionalism and Restructuring in Natal, University of Natal, Durban, 28-31 January, 1988).

⁷⁹ Interview with N. Gwala, 1/10/87. Ibid.

The specificity of the situation in Edendale is not unlike the situation in other parts of Natal where violence has erupted. Local conditions, social forces and social pressures play a major role in determining the form taken by the conflict. Although at one level, the organisations at war are the ANC and Inkatha, at another, the conflict revolves around inequalities, unequal distribution of resources, competing ethnic groups, and general alienation, dissatisfaction and frustration among youths and adults. Among the Zulu, debates about ethnicity have generally been paralleled by a demarcation along generational lines. The youth, rebellious and antagonistic towards Inkatha councillors and chiefs, tend to vacillate away from the Zulu past. For them, Zulu ethnicity and Inkatha are intertwined, and are experienced as oppressive as the apartheid state. For their parents, Zulu ethnicity has a far deeper meaning and is an important aspect of their individual identities. Their attitude towards Inkatha is double-edged. Inkatha sustains Zulu ethnicity, but it also constitutes the structures which circumscribe their lives, controlling land, housing and resources. It is difficult to be an adult Zulu, to live in a township or rural area that is administered by Inkatha, and yet disclaim any allegiance to the organisation. In rural areas, the rule of chiefs is so closely tied up with past Zulu structures, that the choices for adults are more complex. Exploitative chiefs are detested, and people complain, but still feel obliged to defend their Zuluness and hence the chiefs, when these institutions come under fire.

Inkatha and the state

A dossier entitled 'COSATU Report on Imbali Stage One', was made public in March 1989. It stated the following:

It appears that the police have a highly suspicious relationship with high-ranking Inkatha membership. There are repeated incidents of Inkatha members playing quasi-police roles. It is apparent that the incidents of conflict are often initiated by 'warlords'. The situations are such that the 'comrades'... are always arrested. The 'warlord' is never arrested. His version is always accepted.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Weekly Mail, 3/03/89.

Oscar Dhlomo, who was then the Secretary-General of Inkatha denied these allegations:

As far as we are aware, it is the COSATU/UDF alliance that has openly collaborated with the police in the past, as evident by the arrest of two SAP members in 1987. (They)... were in a group of COSATU/UDF supporters who attacked and murdered 13 members of the Inkatha Youth Brigade who were gathered for a meeting at KwaShange, near Taylor's Halt in Pietermaritzburg. Both these men were convicted of murder... These are facts and not mere allegations which are unsubstantiated.⁸¹

In July 1992, the Weekly Mail obtained copies of internal security police documents showing 'extensive discussions between president chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and a senior Durban security policeman about ways of preventing the ANC from eroding Inkatha's support in Natal'.⁸² It showed that at least R250 000 was paid into an Inkatha account by the security police. The Foreign Minister Pik Botha admitted that he authorised the money strictly within the mandate to combat sanctions against South Africa. He insisted that the money, which came from the Foreign Affairs Special Account, was given to Inkatha to hold two anti-sanction rallies. The paper also revealed months later that Inkatha received money and paramilitary training from the South African Defence Force Military Intelligence (MI). 'MI paid for the training of an "elite" hit-squad unit, equipping and maintaining a secret camp at Mkuze in northern Natal and paying up to R2,25- million a year for at least three years for the salaries of these Inkatha men'.⁸³ Before going into the extent of police and state collusion in violence, the historical role of the state in the control and policing of black people needs to be highlighted.

To recap on chapter one, I argued that the state is both intrusive and absent. This is most clearly exhibited in the way the law, police and army operate with respect to black civil society. There are many laws which function to suppress and control, but few which offer protection to civilians. As Kentridge says, 'people in townships

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Weekly Mail, 19/07/91.

