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LABOUR MIGRATION, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE
IN A CISKEI VILLAGE

Thesis

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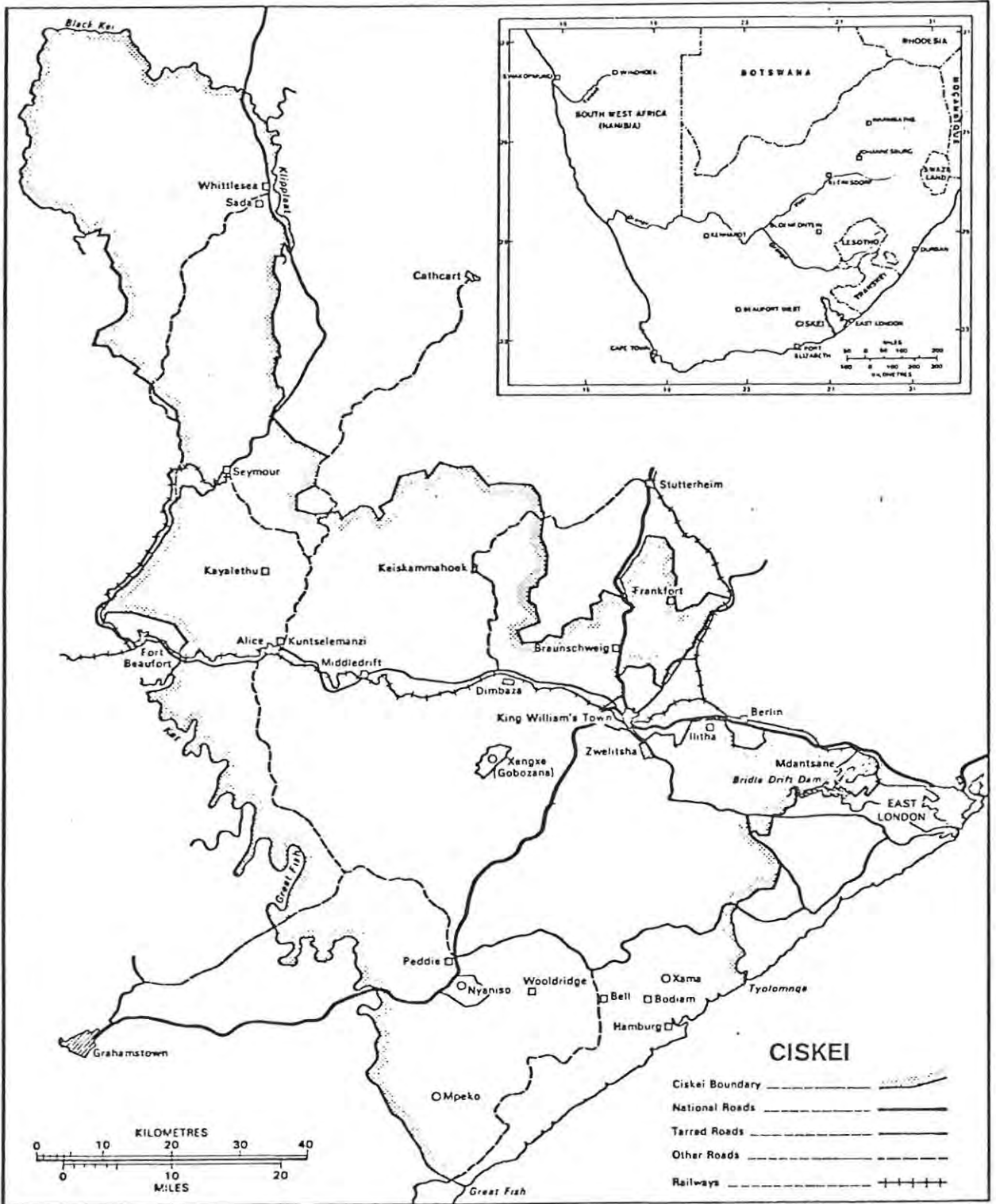
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CISKEI



CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

(a) The Subject

The aim of this thesis is to describe and analyse the effects of labour migration on marriage and family life. The field material is from Burnshill, a village situated in the Keiskammahoek district in the Ciskei. Keiskammahoek is bounded on the East by the districts of King William's Town and Stutterheim, on the West and South by Middle-drift and on the North by Cathcart. The inhabitants of Burnshill are overwhelmingly Xhosa and Mfengu (the main ethnic groups in the Ciskei) but also include a small proportion of people whose clans are of Mpondo and Thembu origin. This village has undergone extensive change. As we shall show later, it was settled de novo by the Mfengu and the Xhosa during the second half of the past century. This is one of the reasons why it lacks the homogeneity and continuity of cultural tradition which are predominant features of long-established communities.

As in other parts of South Africa the migratory labour system, under which black workers sell their labour far from their homes, has been in force for generations. The effects of this long-established pattern of migration on marital and family life are important and warrant intensive study. Over the years the declining economy of this rural community (cf. Chapter 3) has forced both men and women to seek work in the cities. Yet the vast majority of country-born people are excluded from permanent settlement in town and are forced to be migratory labourers. This means that almost all the time the members of the various families in the country are dispersed; husbands and wives are forced to live apart for the greater part of their married lives and children seldom live with both parents. Also, the radical changes in the pattern of marriage as well as the domestic tensions which will draw our attention later are to a large extent the results of labour migration. These are some of the problems which will concern us here.

The present study was conceived as an attempt to gain information both about the transformation of attitudes and norms and the accompanying stresses related to migrancy. We intend explaining the ways in which a territorially defined community has adapted to a set of

constraints which limit their access to material resources and at the same time involves circumstances which demand that they need an increasing volume of resources to meet rising expectations in education, quality and style of housing, diet, clothing, etc. To meet these new needs, certain values must be compromised or even abandoned.

Given the periodic absence of the husband and father, as well as other male kinsmen, a new independence is given to the domestic unit of the woman and her children. Whereas formerly the wife was subject to the authority of her husband, today she is frequently left in full charge not only of her children but also of her husband's property. She makes the day to day decisions and may also make long-term decisions which the husband must accept as a fait accompli when he returns home. Coupled with the economic independence which married and unmarried women gain through wage labour, the present situation has enhanced the status of women and has led to a relative loss of domestic authority among men. Similarly, the emergence of the greater independence of the younger generation and the weakening of kinship relations are developments which are closely linked with the economic independence which young people derive from wage earning. In later chapters an attempt will be made to evaluate these social processes from the point of view of the people themselves.

However, in considering this subject it is well to remember that there are other major factors which have operated directly and indirectly in bringing about changes in marriage and family life. One cannot overlook, for instance, the far-reaching effects of forces like Christianity, education, and political domination which have been felt in every corner of South Africa. Migrant labour, therefore, is only one of the agents of change although it is undoubtedly one of the most important factors which have contributed to the overall process.

There were two main reasons why Burnshill was chosen for this study. Firstly, the village was one of the six villages included in the four-volume series entitled Keiskammahoek Rural Survey undertaken by Rhodes University between 1948 and 1950. The selection of one of the villages included in this survey was intended to give the present investigation a time depth. Secondly, Burnshill is of interest for the purpose of our study because its inhabitants vary a great deal with regard to economic standing (particularly land-ownership), educational achievement and in their association with Christianity. These

factors make this community a good field for observing how migrancy has affected people of different social and economic statuses within a defined territorial area.

(b) Fieldwork

The fieldwork on which this thesis is based began in October 1976 and continued for a period of seven months. The village was visited again at the end of 1978 for two weeks and in November 1980 for a few days to fill the gaps in elaborate inadequate accounts. The investigation commenced with a census, seeking information on the number of homesteads in the various sections of the village, educational standard and ethnic affiliation of the homestead heads. This was followed by an intensive study of a random sample of 53 homesteads representing a one-in-six sample of the entire village.

For material concerning migration and the various aspects of marriage the method used was that of obtaining complete genealogies of the homesteads in the sample. The aim in collecting these genealogies was to obtain a complete list and various particulars of all persons belonging to the sample of families. The same procedure was followed in the Keiskammahoeek Rural Survey. The genealogies were collected in the following manner: each genealogy started with the present head of each homestead (referred to here as 'X') and was brought down to the youngest living member of the family. 'X' and his or her siblings constituted the first generation while the second and subsequent generations included all the children of 'X' as well as their offspring. Information was solicited about each person on the lists concerning the date of birth, educational status, migration history, details concerning marriage as well as the number and whereabouts of their children.

(c) Acknowledgements

The fieldwork on which this thesis is based was financed by the Chamber of Mines of South Africa to whom acknowledgement is made. The direction of the investigation and the writing of an initial report were supervised by Professor P. Mayer. Professor M.G. Whisson, head of the department of Anthropology at Rhodes University, guided me

in the writing up of the thesis and in re-formulating some of the problems the report brought to light. To both Professors Mayer and Whisson I wish to express sincere gratitude for their encouragement and guidance. For time to write this thesis I am indebted to Professor J. Opland, Director of the Institute of Social and Economic Research at Rhodes University, who enabled me to make this task a priority.

I am also indebted to other members of the Migrant Labour Project for their valuable comments. Lastly, I must thank the people I met in Burnshill for their friendly co-operation in the investigations and, in particular, Miss V. Bacela and Miss N. Mgatyelwa for the assistance they rendered during the earlier phases of the research.

(d) Background to the study of migrant labour among the Xhosa

There exist several publications which deal with subjects which are related to labour migration among the Xhosa. Reaction to Conquest (Hunter 1936), an outstanding monograph, mapped out the main outlines of rural life among the Mpondo¹ and contains several important statements about labour migration. Hunter's insightful understanding of this problem is contained in the following comment which raises some of the issues which we intend to pursue:

"The constant flow of labour from reserve to town and back, and the necessity for labourers living away from their families, is socially disruptive, and hampers advance in skill both in agriculture and in town industries. The aim of an administration anxious to avoid social chaos will be to stabilize town and country communities. This can only be done by extending and developing reserves so that they can support an increased population, and so that sufficient produce may be sold to meet cash needs;

1. Besides this Hunter studied urban conditions in East London and Grahamstown.

and by paying wages on which families can live at labour centres, and providing adequate quarters for them, with security of tenure". (Hunter 1936: 551)

We have already mentioned the Keiskammahoek Rural Survey which constitutes a baseline for our investigation. Three of the four volumes in this series - The Economy of a Native Reserve (Houghton & Walton 1952), Social Structure (Wilson 1952), and Land Tenure (Mills & Wilson 1952) - took labour migration into full account. In The Economy of a Native Reserve Houghton and Walton noted: "Labour migration was . . . considered to be a matter of such great national importance that a determined effort was made in this survey to obtain comprehensive and accurate information about it". (p. 114) This volume contains valuable information about the economic consequences of labour migration in the district of Keiskammahoek. Its concluding chapter contains recommendations which, at the time, were seen as necessary for the economic rehabilitation of rural areas in which economic conditions paralleled those obtaining in Keiskammahoek. Houghton and Walton (1952: 188-193) emphasized the need for effective industrialization of the reserves and the introduction of a new system of land tenure which would enable successful farmers to acquire additional land and eventually make their living exclusively from farming. The establishment of industries in the reserves would create employment opportunities for some of the people and others were encouraged to leave the country and settle permanently in town. These recommendations, however, were ignored by policy makers and administrators. Social Structure brought to light several important developments concerning the effects of labour migration on the social organization of the district. Similarly, Land Tenure, which was concerned "to discover the relation between the different types of tenure and land use, the standard of living, migration to towns, and the stability of the family" (p.1) is of much value.

In the years 1961-63 the rural studies noted above were supplemented by urban studies which are also relevant to the understanding of our subject especially since our investigation was conducted only from the rural end. This was the series

Xhosa in Town which dealt with the Xhosa in the city of East London. The Black Man's Portion (Reader 1961), the first investigation undertaken in this area, gave an historical background, demography and problems the Xhosa encountered with regard to subsistence and accommodation in town. Townsmen or Tribesmen (Mayer 1961) and The Second Generation (Pauw 1963) describe the patterns of urbanization and the responses of the Xhosa to urban life. Despite the criticism of the methodological and theoretical approaches pursued by the authors (Magubane 1973) the intrinsic worth of this series cannot be doubted. Another study of the Xhosa in an urban setting, Langa (Wilson & Mafeje 1963), provides interesting comparative data for the Xhosa in Town series.

Of more recent vintage is Migrant Labour (Wilson, F. 1972) which deals with the nature and causes of migrant labour providing detailed evidence of the widespread use and consequences of migrancy in South Africa. The book contains a chapter on the 'homelands' (including the Ciskei) in which the author highlights the problem of increasing rural poverty accompanied by greater population density. His conclusions question the validity of South Africa's policies which perpetuate labour oscillation. Among other things the author notes:

"The elimination of the system (migrant labour) cannot be achieved by any combination of measures so far brought within the definition of Separate Development. What is required, we suggest, is a major policy change which, whilst not detracting from the importance of industrial decentralization or genuine development in the homelands, seeks to make it possible for all workers to live where they choose, with their families". (p. 217)

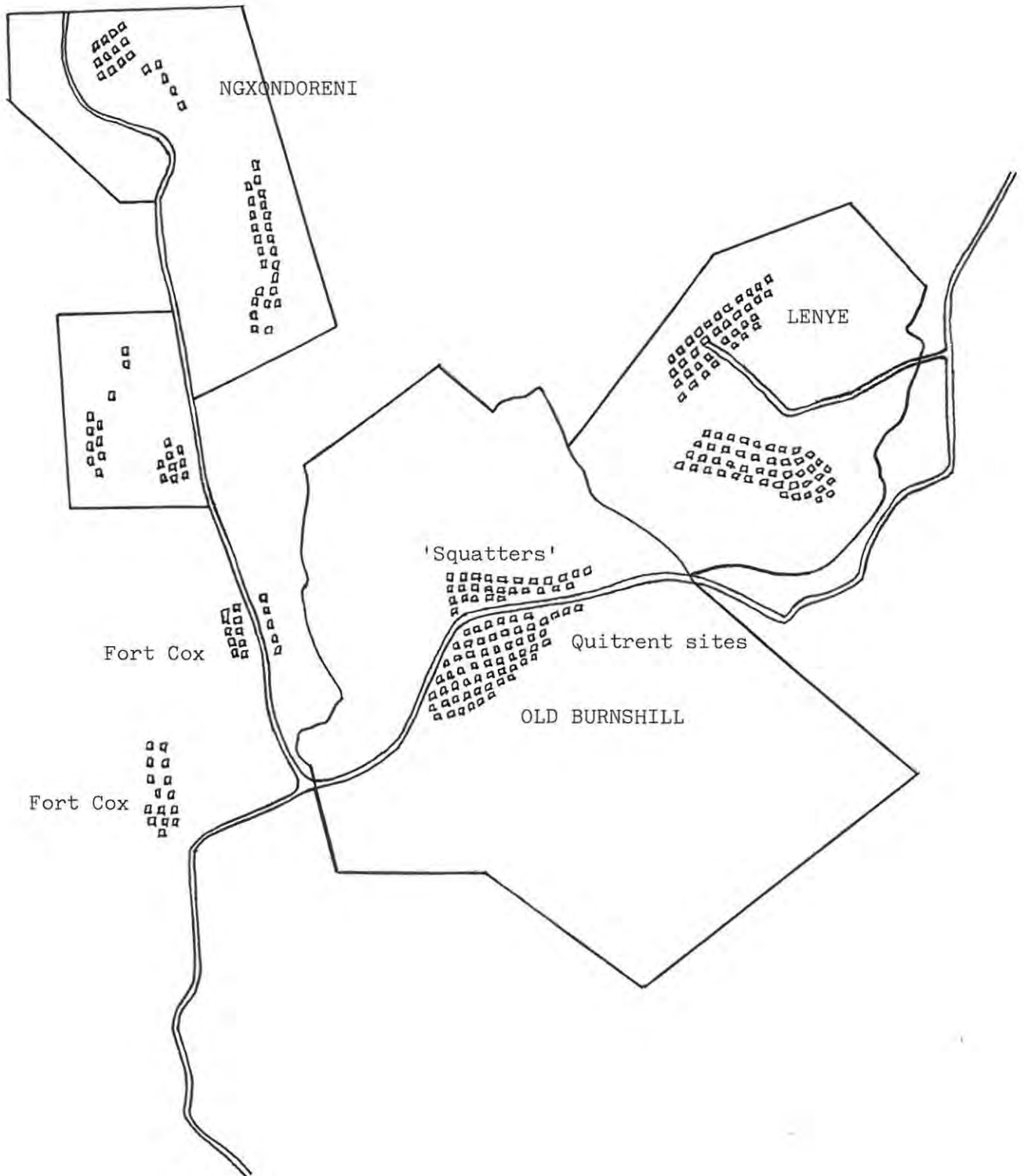
In 1975 what came to be known as the Migrant Labour Project was instituted at Rhodes University with the intention of investigating several aspects of labour migration. Under the direction of Professor P. Mayer a team of anthropologists studied labour exporting communities in Lesotho, Transkei and Ciskei. Urban studies of the same series were made in the Grahamstown Black townships, the Modderdam squatter camp, and the Men's hostels

in Johannesburg.

From this brief review of the literature relating to migrant labour among the Xhosa it can be seen that informative publications already exist in this field. By the time the present investigation was started the phenomenon of migrant labour was already fairly well-known. One lacuna was any detailed account of the impact of the system on the social life of people living in the labour exporting rural areas. It is the intention of this study to fill that gap - at least in relation to one distinctive but not unique community.

Sketch map of the village

BURNSHILL



CHAPTER 2

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF BURNSHILL

(a) Burnshill and its people

The total number of homesteads in Burnshill is 317. 198 homesteads belong to the Xhosa and 109 to the Mfengu. A further seven homestead heads are of Thembu, and another three of Mpondo, origin. As we have already noted, the inhabitants of this village vary a great deal with regard to economic standing, educational achievement and in their association with Christianity. (a) Firstly, there are old-established residents most of whom own land. Many of them have been owning land for several generations and are the descendants of the first group of Mfengu settlers in the village. They are people who have been in close contact with the missionaries and with schooling for well over a century. (b) Secondly, there is in Burnshill a large number of people who have migrated into the village recently. Most of them are Xhosa who have lived and worked on the farms (mostly white-owned farms) as landless people for several generations. They have relatively recent contact with schooling and Christianity and some of them are landless.

The socio-economic distinctions we are to make regarding the inhabitants of this village have a bearing on historical developments which have affected the Xhosa and the Mfengu in the Ciskei. Brief comments concerning these developments are therefore necessary.

The Xhosa occupied the area now known as the Transkei and Ciskei at least as far back as the year 1554. (Wilson 1959: 178) Between 1779 and 1879 they fought nine frontier wars against the encroaching Dutch and English. During these wars they lost the greater part of their land and their military power was diminished. (Wilson & Thompson 1969: 252) Their political decline was accelerated by the Cattle Killing of 1857 which caused the death of some 20 000 Xhosa living between the Kei and the Fish rivers. The starvation which followed this "national suicide" forced many of them to seek employment in the Colony. Others migrated permanently to white-owned farms where they lived

as farm labourers. Some of their descendants have remained there since that time (Wilson & Thompson 1969: 258) and others have been compelled to settle in the Ciskei.

The early missionaries made slow progress among the Xhosa. During the first half of the 19th century in particular the Xhosa asserted their identity and rejected Christianity and schooling which they saw as an attempt to change their way of life. (Ashley 1974: 200-202) Although these attitudes softened somewhat by the last third of the past century, (Mayer 1961: 34) the Xhosa rejection of western innovations persisted. This response was apparently related to the loss of their land and independence.

The history of the Mfengu in the Ciskei, on the other hand, is different. Previously this group resided in Natal and immigrated to the Cape fleeing from Tshaka's wars (the Mfecane) which took place early in the 19th century. After residing with the Xhosa in the Transkei for a brief period, most eventually settled in the Ciskei after 1835. (Moyer 1973: 145) In their search for land and security the Mfengu allied themselves with the colonial government and played an important role in the defeat of the Xhosa during the frontier wars. As a reward for the military assistance they rendered to the colonists the Mfengu received large tracts of Freehold land which had formerly belonged to the Xhosa. (Peires 1976: 134)

The Mfengu have been associated with Christianity and schooling since the early stages of mission work in the Transkei and Ciskei and conversion among them went much faster than among the Xhosa. (Ashley 1974: 200) Besides, their alliance with the colonial government and the missionaries enabled them to acquire western skills and education with the result that today they dominate the white-collar jobs. (Peires 1976: 134) Our discussion, however, will not be made specifically in terms of these ethnic distinctions. These are mentioned here on account of their relevance to the history of Burnshill which we now consider.

During the early 19th century the Keiskammahoek district was occupied by the Xhosa under Chief Ngqika who had his principal homestead in what is today the village of Burnshill.

After the 1850/53 war between the Xhosa and the British, Ngqika's son, Sandile, was expelled from the district which then became a possession of the British government. In accordance with the government policy of the time provision was made for the settlement of this territory by whites and 'loyal' Africans. As a result some of the best land in the Keiskammahoek district was taken up by people of German descent while the bulk of the land was granted to groups of Mfengu people who had assisted the British against the Xhosa. (Mills & Wilson 1952: 1-2)

After the expulsion of the Xhosa from their territory, the first group of Mfengu people to settle in Burnshill were granted what was referred to as reward land (umhlaba webhaso) for the services they rendered during the 1850/53 war. (Mills & Wilson 1952: 69) These were the Mfengu who were moved from the vicinity of the Fort Beaufort and Alice districts and consisted originally of seven lineages with their headman, Mangqalaza.¹ In Burnshill the Mfengu settlers became closely associated with the Rev. James Laing of the United Free Church of Scotland who served the Burnshill mission from 1830-1872.² It was during this time that the mission-school tradition of this community was established. Rev. Laing was particularly successful in introducing the inhabitants of Burnshill to Christianity, mission education and to the use of new methods of agriculture. The venture was so successful in Burnshill that towards the end of the past century the inhabitants of the village were producing a large variety of crops for the markets and had orchards and an irrigation scheme. Some had training in trades like blacksmithing and building. This mission-educational work was continued by other white missionaries who served the community until 1931.³

After settling in Burnshill some families became wealthy

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1. Burnshill is also known as the village of Mangqalaza - a term derived from this settler headman.
 2. These dates are inscribed on his tombstone which stands in this village.
 3. The last resident white missionary in Burnshill was the Rev. William Steward who left Burnshill in 1931.

in land through the purchase of small holdings under Freehold tenure.¹ Between 1868 and 1869, through the insistence of Rev. Laing, surveyed building sites and fields were granted under Quitrent tenure. (Mills & Wilson 1952: 69) and a relatively large commonage was attached to land belonging to this village. Also, a large piece of land with surveyed fields which belonged to the United Free Church of Scotland was made available to landless people who lived on the commonage of the village.

Some of the land-owners occupied their Quitrent sites which formed a compact settlement: others moved their homesteads to the commonage so that they could be near to their fields. In the 1930's, with the implementation of the Betterment Scheme,² the Quitrent land-owners were compelled to leave the commonage and return to the compact settlement of surveyed sites. The landless people who also had to vacate the commonage posed a problem which has not yet been solved up to now. In 1939 the Administration gave the landless people who had been living on the commonage (the so-called 'squatters') permission to erect their houses on land which forms part of the commonage. The land adjoins the block of Quitrent sites in the old village section, Mkhubiso. (cf. Map 2) As we shall show later, the present struggle for land rights in Burnshill is spearheaded by the 'squatters'.

The large-scale immigration of landless people from the farms is another development which has affected the social structure of Burnshill. This immigration was made possible by the introduction of the South African Trust tenure in 1936 which was implemented in Burnshill in 1945. During this year the S.A. Trust bought land from white farmers in the district and made it available for occupation by people who had no land. (Mills & Wilson, M. 1952: 46) Two new sections, which were

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1. Cf. Mills & Wilson (1952: 45-68) for details of this form of tenure.
 2. From the 1930's some of the reserves were planned for agricultural development in terms of the Betterment Scheme. In such areas residential, arable and grazing land was demarcated and the people re-settled accordingly.

formerly white-owned farms, were incorporated into Burnshill. At present 172 (54%) of the homesteads in Burnshill belong to the old residents of the village, i.e. families who were living in Burnshill before the establishment of the S.A. Trust tenure in 1945. Many of the old residents' families, in fact, have lived in Burnshill since its occupation by the Mfengu soon after 1853. The remaining 145 (46%) homesteads belong to the immigrants who have been moving into this village since 1945. (cf. Table 1) The following table shows the districts or geographical areas from which the immigrants came in order to live in Burnshill.

Table 1
Immigrants: Previous places of domicile
Type of place

District or geographical area	White- owned farms	Black- owned farms	Reserves	Unknown	Total
Keiskammahoek	64	33	7	-	104
Cathcart	7	-	-	-	7
Middledrift	-	4	3	-	7
Alice	4	-	2	-	6
Transkei	-	-	3	-	3
Stutterheim	1	-	-	-	1
Port Elizabeth	1	-	-	-	1
King William's Town	1	-	-	-	1
Unknown	-	-	-	15	15
Total	78	37	15	15	145

The majority of the immigrants lived previously on the farms, the white-owned farms in particular. They include most of the Xhosa who, as we have seen, lost their land during the past century and sought employment on white-owned farms

in the Colony. A few decades ago it seems that the proportion of people who lived and worked on these white-owned farms was substantial almost everywhere. For instance, between 1958 and 1959 people living on white-owned farms in the East London and King William's Town districts were between twenty and thirty thousand. (Mayer 1961: 20-21) Mechanisation, which has enabled white farmers to reduce their labour force, (Wilson, F. 1972: 153) precipitated the mass immigration of landless people into the rural areas like Burnshill.

The table above shows that the previous place of domicile of most immigrants was the Keiskammahoeck district itself. A few immigrated from neighbouring districts like Cathcart, Middle-drift and Alice. It must be borne in mind, however, that the information presented in this table refers only to the previous places of domicile and does not trace the immigrant families to their 'original' places of domicile. An attempt was made, in fact, to trace the paternal family origins of the people concerned. This, however, was abandoned when it became clear that many informants remembered only the moves they made in the recent past when they were already living on the farms.

What seems clear, however, is that the majority of the immigrants have not owned land for several generations and many of them have changed residence frequently. As a result, their lineages are fragmented and some of their kinsmen have either migrated to town or are residing in other rural areas of the Ciskei and the Transkei. Among the immigrant families the lineage is seldom a localised unit. Unlike the old residents, whose lineages sometimes go up to five generations in depth, many of them have no other members of their lineage groups living in the village. For a people whose social relations were dominated by kinship ties and obligations, these are new circumstances which tend to make the present day family more isolated. The frequent changes in residence are illustrated in the following case:

Richard is an 84 year old Xhosa man of the Mavaleni clan. Before the turn of the century he resided with his parents on a white-owned farm in the Fort Beaufort district and left when they were expelled from the

farm. His family then settled as tenants on a black-owned farm at Zanyokwe location in the Keiskammahoeck district and later migrated to the Ngangelizwe location in the Middledrift district. When his father died, Richard and his mother returned to Zanyokwe location and when the S.A. Trust tenure was established in Burnshill in 1945 they settled at the Lenye section of Burnshill.

(b) Land tenure

As we have already indicated, socio-economic distinctions in Burnshill are closely connected with land tenure. In the Ciskei the villages which are more or less homogeneous socially and economically are mainly those which have a uniform system of land tenure. Burnshill, on the other hand, is a stratified community which has three different types of land tenure - Freehold, Quitrent and the S.A. Trust. Freehold and Quitrent are types of tenure which carry a title deed to any land one buys or inherits. The owners of both Freehold and Quitrent are relatively free from control by the administration and enjoy a large measure of security as compared to owners of the S.A. Trust land. (Mills & Wilson, M. 1952) Freehold differs from Quitrent tenure mainly with regard to the extent of each holding. There are, for instance, Freehold lots which are 17,8 hectares (44 acres) in extent while Quitrent entitles the owner only to the use of a residential site in the old section of Burnshill as well as a field 1,7 to 2,6 hectares¹ in extent. (Mills & Wilson, M. 1952: 70)

The Quitrent land-owners, however, benefit a great deal from their relatively large commonage which enables some stock owners to rear as many as 15 head of cattle without running the risk of overstocking. As yet there has been no stock limitation on the Quitrent land. Stock ownership on the S.A. Trust tenure, on the other hand, is limited to three to five head of cattle among people who have the right to own stock. 52,6%

1. 1 hectare = 2,4711 acres = 0,8565 morgen.

of the families settled on the S.A. Trust land, also, do not have fields and do not have the right to own stock. (cf. Table 2) This applies particularly to those people who were allocated residential sites after the first group of people who were settled on this type of land. Trust land in Burnshill is also the least productive mainly on account of monoculture and overstocking. In the table below the 317 homesteads in this village are grouped according to the type of tenure of each homestead.

Table 2
Land Tenure

<u>Type of tenure</u>	<u>Old residents</u> No. of homesteads	<u>Immigrants</u> No. of homesteads	<u>Total</u>
(a) Freehold	24	1	25
(b) Quitrent	94	1	95
(c) <u>S.A. Trust</u>			
(i) With arable & stock rights	14	50	135
(ii) Without arable & stock rights	2	69	
(d) Landless 'squatters'	34	7	41
(e) Landless tenants	4	17	21
Totals	172 (54%)	145 (46%)	317 (100%)

The majority of the old residents own land. Of the 172 homesteads belonging to the old residents 108 (62,8%) exercise the more secure land rights - Freehold and Quitrent. Most of them, as we have already shown, acquired land during the last 100 years. The old residents, however, also include a large proportion of the landless 'squatters' who are the descendants of the Xhosa who returned to Burnshill during the second half of the last century.

Most of the immigrants, on the other hand, are landless people. Many of the immigrant families settled on the S.A. Trust land do not have access to arable land and are not entitled to own stock. The category of landless people also

includes the tenants (izitorosha) who have established their homesteads on land which belongs to the owners of Freehold land. Most of the tenants are recent immigrants from the farms and a few are old residents of Burnshill who have for a long time been servants (izicaka) of the landowners in the village.¹ As a group, the tenants constitute a distinct category of people with significant economic disabilities. (Mills & Wilson, M. 1952: 45) noted that "their economic position was somewhat similar to that of labour tenants on European-owned farms, the difference being that the services due were never so clearly defined nor as onerous as those of labour tenants on European-owned farms."

The conditions on which the tenants use the land they occupy are not uniform. We found some performing services like herding and ploughing for the Freehold land-owners on a permanent basis while others lived independently of their landlords. They were only expected to perform services like tilling the Freeholders' lands in return for which they received part of the produce. In all the cases we encountered tenants did not pay rental either for the land they used for their buildings sites or the fields they can till on a share-crop basis. Some Freehold owners allow their tenants to own stock but, as we shall show later, few tenants own stock.

The life of the tenants is one of great insecurity which results from landlessness. They can, for instance, be moved from their homesteads by their landlords at will. When I returned to Burnshill at the end of 1978 some families (about seven) which had been residing on one of the Freehold farms in Burnshill had vacated their homesteads. They left them because the land-owner introduced a stock fee of 35c per beast per month for the use of his land. Some of the tenants moved their homesteads to the S.A. Trust land in the village, others went to a nearby village.²

1. Cf., for instance, Mills & Wilson, M. (1952: 45-46)

2. Information used in Table 2 above reflects the situation as it was during the 1976/77 investigation.

A further point to note is that in this village land is not held by men but by women as well. The census we undertook included information which illustrates this point.

Table 3
Ownership of land by men and women

	<u>Land-owning</u>			<u>Landless</u>			<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Freehold</u>	<u>Quitrent</u>	<u>Trust (with land)</u>	<u>Trust (landless)</u>	<u>'Squatters'</u>	<u>Tenants</u>	
<u>Homestead heads</u>							
<u>Males</u>	16	56	43	54	28	13	210
<u>Females</u>							
(a) Widows	8	32	18	11	11	6	86
(b) Unmarried women (never married)	1	6	2	5	2	1	17
(c) Separated women	-	1	1	1	-	1	4
<u>Totals</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>317</u>

69 (37,5%) of the land-owning families are headed by women, mostly widows. Unmarried and separated women constitute other categories of women who own land. Most of the land-owning women are widows who have acquired the land of their deceased husbands. The regulations which apply to Quitrent tenure clarified the legal position of widow with regard to land rights. These regulations entitle a widow to continue using the land of her deceased husband for as long as she lives. It is only after her death that the land can be transferred to the heir. (Mills & Wilson 1952: 147) Similarly, under Freehold and S.A. Trust tenure the same procedure is followed.

Besides the widows, our sample includes an unmarried woman who inherited a portion of her father's Freehold allotment. Under Quitrent tenure the regulations which were promulgated in 1928 and 1931 prevent women from inheriting land. (Mills & Wilson 1952: 72)

In spite of these legal restrictions, we noted one case in which an unmarried woman took her case to court and managed to inherit her father's Quitrent land. In the 1950s the administration discouraged women from purchasing Quitrent land although legally they were entitled to do so. (Mills & Wilson 1952: 148) We have not been able to determine the attitude of the administration with regard to the purchase of Quitrent land by women. There are women, however, who have purchased Quitrent land since 1960. Available information refers to two female homestead heads (one widow and one unmarried woman) who purchased their Quitrent allotments from the Church of Scotland during this period.¹ Also, some of the women in Burnshill have acquired land under the S.A. Trust tenure. Information relating to such cases indicate that the practice of granting land to elderly women who have children was adopted soon after the introduction of the S.A. Trust tenure in the village.²

(c) Education

Rev. Laing established a small mission school in Burnshill in 1831. (Govan 1875: 11,34) The following year the few children who were attending his school were withdrawn by Ngqika's Great Place (ibid: 35). For many years Rev. Laing laboured in Burnshill "without any very encouraging measure of success." (ibid: 61) and it was not until after the 1850/53 war that he could report much progress. After the arrival of the Mfengu in Burnshill his school was well established and had an enrolment of 114 scholars by 1859. (ibid: 207,211) Since that time educational work expanded and today the village has a high school, a higher primary school as well as two lower primary schools. Based on the census, the table below presents the educational levels of the homestead heads and their spouses.

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1. Originally mission land in Burnshill belonged to the Glasgow Missionary Society and was transferred later to the Church of Scotland. (Mills & Wilson 1952: 70)
 2. The Keiskammahoek Rural Survey does not discuss this point.

Table 4

Educational levels: Homestead heads and their spouses

Age category: 50 years and over

Freehold/

Highest standard passed	Quitrent		Trust		Squatters		Tenants		Totals
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Nil	1	2	36	16	-	-	2	4	61
Sub A & B	-	-	1	3	2	1	-	-	7
Stds 1 & 2	7	3	8	1	2	2	2	2	27
Stds 3 & 4	3	11	4	4	4	-	-	-	26
Stds 5 & 6	19	10	7	4	1	6	-	-	47
Forms 1 & 2	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Form 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professional training	10	13	1	-	-	-	-	-	24
Totals	40	43	58	28	9	9	4	6	197

Age category: below 50 years

Nil	1	-	7	15	-	1	4	5	33
Sub A & B	-	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	4
Stds 1 & 2	3	3	9	8	-	2	1	2	28
Stds 3 & 4	4	9	12	17	3	3	1	-	49
Stds 5 & 6	8	14	2	11	7	8	-	1	51
Forms 1 & 2	3	7	-	3	-	3	-	-	16
Form 3	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Professional training	7	4	1	2	-	-	-	-	14
Totals	26	41	33	57	11	17	6	8	199

Bearing in mind Burnshill's long-established school/mission tradition, it is not surprising that the educational level of the old residents (Freehold, Quitrent land-owners and the majority of the 'squatters') is generally higher than that of the immigrants. Since most of the 'squatters' have been in Burnshill for a longer period than the immigrants, and had access to education as a result, they normally have several years of schooling although only a few of them advance beyond the Std 6 level. A significant proportion of the Freehold and Quitrent land-owners, on the other hand, has acquired higher education and professional training mainly in teaching.¹ The old residents, in fact, are proud of their achievement in the educational sphere and believe that Burnshill has produced a larger number of teachers than any other village in the district.

By contrast, the educational level of the immigrants is generally low. A significant proportion of the homestead heads (especially those aged 50 years and over) never attended school and the numbers of those who have been to school decreases rapidly the further one goes up the educational ladder. Among other things, this is related to the fact that most of the immigrants grew up on white-owned farms where educational facilities were almost non-existent before the Second World War. (Roberts 1958: 73) This is borne out by the fact that by 1961 almost all farm labourers in the East London and King William's Town districts were illiterate. (Mayer 1961: 169)

The educational gap between the old residents and the immigrants is, however, narrowing among the young people. This is illustrated in the table above with regard to the educational levels of the homestead heads who are above, and those below, 50 years of age. In the category of homestead heads aged below 50 years there are fewer illiterate people. Also, parents who received little or no education normally

1. The category of people with professional training includes 34 teachers, two qualified nurses, two ministers of religion and two clerks.

send their children to school albeit often for only a few years. Children usually start attending school between six and seven years of age. Our sample households included 128 scholars as well as 15 children who have already left school. Without exception, all the children in the sample were either at school or had been to school. This illustrates that parents accept schooling as a part of a child's career and, as a result, virtually all the children start attending school when they attain the school going age.

In spite of this interest in education, many children (especially among the immigrants) leave school at various stages of their primary schooling. In some cases parents are forced to withdraw their children from school because they cannot afford to educate them. Other children fail examinations several times and eventually lose interest in schooling. Boys who have already left school also influence their age mates to leave school. This is one of the reasons why girls remain at school for a longer period than boys.

It is also evident from the table above that women are generally more educated than men. What accounts for this difference is the fact that at least a generation ago more girls than boys were attending school in the Keiskammahoek district. At that time some of the boys could not attend school regularly since they had to herd cattle and plough. Girls, on the other hand, had greater liberty to attend school since the duties they had to perform (nursing children for instance) did not necessarily prevent them from attending school.

In the village there are several long-established clubs which cater for the interests of the educated people and gain support mainly from the old residents in the main village section. They include two womens' clubs, the Zenzele (self-help) and the Amabhaso (gift) clubs. The Zenzele club is affiliated to the Zenzele Association of Southern Africa. Its activities include lessons and demonstrations which are intended to encourage women to be self-reliant and thrifty. It also gives assistance to needy people in the village. The Amabhaso club, on the other hand, operates as a savings

club which assists mothers when their daughters get married. Members contribute gifts (usually in the form of household goods) which are added to the marriage goods a woman takes to her husband's home. Also, Amabhaso are festive occasions which provide women an opportunity for social intercourse and recreation. A similar organization is the Burnshill Students' Association which caters for the interests of young people among the old residents. This organization includes a cricket club which takes part in inter-village cricket tournaments held during the Christmas holidays. It also provides entertainment for its members.

(d) Religion

Other social distinctions in Burnshill are encountered in the sphere of religion. As mentioned earlier, the old residents became closely associated with Christianity from the second half of the 19th century. Acceptance of Christian teaching implied a radical change in the manner of life of converts. Among other things, the missionaries strongly criticised polygyny and the performance of rituals connected with the appeasement of the ancestors. As a result, new forms of rituals which are now associated with Christianity replaced the older customs. For instance, a dinner for baptism has now taken the place of the traditional imbeleko performed after the birth of a child. Similarly, the unveiling of a tombstone, which includes a church service and a dinner, has taken the place of the traditional rites for 'accompanying' and 'returning' the dead. Also, only the bare essentials of the custom of male initiation are observed by the majority of the old residents. The circumcision itself is undertaken quietly and boys no longer take part in the all-night dance known as umguyo. In some cases the initiates are accommodated in their own homes and do not undergo a period of seclusion in initiation lodges in the veld. Generally, this modification of Cape Nguni custom has resulted from the acceptance of Christian teaching which prescribes a specific mode of behaviour for those who associate themselves with the Church.

The 'mission' churches established in Burnshill include the Rhabé Presbyterian Church,¹ the Presbyterian Church of Africa, the Roman Catholic Church and the Free Church of Scotland. These churches draw their membership mainly from the old residents who include staunch Christians who adhere to the rules which the churches impose upon the behaviour of their members. The influence of the Church, however, is less noticeable among the members of the younger generation. Some of them are children of parents who were active church members but they themselves maintain only nominal connections with the church. In spite of this, however, Christianity is still an important influence among the old residents. In the various churches Womens' Associations (umanyano lwamanina) play an important role. These associations hold prayer meetings on Thursday afternoons and also play an active role in the raising of church funds. Another association closely associated with the churches is the Independent Order of True Templars (I.O.T.T.), an inter-denominational temperance association.

On account of the historical factors noted earlier, most of the immigrants had no direct contact with the missions in the past. At present, only a few of them are affiliated to the 'mission' churches in Burnshill. Most of them are active members of the Zionist churches established in Burnshill within the past few decades. It is not surprising that the Zionist churches, which are characterised by the merging of Christian and traditional beliefs, should gain their support mainly from the immigrants since in this sector of the community Xhosa traditional beliefs are still of great significance. In the context of Burnshill it would seem that the emergence of the Zionist churches is in itself evidence of the impact of the church. Christianity cannot be rejected totally - hence its message is interpreted in terms of the Xhosa religious heritage.

The adherence of the immigrants to Xhosa custom is also noticeable in the traditional sacrifices which play an important

1. Previously known as the Bantu Presbyterian Church.

role in their lives. These sacrifices, which stress the significance of the ancestor cult in this sector of the community, include the 'accompanying' (ukukhapha) and the 'returning' (ukubuyisa) of deceased fathers and grandfathers. Some of the sacrifices are prescribed by diviners. For some forms of illness, for instance, a diviner may suggest the killing of a goat or beast from which a necklace (intambo) is made for the patient.

Initiation ceremonies are other occasions which illustrate the persistence of Xhosa custom among the immigrants. Among them this custom follows 'traditional' patterns fairly closely. As in the past, these ceremonies draw large crowds of people and cause much excitement. Several days before an initiation ceremony women who gather together for the brewing of beer break into sporadic trilling (umyiyizelo) which builds up the excitement for the occasion. During this time the boys who are to undergo initiation (usually a group of boys) advertise their ceremony by their riotous behaviour and by wearing ragged clothing. The increasing excitement leads up to the all-night dance normally attended by a large number of boys including those of other neighbouring villages. This all-night dance frequently leads to faction fights in which some of the boys are seriously injured. However, the 'coming-out' ceremony (umphumo) at the end of the seclusion period is a relatively quiet occasion.

(e) Political structure

Burnshill is one of the villages which are under the jurisdiction of the Ciskei government which attained internal self-government status in 1973. The district of Keiskammahoek is divided into two sections which are linked to the Ciskei administration - Keiskammahoek North and Keiskammahoek South which includes Burnshill. Keiskammahoek North is administered by a Tribal Authority under a chief. Keiskammahoek South, on the other hand, is under the jurisdiction of a Community Authority because it does not have a recognised chief. Chief Sandile, who was expelled from Burnshill during the middle

of the past century, was the last chief to exercise authority in this area.

Burnshill itself constitutes an administrative unit under a headman who is a link between the village and the Ciskei government. Under his control there are three village sections which are several kilometres apart - old Burnshill (Mkhubiso), Lenye and Ngxondoreni. (cf. Map and Table 5)

Table 5
Village sections

Residents	Mkhubiso	Lenye	Ngxondoreni	Total
Old residents	142	14	16	172
Immigrants	9	71	65	145
Totals	151	85	81	317
<u>Type of land tenure</u>				
Freehold	3	10	12	25
Quitrent	95	-	-	95
S.A. Trust	11	74	50	135
'Squatters'	41	-	-	41
Tenants	1	-	20	21
Totals	151	84	82	317

The old residents and immigrants are concentrated in different sections of the village. 83% of the old residents live at Mkhubiso, the oldest village section, and 94% of the immigrants occupy either the Lenye or Ngxondoreni sections. (cf. Table 5) The latter sections, which were established and incorporated into Burnshill in 1945, are several kilometres away from Mkhubiso which is more developed than the other village sections. The social services offered in this part of the village include higher primary and high school education as well as a health clinic. Matters affecting the inhabitants of the various village sections are discussed at Mkhubiso by the village council, inkundla. Among other things, this body controls the allocation of the S.A. Trust land and arbitrates in disputes brought before it.

Although all the village sections in Burnshill are under administrative control of a headman who lives at Mhhubiso, Lenye and Ngxondoreni enjoy a large measure of local autonomy. These village sections have their own headmen who are entitled to hold meetings in their own sections when such a need arises. Most of the people who live in these newly-established sections have little contact with the people who live at Mkhubiso and show little interest in the day-to-day affairs of Mkhubiso. They seldom attend the village inkundla at Mkhubiso and normally do so only for some of their court cases.

The Mkhubiso section is different from either Lenye or Ngxondoreni. The people who live in this village section have a relatively higher standard of living and are better educated generally. They include two influential groups of people, the Quitrent land-owners and the 'squatters'. During the past few decades disputes over land-ownership have produced a great deal of tension between these two groups. We have already noted that in 1939 the 'squatters' were moved from the commonage and given permission to erect their houses next to the Quitrent residential area at Mkhubiso. The land they occupy is part of the commonage which belongs to the Quitrent land-owners. After their re-settlement the 'squatters' were not given any arable land although they were allowed to rear their own livestock. In 1959, however, the Quitrent land-owners prevented the 'squatters' from owning livestock and forced them to sell the cattle and goats they possessed. This measure offended the 'squatters' and continues to be a source of friction between the land-owning and the landless people in Burnshill.

In Burnshill, also, there is a large piece of land (known as Ronaskap) which has been under the control of the United Free Church of Scotland since the last century. During the early 1950s the S.A. Trust bought this church land. Since that time the 'squatters' have been insisting that the surveyed fields at Ronaskap be allocated to them. The land-owners, on the other hand, maintain that Ronaskap belongs to the Quitrent land-owners. This issue has accentuated the opposition between the land-owning and the landless people in the village.

With the introduction of party politics after the first general elections in the Ciskei in 1973, many of the landless people in Burnshill (the 'squatters' especially) became ardent supporters of the ruling Ciskei National Independence Party (CNIP) which gained the support of most of the Xhosa even in other parts of the Ciskei. The majority of the land-owners (mostly the Mfengu) supported instead the opposition Ciskei National Party (CNP) to which most of the Mfengu in the Ciskei affiliated. In the Ciskei opposition between the Xhosa and the Mfengu resulted from historical grievances concerning land and political power. In the case of Burnshill the land which belongs to the Mfengu was originally owned by the Xhosa. Among the old residents there are families who are descendants of the Xhosa who lived in Burnshill before their expulsion from the village during the 1850/53 frontier war. Also, the dominant role played by the Mfengu in the Ciskei Territorial Authority (CTA) which functioned between 1968 and 1972 was questioned by many Xhosa during the election campaign which preceded the 1973 elections. Since 1973 the ruling CNIP has entrenched its position and in the 1978 general elections it won all the Ciskei Legislative Assembly seats. To protect their interests most of the Mfengu now support the CNIP. In spite of these political developments, the land situation in Burnshill remains more or less as it was before 1973.

(f) Village economy

(i) Emergence and decline of a peasantry

The economic changes which have taken place in this community since the 19th century must be mentioned here since changes in the rural production are closely related to migrancy. Colin Bundy (1972) has described how from the 1830s onwards in some parts of the region now known as the Ciskei and the Transkei a relatively wealthy class of peasant farmers emerged, modifying and adapting their traditional mode of production to take advantage of the wider market economy which had been introduced:

". . . the adoption of the plough and other implements, of new crops and methods, had provided a superior mode of production to pre-colonial agriculture, and many Africans responded to the imposition of taxes and the desirability of trader's wares by participating in the produce market." (Bundy 1972: 375)

These peasant farmers, who were represented mainly by the Mfengu in the Ciskei, competed effectively with white farmers. We have already pointed out that the Mfengu who settled in Burnshill after the 1850/53 war came under the direct influence of the missionaries who enabled them to acquire education, land and introduced them to new methods of agriculture. Bundy refers to the district of Keiskammahoek as one of the districts in the Ciskei which produced surpluses for the local markets in the 1860s and the 1870s. (Bundy 1972: 374)

Oral evidence obtained in the field suggests that the successful farmers in Burnshill produced a large variety of products like wheat, maize, oats, pigs and cattle which they sold to the German farmers in the Keiskammahoek district, and they also sent other products to the market in King William's Town. Many land-owning families, too, had grain pits which were situated on the commonage of the village and these were looked after by the landless people who lived on the commonage. Among the men who were independent peasant farmers during this time there was Alfred Keswa who was born in 1864 and died in 1937. He had two Freehold farms (one 33 acre farm at Zanyokwe location and another 10 acre farm at Chwaru location) as well as three Quitrent sites with fields which were five acres each in extent. Alfred Keswa derived his income from the sale of cattle and agricultural products like beans, oats and bird seed. He sold his products to the German traders in the district. Four of his six children qualified as teachers.