⁸³ Weekly Mail, 13/12/91.

experience law as a negative, predatory force, not as a protector or enabler'.⁸⁴

Townships are grossly under-policed, for example, in 1984 in Mamelodi, there was one police station for an official population of 106 704.⁸⁵ The formation of neighbourhood groups to defend law and order has been a common occurrence throughout the country. Vigilantes just took the process a step further.

In order to understand the possible relations between the state and Inkatha, we need to go into an excursion about the ramifications of state brutality and violence within the state and in its dealings with civil society. The reform programme of the National Party in the 1980s was paralleled with the 'militarization of South African society'. According to Cock, militarization 'involves both the spread of militarism as an ideology and an expansion of the power and influence of the military as a social institution'.⁸⁶ At the economic level, the process involved the expansion of the armament industry and increasing links between the South African Defence Force (SADF) and the private sector. The state owned Armscor is the third largest corporation in South Africa and the fifth largest arms producer in the world. The defence budget of South Africa is around 28 percent of the national budget. At the ideological level, militarism involves attitudes and practices which regards war and preparation for war as normal and desirable. The state attempts to achieve this through the education system, state owned radio and television networks and newspapers. At the political level, the military has gained increasing decision-making power in central state politics. A significant element of the National Security Management System (NSMS), which until recently was the pivotal point of state power, was the State Security Council (SSC). Through the NSMS, the military could directly influence decision-making right down to local government level. At the regional level, the Joint Management Centres (JMCs) coordinated local strategies to deal with potential security problems. Eleven of the twelve JMC chairmen were SADF officers. At the

⁸⁴ M. Kentridge, *Unofficial War*, p. 155.

⁸⁵ J. Brewer, 'The police', p. 261.

⁸⁶ J. Cock, 'Political Violence', p. 48.

lowest level was the Local Management Centre headed by the South African Police (SAP) station commander and the SADF company commander. 'Thus the reality was a massive network of some 500 secret committees operating under the control and direct chairmanship of the police and the Defence force'.⁸⁷ President De Klerk had recently down-graded the SSC to the level of cabinet sub-committee, and has moved to dismantle the NSMS structure.

The government has criminalised many actions, that is, legal and peaceful acts are criminalised in order for them to become the object of police action. For example, the 1982 Intimidation Act makes it an offence to encourage someone to participate in collective action or industrial disputes. Definitions of terrorism and sabotage in the 1982 Internal Security Act are so 'broad that under this guise the police can act against workers in industrial disputes, pupils boycotting classes and participants in peaceful demonstrations'.⁸⁸ Many lawful acts are described as politically motivated, for example, funeral processions, church services and wearing certain T-shirts. Political acts are treated as breaches of law and the political content is de-emphasized.

The state has also developed, through the years, numerous laws which allows them to suppress political opposition. Section 49(2) of the 1977 Criminal Procedures Act allows the SAP to use such force 'as may in the circumstances be necessary to overcome resistance or stop a fleeing person'.⁸⁹ To kill a person who cannot be arrested or stopped in flight, is deemed justifiable homicide. In 1984, 98 people were killed in terms of this provision.⁹⁰ Two legislative acts govern the state of emergencies in South Africa, the Public Safety Act 3 of 1953 and the Internal Security Act 72 of 1982. This legislation overrides the provision of any other law or common law. The Public Safety Act, as amended, provides for the summary arrest and detention of people under the Emergency Regulations. The regulations of this Act

⁸⁷ Ibid, p 49.

⁸⁸ J. Brewer, 'The Police in South African Politics', in *South Africa: No Turning Point*, ed. by S. Johnson, (London: Macmillan Press, 1988), p. 268.

⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 270.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

restrict access to detainees, except with the consent of, and subject to, the conditions laid down by the Minister of Law and Order. Information relating to detainees is restricted, leaving them at the mercy of the security forces to whom almost complete immunity is granted. The Internal Security Act, as amended, confers wide powers to the Minister of Law and Order and the police. It provides, *inter alia*, for the preventive detention of anyone considered to be a threat to state security (section 28), the indefinite detention of a person for the purposes of interrogation (section 29), the detention of potential state witnesses for up to six months or until the trial is completed (section 31), and the short-term detention (up to 14 days) of people deemed to be contributing to public disturbance, disorder, or riot. Police are given widespread powers under the state of emergencies allowing any officer, soldier or prison officer of any rank to arrest and detain without a warrant. These detentions were restricted to 14 days in the first State of Emergency in 1985 unless extended by the Minister of Law and Order, and were lengthened to 180 days in the second. In 1985, 25 percent of the 8000 detainees were children, and this proportion reached its highest point in 1987 when children made up 40 percent of the total detainee population.⁹¹

The SAP has a reputation for violence and brutality even without indemnity. For example, 'between 1976 and 1985 the SAP alone killed or wounded 9771 people in the course of their duty and paid compensation of R8.25 million for assault, wrongful arrest and injury'.⁹² The brutal and abusive treatment by the police has a particularly detrimental effect on children. As Thomas says, when 'children are subjected to humiliation and brutalization, when they witness aggression to their family and community, and then they have little hope for their own futures, violence can quite often be a way of relieving this stress'.⁹³ Living in a community traumatized by repression and violence, where the overwhelming feelings are fear and hostility, 'the gap between being a victim and being a perpetrator of violence may diminish or

⁹¹ A. Thomas, 'Violence and Child Detainees', in B. McKendrick and W. Hoffman, *People and Violence*, pp. 440-441.

⁹² J. Brewer, 'The Police', p. 271.

⁹³ E. Thomas, 'Violence', p. 448.

disappear'.⁹⁴ The violence inherent in the state system creates an atmosphere in which violence is considered intrinsic to daily life.

The SADF has been used consistently from 1984 onwards to break rent and school boycotts, to invade clinics to identify the injured, to maintain beach apartheid, to monitor demonstrations and to suppress resistance and break strikes. Between 1984 and 1986, Detainees Support Committees reported a pattern involving soldiers picking up children off streets, holding them for several hours in military vehicles or remote areas, being beaten with fists and rifle butts or undergoing electric shock treatment. This arbitrary and indiscriminate use of violence intensified the spread of fear. A resident explains: 'In our streets, one day its all right. The next day, you can cross the street when a casspir (police vehicle) comes round the corner, and you'll die'.⁹⁵ They continued to play a similar role in the conflict in Natal. A diary of a priest working at the Inchanga Mission in the Natal midlands recounts a familiar scenario. On 12 July, 1988 the parish priests were away from the mission and at 4 p.m, 45 members of the parish youth committee were holding a meeting. While the boys and young men were singing, nearly 100 SAP arrived in yellow vans, cars and a helicopter. Without any explanation, they assaulted the group, leaving 10 youth beaten, bruised and shot. 30 of them were detained for an hour, during which time they forcibly extracted "confessions". Distraught parents were waiting when a priest arrived at 6 pm. 'The priest confronted the police who denied that anyone had been detained'.⁹⁶

In September 1986, the government resurrected 'black special constables' who had first been deployed in 1976. They are colloquially known as kitskonstables (instant constables) because they have only 6 weeks training but can be on the streets after three weeks. Municipal Law Enforcement Officers are auxiliaries to the SAP and were established to protect the lives of African councillors, guard municipal installations and government buildings and to assist in riotous conditions. In 1986, 16

⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 451.

⁹⁵ J. Cock, 'The role of violence in current state security strategies', in *Views on the South African State*, ed. M. Swilling, (South Africa: Human Science Research Council, 1990), p. 88.

⁹⁶ Africa Watch Report, *The killings in South Africa*, (USA: Human Rights Watch, 1991), p. 35.