Subsequent generations in this family, however, ceased to be self-sufficient and depended on wage earning

for their living. For instance, Alfred's youngest son, Themba, completed his teachers' course and worked for a few years as a clerk in Johannesburg. Alfred encouraged him to study agriculture at the Fort Cox agricultural college. After completing this course, Themba taught for a short period outside the district and later joined the staff of the Fort Cox agricultural college where he lived and taught until his retirement a few years ago. Almost all the children of Themba have acquired a relatively high standard of education (two obtained degrees at the university of Fort Hare).

The case illustrates the shift from self-sufficient peasant farming to dependence on wage employment which supports Bundy's argument. One of the reasons which led to the decline of this peasant agriculture in Burnshill was the increasing land shortage. The amount of land Alfred possessed, for instance, was relatively large and enabled him to pursue agriculture throughout his life. His descendants, on the other hand, have not been able to acquire enough land to make farming a profitable undertaking. For them land has not been as freely available as in Alfred's time. If Themba wanted to follow his father's footsteps, to depend entirely on agriculture, he needed to inherit perhaps all the land his father possessed. Since he was the youngest son this would have been impossible and, even if he were the eldest son, this would not happen under normal circumstances: sons normally share their father's estate. Opportunities of acquiring large amounts of land existed in Burnshill only during the second half of the 19th century.

The decline in productivity and profitability of this form of agriculture was also the outcome of discriminatory means enforced by the white agricultural sector to disadvantage the black peasantry. Bundy (1972: 387) notes that in the regions where peasant agriculture had emerged, underproduction for want of market access became noticeable during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Produce sent from Burnshill to the white-

controlled market in King William's Town, for instance, was sold separately at specially reduced prices.

Also, the peasant farmers who adapted to the demands of the new market economy did not have a high standard of education. Many of their descendants, on the other hand, went further than the elementary education which their fathers received and managed to qualify in professions such as teaching. In the light of the general under-development of the area as well as land shortage, educated people began increasingly to depend on wage employment rather than farming. Also, the fact that training in agriculture became available only in the early 1930s with the establishment of the Fort Cox agricultural college militated against any entrepreneurial activity which could have enabled this peasantry to adapt to the new situation of land shortage and pressure from the white farmers.

In spite of these difficulties, even as late as the 1930s there were some families in Burnshill who produced surplus agricultural products for the local markets. During his boyhood Heren Sambu (born in 1915) used to accompany waggons which transported agricultural produce like oats and pigs from the farmers in Burnshill for sale in King William's Town. It would seem, however, that by the 1930s there were very few people who could still make a living entirely on agriculture. Information gleaned from migration histories suggests that the shift from agriculture to wage employment gained momentum during the first two decades of this century. During this time this process was also noticeable in other regions which had experienced an earlier period of prosperity. (Bundy 1972: 386)

(ii) Arable and stock farming today

The state of agriculture in Burnshill is characterised by land shortage which stems from the natural increase in the village population as well as the large scale

immigration of many families into the village. This shortage of land means that only 184 (58%) of all the families in the village have land rights. (cf. Table 2) Under the S.A. Trust tenure shortage of land has resulted in the reduction of individual arable holdings. The fields belonging to the families who obtained land soon after the introduction of this type of tenure are 2,4 hectares in extent. Later, some families received only 0,6 hectare for cultivation. At present there is no more arable land available for new families. Also, the pressure of population on limited land has reduced the productive potential of the land. Under the S.A. Trust tenure, for instance, the land-owning families are limited to six (and sometimes three) head of cattle. In spite of these stock limitation measures the quality of the S.A. Trust grazing land is generally poor and many cattle die during drought. Freehold and Quitrent grazing land, on the other hand, is in better condition and overstocking is not a serious problem.

Much as we regard scarcity of land as an important factor which militates against successful farming in this community, it must also be noted that there are other difficulties which prevent people from using the available land productively. Most of the land in the village belongs to men who work in town and visit their homes for only brief periods. Their home visits do not always coincide with the ploughing times. This prolonged absence of the able-bodied men causes a serious shortage of labour which makes cultivation and the rearing of stock largely dependent on women and children. Many men settle permanently at home only when they are too sick or old to undertake farming effectively. Largely on account of this scarcity of effective labour many families cultivate only small portions of their fields and large amounts of arable land lie fallow for several years. Others have given up cultivation and the rearing of stock altogether.

Lack of capital and the general under-development

of the area are other limiting factors. Largely on account of the increasing needs for money very little of the wages earned in town is invested in agriculture, e.g. in the purchase of implements and better quality stock. Profitable agriculture today involves the investment of large amounts of money which most people cannot afford. This is particularly the case with the hiring of tractors which is necessitated by the scarcity of labour and cattle. Rehabilitation measures undertaken by the administration since the early 1940s were concerned mainly with the resettlement of the people in clearly demarcated residential areas as well as the creation and fencing of separate areas for grazing and cultivation. Control of stock numbers and the introduction of contour banks in the fields also formed part of this rehabilitation scheme. This scheme, however, had limited objectives and, largely on account of the lack of funds and shortage of personnel, only touched the fringe of the problem. These measures were aimed at soil conservation and control, not at increasing production. Conserving an asset actually reduces its productivity in the short run unless some additional investment is made. Due to lack of funds, for instance, the condition of the fence around the fields has deteriorated and crops are frequently destroyed by stray stock. It is also necessary to assess the role played here by the Fort Cox agricultural college which is situated next to the village. This college, which was established during the early 1930s, trains agricultural extension officers who work in various parts of the Ciskei. Although Fort Cox has several agricultural projects, its activities are confined within its boundaries and its expertise and resources are not freely available to the people in the nearby villages. Since its establishment this institution has been rather exclusive and has not contributed much to the general improvement of farming methods among the people who live in Burnshill.

Due to the difficulties mentioned above agricultural productivity in Burnshill continued to decline during

the past few decades. The 1975-76 maize season which was one of average climatic conditions is here compared with the 1948-49 and the 1949-50 seasons:

Table 6
Maize production¹

	<u>1948-49</u>	<u>1949-50</u>	<u>1975-76</u>
	<u>season</u>	<u>season</u>	<u>season</u>
No. of families in sample	42	42	40
No. of families who sowed	38	41	25
% of families who sowed	<u>90,5</u>	<u>97,6</u>	<u>62,5</u>

During the 1975-76 summer season 13 of the 15 families who did not sow were landless families who could gain access to arable land only by share-cropping or by hiring fields from other people. The impression gained in the field is that share-cropping and the renting of fields from other people is much less common now than it was in the past. Most of the people who do not have land do not plough. Share-cropping, which entails the division of the produce obtained, is seldom considered a worthwhile proposition on account of the low yields obtained today. Also, the majority of the people today grow maize only whereas the produce for the 1948-49 summer seasons included supplementary crops like sorghum, peas, cowpeas, and beans. (Houghton & Walton 1952: 161-162) None of the homesteads in our sample, for instance, had grown sorghum during the 1975-76 summer crop season and only a few sowed beans and peas. Estimates of maize produced by the 25 families who sowed during the 1975-76 summer season are given below:

1. Information concerning maize cultivation for Burnshill during the 1948-49 and the 1949-50 seasons is in Houghton & Walton 1952: 161-162).

Table 7
Maize produce: 1975-76 season

No. of bags ¹	Old residents	Immigrants	Totals
Nil	3	3	6
½ to 1 bag	2	3	5
2 to 4 bags	4	5	9
5 to 10 bags	3	-	3
11 to 20 bags	-	1	1
21 to 30 bags	1	-	1
Totals	13	12	25

Since the time of the Keiskammahoek Rural Survey the production of maize (which is the staple food) has decreased considerably. For the 1949-50 summer season the 42 families who sowed maize in Burnshill obtained an average yield of 8,58 bags per family. (Houghton & Walton 1952: 162) A comparable figure for 1975-76 is less than three bags per family. The produce lasts for only a short time because an average family (of about 5,8 persons) consumes at least 20 bags of maize per annum. (Houghton & Walton 1952: 159) Among the families who cultivate there are no significant differences between the old residents and the immigrants with regard to productivity: in both sections of the community agricultural yields are small and the techniques of cultivation are broadly similar.

The position with regard to stock ownership is illustrated on the following page.

During the past few decades the number of families without cattle increased both among the immigrants and the old residents. No significant change has occurred though in the average number of cattle for each family. The averages are 4,9; 3,8; 3,5; and 4,2 cattle for the years 1948, 1949, 1950 and 1976/77 respectively. In the case of the immigrants residing on the S.A. Trust land the decrease in the number of

1. 200lb bags which is about 90,7kg.

Table 8
Stock ownership¹

Immigrants

<u>No of cattle</u>	<u>1948</u>	<u>1949</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1976/77</u>
Nil	2	2	4	7
1 or 2	3	2	1	2
3 to 5	-	1	-	3
6 to 10	1	3	3	6
11 to 20	3	1	1	-
<u>No. of homesteads</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>18</u>

Old residents

Nil	2	2	2	11
1 or 2	4	8	7	1
3 to 5	6	6	7	-
6 to 10	8	4	4	6
11 to 20	-	-	-	4
<u>No. of homesteads</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>22</u>

families owning cattle seems to be connected mainly with the shortage grazing land. Under this type of tenure stock owners are forced to cull their stock periodically because they cannot own more than six (and in some cases three) head of cattle. There are cases where people minimise the effects of stock limitation by utilising the stock rights of other people. Although this practice is well established, it does not seem to influence the overall situation much.

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1. To assess the changes which have occurred among the old residents and the immigrants over the past few decades the schedules used in the Keiskammahoek Rural Survey were consulted. Information concerning stock ownership in Burnshill during the years 1948, 1949 and 1950 is based on this source.

Freehold and Quitrent land owners, on the other hand, have more land for grazing than the owners of the S.A. Trust land. It is, however, interesting to note that this advantage does not necessarily make the majority of the old residents better off as far as stock ownership is concerned. Also, with regard to this section of the community mention may be made of the inequality which the data presented above suggest. Between 1948 and 1950 most of the old residents owned between one and five head of cattle. At present these families vary widely: 11(50%) own no cattle at all and 10(45%) more than five head of cattle. It is not clear why this change has occurred.

(iii) Employment and other sources of income

Little economic development inside the village has taken place and employment opportunities available locally are few. In our sample homesteads, of the 72 adult males who were at home during the time of the investigation only 12 were employed locally. Eight were labourers at the Fort Cox agricultural college; three were school teachers and taught within the district, and one was a labourer in the Keiskammahoek village and returned home during the weekends. Local jobs for women are even more limited. Only six women in the sample were employed locally (five as domestic workers at Fort Cox and one by the forestry department). Qualified women, too, have to migrate because suitable employment opportunities at home are not always available. In our sample there were nine women who were employed as teachers. Only one of them was teaching at home, others taught either in other reserves or in the urban areas.

Some families have no cash income whatsoever. The most acute distress, however, is sometimes alleviated by old-age and disability grants which at the time of the investigation varied between R32,00 and R38,00 over a period of two months. However, not every person who

regarded himself as qualified received these grants. Many elderly people had applied for them several years ago and were still not receiving them.

(g) Conclusions

We have shown above that the social structure of Burnshill includes two categories of people who vary in terms of wealth and cultural backgrounds. Primarily, this cleavage is between wealthier and poorer people who occupy distinct positions in the social structure. The close association of the old residents with the early missionaries gave them distinct advantages in that it enabled them to acquire land and education. For several generations these assets have enabled this section of the community to remain a privileged group with a distinct mode of living. Although the majority of the old residents now own land either under Freehold or Quitrent tenure, their higher economic status is not so much connected with their land rights as much as their educational skills. The immigrants, on the other hand, constitute a distinct category of people with significant economic disabilities. Many of them have suffered economic insecurity for generations on account of landlessness and lack of educational skills. These disabilities limit their chances of self-improvement.

The people who live in Burnshill, also, have different cultural backgrounds. Since the days of the early missionaries a sharp cultural division existed among the Xhosa-speaking peoples in the Ciskei and the Transkei. The people who adopted the mode of life introduced by the missionaries have come to be known as School people and those who resisted change and stood by the indigenous way of life were called Red people. (Mayer 1961: 4) The people who live in Burnshill today, however, cannot be differentiated in terms of these ideal types, Red and School. Even a generation ago there were no Red people in the whole of the Keiskammahoek district. (Wilson, M. 1952: 129) Also, present day circumstances are different from the conquest situation of the last century which produced a sharp

cultural distinction between the Red and the School people. In Burnshill today the immigrants are not opposed to change per se: they willingly send their children to school and generally accept education as a part of a child's career. Although their traditional beliefs are still of great significance, Christianity influences their lives and its impact can be seen in the emergence of the Zionist churches which draw their membership mainly from the immigrants. These adaptations indicate that the cultural differences between the two contrasting sections of this community cannot be explained in terms of the Red/School division. Although the Red School cultural traditions do have an influence on the behaviour of the people, their influence can easily be over-emphasized. The fact that the immigrants tend to be more conservative than the old residents does not necessarily spring from a positive opposition of what is new as much as it is related to contemporary socio-economic factors which influence the behaviour of the people and predispose them toward particular values and choices. What is to be explained here is not a simple and massive rejection or acceptance of change and modernization but a selective absorption of new patterns of behaviour into contrasting cultural traditions. As we hope to show in later chapters, economic factors play an important role in this process.

CHAPTER 3
LABOUR MIGRATION

(a) Historical background

In the early days of settlement, white colonists in the Cape made use of imported slaves as well as Khoikhoi labour. Their dependence on Khoikhoi labour, however, was short-lived because the Khoikhoi moved away from the Cape Peninsula as the colonists advanced, preferring independence to employment where this was economically possible. (Wilson, M. 1971: 65-66) Some were absorbed into the labour force, especially in rural areas but disease decimated their numbers and retreat into the interior ahead of the trek boers was always possible. Slavery was abolished at the Cape in December 1834 (Muller 1969: 116) although the "apprenticeship" system continued for another fifteen years for those emancipated at that time, effectively extending slavery until 1850. The earliest references to the employment of the Xhosa by the frontier farmers in the Eastern Cape date back to 1777. (Moodie 1884: 73) By the end of the 18th century this practice was already common although it conflicted with the policy of the colonial administration which sought to avoid conflict by limiting interaction between the Xhosa and the colonists. Various ordinances issued between 1797 and 1820 specifically prohibited the employment of the Xhosa within the Colony. (Donaldson 1974: 340)

However, the growing need for labour forced the government to change its policy and Ordinance 49 of 1828 permitted the employment of blacks in the Colony under contracts ranging from one month to a year. Moreover, this Ordinance introduced the usage of passes (official permits) which, from this time to the present, have featured prominently in the control of black labour. White employers who violated this regulation were liable to a fine (maximum R10,00) or imprisonment (maximum three months). (Donaldson 1974: 370-371) In spite of this change in labour policy, the frontier farmers continued to

experience labour shortages. Primarily, an increased labour supply could be achieved by the expropriation of ever-increasing amounts of Xhosa land. (Moyer 1976: 262) In the course of the frontier wars which lasted up to 1879 the colonists managed to expropriate large quantities of Xhosa land and thereby create conditions which compelled many of the dispossessed people to seek paid employment.

From 1835 most of the labour in the Colony was supplied by the Mfengu. Their movement from the Transkei into the Colony in 1835 was, inter alia, an effort to solve the problem of labour shortage among the frontier farmers. Governor D'Urban wanted all the Mfengu to live in the district of Peddie and knew that the limited economic potential of the district would force the Mfengu to seek employment among the white farmers. (Moyer 1976: 263-264) D'Urban's plan failed, however, because the Mfengu did not want to be confined to Peddie and, instead, many of them filtered into the interior of the Colony soon after their arrival in Peddie. At this time Grahamstown attracted many of the Mfengu immigrants. (Moyer 1976: 270)

In 1837 D'Urban's policy was reversed when Stockenström embarked on a large scale programme to distribute the Mfengu throughout the Colony. Under this scheme some 2 000 Mfengu were moved to the Humansdorp (Tsitsikama) district¹ and others were settled at Uitenhage, Port Elizabeth² and the Western Cape. On account of this movement the Mfengu populations in the various towns grew rapidly and new settlements were formed. As early as 1839 a Mfengu settlement already existed in Cape Town. (Moyer 1976: 271-272) By 1879 the 3 778 Xhosa-speaking people residing in the Western Cape included 1 164 women and 1 472 children. (Wilson, M. & Mafeje 1963: 1) In Uitenhage (1836) and in Grahamstown (1856) the Mfengu were

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1. These are the ancestors of the people who were moved to the Ciskei (Keiskammahoek) recently.
 2. The harbour in Port Elizabeth grew rapidly after the arrival of the 1820 settlers. Its labour needs were supplied by the Mfengu who served there as surf labourers. (Moyer 1976: 289) A "Fingo village" developed on the outskirts of Port Elizabeth before 1860. (Lorimer 1970)

granted freehold land rights in certain areas of those towns. (Welsh 1971: 179) Thus blacks were incorporated as permanent residents in the colony within a generation or two of the appropriation of the land by the white settlers.

The first major impetus to the migration of the Xhosa to the Colony resulted from the widespread poverty which followed the cattle killing of 1857. This incident was a shattering blow which forced some 30 000 Xhosa to seek employment on the Eastern Cape farms and others were absorbed by the projects initiated by Grey. (Wilson, M. 1971: 258, Moyer 1976: 411) Further, this 'national suicide' followed the 1850-53 war during which the Xhosa in the Ciskei lost their fertile lands along the Amatola mountains as well as most of their herds. (Theal 1964: 114-115) Between 1866 and 1868 some of the Mfengu living in the Burnshill area responded to the pressures of increasing land shortage by migrating to the less populated areas of the Transkei. That it was only the Mfengu who chose to migrate to the Transkei seems to be associated with the division which existed between the Xhosa and the Mfengu at the time. In Burnshill the survey of land grants which was initiated in 1868 produced a considerable friction in the community. "The few Xhosa who were living in the village refused to accept grants on the grounds that the land belong to their chief, Sandile, not to the Crown, and among the Mfengu two factions developed, one in favour of survey and the other against it. The faction that opposed the survey then migrated to the Transkei, though some of them had obtained grants before they left." (Mills & Wilson, M. 1952: 69) The majority of the Xhosa moved to the growing towns in search of work. (Wilson, M. 1971: 59) After 1876 economic distress stimulated further townward movement especially in the districts of King William's Town, East London, Victoria East and Peddie. (Bundy 1972: 378) By the end of the 1870s Xhosa military resistance was finally broken and the only way in which many could survive was by going out to seek employment. (Thompson 1971: 257)

These developments co-incided with the discovery of diamonds and gold which accelerated the flow of black workers

to the towns. Not only did the mining industry have its own labour needs, it also stimulated the growth of the railways and the farming industry. At the same time, these discoveries had a different effect on the small class of independent peasant farmers we described in the previous chapter. From the early 1870s the peasant farmers in the Ciskei (as well as the Transkei) benefited from the expansion of the South African economy which resulted from the mineral discoveries. The new markets enhanced their opportunities for earning cash incomes by selling their surplus produce. Their period of prosperity, however, was short-lived; by the end of the century they faced considerable opposition from both the white farmers and the mine owners who found that the most effective way to increase their labour supply was by reducing the amount of land available to the blacks. (Bundy 1972: 376-377, 382-384) Whereas in the 1850s and 1860s the Mfengu in the Ciskei were granted land ranging between 16,19 and 32,4 hectares per family, the Glen Grey Act of 1894 precluded the accumulation of land by imposing the principle of one man one lot and limited all land grants to 4,67 hectares. (Bundy 1971: 31) At this time Cape policy was aimed at restricting ownership of land by blacks and at evicting the squatters who lived on land belonging to the white farmers. From the 1890s many squatters were evicted from the Eastern Cape farms and between 1899 and 1909 a series of Location Acts stepped up the control of squatters living on white-owned farms. According to official figures from 1899 to 1909 the number of squatters fell from 40 000 to 7 000 as a result of these measures. (Bundy 1972: 386) Also, the rinderpest epidemic of 1896-97, which killed more than 80 per cent of the black-owned cattle in some areas, was a disaster which added to the difficulties people experienced during this time. (ibid: 381)

By 1913 even the communities which had been prosperous during the previous century were reduced to stagnation and poverty. After the 1920s nearly all communities depended on wage labour for subsistence. (Bundy 1972: 386) So established had the process of labour migration become by the late 1940s that 25% of the people included in the Keiskammahoek Rural

Survey were found to be in the urban areas. (Houghton & Walton 1952: 126) The people who were away included a larger proportion of males than females and belonged mainly to the working generation. (ibid: 29-34) From the viewpoint of the white pressure groups (the industrialists and the farmers) the "ideal" was for the black reserves to be adequate to keep people alive, but never adequate enough to tempt them to stay and prosper at home. What the government had in mind during the earlier part of this century was the migration of single male contract labourers who would work for specific periods in the towns and then return to their rural homes. The government did not regard blacks in the towns as permanent members of the urban communities: it saw them as migrants whose homes were in the rural areas. (Welsh 1971: 185 200) This reasoning accounts for the introduction of many influx control restrictions which are applied in the country.

A number of legal restrictions which control the movement of blacks between the towns and the country were incorporated in the Urban Areas Act of 1923 which gave powers to local authorities registered as 'proclaimed' urban areas to restrict the number of black workers entering the towns to the number of jobs available. The Act established the basis on which the influx control regulations were to be exercised. Black male workers entering the 'proclaimed' areas were to report their arrival to the authorities within a stipulated period and could not be 'legally' employed unless their employers registered them. Those who could not find employment within the prescribed time could be evicted from the area. After 1923 amendments of the Act provided further restrictions on the entry of blacks in the towns. The 1930 amendment gave local authorities in these 'proclaimed' areas powers to exclude from the towns all black women who had no accommodation. The 1937 amendment gave the government powers to force municipalities to expel unemployed blacks from the towns. (Welsh 1971: 197, 198)

In spite of these legislative measures, the number of blacks migrating to the towns continued to increase. Between 1921 and 1936 the urban black population almost doubled and

between 1936 and 1946 it increased by a further 57,16 per cent. More townward movement resulted from the industrial expansion which occurred during the Second World War. (Welsh 1971: 188-190) Natural increase could not have accounted for much more than half of this growth, and it should be noted that these are the official figures which do not necessarily take into account the 'illegal' migrants.

Between 1946 and 1948 the position of blacks in town was reviewed by the Fagan Commission which, among other things, recommended the recognition of blacks living permanently in the towns. Although these recommendations were accepted by the government, they could not be implemented because the United Party government lost the 1948 elections. Since 1948 the policies of the nationalist government have extended influx control regulations and sought to reduce the number of blacks in the towns. The government rejected the findings of the Fagan Commission and declared permanent urban residence as the exclusive right of whites. In 1950 the government vetoed proposals made by a mining company in the Orange Free State to provide accommodation for at least ten per cent of its married workers. During the same year the 'border industries' scheme, which encouraged the location of labour-intensive enterprises close to the reserves, was initiated. (Welsh 1971: 191, 192) Since 1952 government policy has been directed towards increasing the proportion of labour migrants and decreasing the number of those people who settle permanently in the towns. This policy is applied most strictly in the Western Cape. (Wilson, M. 1971: 66)

(b) The phenomenon of labour migration

Although a large number of the men and women leave Burnshill and settle permanently in the urban areas, the majority of the people continue to follow an oscillating pattern, going out to the towns and returning home in between work spells. For a considerable number of men and women the motivating factor in going out to work is economic necessity - lack of money to support themselves and their families, etc.