000 kitskonstables and municipal policemen were added to the police force. A CIIR report states that:

The hastily trained black policemen were deployed in large groups in all areas where resistance was strong. From the beginning they used excessive violence. Their brutality created an atmosphere of fear that was not only aimed at activists but at intimidating entire communities. The behaviour of the new police is characterised by an arrogant disregard for the law.⁹⁷

In February 1989, 3 kitskonstables appeared in court for killing 4 residents in an Eastern cape township. They had been guarding a school and shot wildly when confronted by a crowd.⁹⁸ Kitskonstables have also become embroiled in the Natal conflict. Roy Ainslee, a representative of the Democratic Party who monitors violence, relates a phone call he received from a Mpumalanga resident on November 27, 1989, during an attack by vigilantes:

At 11 a.m. police, kitskonstables and vigilantes came in a "super-10" Kombi [taxi-van]. It was white and the registration had been taken off. Some of the white policemen had balaclavas on. Others wore overcoats to disguise themselves. They jumped off the Kombi. They had R1 rifles and shotguns. They fired shots and chased people. They took two youths away to Woody Glen... a vigilante stronghold... Vigilante gangs, assisted by the SAP kitskonstables, are shooting everyone. There is total chaos. Many people are hurt. They are looting. Please help us.⁹⁹

Despite the obvious planning that goes into state violence, on the ground it too appears random, indiscriminate, arbitrary and capricious. The use of informers leads to social atomisation. As Arendt explains, this 'atomisation... is maintained and intensified through the ubiquity of the informer, who can be literally omnipresent because he is no longer merely a professional agent in the pay of the police but potentially every person one comes into contact with'.¹⁰⁰ State violence, which is

⁹⁷ Catholic Institute for International Relations, *Now Everyone is Afraid. The changing face of policing in South Africa*, (London, 1988), pp. 13-14, in J. Cock, 'Role of Violence', p. 89.

⁹⁸ J. Brewer, 'The Police', p. 264.

⁹⁹ Africa Watch Report, *The Killing*, pp. 38-39.

¹⁰⁰ See H. Arendt, *On Violence*, London: Allen Lane, 1970), p. 55. J. Cock, 'The role of violence', p. 94.

often clandestine, perpetuated by anonymous actors, serves to atomize and disorganise opposition forces.

There are numerous examples of the violence that is intrinsic to the state. 700 people were executed by the death penalty in South Africa between 1983 and 1988, and 47 percent of a 1989 study of a sample of people in death row were found guilty of 'politically related offences'.¹⁰¹ Murders, disappearances and the assassinations of political activists have become more significant in recent years. For example, there was at least one armed attack on an ANC member living outside South Africa every twelve days in 1988.¹⁰² ANC members like Abraham Tiro, Joe Gqubi and Ruth First were assassinated outside the country. A few of those murdered in the country were the Social Scientists, Rick Turner and David Webster, and civil rights attorney, Griffith Mxenge and his wife, Victoria. Many community leaders were killed. Some of the most publicised were those of the Cradock leaders in 1986, Matthew Goniwe, Fort Calata, Sparrow Mkhonto and Sicelo Mhlawuli. In April 1988, the Anglican Bishop of Lebombo, Denis Sengolane together with 3 trade unionists were reported missing.

In the course of action, police have killed many people. In 1962 at Sharpville, 69 people were killed and in Soweto 1976, the number was as high as 700. In March 1985, 21 people were shot dead at Langa in Uitenhage. Between September 1984 and May 1987, the security forces were responsible for 40 percent of all deaths in civil unrest.¹⁰³ With 30 000 in detention in 1990, and numerous complaints of torture in detention, the state maintains control over the populous by disrupting the operations of political organisation and perpetuating fear of participating in the activities of such organisations. As Cock says, torture 'is not only considered as a means of obtaining information on clandestine networks, at any price, but also a means of destroying every individual who is captured, as well as his or her sense of solidarity with an

¹⁰¹ New Nation, 6/10/88. J. Cock, *Ibid*, p. 96.

¹⁰² G. Moss, 'Politics with a price on its head', *Work in Progress*, no 53, April 1988, pp. 24-27.