Generally the people cannot earn sufficient money at home to satisfy their needs for cash. These needs have increased so that in most cases the remittances from migrant workers are used to buy food and clothes. Soon after his arrival home, the migrant's economic resources become exhausted and he has to go out again for another spell which usually involves a long absence from home. Also, the spread of consumer goods generates additional wants and new opportunities for spending create new needs which only more migrant labour can satisfy.

Although prior to marriage a man may tend to work primarily for himself, he acquires new responsibilities after marriage, particularly the need to support his family, to establish his own umzi and to educate his children. These are the major goals adult men seek to achieve by going to work. But the building of independent households and the education of children strain the resources of many families since the greater part of the remittances must be used for keeping the family members alive. Although many people do all they can to enable their children to acquire education, they find it difficult to invest much in agriculture.

Other factors which account for the movement of the people from the rural areas are of a social and personal nature. A large number of the people (especially among the old residents) migrate because they have skills which equip them for employment outside the village. Only a few of the people with professional qualifications can be employed locally; the others go out to try their luck in towns. Education, also, is important in cases where people migrate for reasons other than employment. Many children go out to further their education outside the village, some in the urban areas. On the completion of their educational careers they normally find employment in the towns or in "white" rural areas.

The social and personal factors refer to domestic relations as well. Migration may enable a young married woman to escape from the control of her husband's relatives, a boy may leave home for work in the towns to avoid ill-treatment at home, etc. Apart from this, influences which ultimately lead to migration may emanate from the wider society, especially

the peer group. In many instances boys say they are leaving their homes because their age mates are doing so.

While it is difficult for most men and women to support themselves at home, it is also not easy for them to settle permanently in the towns. Influx control regulations govern the entry and residence of the workers in the urban areas. The migrant must acquire a permit from his local authority at home¹ and thereafter the labour bureaux in town must be satisfied that labour conditions justify the migrant's entry in the area. Besides, a migrant can achieve the status of a 'permanent resident' in the towns only by fulfilling stringent conditions, viz. by showing proof of 10 years' continuous employment with one employer or 15 continuous years of employment with different employers. (Section 10 (1) (b) of the Natives (Urban Areas) consolidation Act No. 25 of 1945) Also, the legislation which came into effect in April 1968 prohibited married men who work in town as contract workers from bringing their wives into the urban areas. (Bantu Labour Regulations of 1968 promulgated in terms of the Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act No. 25 of 1945)

These legal restrictions are of exceptional proportions in South Africa as compared to other countries in Africa - in part because of the efficiency with which they are implemented. The scale of the operation is due to South Africa's well developed urban mining and industrial sector. This makes the South African migrant labour situation different from many other cases discussed by anthropologists in Africa. (Schildkrout 1978; Mitchell 1959; van Velsen 1960; Gulliver 1969)

There are several physical constraints, too, which encourage people to return home and not settle in town. Apart from the workers who are accommodated by their employers in "single" accommodation (e.g. the mine and domestic workers) it is with great difficulty that the married men are able

1. People from Burnshill have to acquire work seekers' permits either at Keiskammahoek or Middeldrift before they go out to look for work in town.

to find suitable homes for their families in the urban areas where the municipal houses are normally allocated to the 'permanent residents'. Besides, the man who takes his family to town may lose his job and his accommodation as well, either through his accommodation being tied to his job by his employer, or through the operation of influx control. Also in the past black urban residential areas have included a large number of overcrowded shanty towns. In 1955, for instance, the East Bank location in East London was inhabited by 45 000 people living on 127,9 hectares. (Reader 1961: 103) Although most of the shanty towns have now been demolished, they have not been replaced with an equivalent number of urban houses and the shortage of suitable accommodation in town is acute. Other difficulties are related to the unpleasantness of the urban environment generally, especially for bringing up children.

The rural areas, on the other hand, offer a greater measure of social security, independence and a lower cost of living. People are able to build their own houses and a few are still able to supplement their earnings by cultivation and the rearing of stock. Also, there is a role and status for old people in the country. They are the custodians of the young family members and look after the homes and property of the absent relatives. These are some of the reasons why many people return eventually to their homes after many years of work in the towns. There is also a romantic view of the rural areas as havens of peace which characterises first generation urban dwellers in particular, but even established urban dwellers. Just as thousands of middle class English and white South Africans dream of retiring to a home by the sea or in a rural area, and many actually realise that ambition, so black urban slum dwellers have similar dreams.

It can thus be seen that the circumstances under which migration takes place vary and include economic, political, social and personal factors. The phenomenon cannot be explained in terms of a single cause. In the light of this, Francis Wilson's (1972: 145-158) argument concerning the 'push-pull' factors which he links with labour oscillation must be modified.

While economic and political pressures exercise a great influence on migration, the difficulty with this approach is that it obscures the inherent complexity of labour migration (Watson: 1977) and it does not help us in explaining the persistence of labour oscillation nor the wide variation we find in migratory careers. (Garbett 1975)

Based on the idea of individuals who exercise choice under conditions of risk and uncertainty Garbett (ibid) has formulated a decision model that seems helpful in understanding the case with which we are concerned. This model is closely associated with the concept of strategy which has been applied in the study of political sociology and interpersonal relations generally. (Bailey 1969; Goffman 1970) In the migratory labour situation people weigh advantages and disadvantages and make choices and decisions in terms of their own needs. Although the migrant has no control over the political, economic and other factors operating at the macro-level, it is within these constraints that he exercises choice. The value of this approach is that it explains the behaviour of particular sets of migrants and enables us to comprehend the range of variation in migratory careers. In his decision model Garbett states that the migrant is not an independent decision maker: his actions and decisions are influenced by his position in a particular set of social relationships. Although some people may be motivated by purely personal reasons for migrating, others are influenced by the actions and decisions made by other people who fall within the migrant's social field. Further, an examination of the migrant's network of social relationships indicates the extent to which he has a rural or urban orientation. Mayer (1961) shows how some Xhosa during the course of their East London careers undergo the transition from migrant to real townsmen. He defines the process of urbanization primarily as the slackening of ties with the former rural home, carried to the point where a person no longer feels the pull of the country. Here he distinguishes between the people who have been able to settle in town and have no ties with their rural homes ("the town-rooted") and those who continue to regard themselves as having their real homes in the country ("the country-rooted").

(ibid.: 5) Other people, however, keep a footing in both the towns and the country ("the double-rooted"). (ibid.: 224)

There seems to be a fairly large proportion of country-rooted people in the towns; in 1974 De Jongh (1979: 70) found that 55% of the Xhosa-speaking residents in the Port Elizabeth townships were people who felt their stay in town was only temporary (the earning of money being the main purpose of their presence in this urban area) and intended to return to their areas of origin eventually. At the same time, the process of urbanization is encouraged by the influx control regulations which inhibit people from absenting themselves from town for lengthy periods. (ibid.: 72) There are also many people who decide to settle permanently in the towns which they perceive as places that offer more favourable conditions of living than the rural areas. (Pauw 1963)

(c) Migration of men

Table 9
Analysis of genealogies¹

	240 genealogies in 1950 ²		53 genealogies in 1976-77	
	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Adult males (over 16 years)</u>				
No. living	1 090	100	174	100
At present in Keiskammahoek	512	47	72	41
At present outside Keiskammahoek	578	53	102	59
<u>Adult females (over 16 years)</u>				
No. living	955	100	264	100
At present in Keiskammahoek	579	61	144	55
At present outside Keiskammahoek	376	39	120	45

1. The material concerning migration was obtained from the genealogies of our sample homesteads.
2. cf. Houghton & Walton (1952: 133).

Since the Keiskammahoek Rural Survey male absenteeism has increased from 53 to 59 per cent. The change over a quarter of a century is not startling but the trend of continual townward movement continues. The 72 men found at home included 53 men who lived permanently in the country. Most of them were no longer migrating either on account of old age or physical disability. The men found at home also included five migrants who were at home temporarily and intended to go back to work shortly, 12 men employed locally and four able-bodied men who had been at home for a number of years and could continue staying at home or go out again to look for work. One of them was a self-employed builder. Apart from eight young men and boys without labour migration experience, the sample included only one elderly man, a relatively wealthy freehold land owner, who had never been a wage earner and depended on his land for a living.

Although people are attracted by the higher rates of pay in the cities and towns, they do take jobs locally when such opportunities arise. The largest employment centre in the vicinity of Burnshill is the Fort Cox agricultural college. Towards the end of our fieldwork a building contractor began erecting a water purification plant in Burnshill and provided some of the people with jobs. The chances of finding employment locally, however, are limited and most of the men have to go to the towns.

Boys who do not continue their schooling go out to look for work from about the age of 17. This is not very early compared with early 19th Century Britain when 10 year olds worked a 12 hour day in factories. The boys in Burnshill seldom have special aims when they venture out to the cities for the first time and, in many instances, they do not discuss the matter with their parents but leave the village secretly (ukuzimela). It is often the peer group which influences their decision to leave. "I saw other boys going to the mines and decided to go. There were no difficulties at home, it was only ubukhwenkwe (boyishness) which induced me to leave home." Also, the return of young men from the mines and towns as well as dissatisfaction with home conditions (e.g. ill-treatment and lack of interest in schooling) are some of the factors

which encourage boys to leave for work. "I could not bear the constant thrashing and ill-treatment at home and decided to leave for work." "I was tired of schooling and ran away to the mines". The boys who migrate for the first time normally chose towns where their relatives work. The relatives provide the prospective worker with accommodation and assist him in looking for work. Many children have already become familiar with town life while they are living in the village as they often visit their relatives in the urban areas during school holidays.

After a few years in employment boys save money for circumcision. Thereafter several more trips to town are undertaken before the man marries. After marriage men's economic responsibilities increase and tend to keep them in employment until very late in life, sometimes until the men are well over the age of 60. This is in sharp contrast to other areas where the fathers stop migrating altogether once their sons go out to earn money. (McAllister 1978: 10) Most of the elderly men in Burnshill continue working in town because they do not receive adequate support from their sons, especially when their sons are married. In many instances ill-health forces the men to retire: others die at work.

There are two main categories of employment for the men who migrate. The first includes all the contract workers employed on the mines and other enterprises which recruit workers locally. This type of employment, which is commonly referred to as ijoyini, is obtainable in Keiskammahoek and Middledrift through the labour agencies. It is the main avenue of employment for the less educated members of the community. The better educated people, on the other hand, do not normally think of ijoyini when they seek employment because they associate it with poor wages and ill-treatment of workers. It seems in most cases workers who go out by ijoyini prefer employment on the mines and take contracts to other industrial centres only when they cannot get any other work. It is commonly known that some labour recruiting agents do not give the workers the correct information when they recruit them and the workers are sometimes paid lower wages than those they are promised when they are recruited. Also, the conditions of service for a particular contract are not always

known by the worker beforehand. A 38 year old regular mine worker who started working on the mines in 1956 could not get any vacancy on the mines in 1966 and signed a contract for work with a construction firm in Port Elizabeth, only to find that conditions of service there were very unpleasant. "The place was bad. We were digging deep tunnels and had to stand in puddles of water while working. These deep tunnels were dangerous and the water was uncomfortable. Even if you wore gum boots it did not help. I felt I had to finish the six months contract and never go back to the same job. We did not receive much - only R9,00 a week . . . I just go to the mines now and I am used to that. Some of the people who simply go to the towns to look for work suffer: they work for nothing because they pay heavy fines for working without permits. If I can, I will always work on the mines. When you leave you know what is in store for you and you are already in employment."

The second category of employment includes workers employed in the factories and other business enterprises in the towns and cities. This is the main mode of employment for the better educated people. Workers in this category go out to search for work, they are not recruited in the country. Many men would prefer employment in the factories and other business undertakings in town but continue taking ijoyini because influx control regulations inhibit them from doing so. Some choose to break the law and take the risks and consequences.

We propose to describe the migration history of Mvalo to illustrate, among other things,

- (i) the kind of decisions workers make during their working careers,
- (ii) that educational status is a marketable commodity that can be used by the workers to gain better employment, and
- (iii) that going out to work in the towns is not only an experience that entails a great deal of travelling and acquaintance with different environments but that it is often a tough experience that is fraught with many hazards.

Mvalo was born in 1901 in Burnshill where he passed standard six in 1916. While some of his classmates proceeded to the Lovedale Institution for further study, his parents could not afford further expenses for his education. In 1917 his father raised a loan of R6,00 from the local trading store to enable him to travel by train to Cape Town (where he had an uncle and other relatives) to look for work. Since his father had notified relatives in Cape Town about the matter, Mvalo found a job - at a dairy as a delivery man - soon after his arrival there and his uncle provided him with accommodation. He worked there until 1924 when he returned home for the first time for circumcision.

When he returned to Cape Town the same year he went back to his previous job but was not keen to keep it for much longer. "We were delivering milk in the Cape Town suburbs . . . waking up at midnight and carrying ice cold milk. I never knew milk could be so cold. This was unbearable and I believed I could do something better since at least I had a standard six certificate." He made an arrangement with a garage to take driving lessons on Saturday afternoons and in 1925 got his driver's licence. Thereafter he resigned from the dairy and was employed by one of the trading firms in Cape Town as a driver for a salesman who had to visit various stores around Cape Town. When Mvalo came home at the end of 1925, his intention was to return to his job at the end of his holiday. But while he was visiting King William's Town during this holiday he was offered employment as a driver by one of the hotels in the town and decided to take it because he would be working nearer home. He held this position for two years when the proprietor of the hotel who had bought another hotel in Umtata asked him to go and work for him there and he agreed. Mvalo worked for the hotel from 1926 to 1928. "We parted ways when he (the hotel proprietor) decided to leave again, this time to take up ownership of another hotel in Rhodesia. At first I was willing to go with him, but just then I met a friend who advised me not to go. He told me I would find the Rhodesian hot weather intolerable and informed me about a salesman in Mqanduli who needed a driver

urgently. I applied and soon thereafter received a telegram offering me the job. I was to work for the Transkei Trading Company whose headquarters were in Queenstown." For a number of years Mvalo drove for the white salesman, visiting trading stores in the Free State and Lesotho. After a quarrel with the salesman - "over a minor thing, just a small fault in the car which I did not report to him" - he was dismissed while they were working in Lesotho.

He was, however, out of employment for only a short time and was taken on again as a driver for another salesman who worked in Lesotho. He worked with him for a few months and "we had enough of each other. In those days if you worked for a white person far away from your home he could easily treat you like a toy." Mvalo left this salesman and was 'picked up' by another salesman with whom he worked until 1931 when he wanted to visit home. During this year he spent a few months at home and, since he "did not find it necessary to return to Lesotho", left for Port Elizabeth to look for work. "I regretted later: in Port Elizabeth there was no work and any job you could get rewarded you with only a penny. I was employed by a building firm as a labourer where we set up water and sewerage pipes, earning as little as seven shillings and six pence (75c) per week." Because Mvalo was not satisfied with the wage he left the job and worked for a garage which paid a slightly better wage. It was not long before he returned to driving for another salesman. "I drove for him for a number of years although he was unpleasant. He drank heavily. We would finish our work at five in the afternoon and thereafter he would go to a bar. I had to sit in the car from that time up to eleven at night and drive him home. It was only then that I would walk home to the location. If at that time Port Elizabeth was as violent as it is now, I would have died long ago. At that time there were no buses after nine o'clock at night."

In 1936 the salesman decided to employ a white driver and dismissed Mvalo who subsequently drove for a timber company in Port Elizabeth. He resigned from this job in 1938 when "the firm increased the wages of its white drivers and did nothing about us. All the black drivers decided to leave the firm."

During the same year Mvalo joined one of the motor car assembly companies in Port Elizabeth, at first as an ordinary labourer and "because I could speak English well I was promoted to a better grade and worked in the stores department. I was employed in this capacity for many years and worked happily with my supervisor. But when he died, his successor ill-treated me so much that I asked for a transfer to another department. There conditions were much better." He worked for the company up to 1959 when he had to return home to bury his father. Although initially he intended staying at home only for a short time, he decided to remain at home permanently. "I did consider settling permanently in Port Elizabeth but when I returned home for the funeral of my father I felt the home would be deserted if I were to leave. Relatives advised me to stay at home and care for the cattle and the goats I had inherited from my father. Mvalo married in Port Elizabeth in 1940 and had three children. After he separated from his wife in 1948, she took the children to her home in Peddie. The children joined him when he was living in Burnshill permanently. All of them started their working careers in Port Elizabeth where they reside at present.

Few workers have been as fortunate as Mvalo in acquiring first a standard six certificate and later a saleable skill (driver's licence) which enabled him to hold relatively good employment for the greater part of his working career. Many other older people have migrated with little or no schooling and had to accept the lowest paying jobs in the urban areas. Some of them have the experience of working only for the mines and others have been alternating between the mines and other poorly paid jobs in the industrial centres. A few managed to get employment locally and preferred to work nearer home although this often meant accepting a much smaller wage than one would normally receive in town.

The next case we cite is of a younger worker, Mpinga, who was born on a farm near Burnshill in 1942 and moved with his parents to the Lenye section of the village which was established when the S.A. Trust tenure was introduced in 1945. He attended school at Lenye and while doing standard three he left school because he "lost interest in schooling. Other boys were also

not keen to continue. There was much fun we were missing and and friends influenced me." After leaving school he spent about a year at home and in 1959 decided to go to the mines. Without his parents' knowledge he arranged the contract in Keiskammahoek and when he returned home "they could not stop me from going. They saw me arriving with provisions which were supplied by the recruiting agency and they allowed me to go. My mother baked bread from the flour I brought from Teba." Mpinga spent about a year on the mines on his first contract and returned home. He stayed at home for only three weeks and left for a mine in Brakpan. "There I was only able to complete my contract of six months and decided to leave the mine because the work was hard. I did not return home after this contract but found work in another mine where I worked for about a year and returned home. At home I spent a few weeks and in 1962 took a contract for work in Cape Town where I worked for a liquor company for three months. At the end of that period a big lorry was brought to where we were working and our employers told us that those who wanted further employment must get on to the lorry. I decided to do so and those who did not returned home. In this new job we worked for the City Council making roads. I worked there for a few months and returned home when there was no longer any work for us." After spending some time at home in 1966 Mpinga took another contract - this time for work with a construction firm in Port Elizabeth. He found this work, involving the digging of deep tunnels for water works, unpleasant and dangerous. "I felt I had to finish the six months contract and never go back to the same job." Thereafter he returned home.

From 1967 to 1970 he made several trips to the mines and in 1971 went to Cape Town on another contract. When it expired he did not return home but took other jobs (without a permit) in the city. "I did these casual jobs (izingxungxo) for about a month and felt the thing was not worth the while. This would land me in gaol. I was arrested there for working without a permit and paid a R10,00 fine for that. They did not repatriate me and I could have continued working but I felt if I did so I would be working only for the gaol because each time I am discovered they would arrest me. When you are out of gaol you have

to refund the people who paid your fine. I decided to return home. I stayed for a short time at home and in 1972 went out for six months to a mine at Prieska. I was at home in 1973 and stayed for a long time, taking jobs I could get around here. A building company employed me for three months when the new Fort Cox college was built and for another nine months I worked for the timber factory in Keiskammahoek. I was out of employment for a week, after which I took another contract for work on a mine at Prieska. But I did not want to go to Prieska because that mine does not pay. I would go to Keiskammahoek regularly but find no other mine contract and felt I could not help but go to Prieska." Mpinga has been working for this mine ever since and his last trip, which ended in September 1980, lasted for 18 months. At the end of November 1980 he was still at home (having married three weeks previously) and intended going back to Prieska early in 1981. When we interviewed him (in November 1980) he spoke favourably about mine work and it seems he will not change to other contract jobs in the cities even if he can in view of the difficulties he has experienced in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth.

Mpinga's case is an illustration of what usually happens to younger people with few years of schooling who thus have a limited choice with regard to employment opportunities and are mainly confined to contract (and relatively unfree) employment either on the mines or other industrial concerns. But in spite of these limitations, the workers make their own decisions about the jobs they take and continually evaluate their situation in terms of their own needs. For instance, Mpinga left the mine for which he worked in Brakpan "because the work was hard" and tried his luck in another mine; he decided "never to go back to the same job" in Port Elizabeth because he viewed it as unpleasant and dangerous; he found casual work (without a permit) in Cape Town hazardous as it exposed him to legal prosecution and at present he feels it would be better for him to work on the mines.

For the industrial centres which attract workers from Burnshill the distribution is shown below:

Table 10
Location of male absentees

	1950 ¹	1976-77
Cape Town	161 (33%)	16 (18%)
Witwatersrand	123 (25%)	25 (27%)
Port Elizabeth	87 (17%)	25 (27%)
East London	57 (12%)	11 (12%)
Other towns ²	65 (13%)	15 (16%)

From the table above it can be seen that the majority of the males from Burnshill work on the Witwatersrand and Port Elizabeth. The majority of those who work on the Witwatersrand (19 out of 25) are unskilled workers employed by the mines. Also, on account of industrialization, Port Elizabeth now attracts the same number of male workers as the Witwatersrand. At the same time, the proportion of workers employed in Cape Town declined since the 1950s. This decline could be expected since there are now more restrictions on individuals who want to work in Cape Town. Apart from workers who enlist for contract jobs in this centre, it is mainly the elderly men in permanent employment who still work there. Younger men who leave home and seek work in Cape Town without work permits often experience difficulties. One example of this was Zinto who left for Cape Town in 1959 and remained there

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1. Houghton & Walton (1952: 127).
 2. The adult males in 'Other towns' were distributed in the following manner: King William's Town (12), Queenstown (1), Escourt (1), and Alice (1).

until 1963 moving from one temporary job to another since he could not obtain a work permit. Eventually he decided to return home and later found employment in a factory in King William's Town. Measures taken to implement the 'Coloured Labour Preference' policy in the Western Cape in the late sixties aimed at, among other things, restricting black employment in the industrial sector in Cape Town. (Bekker & Coetzee 1980: 7)

Mpinga, whom we introduced earlier in this discussion, completed a work contract in Cape Town in 1971 and took up other jobs in the city without a permit. That he was once arrested, and could be arrested again if he continued to work there without a permit, indicates the increasing difficulties black workers experience in the Western Cape at present. East London and King William's Town are other centres which draw a substantial number of men from Burnshill. Not unconnected with these shifts in the direction taken by migrants is the relative pace of growth in the areas mentioned. Port Elizabeth and King William's Town have grown proportionately faster than Cape Town and are accessible to Burnshill so that men can get home in a day or less in an emergency. Compared with King William' Town Cape Town has

Table 11
Classification of married male absentees
by location of their wives and children

	Freehold Quitrent	S.A.Trust & landless families	Total
(i) Married men with wives and children left at home	10 (43,5%)	22 (91,7%)	32 (68%)
(ii) Married men with wives and children with them in town	11 (47,8%)	2 (8,3%)	13 (28%)
(iii) Married men with wives in town, children in the country	2 (8,7%)	- -	2 (4%)
	<u>23 (100%)</u>	<u>24 (100%)</u>	<u>47 (100%)</u>

higher wages but higher living costs and risks of arrest. It is also further from home. The migrant makes his judgements according to his needs, his personality (some enjoy risk taking or fear goal less than others), his experience and his opportunities.

The majority of the married men (particularly among the recent immigrants to Burnshill) leave their wives and children behind when they go out to work. As shown in the table above, this accounts for 68% of the cases in our sample. The rest reside in town with some or all the members of their families. Children left at home while their parents are away at work are normally left under the care of relatives, especially elderly widows. Some of these couples do not emigrate permanently, they establish themselves in the country while working in town and eventually return. Many of the families in this category contemplate their return to the country over many years and even start building projects at home without knowing exactly when they will eventually settle. In Burnshill there are many buildings which have been abandoned at the initial stages and some residential sites are re-allocated because their owners have left the village completely (ukufuduka).

In some instances the wife who resides with her husband in town may return earlier to establish the homestead for the family and, in other instances, the wife may continue working in town when the husband is already living in the country. The latter cases refer particularly to husbands who are forced to stop working on account of illness. The children who are brought up in town may continue living in town after their parents have returned to the country. This situation contributes to the family scatter which is discussed in chapter 5 below.

Caleb (aged 68) is a retired old resident of Burnshill who worked in Johannesburg from 1927. He married in Johannesburg in 1937 and settled there with his wife and children. Although he stayed with his family in town, his intention was to return home to take up the Quitrent site and field he had inherited. While still

working in Johannesburg, he established his homestead at home. In 1958 he could not continue in employment on account of ill-health and he returned to reside permanently in Burnshill. His wife continued working in Johannesburg until 1977 when she joined her husband at home. All their children live in Johannesburg and none have visited Burnshill.

The form of migration under consideration here is distinct from the seasonal migration which is common, for instance, in many parts of West Africa where the migrants leave for work abroad when agriculture does not require their presence. (Du Toit 1975: 51) The system as it applies to Burnshill involves men and women of all ages in prolonged urban residence and the time the migrants spend at home is relatively short. Workers employed in far away places like Johannesburg and Cape Town normally visit their homes during their annual leave (for about three to four weeks). Those working nearer home in places like King William's Town and East London are often at home during Christmas (for about three weeks) as well as during the long weekends. Many of the important social occasions like family rituals take place during these times.

Workers employed on the mines, on the other hand, are not always at home during Christmas: they arrive at any time during the year and usually spend a month with their relatives. Some of them, however, are not able to renew their contracts immediately and remain at home for several months. The time they normally spend away from home ranges between nine months and a year. At the same time, there are some mine workers who absent themselves from home for several years. In one case a young mine employee continually extended his labour contract and eventually returned home at the end of his third year of employment.

The question of home visits is closely connected with remittances. People who visit their homes regularly tend to support them as well. Similarly, those who absent themselves from home for several years tend to send little or nothing home. A large number of the households receive these remittances and, apart from old age pensions and disability grants,

depend on them to a large extent. The money is used mostly for the purchase of food and other daily requirements like clothing. The remittances are also used for the education of children, the building of houses, medical attention, etc. Generally, the people are unable to spend much on farming. Not all remittances are in cash form: some comprise clothing, furniture, building materials, groceries and radios.

The amounts remitted vary widely between individual migrants. These differences depend on variables like the wage level of the individual migrant, his position in the household and the point reached by his family in its domestic development. In some cases, for instance, the young unmarried men, migrants send no money home while they are away. Some do, however, when relatives have written requesting financial assistance. Over a period of three years David (aged 30, unmarried) responded to four requests from his mother at home. In 1974 he did not send any money home. In 1975 he sent R10,00 for the payment of a school levy at home and R16,00 for the purchase of a grain tank. In 1976 he sent R10,00 for the purchase of clothing and R20,00 for medical needs for his mother. He arrived home in December 1976 and claimed to have R400,00 deferred pay at the local labour bureau.

Married men working on the mines normally send money home after a period of two months. However, there are few wives who can rely on the receipt of regular and fixed remittances. Madlomo (aged 20) married in March 1977. Her husband left her with his widowed mother and took a contract to the mines. He sent her R30,00 in April, R20,00 in June and in August. The next remittance of R22,00 arrived just before Christmas and her husband came back home in January. The Chamber of Mines operates a number of voluntary stop-order savings schemes whereby workers can request the recruiting organization for the mines (Teba) to make deductions from their monthly earnings and the depositor's money can be

remitted home during or on completion of a contract.¹ Although most of the mine workers make such savings, (1979 Report of the Chamber of Mines) they do not normally send the money home on a monthly basis and choose instead to return home with the 'lumpsum' (intsebenzo) at the end of their contracts. Apparently this pattern is associated with the fact that the mine workers (and their relatives at home) regard it as important for one to arrive at home with a 'respectable' amount of money. This impinges on one's prestige as is indicated by the interest the local community takes when any migrant returns home - many people getting to know the exact amount the man is bringing back. Also, the migrant cannot exercise much control on the money he sends home, for although he usually indicates the manner in which remittances must be spent, the money is used sometimes for other purposes which the people at home may consider more urgent. On the other hand, he can control the usage of the money he brings with him from work.

The amounts remitted by married men who work in the factories and other business enterprises in town also vary and are not always regular. In 1978 Mamthembu (aged 52) said she normally received between R70,00 and R100,00 per month from her husband who was employed as an ambulance driver in Port Elizabeth where he earned R206,00 per month. She was satisfied with her husband's support. Regina (aged 42), on the other hand, felt that her husband was sending home very little money for the maintenance of herself and their three children. Her husband, who worked for the S.A.R. in Port Elizabeth at the time, usually sent her between R20,00 and R30,00 per month but nothing during certain months. She did not know how much her

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1. Whenever the employee wants to send money home he informs Teba about the amount he wants to remit and the name of the person to whom the money is to be paid. The employee is given a voucher which he sends home and the home Teba office is given the relevant details by the savings office on the mines. The money is then collected from Teba by the payee stipulated on the voucher.

husband was earning. With the material at hand we are unable to specify the proportion of the migrants' earnings which reach the rural homes. However, it seems migrants spend a large proportion of their earnings in town and it could only be about 10 to 20 per cent of their earnings which are sent or brought home.

Burnshill is not unique in this regard: through labour migration the rural areas give to the cities and towns much more than they get from them. In 1940 Godfrey and Monica Wilson (1945: 18) noted that in Broken Hill a total of 6 460 men received annual earnings amounting to R135 660,00 and of this only 17,7% (R24 066,00) was sent or brought back by the workers - the rest was spent in the urban areas. Similarly, Alverson (1978: 57) reports that in 1973 in a village in Botswana 4 636 mine workers sent home a total amount of R167 960,00 while they were away at work, i.e. an average of R36,22 per worker for a period of absence ranging between nine months and a year. Although in this case we do not know the total earnings of the workers nor the amounts they brought back home, the evidence indicates that mine workers commonly send only a small proportion of their earnings home.¹ At the same time, larger amounts (if only a small proportion of the total earnings of the employees) are collected from Teba by the migrants when they return home. Some of the mine workers told us that they brought back from work over R200,00 and others more than R400,00.

Not all the money brought home by the migrants benefits their homes. On their arrival some of the men (especially the younger ones) reserve relatively large amounts of money for their own use, particularly for purchasing liquor. The money is spent by the men entertaining themselves in the 'shebeens' locally, and some are unable to do much work at their homes as a result. This development is causing much

1. A mine recruiting officer in Grahamstown estimated that this amount constituted only about half a month's wage for many of the workers who were employed by the mines in 1973.

concern among the older people. Residents also complain that while workers are at home they "do not care to go to the inkundla and are not interested in matters discussed by the inkundla." Such complaints indicate that the migrant's view of the world and his place in it diverges from that of the people at home. This aspect will be discussed later when we consider the processes of 'estrangement' and 'disengagement' in chapter 5.

Apart from the short term migrants described above, the male workers from Burnshill include long term absentees who visit their homes after several years as well as those who have relinquished their links with the country altogether. Of the men in the genealogies 30% had been away from their homes for five years or more. Many men left home long ago and lived in town with their families until they died. After their death, their widows and children did not return to Burnshill. In the majority of cases it is the better educated people who leave the village to settle permanently in the towns. The people who emigrate do so for various reasons. Very few people can make a living in the country under present conditions. Also, the difficulties of oscillating between the towns and the country force many men to abandon the country completely and to set up their homes in the towns. Apart from this, it seems the permanent emigrants include most of the people who qualify for 'permanent residence' by long employment in one particular town. This enables them to qualify for family accommodation for their families in the new Ciskei towns.

Although the ownership of land in the country enables a large number of people to return home eventually, it is not entirely decisive. Some of the people who inherit land in the village (especially under Quitrent tenure) sell their land and settle completely in town. Kondlo, for instance, inherited Quitrent land which he never used as he lived with his family in Port Elizabeth. His residential site in Burnshill remained vacant for many years and in 1973 he sold it to another man who also worked in Port Elizabeth. He was said to have lost all interest in the village.

The sample of male absentees included 12 (11,8%) absconders (amatshipha). Eight of them were men who left in youth, three were married men who deserted their wives and one was an unmarried 37 year old man when he left home. When people go out to work they normally send money and visit their homes from time to time. When they abscond, they neither communicate nor send any remittances home. In some instances all trace of them is lost and in others the relatives at home get to know the whereabouts of the amatshipha only through other people who work in town. People can tshipha anywhere, in East London (relatively near home) or in Johannesburg (farther away). Some of them do return eventually, especially on account of ill-health. On arrival they usually have few personal possessions and tend to depend on their relatives (and sometimes disability grants) for maintenance. The following are some of the cases of ukutshipha.

Case 1

Simon, who has been away from home for well over ten years, deserted in his youth. His parents are old residents of Burnshill. He left school during the early 1960s while he was in Std 4 and worked two labour contracts on the mines. Each time he returned home he did not bring back any money. After spending some time at home, he disappeared and nothing was ever heard of him and it is not known whether he is still alive.

Case 2

Maxwell deserted his home after marrying. He met and married his wife in East London and after the birth of their first child (a son), he brought his wife home to live with his parents. After his departure for East London, his wife bore their second child. Maxwell did not communicate with his home for several years and did not answer letters written to him. His wife decided to go to East London to look for him but she never returned. Maxwell's children remained under

the care of his parents but when they died, the children were transferred to the homestead of his brother and later cared for by his sister at another homestead.

A few years ago Maxwell's eldest son (aged 25) was able to trace his father in East London where he apparently stayed with another woman. But he never found any information about his mother. Maxwell's eldest son returned from the mines in 1977 with the intention of being circumcised and it was then necessary for him to visit his father in East London to inform him about the occasion. Maxwell, however, did not show any concern about the matter and the circumcision was performed in his absence.

Since our investigation was done solely at the rural end of the migration cycle, we are unable to explain why amatshipha go so far as to live anonymously in town and relinquish all family ties. It may be noted, however, that this practice occurs in a situation of rapid social change in which men have to be away from their homes for lengthy periods while at the same time women are becoming more and more independent. If a man neglects his wife for a long time, he can be almost sure that she will not wait for him. Our informants, including people with a long experience of working in the towns where they could observe this practice of absconding directly, tended to see ukutshipha in terms of ubumnandi bedolophu (attractiveness of urban living). A middle aged man who has been working in Port Elizabeth for the greater part of his working life tried to explain why people abscond. "It is not easy to explain that one. Perhaps people forget their homes when they get used to city pleasures. Two of my equals left their homes while they were young and have not returned yet. There are others I have seen in Port Elizabeth who no longer care for their homes . . . Amatshipha are not driven away by hardship here at home. Instead there is more suffering in the towns than here. In the country if you have R20,00 you buy food that can last you a long time but there that amount is not sufficient even for a week. Those who abscond like the pleasures they find in town."

An elderly man who worked in Cape Town for many years gave a similar response: "You become itshipha once you get to know town life too well and start attending social occasions and dances. You become used to city life and its pleasures and you are lost to your relatives at home."

(d) Migration of women

Though men continue to be regarded as the principal breadwinners, women in Burnshill have been going out to work in the towns for many decades. This practice was already fairly common even in the 1920s among the old residents, and there is a likelihood that some of the women became involved in wage employment in the towns before the beginning of this century. During our fieldwork 45 per cent of the women above the age of 16 were outside the district, most of them working in town. This represented a 6 per cent increase in female migration since the 1950s. (Table 9) The extent to which Burnshill is different from other relatively traditional areas where the migration of women is uncommon is illustrated by the fact that in 1976/77 there were only four female migrants at the Folokwe ward¹ in Willowvale in the Transkei.

Among the immigrants in Burnshill this is a fairly recent development: a large proportion of the elderly women in this section of the community have never been employed in town. But at present, apart from the women who marry in the village at a relatively early age, virtually all the young women go out to work. Most of them migrate at 18 or 19 years of age, slightly later than in the case of boys. One of the reasons for this is that girls normally spend more years at school. As in the case of men, many women are forced to continue working in town up to old age. There are some instances, however, where they return home earlier to care for the homesteads and the children of their absent relatives,

1. The ward at the time was inhabited by 410 people living in 79 homesteads. (McAllister 1978: 5)

especially when the parents become too old or die. Like the men, women work in the large urban centres (Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and Johannesburg) as well as the smaller labour centres nearer home. Apart from the relatively small number of women whose education equips them for specific jobs, most of them find employment in the domestic service.

Generally, young women with no children go out to work for their personal needs and, in some instances, to gain the experience of working in town. The women who have children, on the other hand, go out primarily to earn money for the maintenance of their children. The sample of 98 women who were in town at the time of our investigation included many who had left their children in the care of relatives at home. These are the women who are more reliable than men about remittances. Mamcira lives with seven children of her two unmarried daughters who work in East London. Her comment about her daughters was that "They support me in everything. I do not struggle at all with their children. They support the home as well. Even if the children need money for the school, they send it immediately. During the months that I receive my old age pension each daughter usually sends me R10,00 and on the following month when no pension is paid out each one sends me R20,00." Although these amounts are not very large for Mamcira to maintain the seven children, she is apparently satisfied with the support because the money is received more or less on a regular basis and she is thus able to plan her budget.

Another fairly large category of women who go to the towns are married women. This accounts for 31 (31,6%) cases in the sample. Most of the women who marry in the urban areas continue living in town after marrying. Some start their married lives in the country and migrate later in order to assist their husbands meet the needs of their families (particularly the need to educate children) or simply to live with their husbands. In other instances the migration of married women is caused by domestic tensions which include mostly dissatisfaction with their husbands' support and quarrels with their husbands' relatives. Some simply decide

to join their husbands and disregard their husbands' views about the matter. Others, however, solicit the approval of their husbands before leaving.

Widowhood and desertion by husbands are two common crises which force women to seek urban employment. Our sample included 16 separated women and six widows who were working in town. In the majority of cases the separated women and young widows return to their homes of origin and leave their children with their mothers or sisters when they go out to work. Elderly widows, on the other hand, look after the homesteads of their deceased husbands and rear the children of absent relatives. Also, many of them are able to qualify for old age pensions which provide them with some income.

We have already indicated that many of the women who work in town leave their children in the care of their relatives. In this respect a great deal of co-operation occurs between women, especially between mothers and daughters and also between sisters. Generally, mothers accept the responsibility of caring for their daughter's children and their daughters who, in turn, are expected to contribute part of their earnings for the maintenance of their children and their homes. Similarly, where sisters live together in one homestead it is usual for one of them (often the eldest) to remain at home caring for the household and the dependants of the other working women. In many instances the relatives receive fairly regular financial remittances from the working women and this constitutes an important source of income in many families. Also, there are comparatively few women who abscond. In the sample of 98 women in town only four (4,1%) were amatshipa. It is also rare for women who have left their children behind to abscond. The close relatives of Maxwell (case 2 above), whose wife left behind two young children and never came back from East London, regarded her behaviour in this respect extremely abnormal.

Apart from the material contributions that women make through their wages, labour migration enables women to maintain themselves without the help of men. For instance, the village includes a large number of unmarried women who have established their own homesteads. This is made possible by the fact that

women can acquire land in their own right.¹ While working in town, they provide money to build the houses to which they retire when they no longer work. Also, the greater measure of economic independence enjoyed by women has an important influence on the relations between the sexes. This aspect will be discussed in the next two chapters.

(e) Conceptualising choices

As illustrated in the case of Mvalo and Mpinga above, the range of options in the choice of jobs is wider among people with education and training than among those who leave the village without any saleable skill. Also, these cases indicate the varying extents to which the older and the younger migrants have been affected by influx control. For the greater part of his working career Mvalo (who is 41 years older than Mpinga) exercised a relatively wide choice with regard to where he worked and the jobs he took while, among other things, the tightening of influx control is apparent in Mpinga's job history. Earlier Mpinga alternated between the mines and other contract jobs in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth and, apart from other difficulties he experienced, the likelihood that he could be arrested in the towns for working without a permit made him evaluate the mines more positively. Although there are many people who take the risk of working 'illegally' in the towns,

1. They easily acquire building sites under the S.A. Trust tenure and have gained access to the land taken up by the 'Squatters'. In the past few decades there are a few women who purchased Quitrent land and legally they are entitled to do so. (Mills & Wilson, M. 1952: 148) Although the regulations which were promulgated in 1928 and 1931 prevent them from inheriting Quitrent land, (ibid.: 72) one unmarried woman took her case to court and managed to inherit the building site and field (Quitrent) which belonged to her father. Also our sample includes an unmarried woman who inherited a portion of her father's Freehold allotment.

Mpinga's response to this situation illustrates the important influence of legal restrictions in the decisions the migrants make.

At the same time, the data confirms Garbett's contention that a better understanding of the migratory process can be gained only if we consider the decisions made by the migrants themselves. Some of the important choice factors related to this situation are economic considerations (particularly shortage of money) which make it impossible for many people to remain at home without working. Apart from the younger migrants whose decision to migrate is usually affected by the peer groups, it is mainly economic considerations that determine whether one stays at home for a longer time or goes to work. Although conditions of work are taken into account and some of the workers decide to leave jobs associated with bad working conditions even if they do not have an obvious alternative, the various jobs are evaluated by many workers mainly in terms of the wages they offer. Further, family relationships affect the choices people make. We saw, for instance, in the case of female migration that factors like the death of a husband or the dissolution of a marriage can play an important role in this situation.

CHAPTER 4

MARRIAGE

(a) The changing social situation and marriage

In this chapter we indicate the lines along which marriage is evolving today. Among the Xhosa-speaking peoples (as among many other Africans) marriage in the past was embedded in the kinship structure and authority within the family was vested in men and particularly in the elders. This traditional social structure in which marriage was conceived as an alliance between two kinship groups, and family relations stressed the subordination of children to their parents has been modified in many African communities. The transformation of these social relationships stems mainly from the increase in the scale of society, a process which has produced the most fundamental changes that have taken place in African societies during the past century. (Wilson, G. & M. 1945: 24-41)

The traditional small scale societies in Africa were not wholly homogeneous and the degree to which they have been exposed to new influences varies from area to area. As we have already noted, in Burnshill many drastic social changes occurred as early as the first half of the last century and the events which took place in the community thereafter did not only change the people from within (Christianity and education) but also forced the society to extend its contacts with the outside world, thereby increasing its scale. By the early 1950s many changes had already taken place in marriage and family life of the people living in the Keiskammahoek district. The changes which have a direct bearing on our subject are related, firstly, to the shift of economic power from the senior to the working generation and, secondly, to the change of the status of women vis-a-vis men. These seem to be the most important themes which emerge from the material presented here.

Attention has been drawn by Monica Wilson (1977) to similar developments concerning change in the relationship of generations and of men and women among the Nyakyusa-Ngonde. Between the

years 1875 and 1971 the society evolved from one that was dominated by men and elders to one in which a relatively egalitarian relationship was established between the generations as well as between the sexes. In this case the changes in social relationships were due mainly to the introduction of new opportunities to acquire wage employment, education and land rights. As a result, the community became more diversified and contradictions became apparent, for example, ". . . the contradiction between the men's assumption of a legal and ritual inequality between men and women and the questioning of this by some women; contradictions between close co-operation in the age-village and individual economic advancement; contradiction between polygyny and monopoly of wealth by older men, and the desire of young men to marry." (ibid. 27) Although there are significant distinctions that can be made between Burnshill and the Nyakyusa-Ngonde society (e.g. with regard to the pace of change), the general direction of change from the subservience of women and children towards greater equality with husbands and parents is noticeable in both cases. Also, the diversity and some of the contradictions that characterise the social relations of the Nyakyusa-Ngonde will be noted in the case of Burnshill as well.

(b) Premarital pregnancies and marriage

Traditionally, although sexual activity commonly started at an early age, there was strict enforcement of the rule that girls must not be made pregnant. Today the extent to which young people indulge in sexual relations which often result in pregnancy is one symptom of the changing social situation in which the authority of parents and many of the traditional restraints have weakened. It was noted in the Keiskammahoek Rural Survey that "of the 476 births to 110 mothers reveals that nearly half the mothers have borne one or more illegitimate children and one quarter of all births are illegitimate." (Wilson, M. 1952: 99) Our data does not deviate much from these earlier findings; a sample of 122 mothers revealed 55 (45%) cases of mothers who had borne children out of wedlock and of the 402 births to all the mothers in the sample 26,9% were borne extra-maritally.

Commenting on the premarital pregnancies which are now very common some of the older informants felt that in the past mothers secured a measure of control on their daughters whom they examined regularly for virginity. Apart from the fact that this custom has now fallen into disuse, the social life of the village gives young people many opportunities for sexual relations and in the towns they are generally free from parental supervision. Also, although the churches still condemn premarital sexual relations, they are now forced to be more accommodating and find it necessary to make less demands on their members generally. For instance, the requirement that a girl who bears a premarital child be suspended from church activities for some time is no longer observed and would not be considered very serious anyway. There are also several churches which would welcome newcomers without question.

Parents complain about this problem frequently but do not see any easy solution for it. "Some of these children want to get pregnant. They want the children of their boyfriends and are not worried when they become pregnant. The cases where this happens accidentally are different. The number of young unmarried mothers is increasing, not decreasing. This is a problem for us. We cannot discuss these things with our children. Maybe you could ask your sister or relative to do so, but if you talk about these things to your child you will give the impression that you approve of these love affairs." (Middle aged mother) "My daughter passed Form 3 and became pregnant. That frustrated me a great deal and I could not spend any more money on her education." (Elderly father)

Some of the mothers encourage their daughters to attend the family planning clinic which has been introduced in the village. However, in many instances this precaution is taken after the girl has borne one child at least. Although during our stay in the village there was a great deal of talk as to whether young girls should use contraceptives provided by the clinic, it would appear that in the long run this service will become acceptable generally and this will undoubtedly have an effect on the incidence of premarital births. Although this service may become more acceptable in the long run, it is not

easy to predict what its effect will be in future since some of the girls want to bear their lovers' children.

In the cases where a girl becomes pregnant while living at home, the parents usually make attempts to find out the man responsible for their daughter's condition and demand damages (intlawulo) from him. The matter is discussed first by the representatives of the two families and, if they fail to resolve the issue, it is taken to the inkundla. While in the past the girl's family was entitled to five head of cattle as damages for the first pregnancy of their daughter, at present these claims are in the vicinity of R100,00.¹ Many men, however, manage to evade these payments entirely and the parents who receive anything at all consider themselves lucky; many men leave the village before their cases are considered either by the family representatives or the inkundla and others deny responsibility. Under such circumstances the cases tend to drag on until the girl's relatives decide to drop them. Also, to enforce the payment of these demands for a girl who becomes pregnant while working in town is apparently so difficult that we did not encounter a single case in which such an attempt was made.

While at present in Burnshill there is no longer any publicly expressed disapproval of premarital pregnancies on the part of the community, it is worth noting that in other areas seduction of girls still elicits a great deal of public reaction. Among the Nyuswa of Botha's Hill in Natal, for instance, the mother of the girl who is seduced "informs the married women of the neighbourhood and the story spreads to the unmarried girls also. The married women and the unmarried virgin girls of the neighbourhood take the girl personally to the seducer's home where they lay a public charge against him. He or his family must forthwith produce a cleansing goat (white) for the girls and pay or promise a ngquthu beast for the girl's mother. If he, being the acknowledged lover of the girl, denies liability

1. This amount is the equivalent of two head of cattle in modern terms.

he may be assaulted by the women." (Mbatha 1960: 218-219) Also, in his analysis of Red Xhosa youth organization, Mayer (1970: 176) furnishes data that emphasize these contrasts. "Prevention of pregnancy is a matter on which the youth organization adds its own heavy sanctions to those to be expected from adults. An impregnated girl can never become a wife; she must content herself with becoming an inkazana, a woman available for love affairs with mature (especially married) men. Inkazana status carries certain disabilities in the adult world but it means instant complete exclusion from the pleasures of the youth organization." Although the comparative data in the case of the Red Xhosa youth and the Nyuswa concerns observations made about two decades ago,¹ the Keiskammahoek Rural Survey suggests that Burnshill was different from these relatively 'traditional' communities even in the late forties. In Burnshill some of the girls subsequently marry the fathers of their illegitimate children. At the same time, if the man does not marry the woman, her chances of marriage with another man are not necessarily prejudiced by her premarital pregnancy - this occurs so often today that no special stigma attaches to it.