¹⁰³ J. Cock, 'The role of violence', p. 98.

organisation or a community'.¹⁰⁴ Prior to 1986, state violence was more overt and arbitrary. Thereafter, violence has been more selective, as the state moved to win the hearts and minds of people, to blur political aspirations, fragment political organisations and to foster material and consumerist needs.¹⁰⁵

The role of the state and police-force in the Natal conflict is complex, but certain elements can be distinguished. Firstly, the police failed to restrain and discipline those who perpetrated violence. In many instances they stood by while vigilantes attacked civilians, in others, they actively participated in violence against township residents. Secondly, the state failed to quickly prosecute those who were accused of engaging in violent activity. Their supposed impartiality was often questioned. For example, Security police have, on numerous occasions, detained key UDF figures at crucial times when peace negotiations were underway. Thirdly, some of the attacks on residents appeared so well orchestrated, the attackers used such sophisticated weapons, that the possibility of a third force backed by the state seemed very real. Let us look at these in greater detail.

In Enseleni, a township near Empangeni, north of Durban, a shop-keeper who was coerced into joining an Inkatha attack in July 1990 describes the involvement of the police and local officials:

The police... laughed and talked with the leaders of the crowd. The mayor of the township, Dlodlo, was there too.... These people who forced me to go with them to burn houses had guns, knives, pangas, clubs, sticks and other weapons. When we were walking... we saw that one of the groups had already bombed four houses. I saw three police vans... The police took no action to stop the burning of houses. I saw two yellow vans and police in private clothes. The police in vans were in uniform... The police made no effort to seize the weapons from anybody.¹⁰⁶

After an Inkatha rally on 25 March, in Caluza in the Edendale complex, a resident describes police involvement in an attack:

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 99. A study in the University of Cape Town showed that 85 percent of a sample of 175 ex-detainees had suffered physical torture.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 103.

¹⁰⁶ Africa Watch Report, *The killings*, pp. 50-51.

Inkatha was advancing, and 300 meters away were the police. There were about 400 Inkatha members and they advanced toward Caluza at 8.00 a.m. and again at 10:00 a.m. About 100 to 150 amaqabane [UDF supporters] advanced to defend the township. Police chased our boys away and one was shot dead on the spot.... Inkatha came in behind the police and burned 14 houses.¹⁰⁷

There are numerous examples of collusion between the police and Inkatha. Many Pietermaritzburg residents claim the 'the police assist Inkatha in other ways, by providing warlords with guns, by turning a blind eye to illegal possession of weapons and by transporting vigilantes in police vans. When the police deployed two squads of kitskonstabels in the area, there were complaints and allegations that many of the new recruits were simply vigilantes dressed in formal police uniform'.¹⁰⁸ A distinguishable element of police malpractice is the negligent response to requests for help or complaints against Inkatha members. In their *Memorandum on Violence in PMB*, published in November 1987, COSATU and the UDF highlighted a number of cases in which the police failed to investigate complaints and in some cases even refused to take statements. 'In a number of instances the police were called while an attack was in progress, but they either did not arrive at all, or only arrived after the event. For example on October 4 1987 the house of Willie Mpulo aged 49 was attacked.... and his son... murdered. While the attack was in progress one of Mpulo's children, Busizwe, ran to the Hilton police station to ask for assistance. Help was promised, but never arrived'.¹⁰⁹ Apart from the SAP and kitskonstabels, KwaZulu residents also have to contend with the homeland police. The KLA spent R5,4 million on policing in the 1983/84 financial year, representing 1 percent of its total expenditure, and the South African government added a further R20.62 million.¹¹⁰ The KwaZulu police (ZP) have consistently been accused of harassing and

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 31.