(c) Age at marriage

It was noted in the Keiskammahoek Rural Survey that the average age at which men married for the first time has increased gradually since the past century: advancing from 23,3 years in the 1890s to 28,6 years in the 1930s and reaching 30,1 years in the 1940s. The men married rather later in life because the tendency for them to depend more on their own earnings for the lobola was already noticeable even in the early 1950s. The survey further noted that the delayed ability of young men to afford lobola as well as female migration contributed to the rise in the marriage age of women. (Wilson, M. 1952: 89)

1. Professor Mayer did his fieldwork for the article cited here in the early sixties and the nine months Mbatha spent among the Nyuswa were prior to the completion of his thesis in 1960.

In our investigation comparative data based on 23 men and 35 women whose marriages date from 1950 to 1977 gave an average marrying age of 29,8 years for men and 25,0 years for women. From this slender evidence it would appear that no change has taken place and the tendency towards a later marriage age is still noticeable even at present. While the problem of acquiring enough money for lobola is still relevant to the present situation, there are other factors involved here. Nowadays marrying means taking on the sole responsibility of supporting a wife and family since parents can give little assistance to their children. Also, the few people who continue at school and eventually take up professional training such as teaching and nursing normally complete their courses at a relatively late age.¹

(d) Establishing a marriage

There are a number of ways in which a man can establish his position as a woman's legal husband and the legal father of her children. Among the immigrants the most common form of marriage is ukuthwala, i.e. elopement and in a few cases abduction. The table below, which is based on marriages dating from 1950 to 1977, illustrates the situation.

Marriages by ukuthwala have increased during the past few decades. They increased from 14,6% of all marriages in the 1920s to 18,3% in the 1930s and reached 30,3% in the 1940s.

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1. In the fifties and early sixties in colleges like Lovedale and Healdtown some students completed teacher training or matriculation in their mid-twenties and others slightly later. That some could only complete their training at a later age is illustrated by the case of one of the men in the sample cited above who passed his teacher training course in 1959 at the Healdtown Training School at the age of 29.

Table 12
Forms of marriage

Forms of marriage	Freehold/	S.A.Trust/'Squatters'	Totals
	Quitrent	Tenants	
<u>Ukuthwala</u>	8	53	61
Civil marriages	17	5	22
Church marriages	11	10	21
'Living together'	1	4	4
	37	72	109

They now constitute 55,9%. Ukuthwala, which literally means to carry, is an old Cape Nguni custom. While in the past it was an exceptional procedure in initiating a marriage, at present its widespread occurrence and the social context in which it takes place have made it a normal practice. At the same time, it is somewhat a second class marriage since in most cases the couple initiates the marriage before cattle are paid and without negotiations between the two families. The earlier form of marriage among the people who now marry by ukuthwala was the customary marriage (umdudo) which was celebrated by means of festivities lasting for several weeks. There were some immigrants in our sample who had married in the 1920s and the early 1930s by these customary rites which have now been abandoned.

The majority of the ukuthwala marriages involve people who are already in love. Sometimes the man informs his relatives about his intention of marrying beforehand and in other cases the couple elopes without any previous consultation with anyone. The man fetches the woman from her home at night and reports her presence to his parents on the following day. On this day boys are sent to the woman's home to report the matter. In the few cases of abduction, in which a girl is 'taken' without her consent, force is seldom used. Arrangements are usually made by the man with the girl's relatives for her to be sent to a specified place on the day the ukuthwala is to take place. On this day the man proceeds to the arranged place accompanied by a few other men and they persuade her to accompany them to the man's home. On her arrival at the man's home she is introduced to the men of the umzi who also tell her

that "you are now a wife in this homestead." If a girl is abducted by a man with whom she is in love, she usually agrees to marry him. But she can run away if the man is unknown to her especially if she finds him disagreeable. For instance, Nongazi (aged about 30) was abducted by a man whom she did not know previously. She stayed at the man's home (in a nearby village) for only three weeks and returned home. "I could not be married to him. He was too old for me." There is no doubt that today a girl must give her consent to marriage and no one can force her into it.

After the elopement or abduction, the woman stays indoors until new clothing is made for her. Perhaps the key symbolic action in this type of marriage is the dressing (ukunxityiswa) of the woman by her mother-in-law because it is only after putting on her new attire that she starts her married life. It is the man's responsibility to provide the money for the purchase of her clothing which includes a long 'German print' dress, a black doek (iqhiya) and a scarf (uxakatho). There are usually no rituals which follow such marriages although previously the drinking of milk ritual (ukudlisa amasi) was commonly observed; today it is rarely performed.

It is evident from all this that ukuthwala as it occurs today is an informal form of marriage which is rarely preceded by the recognised negotiations between the two families or by the payment of lobola. This is one of the aspects which distinguishes it from the customary marriages in which a marriage was established only after several months of negotiations between the two families. Today these formalities take place after the marriage in virtually all cases and sometimes they are omitted entirely. The diminishing importance of the collective aspect of marriage (the linking of two families through marriage) is evident here. Further, the slackening hold of tradition is seen in the curtailment of ceremonies and rituals which were previously associated with marriage. Promoting these trends is the migrancy cycle itself which keeps men away from home for all but a few weeks of each year - hence promoting marriages without traditional formalities. Ukuthwala is thus essentially marriage instigated by the couple themselves, rather than sanctioned by their parents and families. Its incidence reflects the increasing autonomy of the younger generation and a rejection of parental authority over the affairs of their children.

That the majority of the immigrants marry at home and many of the old residents marry in town is another indication of the different modes of adaptation of the two sections of this community to the demands of labour migration.

Table 13
Place of marriage

<u>Where married</u>	<u>Freehold/ Quitrent</u>	<u>S.A.Trust/'Squatters' Tenants</u>	<u>Totals</u>
At home	9(24,3%)	57(79,2%)	66
In town	28(75,7%)	15(20,8%)	43
Totals	37(100,0%)	72(100,0%)	109

As we have already noted, the immigrants are, on the whole, short term migrants who feel a strong attachment to home and the security which it holds for them. Also, many of them tend to select for marriage not only women who are born and bred in the country but women who have family connections in Burnshill or in other neighbouring villages; they seldom marry women they meet in town. On this point one middle-aged man (immigrant) noted: "It is better to marry a local woman. You can stay with a woman there (in town) but you expect her to leave you at any time. If a town woman leaves you, she leaves you for good, she never comes back." Further, in the homes which tend to stress the traditional moral standards heavy demands are sometimes made on the woman who comes from the towns to settle down in marriage in the country. While the woman from Burnshill or other villages nearby would have a wide circle of relatives and friends who can give her assistance when she needs it, the woman with an urban background (umntwana wasedolophini) faces many problems when she lives in the country after marriage.

In the past many of the old residents also married at home. Information concerning the older generation of this section of the community shows that previously many of them returned home to perform a colourful church ceremony (umtshato) which used to last several days. Other people who could not afford these weddings were married privately by the local ministers

of religion. At present, however, these elaborate church marriages are extremely rare because, for one thing, they are beyond the means of most people. In 1977, for instance, only two church weddings were celebrated in Burnshill. Instead, the majority of the old residents marry in town, mostly by civil rites. This is a further indication of the different modes of adaptation of the two sections of this community to the demands of labour migration. As we have already noted, many of the old residents are long term migrants who return home less frequently than the immigrants and tend to become committed to urban residence. These are some of the factors which play an important role in the decisions people make when they marry.

Generally, the men and women who work in town establish their marriages independently of their relatives in the country. Further, the formal approaches to the girl's family often take place after the marriage, sometimes several years later. The negotiations can never be made directly by the man himself, but must be undertaken on his behalf by other people, preferably his relatives. In the cases where the girl's family lives in the same town the man may substitute his kinsmen at home with those he can find in town, thereby overcoming the difficulty of consulting parents who live far away. Where the wife's home is a long way from town, these negotiations are sometimes delayed for a number of years. Getting married today is, therefore, a process that may extend over many years although the couple may live together as soon as they have accepted one another. Also, the negotiations are omitted in some cases, which indicates the extent to which many of the steps of the 'traditional' marriage procedure have been curtailed. This situation causes great concern for the relatives at home because the 'seeking' and the giving of lobola ensure that not merely the parents but also the other relatives on both sides take an interest in a marriage. Another cause for this concern is that if a man marries and lives with his wife in town and does not introduce her to his relatives at home, this is seen as a step towards abandoning his country home completely. Thus we can see here the conflicting interests between the generations. This is a respectable way to evade parental interference in the marriage

arrangements. Ukuthwala is not respectable in much the same way as marriage in town is anonymous and nobody at home knows what has been done in town.

For some people marrying privately in town is an unwelcome alternative to the marriage which they feel should be celebrated at home. For this reason they return home even after many years of married life and perform the ukuhlaziya (to renew) ceremony which can range from a colourful wedding to a small gathering intended only for close relatives and friends. It is during this ceremony that the parents who receive lobola are able to compensate the husband's family by providing their daughter with marriage goods which, ideally, should approximate the amount of lobola the man has been able to afford. That the value of marriage goods tend to reflect the value of the lobola given reflects some of the changes that have taken place in the function of this institution. Previously, when lobola was normally in the form of cattle marriage goods consisted mostly of homemade household goods (e.g. grass sleeping mats and baskets), kitchen utensils and a few items of clothing. The bride's family retained the cattle which secured the position of the wife in her umzi. At present it is generally accepted that parents should purchase a wide variety of goods that can serve as an asset to the daughter in her marriage. Some of the items bought for the bride include factory-made furniture (usually a bedroom suite and a kist with linen) and a wide range of manufactured kitchen utensils. Although the traditional gifts of homemade articles are never omitted, interest during the final session of the ceremonies, umyalo, almost invariably centres on the purchased goods the bride brings to her new umzi.

In the case of girls whose mothers are members of the amabhaso club mentioned earlier, women organise a special occasion in which the club members present gifts to the girl's mother who receives them on behalf of her daughter. These gifts, which include both money and household items, are a part of the marriage goods which the wife takes to her husband's home. Even if the daughter is in town, parents organise the amabhaso and, in cases where the couple does not return to celebrate

their marriage, the occasion publicises the marriage. Today, however, the occasions for amabhaso are fewer than in the past few decades.

Table 14
Analysis of lobola

<u>Marriages</u>	Freehold/ Quitrent	S.A.Trust/'Squatters' Tenants	Totals
	With <u>lobola</u>	14	
Without <u>lobola</u>	5	10	15(25,4%)

Some of the changes which are taking place in marriage concern lobola. Although it is the giving of lobola which establishes the validity of a marriage, in a significant number of marriages lobola is not given. In the table above, which is based on marriages dating from 1950 to 1977, 25,4% of the marriages are without lobola. The number of such marriages is increasing as is indicated by the fact that the Keiskammahoek Rural Survey revealed only 0,65% of marriages without lobola.¹ This seems to be one of the major differences between 1950 and 1977. It appears to be related to the weakening of parental authority and the difficulty of applying the traditional sanctions like ukuteleka, which enabled parents to remove their daughter from her husband's home and keep her until the issue concerning the lobola was resolved. At present there is little the parents can do if a man fails to fulfil his traditional obligations. In some instances this causes quarrels between spouses mainly because women believe that they are more likely to be deserted if no payment is made by the husband. One such case involved a young man who married by ukuthwala in 1974 without giving lobola to the wife's family. The man left for the mines and on his next visit home he wanted to use part of his earnings

1. Out of 2 000 marriages included in the marriage survey done in 1950 fieldworkers encountered six such cases at Gxulu and Burnshill and a further seven at Chatha and Mthwaku. (Wilson, M. 1952: 81, 93-94)

to purchase fencing material for his father's homestead. His wife had other plans for the money - she felt the fencing of the homestead was not an urgent matter and that the money could be used for her lobola instead. This caused friction between the husband and the wife and the husband did not send any lobola to the wife's relatives.

Generally, women are in favour of lobola because they feel it enhances the status of their marriages and that to be willing to earn it is a proof of a man's affection. At the same time the custom operates in a different context. The man himself must earn his own lobola and can hardly hope for assistance from his family as was the case in the past. Under present economic conditions he cannot readily fulfil this obligation without making savings over a lengthy period during which he has to make many sacrifices. Besides, some of the men do not give lobola because they cannot be certain that their wives will not desert their homes while they are away at work. Some of the newly married wives do return to their homes after their husbands have left for work and others elope with other men. These are some of the factors that have changed the attitudes of the younger generation regarding lobola.

Burnshill differs from some other Xhosa communities in which traditional sanctions are still relatively more effective. For instance, a man who marries among the Nyuswa is supported by members of his family who co-operate in raising his lobola. (Mbatha 1960: 211) Further, marriage in this community forms part of the wider kinship structure to a greater extent than in Burnshill. "The son's wife is acquired not only for the immediate family but for the lineage group as a whole." (ibid.: 210) "In choosing each other the boy and the girl consider the feelings of their respective family groups During the negotiations the two families come into a closer association as family groups." (ibid.: 214) Although Mbatha's observations seem to stress what people regard as the ideal situation, changes which took place among the Nyuswa 20 years ago were apparently less radical than those occurring in Burnshill.

Yet in Burnshill, as we have seen, the part played by kinsmen in the establishment of the marriages of the young

people is limited both among those who marry at home and those who marry while working in the towns. This development manifests a change in relations between generations - a rejection of parental or elder authority wholly consistent with the shift in economic power from the older property controllers to the younger wage earners. Traditional obligations regarding one's marriage are becoming more and more difficult to fulfil under conditions which necessitate prolonged absence from home as well as emigration. These circumstances give rise to a direct conflict between the traditional values and the never-ending pursuit of individual self-improvement.

(e) Stability of marriage

Labour migration, which necessitates prolonged separation of spouses, is one of the major factors associated with the increasing rate of separations and, in a few cases, divorces. The Keiskammahoek Rural Survey showed only a small proportion of divorces: 0,3% among males 25 years and over and 0,4% among females 20 years and over. The survey also noted 150(7,5%) separations among 2 000 marriages in four villages in the district (including Burnshill). (Wilson, M. 1952: 81, 91) Our investigation, on the other hand, revealed 41(29,7%) separations (including one divorce) among 138 marriages recorded.

Marriage in any society entails a long and intimate association between people differing in sex, temperament and other individual characteristics. At present the couple may decide to marry after establishing an intimate love relationship but soon after marriage the man normally leaves for work. Thereafter he is at home for only brief periods during each year.

Although there are many families in which the husbands have a sense of responsibility for their families, in others the most common problem which tends to emerge early in the married life of many couples that eventually drift apart, is the failure of the husbands to support their wives while absenting themselves from home for lengthy periods. (Cf. section (c) chapter 3) Taking into account the economic position of the rural family, dependent on money for virtually all its

needs and facing the pressure of inescapable demands for better living standards, when the husband does not send money home the wife struggles to survive. Some women devise means of overcoming this problem, e.g. taking up any jobs they can find locally or soliciting help from relatives, especially those connected with their parental homes. The marital bond weakens when the husband continually neglects his wife - sending her very little or nothing and absenting himself for too long. Under these circumstances many women give up their marriages and return to their parental homes. During this post-marital stage they show a great deal of initiative in coping with their difficulties and are able to depend on their own resources - securing employment (mostly in the towns) which enables them to establish their own homes if they do not re-marry.

One of the most important reasons why some men neglect the wives they leave behind is that they establish other sexual relationships while in town. This practice (ukuhlalisana), which may be seen as a new kind of polygyny, is facilitated by political factors which force migrants to maintain two homes - one urban and the other rural. Although a man has no legal responsibility towards the woman with whom he stays under ukuhlalisana, unless he has a child by her, he usually gives her a certain amount of material support. This happens at the expense of his family at home and women take it for granted that the men who send very little or no money at all home spend it on other women in town instead. While ukuhlalisana may continue as a relatively loose arrangement between the man and the woman for several years, it may become so strong that the legal wife in the country is eventually abandoned.

In considering these separations we must also discuss the wider conflict of values which bears upon the relations between the sexes. Although at present there is a great range of variation in the roles and status of women, new forces generally have led to a radical change in the position of married women today compared with the past. Some women accept their traditional role of looking after their husbands' homesteads while the men go out to work but, the more emancipated women desire greater equality with their husbands and have acquired

more opportunity of asserting themselves. Christian and modern values provide an ideological justification for the more assertive role taken by women in situations which compel them to take more initiative. Likewise, the spread of education and wage labour which have placed economic independence within the reach of women have contributed towards making women more independent and more capable of dissolving the marriages that fail to give them satisfaction.

Whereas in the past wives had to fulfil the traditional demands made on them because

- (a) lobola meant their parents had a vested interest in keeping the marriage going,
- (b) there were few opportunities for women to earn money,
- (c) women household heads found it hard to get land or accommodation,

today these constraints have weakened. Women therefore have not only ceased to be subservient to their husbands but their views about marriage have changed as well.

To illustrate the views of women who decide to leave their husbands when they can no longer find satisfaction in their marriages we refer to an interview we had with Mavis (who was born in Burnshill in 1940) towards the end of 1980. After passing standard four she took up domestic work in King William's Town in 1961. She worked there for three years and returned home when she became pregnant. She left the child with her mother and worked in Port Elizabeth until her marriage in 1971. After about a year, three head of cattle were given for her lobola. (She did not know how much this amount was.) While her husband worked in Port Elizabeth, she lived at her husband's home in the Middledrift district and looked after a Freehold allotment which belonged to her father-in-law. Her husband's parents lived at Alice where her father-in-law had spent many years working as a driver for the Lovedale Institution and later for the Fort Hare University. Although her husband was in employment Mavis was supported almost entirely by her father-in-law. "My husband's parents were very kind to me: they bought groceries for me every month-end. They bought clothing and I was never short of anything. My husband's brothers and sisters also saw

to my needs. But my husband seldom gave me anything. He was fond of assaulting me whenever he got drunk. He exercised a great deal of control over me and was strong. It was not possible for me to go to any concerts and he expected me to be at home all the time. I was not free to go to such things even when he was away at work. I could go to a church service, a funeral or a wedding but I had to return home in good time." By 1977 Mavis' husband was having very little contact with his home and was not supporting his family. During the same year Mavis went to Port Elizabeth and found him living with another woman. After reporting the matter to the administration offices the location police brought the husband and the wife together and investigated the matter. The husband was instructed by the administration to return to his relatives (with whom he lived previously) within two days. After this incident the couple rented a room in the location and lived together for four months. "During the fourth month he began to change and did not bring back home all his wages. Then I lost all hope in him and returned home (to Burnshill). He was at home on holiday in 1978 and did not bother to come and see me and his children. He returned from work again in 1979 and did not do anything about me. He has not gone back to Port Elizabeth because he does not want to work and I learn that since he has been at home he has been depending on casual jobs with ukatyi (eradication of noxious weed)." Towards the end of 1980 Mavis sued her husband for maintenance and the case was heard in Keiskammahoek on the 21st November 1980. "The magistrate said he felt like arresting him because he has not been supporting me all this time and I have not done anything about it. He told the magistrate that he was ill. I disputed that because he has never been ill as far as I know and I can see there is nothing wrong with him. The court told him to produce a medical certificate and informed him that from December onwards he must see to it that he is in employment. I told the court that I am no longer interested in him. But he must support his children. That I am suing him for maintenance he cannot escape. I do not want to go back to him. He has not cared for me all these years." The case was remanded for December 23. Towards the end of the interview

Mavis made the following comments about her situation: "These days, if you marry and your husband lets you down, it is better to live independently and look after your children. I tolerated him for too long and he merely wants to avoid the isapoti' (maintenance) when he says I must return to him. I must work next year if I can find employment. I can possibly go to Port Elizabeth although it would be better if I am nearer home. I have relatives in Port Elizabeth and if I go there I will not encounter any difficulty . . . I have no permit for employment there but I can overcome that difficulty."

At the same time, we gained the impression that men generally underestimate the changes that have occurred among women and, especially where it suits them, they tend to be conservative in outlook. A husband may see his marriage essentially as a means of furthering the interests of his family, e.g. as a way in which his mother can be assisted in her household work. Not all women view marriage in this light; they seek instead greater freedom in marriage and, as a result, they do not always meet their husbands' expectations. Where these clashing interests cannot be reconciled, the separation of spouses often occurs.

Some of these conflicting values between men and women are illustrated in the case of Johnson (aged 44) who married by ukuthwala in 1974. In 1975 he left his wife with his widowed mother and served a contract of about a year in Stellenbosch. Their first child was born during the same year. When Johnson returned home at the end of the year, his wife was still at home although she intended going out to work in East London. She told her husband on his arrival that in Mdantsane in East London a restaurant owner who employed her previously needed her services. Johnson allowed her to go and she left her child with Johnson's mother when she left in January 1976. She took up the employment for which she was called to East London and lived with a family that is closely related to her husband. Some time after her departure Johnson left Burnshill for East London to visit his wife. He arrived there on a Friday but met his wife only on the following Monday because she was not returning home after work. Up to Thursday of the same week

she used to come home after work "but on Friday she left for good. I stayed in East London for three weeks, living alone in the room which had been set aside for her and she did not return. It became clear to me that she was interested in another man . . . I loved her and my mother treated her well when she was here at home but that has not served any purpose. I used to send her money when I was away at work. I sent money directly to her and even failed to give my mother anything because I did not want her to complain. But soon after my arrival at home she told me she wanted to go and work." At the end of 1980 Johnson had not re-married and his child was cared for by his grandmother.

The majority of women remain faithful to their absent husbands, and marital infidelity on the part of the women who remain in the country sometimes results in serious family quarrels and creates conditions which alienate spouses. In the following case it seems that this problem manifests the emotional strain resulting from the separation of spouses for lengthy periods of time. Moses (aged 36) passed standard 5 in Burnshill and left for the mines in 1956. While on a visit home in 1966 he married a girl from a nearby village by uku-thwala. Lobola amounting to R60,00 was given to his wife's parents after his marriage. Soon after the marriage Moses returned to work leaving his wife with his mother. He was away from home for three years and during this time he sent money home 'very regularly'. To support herself his wife worked at the Fort Cox agricultural college and it was during this time that she was made pregnant by another man. She secretly left for her parental home and several months thereafter Moses arrived at home and fetched her "so that this matter could be discussed in her presence". Moses' mother pleaded with her son to forgive his wife but before the couple could be reconciled the wife left again for her home and Moses went back to work afterwards. Later Moses' wife joined her relatives at Herschel where she found employment. They never met again. Moses married again in 1974.

(f) Mothers and daughters-in-law

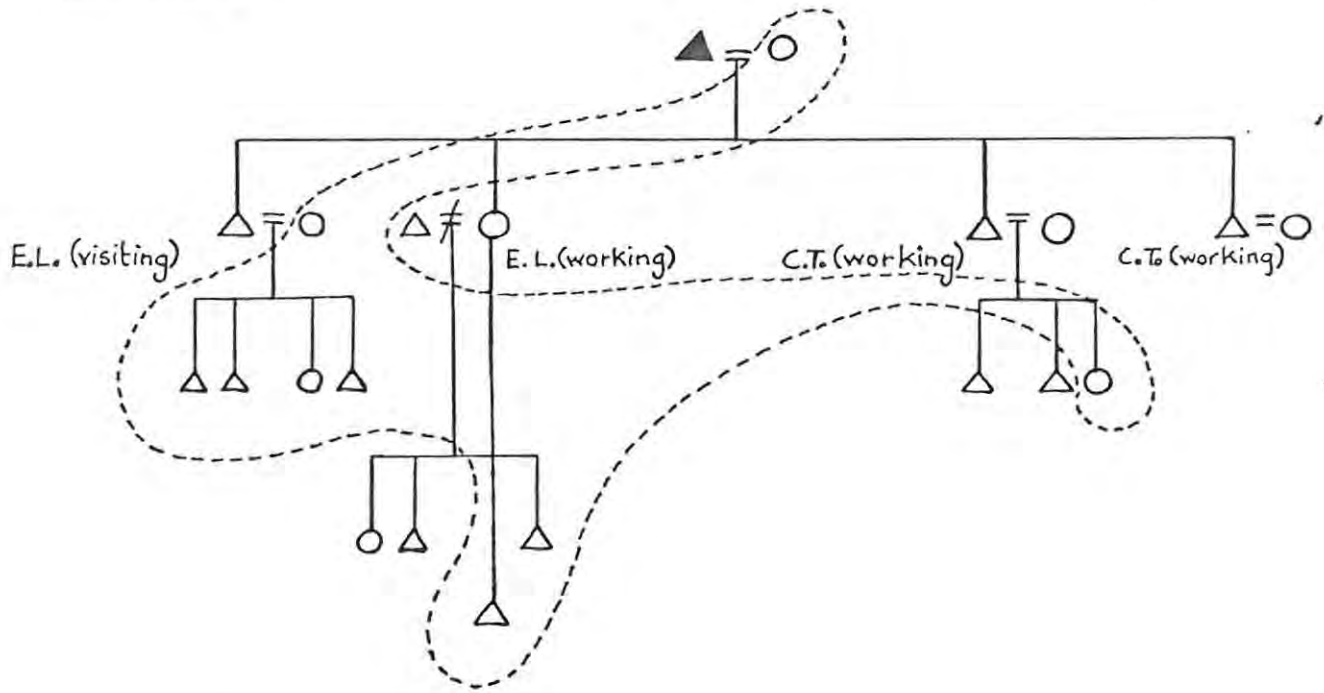
Another relationship that is under a severe strain at present is the one between mothers and their daughters-in-law. The main reason why tensions in this relationship are more common among the immigrants stems from the fact that in this section of the community daughters-in-law usually reside with their husbands' parents for some time after marriage. Traditionally a young wife had to show a great deal of respect towards the senior relatives of her husband, particularly the male relatives. During the early years of her marriage she came under the control of her mother-in-law and had to assist her in all household tasks, relieving her of much of the heavy work in the homestead. She gained a greater measure of independence only when she established her own household.

The carry over of the traditional requirements into a new and changed family situation creates tensions because the status of a wife in her umzi is now very different from what it used to be. There is a divergence of values and interests between the older women who have been living in the country virtually all their lives and the more emancipated younger married women who have several years of schooling and (in most instances) the experience of working independently in the towns. Under these circumstances complaints about daughters-in-law who refuse to work for their mothers-in-law are common and generally the older generation feels it no longer commands much respect from the younger women. In some instances they defy their parents openly. In one case a daughter-in-law had a love affair with another man while her husband was away at work. When her mother-in-law reprimanded her about this, she took exception and left her husband's home soon thereafter. Further, there is a tendency for the young wives to enjoy a large measure of freedom when their husbands are away, some spending lengthy periods of time at their homes of origin and returning only when their husbands are at home. Generally, there is little parents can do to exercise control on their sons' wives.

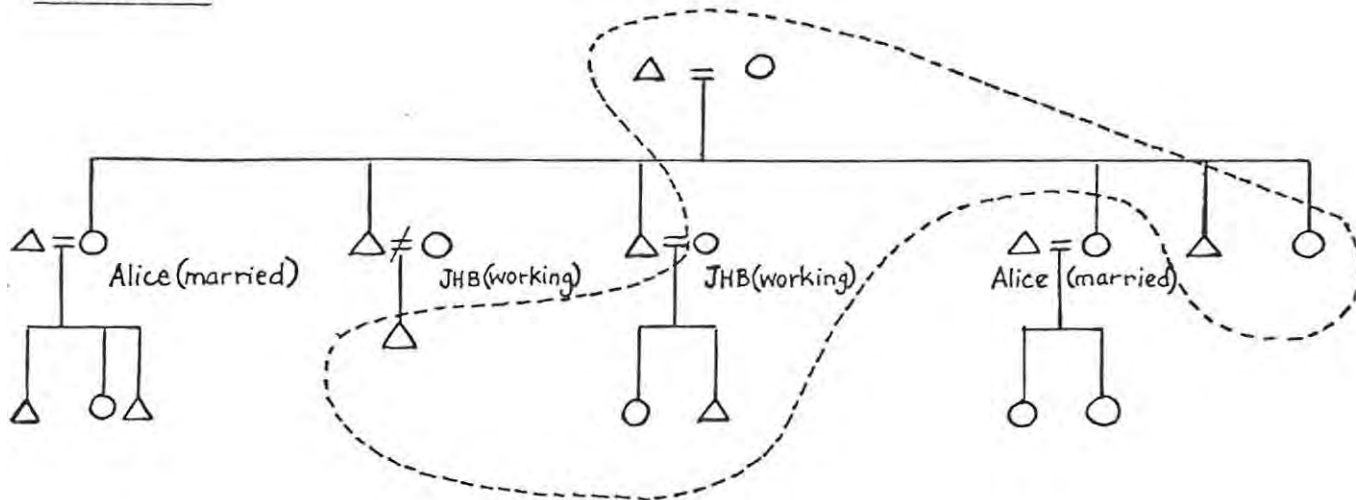
We present below two genealogies showing how some of the married women whose only common feature is that they are married

into one patrilineal family are expected to co-operate and accept the authority of the senior.

GENEALOGY 1



GENEALOGY 2



Key: \neq : married and separated later

Straight vertical line: child or children by no relevant father

Enclosed persons live at the umzi

Other conflicts which occur between these two parties are connected with the distribution of remittances. Many parents who live with their daughters-in-law insist on retaining full

control of their sons' remittances; they expect a son to send his money to his father or widowed mother. Where this pattern is observed, the young wife is often given a relatively small amount of money commonly known as isepha (soap) for her personal needs and the rest is kept by her parents. The money used for the purchase of groceries is usually handled by the mother-in-law. The case of Mambhele (aged 22) who lives with her husband's parents indicates the extent to which disagreement about the distribution of these remittances can harm family relations. Mambhele had been married for nearly two years when we interviewed her. Her husband worked on the mines and used to post money directly to his father who was employed at the Fort Cox agricultural college at the time. Mambhele complained bitterly about the way in which her husband's remittances were used at her umzi. "Sometimes they give me nothing when my husband sends them money. When they have received it they do not tell me how much it is . . . I struggle and no one worries to find out what I need . . . They do not buy me clothing and I am forced to go and ask for help from my mother when I need money for clothing. My father-in-law can afford to give me money because he is working. He cannot do so because all the money in his home is controlled by my mother-in-law who does not care for my well-being . . . I am struggling and they are doing nothing about it." Further, Mambhele felt that her husband was not doing anything to solve her problems. "When I inform him about the things I need, he always tells me about the financial demands his parents make on him," Before Christmas 1976 Mambhele's husband sent an amount of R90,00 which he wanted to be used as a deposit on new furniture. Concerning this Mambhele said, "Since the money was sent to me, she (mother-in-law) became very bitter towards me. She hated me all the more when father-in-law asked me to accompany him to King William's Town to select the furniture. When we came back, I knew why she would not speak to me. During the Christmas period she locked up the groceries and I was not able to enjoy Christmas as a result." After this incident Mambhele wrote to her husband informing him not to send any more remittances directly to her. In this letter she stated the difficulties she was encountering and also noted that she intended leaving her umzi as she felt that

her mother-in-law was ill-treating her, failing to provide her with money for her personal needs.

Her husband's reply did not show much understanding of the situation, at least from Mambhele's viewpoint. Her husband stated in the letter " . . . that you say you are to leave my home is something I cannot understand. If you decide to leave you must know that I did not drive you away. You cannot complain about what I do to you because you can see what I am doing at home." This situation illustrates the dilemma which many men encounter in the course of their marriages. When they try to fulfil their traditional requirements - allowing their parents to exercise full control of their wives - they almost invariably alienate their wives. At the same time it is not easy for the man to concern himself solely with his wife because his parents also need his support. Further, since men spend very little time at home they are not always in a position to understand the problems encountered by the people who live at home. This complicates the family situation all the more.

Because parents and young wives tend to compete for the financial resources sent by the men who work in town, newly married wives try to set up their own households as soon as they can. As a result, many young couples leave the old umzi soon after marriage, a development that was already noticeable in the early 1950s. (Wilson, M. 1952) In some instances the mother-in-law encounters so much opposition from her daughter-in-law that she gives her separate accommodation within the same homestead, and the two women live and cook separately. Mamtshawe (aged 20) married by ukuthwala in 1975 and resided with her mother-in-law while her husband was working on the mines. Her husband sent money twice to his mother and Mamtshawe showed much displeasure about this arrangement. The mother-in-law wrote to her son asking him to send remittances directly to his wife. However, relations between the mother and her daughter-in-law deteriorated to such an extent that the mother-in-law ordered her to reside in another house in the same homestead. The daughter-in-law began cooking separately and there was virtually no communication between the two women.

Even in the past the life of a daughter-in-law was never

easy. For instance, in Pondoland in the early 1930s the expectation was that "the first virtue demanded of a bride is that she should be khuthele (diligent, eager). She rises at dawn, before anyone else, and goes to fetch water. 'If the people are not up when she comes back she must not go to sleep again, but exert herself and sweep before she goes to the fields.' Everyday she should go to fetch wood, and it is she who in winter goes to gather wild spinach from the distant fields. She does the heavy end of grinding and cooking, and helps in garden work, mudding and repairing huts. She must care for her husband's comfort." (Hunter 1936: 35) The new features in the present family situation are linked with the enhanced position of the young married woman who has not only more years of formal education than her husband's parents (and a different world view and expectations) but also more options available to her to leave the umzi if she is dissatisfied. Further, today there are fewer effective sanctions working towards greater stability in marriage.

CHAPTER 5
HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY STRUCTURE

(a) The household: Structure and kinship relations

This section and the one that follows focus attention on the household (umzi), an entity that is the basic unit of social organization in the village. Traditionally the umzi included a large group of relatives who acknowledged the authority of a senior male head living together with his extended family. (Hunter 1936; Hammond-Tooke 1962) At present the term refers to a much smaller group of people who share the same building site and, apart from a few exceptions that will be noted later, eat together. The departure from the traditionally large umzi is associated primarily with the division of land. For instance, the Quitrent and the S.A. Trust building sites which are approximately 40 metres square are specifically designed for single families and the reduction of land through sub-division has apparently had similar effects on the families living on Freehold land.

The population of our sample is 339 and the average number of persons living in a household is 6,4. The fact that the average size of homesteads in the district in the early 1950s was 7,12 persons (Mills & Wilson, M. 1952: 5) suggests that households have decreased significantly in size over the past few decades probably due to the establishment of new homesteads by the younger generation much earlier than in the past.

Table 15
Age and sex structure

<u>Age group (in years)</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Totals</u>	<u>%</u>
Children (0-16)	99	103	202	59,6
Adults (17-59)	24	70	94	27,7
Adults (60 and over)	17	26	43	12,7
Total	140	199	339	100,0

While up to the age of 16 the number of males and females is more or less equal, an imbalance of the sexes occurs at the

productive age group ranging from 17 to 59 years within which females outnumber males almost three times. This disparity results from the greater migration of males than females within this age group.

Children outnumber adults considerably - constituting 59,6% of the total number of people in the sample households. At the same time, the range in the actual number of children in each family is wide. One of the households (headed by an elderly unmarried mother) had no children at all and a further 26 families were also relatively small having between one and three children each. Eighteen households included four to six children while the larger families of seven to ten children occurred in eight instances. The variation in the number of children in each household results partly from the fact that the sample includes families at different stages of development, from newly-established ones which tend to be small to those which include grandparents, grandchildren and, in a few instances, great grandchildren. Further, the fact that some of the families are very small indicates the extent of family scatter due to present economic conditions.

Households in this village may be classified into three main types: 'simple' households comprising one marriage and not more than two generations, 'complex' households including more than one marriage and/or more than two generations and, thirdly, households with unmarried female heads of households. This classification is intended to give some idea of the variety in kinship composition within the various households and the extent to which the traditional extended family pattern features at present. When the above classification is used we find that in our sample 18 households are simple, 28 are complex and seven are headed by unmarried women. Each type, however, reveals a wide variety of arrangements if the kinship relations of the household members are taken into account. These groupings, also, are not permanent since many members of these households are continuously moving between the towns and their homes. For instance, the shift from the 'simple' household type which may include grandparents and grandchildren to the 'complex' type which may then emerge when a daughter or any other member of the middle generation comes home is very slight.

Table 16
Classification of households¹

<u>No. of cases</u>	<u>Simple households with female heads,</u> ² <u>including</u>	
4	<u>Wife</u> ,	children of head. (Husband at work)
1	" ,	children of head, unmarried child of relative, unmarried child of non-relative. (Husband at work)
1	" ,	children of head, unmarried child of relative. (Husband at work)
1	" ,	unmarried child of relative, unmarried child child of non-relative. (Husband at work)
1	<u>Widow</u> ,	grandchild of head.
1	" ,	grandchildren of head, unmarried child of relative.
1	" ,	unmarried children of relative.
1	" ,	unmarried child of non-relative.
1	" ,	unmarried adult relative, children of head, unmarried children of relative.
	<u>Simple households with male heads, including</u>	
2	<u>Husband</u>	wife, children of head.
1	" ,	wife, unmarried children of relative.
1	" ,	unmarried children of non-relatives.
1	<u>Widower,</u>	children of head.
1	" ,	unmarried child of relative.
	<u>Complex households with female heads, including</u>	
2	<u>Widow</u> ,	child and grandchildren of head.
2	" ,	child(ren) and grandchildren of head, unmarried children of relatives.
1	" ,	children of head, unmarried children of relatives.
1	" ,	daughter-in-law and grandchildren of head.
1	" ,	daughter-in-law and grandchildren of head, unmarried child of relative.
1	" ,	daughter-in-law and grandchildren of head, married relative, unmarried children of relatives.

1. Household heads are underlined.

2. In regarding the wives of absent husbands as heads of their households we ignore the legal definition of their status. We intend clarifying this issue later in the chapter.

Complex households with female heads, including (continued)

1 Widow , separated daughter and grandchildren of head.
1 " , separated daughter, grandchildren and great
grandchildren of head.
1 " , children and grandchildren of head.
1 " , widowed daughter, grandchildren and great grand-
child of head.
1 Wife , children and grandchildren of head, unmarried
child of relative. (Husband at work)
1 " , married relative, child of head, unmarried
relative. (Husband at work)

Complex households with male heads, including

2 Husband, wife, children and grandchildren of head.
1 " , wife, children, grandchildren and great grand-
children of head.
2 " , wife, grandchildren and unmarried children
of relatives.
1 " , wife, married relative and unmarried children
of relative.
1 " , wife, married relative, children and unmarried
children of head.
1 " , wife, married daughter, and grandchildren of
head.
1 " , wife, daughter-in-law and grandchildren of
head, unmarried child of relative.
1 " , wife, daughter-in-law, children and grandchildren
of head.
1 " , wife, married son, daughter-in-law, children
and grandchildren of head.
1 Widower, married relative, unmarried children of relative.
1 " , separated son, widowed daughter-in-law and
grandchildren of head.
1 Separated man, husband of daughter, married daughter and
grandchildren of head.

Households with unmarried female heads, including

2 Unmarried female, unmarried children of relatives.
1 " , child of head.
1 " , grandchild of head.

- 1 Unmarried female, grandchild of head, unmarried children of relative.
- 1 " , married relative, unmarried child of relative.
- 1 " , married relative, children of head, unmarried children of relatives.

Since children normally leave for work once they mature, only 21 (39,6%) of the households include children of the heads of households and the middle generation is thus absent in most of the families. Dependant children, on the other hand, are commonly left in the care of relatives, hence about half (26) households include grandchildren. The nuclear family of a husband, wife and children emerges only in two cases. One of the husbands is employed locally and the other is a self-employed builder. Both are middle aged. That the proportion of complete nuclear families is so small¹ is not surprising if one takes into account the fact that the younger couples (who are included mostly in the category of simple households) are the ones in which the husband is most often away from home. The largest category of simple households is that of families that are headed by females who are either widowed or married women whose husbands are away at work. The complex households, on the other hand, include a large proportion of husbands living with their wives. The majority of these men are old and no longer go out to work.

Even the households that are designated here as complex rarely extend to the third generation entirely in the male line as was the case previously. One of the factors operating against the extended family pattern of the past is the growing desire of young people to establish their own households soon after marriage. Only six of the complex households include daughters-in-law and the sample reveals only one married son who lives with his family together with his parents, their children and grandchildren. This indicates the extent to which the tendency towards nuclear households has developed. Instead the 'complexity' of these households stems largely from the inclusion of grandchildren and (in a few cases) great grandchildren to their mothers'

1. During Christmas and over long weekends, however, many husbands are at home.

families. This aspect, which will be discussed in greater detail later, indicates that households at present commonly extend matrilaterally rather than in the traditional patriline.

The seven households that are headed by unmarried women are of special interest to us here since they illustrate most clearly the changing status of women - a development that is associated with the opportunities women have of supporting themselves, and the access they have to education as well as land. With the exception of two cases the women concerned had their own children, some still living at home and others already away at work. Two of them established their own households after working for many years in town and the rest are lineage daughters who live at the homes of their deceased parents. It is now possible for a household with a female head to develop out of a family which previously was headed by a male, the result of family scatter and the tendency for men to leave their natal homes after marriage.

33(62,3%) households in the sample are headed by females. This is a much larger proportion than the two-fifths of female heads found in East London in the early 1960s (Pauw 1963: 146) and would seem to be connected with labour migration which affects the rural areas much more than the towns. Also, the fact that more than half of the female heads in our sample are widows suggests that on the whole men die earlier than women. Although virtually all the young widows return to their natal homes after the death of their husbands, those who become widowed later in life often retain the homesteads of their deceased husbands. As in the case of some of the unmarried female heads, some widows head the homesteads they have established on their own after the death of their spouses.

Since a record was made of the precise relationship of every member of each household to its head, it is possible to discuss the question of matrifiliation which is a common element of household composition in the village. Of the 202 children included in Table 15 above 96 (47,5%) are reared by their maternal kin. This figure includes 57 children of daughters and nine children of granddaughters. The tendency towards matrifiliation is related initially to the bearing of children extra-maritally.

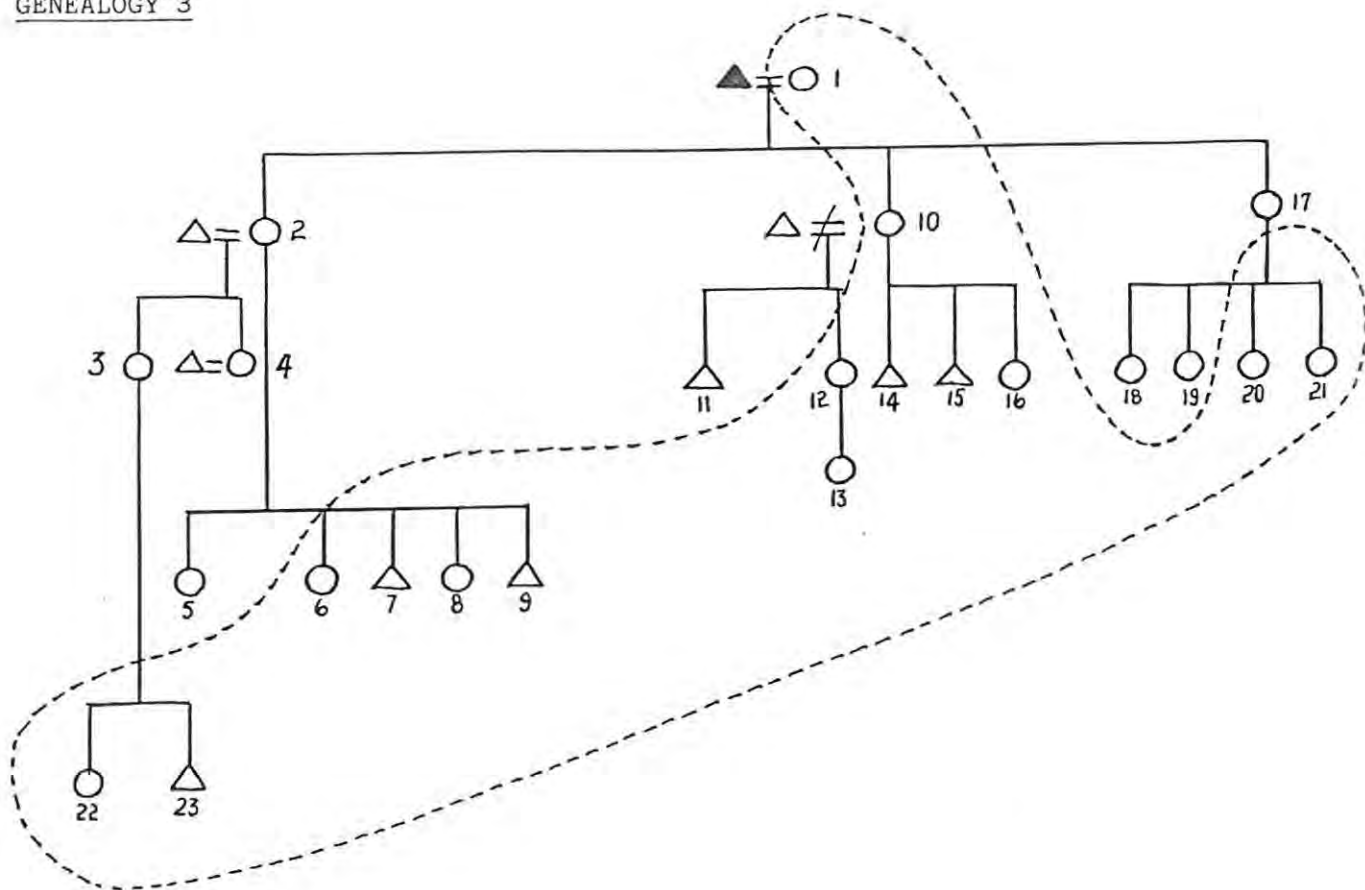
The children concerned must continue to live with their mothers' families because their fathers do not usually 'claim' them. A father can acquire jural recognition as father of a child born outside his marriage and transfer the child to his home only if he is prepared to pay for the 'damages' incurred by the pregnancy as well as a beast for the child's maintenance.¹ But men seldom meet these demands and simply leave the children they bear outside their marriages with their mothers' families. The children adopt the clan names of the families of their mothers and are brought up as the children of these families. The other children of daughters who are commonly included in these households belong to separated and widowed women who return to their natal homes with their children. What is worth noting here is that matrification represents one of the important changes taking place in household structure at present and is a major shift from the traditional Nguni patrilineal descent.

It is the absence of husbands in many of the homes, together with the fact that men are usually drawn away from their homes when they marry and set up their own households, which has contributed to the emergence of what Preston-Whyte (1978: 59) describes as female-linked families. Apart from being headed by women, many of these families form round a core of adult women and their children. This combination is usually that of a mother who lives permanently at home and her daughters who leave their children with her while they go out to work. It may also be an association between sisters or other closely related women. Close emotional ties between mothers and their daughters can probably be noted in any society but they are not sufficient to account for the emergence of these female-linked domestic units that seem to function just as well as the families in which males play a more significant role. As the women concerned are without husbands to support them it is necessary for the women to assist each other.

1. It would, however, not be necessary to pay this beast if the child is taken by the father's family soon after birth.

In these female-linked families the family structure is mother-centred in that kinship ties within the household, and between the generations, are traced largely through women. We present below two examples of families that are formed largely of related women and their children. One of them is headed by a widow and the other by an unmarried mother.

GENEALOGY 3



Matshezi (1), a widow aged 75, has lived in Burnshill virtually all her life. Her eldest daughter, Nomanise (2), is at present working in Cape Town. Nomanise married and stayed with her husband in Cape Town many years ago and out of this marriage they had twins, Nombulelo (3) and Nomthandazo (4). The marriage of Nomanise was short-lived: she separated from her husband

in Cape Town soon after the birth of the twins and Nomanise took the children to Matshezi for her to look after them. Nombulelo is single and works in Port Elizabeth. Her children (22 and 23) live with Matshezi. Nomthandazo lives in Pietermaritzburg where she is married. Nomanise had five other children after her separation, Nomfusi (5) who is a teacher in the Alice district and four children who live with Matshezi attending school.