¹⁰⁸ M. Kentridge, *Unofficial War*, pp. 200-201.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ John Brewer, 'Police Politics', p. 261.

intimidating residents. In April 1990, the Durban Supreme Court issued a temporary order restraining the ZP from attacking residents in KwaMakhutha on the Natal south coast. A second order was issued after the first proved insufficient, extending protection to 'any person in KwaMakhutha' (not just the residents) and restraining the ZP from 'assaulting, harassing or engaging in any unlawful attacks'.¹¹¹ According to a memorandum sent to the ZP Commissioner Brigadier J. Buchner, 'hundreds of women and children had fled the township and sought refuge in Durban. They are afraid to return to their homes without protection and without an assurance that they will not be subjected to further unlawful activities by members of the KwaZulu Police'.¹¹² Giving evidence against the ZP, an SAP officer described the aggressive stance adopted by the ZP:

I was afraid that they might have killed me in order to cover up the whole incident... The ZP in KwaMakhutha have shown themselves to be a completely partial force who seem to be incapable of maintaining law and order. Time and time again they have been seen to be actively supporting one group in their actions against township residents. Through their conduct in attacking and shooting residents at random and for no apparent reason, they have shown themselves to be highly reckless and a real danger to the livelihood and well-being of local residents.¹¹³

Between July 1987 and July 1989 the ratio of detentions of Inkatha members to UDF and COSATU supporters was about 1:50.¹¹⁴ Police obstructed peace efforts between the UDF and Inkatha when they detained key UDF representatives scheduled to appear at the peace talks in November 1987 and February 1988. In March 1988 the police picked up any male over 15 years of age from the streets of Sobantu and Ashdown, photographed and then released them. The prosecution of warlords and Inkatha vigilantes has been slow. Towards 1987, although interdicts were secured against a number of Inkatha leaders, Matthew Dontzin, a lawyer for COSATU, explained that one of the difficulties he encountered was that warlords 'guilty of

¹¹¹ Natal Mercury, 20/06/90.

¹¹² Africa Watch Report, *Killings*, p. 43.

¹¹³ Weekly Mail, 20/07/88.

¹¹⁴ M. Kentridge, *Unofficial War*, p. 198.

serious crimes like murder and kidnapping would be acquitted because the prosecution was so ham-fisted...'115 In one of the early applications, a Justice of the Supreme Court said: 'Why bring all of these applications? The Zulus have been fighting for a hundred years'.116 Also, many applicants and witnesses had been attacked and killed after bringing actions against warlords.

Allegations of a 'third force' were particularly relevant when the violence was transported to the Transvaal. On 13 September, 1990, in a well coordinated attack, two armed African gangs massacred 26 commuters on a train going from Johannesburg to Soweto.117 On 14 September, F.W. De Klerk promised to investigate reports of a 'third force' in the ANC-Inkatha conflict. Witnesses had seen whites covered with balaclavas or black paint, participating in attacks. By 1991, the government admitted to providing Inkatha with extra funds, and Democratic Party MP Kobus Jordaan said he had confirmed that 'about R5 million' was given by the 'government to Inkatha's trade union UWUSA some time before 1989'.118 More ominously, in December it was revealed that 200 Inkatha members who underwent SADF training at Hippo camp in the Caprivi Strip in 1987, were trained specifically for hit-squad activities. A member of the hit squad divulged to a newspaper that a fellow member of the 'offensive' unit was involved in the killing of people in Mphopomeni at Howick. Members of the 'offensive' and 'contra-mobilisation' units, who were first drafted as kitskonstabels underwent a six-week training course in Cape Town posing as school-leavers to 'enable Inkatha to identify its targets' and at least two members of the this unit were posted at all KwaZulu police stations. They also stated that there is a standing instruction that Inkatha members should not be arrested by KwaZulu police.119

115 Ibid, p. 153.

116 Ibid.

117 Africa Watch Report, *The Killings*, p. 77.

118 Sunday Star, 21/07/91.

119 Weekly Mail, 13/12/91.

Evidence of the extent of state collusion with Inkatha is slowly beginning to surface. But it would be short-sighted to assume that the violence was at all times controlled and orchestrated by the police in cooperation with Inkatha. As I have argued in chapters 3 and 4, the question of ethnicity, of identification, of gender relations and chiefly power have all set the backdrop for the kind and extent of violence in Natal. I have shown in this chapter that violence works at several levels. The Apartheid state, which has its roots in the Natal colonial history, has elements of violence intrinsic to its structure. Its oppressive mechanisms dominate and civilians experience it as an unsympathetic and often brutal institution. Racial segregation and the formation of ethnic homelands with low economic viability, set the stage for the corruption, nepotism and violence. The long history of apartheid, poverty and oppression, has created the bases for a number of social conflicts and contradictions. Domestic violence, ethnic violence and generational violence are processes that have developed within the confines of an oppressive state, as a reaction to, and as a way of coping with it. The struggles that dominate the lives of the Zulu are superficially expressed as political struggles between political organisations. What lies beneath, are struggles about identity and about relations of power.

Conclusion

This dissertation has attempted to show that a study of the ethnic conflict in Natal lies not only in the nature of the state, but also in the kinds of organisations and networks that have been created in civil society. As was argued throughout the dissertation, the question of ethnicity, of identification, of gender relations and chiefly power have all set the backdrop for the kind and extent of violence in Natal. The ability of chiefs, warlords and strongmen to mobilise groups of warriors on the basis of ethnic allegiances, and the ability of the UDF and COSATU to organise fighting units on the basis of non-ethnic allegiances, has its roots in the internal structure of Zulu society, and the way in which this structure has developed and changed through time. Influenced and recreated partly by the colonial and Nationalist state, the Zulus are a complex mesh of cultural values and socio-political thoughts, ideas and structures.

At one level, the state directly influences and structures Zulu society. The highly intrusive state attempts to control and suppress, to restrict and imprison black civil society. At the same time, it offers very little in terms of protection and social welfare. In this respect, it is absent. In the effort to fill the gap, black people develop new networks, they maintain links with extended families and with rural areas, form Bulk Buying Clubs and Burial Societies and constitute neighbourhood protection groups and vigilantes. The violence and brutality inherent in the apartheid state has created an environment which is likewise harsh and alienating. The nature of the organisations of civil society, is influenced by the nature of the state and Zulu society.

It has been argued that the state is a complex entity and contradictory and asymmetrical relations exist between the matrix of departments and organisations which condition and are conditioned by struggles in the political terrain. The various forces within the state do not act strictly according to overall state policy. Influential civil servants, departments with large financial budgets and differing ideologies tend to

interpret central policy in varying ways. The role of the state in the Natal conflict must be seen within this context.

I have tried to show two quite contradictory aspects of Zulu violence in Natal. Firstly, the endeavour by Inkatha, to control the conflict is hampered by the fact that neither the violence, nor the Zulus can be completely manipulated. Secondly, given the many conflicts and weaknesses within the state, and the complexities of Zulu violence, it too finds it difficult to manipulate the conflict. The kind of assistance, training and resources offered and the extent to which state personnel directly participate in the conflict, is largely determined by individual civil servants, their ideologies, networks, financial budget, and power within the government. Their ability to control and manipulate, is limited by having to work via the KwaZulu government who themselves have difficulty controlling Inkatha leaders. The conflict has created the conditions within which certain chiefs and warlords have become extremely powerful, capable of mobilising large armies and causing extensive damage and destruction. Inkatha cannot claim to control all its members in the situation when violence forms the basis of spirals of revenge, feuds in which the personal and political elements have become inextricably linked. The interplay of local social forces in revenge killings, attacks and counter-attacks, ignites the spiral of violence and contributes to its momentum. The state can inject more weapons, trained military insurgents and money into the spiral and boost it in its progression, but it cannot entirely manipulate or lead it.

The Natal conflict has become personalized, testing the allegiance of every Zulu, and it is this aspect that will continue to plague the country even if, and when, the state stops intervening, or moves to suppress Inkatha. The personal questions of who is a Zulu, what is a proper Zulu woman or man, how much allegiance is owed to the chiefs and so on, will remain.

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