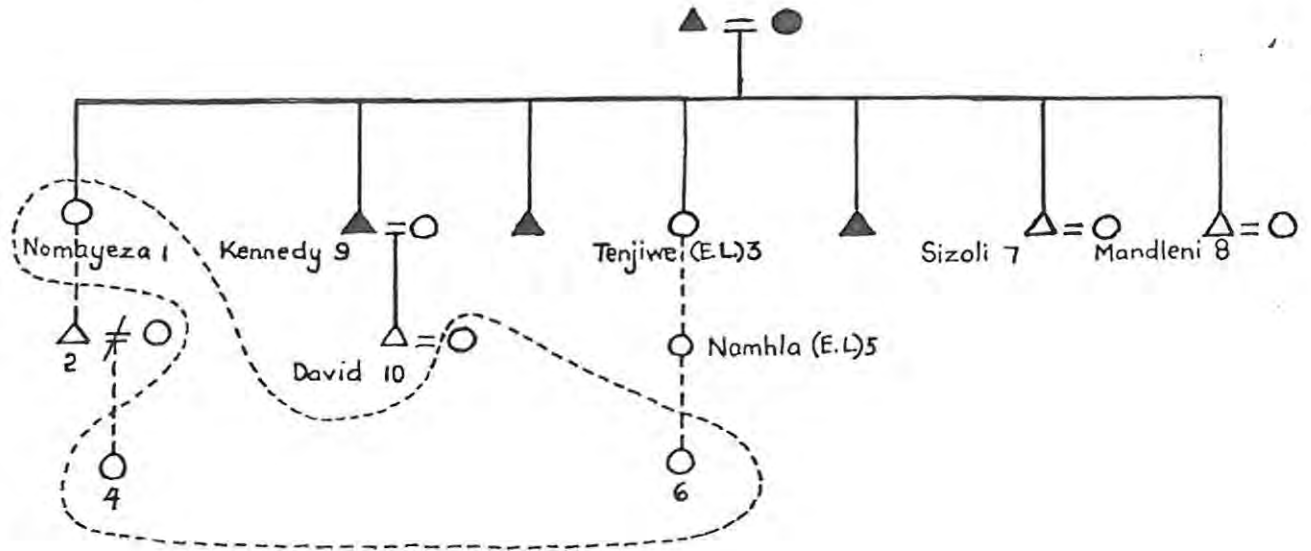
Matshezi's second daughter, Nototi (10), was sometimes at home when we were in the field and on other occasions she was away attending to her clients (she is a diviner) outside Burnshill. Nototi's marital history is similar to that of her elder sister. She worked in Johannesburg where she married a man whose home was in the Transkei. After marrying her husband took her to his home in the Transkei and from this marriage she had two children, Mzingabantu (11) who works in Port Elizabeth and seldom comes home and Nombasa (12) who lives with Matshezi. Nombasa left school in Form 1 when she became pregnant and her young baby (13) was with her. Nototi separated from her husband several years ago and returned home with her children. She subsequently had three other children (14, 15 and 16) who now reside with Matshezi.

Matshezi's youngest daughter, Nontsomi (17) has never been married and has been working in East London for many years. Of the four children she has, the eldest (18) teaches in King William's Town, her second child (19) was doing matric in King William's Town in 1978 and the other two (20 and 21) were at school in Burnshill residing with Matshezi.

The family depends largely on Nontsomi for support. Her contribution is supplemented by Matshezi's old age pension and the earnings Nototi receives as a diviner. There is apparently very little financial assistance the family derives from Nomanise who is sometimes away from home for several years and her mother said she was supporting the children of Nomanise.

The next umzi we consider is that of Nomayeza.

GENEALOGY 4



Nomayeza (1) was aged 72 years in 1977 and is the eldest child in her family. Both her parents died several years ago. She passed standard 6 in Burnshill and worked in East London from 1934. Her working career was interrupted in 1940 when she became pregnant and later returned home with her son, Zolile (2) whom she left behind with her mother when she returned to East London. When Zolile was four years old the sister of Nomayeza's mother took him to her home at the Zeleni location in King William's Town because she needed a young child. He was about the age of 12 when Nomayeza brought him back to her home in Burnshill because "he was keen to return home." He passed standard 5 in Burnshill and left for work on the mines in 1956. This was the same year when Nomayeza decided to stop working "because there was nobody to look after the home." By this time her mother had died and her younger sister, Thenjiwe (3), had left for work in East London. Thenjiwe, aged 64 in 1977, did

not marry. She had been working in East London throughout this time and had one child, Namhla (5) who was also single and worked in East London. Namhla has one child (6) who is reared by Nomayeza.

Nomayeza and Thenjiwe, who seem to get along very well with each other, are key figures in this homestead while their two surviving younger brothers, Sizoli (7) and Mandleni (8) no longer play any role in this home. Sizoli was born in Burnshill in 1919 and left the village for Cape Town in 1942 after circumcision and never returned. His family knows very little about him apart from the fact that he is still in Cape Town and is married. Similarly, Mandleni (born in 1921) last visited home in 1958 and practically all that is known about him is that he has a family in Johannesburg.

Zolile got married in Burnshill in 1966 and his daughter, Noxolo (4) was born in 1967. In 1969 Zilile's marriage dissolved: his wife was made pregnant by another man during Zolile's absence. Noxolo remained behind when her mother decided to leave the home. Zolile married again in 1974 and subsequently his second wife occupied a house (situated on a building site nearby) which was used by Nomayeza's family before the present homestead was established. I paid several visits to Nomayeza's home at the end of 1978 and noted that Zolile's second wife was extremely unfriendly to Nomayeza and hardly visited her although she did not live far away. Also, when Zolile was at home during this time he had very little contact with his mother. Although I was unable to ascertain the reasons for the estrangement of these related families, it was apparent that Zolile had gradually been drawn out of his mother's umzi after marrying his second wife.

The second generation of this family also includes David (10) who was born in Johannesburg. His deceased father, Kennedy (9) worked in Johannesburg where he married David's mother. David, however, did not grow up in Johannesburg but was brought to Burnshill by his father at an early age to live with Nomayeza. (We do not know why Kennedy decided to take David to Burnshill nor have any knowledge about what happened to Kennedy's wife subsequently.) At the end of 1978 David was aged 30 and married earlier during the same year. His wife was living with Nomayeza

while David was away on the mines. Namhla was also away in East London and her child at home.

The main breadwinner of this umzi is Thenjiwe who apparently visits the home fairly regularly. Her large iron-roofed house, which is situated in the same building site as the one used by Nomayeza, was built in 1978 out of the material Thenjiwe sent home while working in East London. Thenjiwe's remittances are supplemented by Nomayeza's old age pension together with other amounts that are remitted by David and Namhla. What has happened to this umzi over time illustrates the common tendency for men to withdraw from their homes at some stage in their lives (particularly after marriage) such that the home has to depend on the remaining women for its maintenance and continuity.

Another issue apparent from the evidence is that of child fostering. This practice, which entails the rearing of children by adults who are not the child's parents, is an old custom among the Cape Nguni. In the past some of the children were reared by their grandparents and it was common for the eldest son of a young couple to be taken from his father's household to live with his paternal grandparents. Also, the rearing of one of the children of a married woman by the maternal kin of the child was fairly common. While the assistance given by children in household duties and herding was valued, child-fostering did not stem entirely from economic considerations but also served to maintain some measure of continuity between the old umzi and the household of the married son who no longer lives with his parents. It was commonly the eldest (and most senior) son who would live with his grandparents, which may have been associated with the need for passing on the traditions of the particular family. It seems, also, that children were fostered by affinal kin in order to strengthen the link between the husband's and the wife's family. However, among the Xhosa-speaking peoples, child-fostering was not formally institutionalised as among the Gonja of Ghana among whom the kin of each spouse have rights in the offspring of a marriage. (Goody 1973)

In contrast with this traditional practice of fostering, is the relatively new pattern in which it is the children of daughters who are most often brought up by the mother's relatives.

The largest category of mothers who leave their children with relatives in the country are the unmarried women. Frequently the woman who bears her first child is young and not in a position to look after her child on her own. A few of the school girls who become pregnant go back to school after a period of about a year. For the majority, however, this signals the start of their working career which can enable them to support their child. This situation makes it necessary for them to leave the child at home. More often the unmarried mother bears more children whom she also leaves behind while she goes out to work to support them. This pattern is similar to that of the Lovedu Christians described by Krige (1975: 145) although the extent to which this occurs in that society may differ from the Burnshill case. Other factors that explain the presence of a large proportion of fostered children in these households include marital instability and the fact that virtually all young widows at present return to their natal homes after the death of their husbands.

The structural distinction we draw here is that whereas in the past fostering generally involved legitimate children going to senior patrilineal kin, today it is generally the children who are born extra-maritally who go to their senior matrikin. This is, of course, consistent with the idea that the children belong to the people who paid cattle for the mother - and if none did, then they belong to her people. One implication of this process is that new norms are being established - that matrifocality is not just a regrettable necessity in an era of irresponsible males, but that it is the best arrangement under present circumstances. It is now becoming more difficult to attain the ideal situation in which families include both husband and wife and 'families without marriage' (Preston-Whyte 1978) are becoming significant in both the urban and rural areas. The extent to which deviation from the traditional ideal has occurred has also made unmarried motherhood respectable, particularly that the women themselves are able to support their children. Whisson (1979: 11-16) has suggested that this revolution "has been made possible by a shift in the balance of economic power within the domestic unit" and has observed that among white South Africans some of the young women also choose to

bring up their families without the presence of husbands. He further notes that "a growing proportion of women no longer perceive a state of matrimony as either their inevitable destiny or their ultimate dream. The proportion of unmarried women in their late twenties has risen markedly in the U.S.A. in the past decade and it has been estimated that, in the future, up to 30% of American women will not marry at all."

At present child fostering is also the main means by which women are able to participate in wage earning. This frees them for regular work in the urban areas and solves many of the problems they would otherwise experience in town, e.g. having to arrange accommodation and find people to care for the children. As we have already noted, most of the women who migrate do domestic work in which provision for the accommodation of children is not normally made.

Although the relatives who look after the children of working mothers often do their best to meet the needs of these children, difficulties arise when the parents who work in town do not support their children adequately. We cited earlier (p. 105) the case of Nomanise who works in Cape Town with four of her children reared by her widowed mother at home. According to her mother Nomanise does not often visit home and she sends money home irregularly. Her children are apparently largely dependent on the old age pension of their grandmother and other contributions made by other working members of this family. This indicates that although child fostering that is necessitated by labour migration is generally a reciprocal arrangement (benefiting the working mother as well as the foster parents) the children may be a burden on those foster parents who do not receive adequate support from the people who work in town.

(b) Authority relations and decision-making

As previously noted, the relation between husbands and wives is one of the aspects of family life that is undergoing far-reaching change in its nature. Labour migration, by forcing the husband to be at home for only brief periods, has contributed to the weakening of the authority of men within the umzi. This

development, which signifies a major deviation from the traditional situation in which the wife was undoubtedly subservient to her husband, manifests the tendency towards what is now known as matrifocality.

It was in relation to Negro families in British Guiana that Smith (1956) introduced the term 'matrifocal' to characterise certain features of their domestic organization. His findings were that the Guyanese villagers live in households with a high proportion of female heads and that their family structure tends to give prominence to the authority of mothers. Fathers, on the other hand, were of little significance in the home and remained on the periphery of the family. Smith also noted that the matrifocal family has persisted in British Guiana on account of the low status of Negro men in the class hierarchy of their society. Their low status limited them to jobs that offered low remuneration and forced them to be absent from their homes much of the time.

Wilmott and Young developed this concept in their 1957 study of Bethnal Green - where 'matrifocality' did not imply female dominance as an ideology but implied that most kin ties were articulated through women; that residence tended towards matrilocality (the mother found accommodation for her daughter close by when the daughter was married); and that women made most decisions in the home. The husband virtually "reigned but did not rule" in that context since his word may have been law in the house when he was there (and respect shown) but the mother made the day-to-day decisions. These issues are related to the situation in Burnshill.

In Burnshill there is a clear social concept which makes a distinction between a male head (umnumzana) and his wife (umni-kazimzi). Although the husband who spends the greater part of his married life away from his family remains the head of his family, to accept this at face value would obscure the very important area of discretion and responsibility which the wife exercises in the absence of her husband. Previously, a migrant who left his wife at home left a brother or any other relative to act as guardian to the wife and to look after the interests of his family. The man's remittances were sent to the guardian

and the wife would go to him for advice and direction concerning the running of the household.

At present it is only in exceptional cases where one can still find the umzi of an absent husband supervised by a kinsman or guardian. Generally the wife manages her own affairs and is not subjected to the control of her husband's relatives. One middle-aged wife noted: "That practice (the supervision of a wife by a kinsman) no longer applies here. It is better for a wife to make friends, for instance, from among her neighbours or any other person she likes. Relatives will look for the least mistake you make and capitalise on it. At the same time they cannot give you much assistance. The relatives you will find around here are old and cannot even plough for you. You are then forced to select someone who can do the job for you properly."

In a community characterised by the traditional notion of male dominance there cannot be a complete break with the outlook of the past. The conflict between the ideal which is generally unattainable at present and the increasing measure of authority the wife exercises in family affairs is reflected in the comment made by a middle aged man who works in Port Elizabeth and resides on the S.A. Trust. "In the home authority (igunya) lies with the man. For any emergency the wife must send a message to her husband and ask him to return and attend to the matter. Since she lives here she can make decisions on matters like ploughing. If someone comes and borrows my bicycle for some emergency, she is the one who is at home and must decide the matter. But she cannot sell any cattle or goats, it is the fowls and pigs which belong to her. But we have no power now. I cannot force my wife to do what she does not like. If you approach me needing my son to assist you or requesting me to lend you money, I cannot simply agree to that without consulting her."

This situation is very different from that which obtains in fairly 'traditional' areas where the homestead heads who are labour migrants have caretakers who act for them while they are at work. For instance, in the Willowvale district in the Transkei the homestead's caretaker (usiphatheleni) has total responsibility for the homestead left in his care. "He attends

to all matters regarding the homestead's livestock, sees to it that the ploughing and other tasks are done and organises work parties to this effect if need be. He acts as host at rituals and beer drinks and at the latter makes public presentations of beer (iminono) on behalf of the absentee. He represents the homestead at the ward moot and is responsible for the actions of all members of that homestead . . . The wife calls him when something requires his attention, informs him when she wants to brew beer, visit her home or when visitors arrive. He consults her in all things involving the homestead and may instruct her to perform tasks that need to be done." (McAllister 1979: 46) Although this relationship does not seem to involve sexual relations between the wife of the migrant and the usiphatheleni, it has close parallels with the custom of levirate which in the past ensured that a widow continued to form an integral part of the umzi.

In Burnshill many relatives undertake economic tasks jointly, for instance, ploughing, herding and dipping of cattle. They also co-operate in ceremonial and ritual activities like marriages, initiation of boys and funerals. But in the more intimate affairs of each household the various families are relatively independent and kinship ties have narrowed to a point where the individual household becomes somewhat an isolated unit. This means that the extent to which relatives co-operate depends on whether they like each other or not.

The women left at home try to communicate directly with their husbands (usually by letter) when something important has taken place or needs to be decided. We noted in chapter 2 that in 1978 about seven families residing on one of the Freehold farms in Burnshill were opposed to the introduction of a stock fee by their landlord and chose to leave the farm. We were told that the wives whose husbands were away when this matter was raised wrote to their husbands about the matter. Two of the husbands were working in Port Elizabeth at the time and the decision to move was taken after their arrival.

As husbands are often able to come home for only a brief and specific period each year, consultation between husbands and wives is not always easy and as some of the decisions must

be made immediately women have wide scope for discretion. Albertina (born 1903) was in such a situation when she had to negotiate the purchase of the Quitrent site and field her family possesses at present. After spending a number of years living with her husband in Johannesburg, she returned home in 1935 and lived with her parents-in-law. A few years thereafter the land was put up for sale in the village. She quickly raised a loan of R40,00 which she used as a deposit for the land and informed her husband about the matter afterwards.

The migrant husbands are also not completely conversant with the day-to-day problems of running a home, e.g. making a living out of limited financial resources, budgeting and making decisions about childrens' education and following up childrens' problems as they grow up. It is the women who tend to be the most knowledgeable people on such matters since they require experience and knowledge of what is involved in the local situation. Similarly, the inkundla makes many important decisions that affect virtually everybody in the village (e.g. imposing levies for school development) and the men can only depend on what is communicated to them by their wives to have any idea of what goes on at home. However, women are only indirectly involved in the inkundla and are expected to attend only special meetings of this body¹), which makes it even more difficult for working men to exercise their influence at home. Although most homesteads have a de facto woman head, it seems unlikely that women will be incorporated into the inkundla in the foreseeable future. Women accept that traditionally men are supposed to be important figures both in the home and community. For instance, women cannot preach in the 'mission' churches nor direct any other religious (traditional) ceremonies, a rule reflecting the same principles that underly their acceptance of the inkundla as essentially a male-only institution. A man who does not live

1. Women are usually summoned to the inkundla when special announcements are to be made. A gathering of this nature is called intlanganiso and this procedure is followed in other parts of the Ciskei as well.

at home is, therefore, handicapped by his absence since his wife cannot replace him and can only report those decisions of the inkundla which are of general concern.

As in Bethnal Green (Townsend 1957) the true status of the husband in the home is revealed at his retirement from full-time employment. We noted earlier that the men who do not emigrate permanently commonly return home late in their lives, sometimes well beyond the age of sixty. Although such a man may look forward to a time when he can retire and live happily at home, his marginal role in the family becomes even more apparent when he no longer works. Since during his life he does not have sufficient opportunity to acquaint himself with the routine of the home, he is forced to leave much of the household management in his wife's hands in much the same way as when he was still a migrant. Apart from the few men who get pensions from their previous employers, e.g. the S.A. Railways makes provision for pensions for its employees, many men retire without any pensions and struggle for many years with their applications for old age and disability grants. But the men who retire earlier (usually on account of illness) sometimes recover and gradually adjust to the rural situation. It is thus easier for such men to play a significant role in their homes and in the community as well. These are the men who constitute the core of the inkundla.

What then is the pattern of domestic authority in the homesteads which are headed by widows and the others which exist without husbands? In the past a man's eldest son, if old enough, succeeded his deceased father as head of the umzi. At present it seems that widows (especially those who are already advanced in age) are prepared to allow their eldest sons to take charge of their fathers' homes. But the vast majority of the sons who are entitled to inherit their fathers' positions within the family almost invariably set up their own households in the country or in town when they are able to do so. Usually old widows retain the homesteads of their deceased husbands and, as we have noted above, the continuity of the umzi is often maintained through co-operation with daughters or other female relatives. There are a few cases, however, in which widows have joined relatives after their husbands' death. One of them had

no umzi of her own and for many years had been living with her husband (she had no children) in the cottages of the S.A. Railways in Fort Beaufort and King William's Town. When her husband died, she returned to Burnshill and looked after the homestead and children of a distant relative, a married man who works in Port Elizabeth with his wife. Without umzi and children in old age she thus became dependent on relatives and had few prospects of making a living on her own, apart from her own old age pension.

In the case of household heads who are either separated or have never been married domestic authority usually rests with the woman concerned if the household was established by her and, in the instances in which the homestead is inherited from deceased parents, authority relations in the umzi are often balanced between the woman who remains behind managing the home and the other members of the family who have to go out to work to support the home. Such families tend to be matrifocal in that they do not include any key male figures and the major decisions in the home are made by the women themselves.

(c) Patterns of economic co-operation

In the relatively traditional communities husbands and wives fulfil distinct and complementary roles in the migrancy situation: the husband who is the breadwinner of the family (umondli wosapho) goes out to work and the wife runs the home and cares for the children meanwhile. In Burnshill, where female migration is a long-established practice, there is considerable variation in the way husbands and wives perform their conjugal roles and co-operate for the benefit of their families.

Although the husbands are the sole breadwinners in many of the families in Burnshill, we have noted that a significant proportion of the men live and work with their wives in the urban areas, some retiring to their homes at the end of their working careers. This means that in some of the families in Burnshill the economic roles of husband and wife are not as clearly distinguished as in the communities where women rarely migrate. Besides, the roles of wage-earner and housekeeper are reversed in Burnshill when a husband is forced to stop

working on account of chronic illness: the wife in such instances usually goes out to work while the husband remains behind to look after the home and the children.

In contrast with the traditional role of male dominance there are many families which rely a great deal on the earnings of women who work in town. Many women send money home fairly regularly and also take every opportunity to visit their homes. It is perhaps for this reason that some people feel that women are far more responsible than men as workers. The men who marry and settle permanently in town often relinquish the responsibility of supporting their rural homes and in many families this responsibility is taken over by women, especially those who rear their children in the country.

In the husbandless families mentioned earlier the pattern of economic co-operation resembles that of the conjugal households. A great deal of the co-operation among related women becomes necessary for widows, women who separate with their husbands and those who raise children without marrying. The mutual assistance such women render each other in the migrancy situation usually revolves around the maintenance of a home for them and the rearing of their children. There are many problems which face the husbandless woman not born in an urban area in that she scarcely stands a chance of obtaining suitable accommodation in town since municipal housing is normally allocated only to married men. This would seem to be one of the most important reasons why women generally tend to maintain strong links with their country homes because in most cases this is where she and her children can enjoy a greater measure of security.

In these female-linked families, the eldest woman usually remains at home and takes charge. She makes the day-to-day decisions and rears the children of the absent women. As in the case of men, the women who are away cannot be completely conversant with the problems of running the home although the family may be dependent mainly on their support. In genealogy 3 above we illustrated the structure of Matshezi's household. This umzi was undoubtedly under the control of Matshezi in spite of the fact that she was 75 years old. In 1976 she organised

the ploughing of her Quitrent field. She noted, however, that the field was not weeded, hence she reaped less than one bag of maize. In 1977 all the children of school-going age in the household were at school. At the end of 1980 one of Matshezi's daughters (Nototi) was at home. She said her mother was not experiencing much difficulty in controlling the children while they (the daughters) are away. "We are fortunate in that they are all at school and they listen to what my mother says to them. I can see of course that they regard themselves as adults now. When they do not listen to me, I send them to her (mother) and they must do what she tells them." Seniority in age thus remains an important principle in these female-linked families - the senior women are the heads, the junior provide material support, and all are linked by descent rather than by affinity. In this way tradition is reconstructed with the inversion of the gender roles and the result is a morally consistent and stable system.

In the economic duties that must be performed men are handicapped by their long absence from home such that the division of labour on the basis of sex is no longer as rigid as it was in the past and women have taken over much of the work that was done by men previously. Women look after cattle and, although they do not actually inspan them, they organise ploughing themselves. Also, the families in the village are largely dependent on women in other important economic tasks like house-building and other improvements in the home. The houses with mud walls, which are common in the village, require a great deal of labour and women play a significant role in this respect. The beams and rafters for the framework of a hut or a square building are purchased from an agency of the Department of Forestry (Ciskei) nearby. Women usually hire men to chop and transport this building material. A local builder is also hired for setting up the wooden frame and roof. The rest of the work - laying down the floors, plastering the walls and (sometimes) thatching the roof - is done by women. In other instances they make the sun-dried bricks on their own. One of the tasks which seem to present difficulties for women is the collecting of cattle in the veld for dipping. This undertaking, which involves a great deal of travelling

in the veld on the day preceding the dipping of cattle, is usually done by men once or twice a month. However, some of the women drive their cattle to the dipping tank themselves. What we observe here is that generally men play an increasingly marginal rôle in rural economic activities.

The wife's responsibility for managing the home and bringing up the children is recognised by the people and a wife who succeeds in this respect is highly regarded. Women generally show a great deal of initiative and competence in planning and managing their homes. Among those who are conspicuous in their economic effort is Manzaba who was born in the Transkei in 1913 and has been living in Burnshill since her marriage in 1937. She admitted that the village acclaimed her as one of the best local farmers: "I was born in the Transkei where people know the value of land. Throughout my life I have concentrated on agriculture and I have been successful." Her husband, who worked in Cape Town, died in 1972. Apart from the help she gets from her son when he is at home, she works her Quitrent field (and another one that belongs to a relative) virtually alone. She estimated that in 1979 she reaped 10 bags of maize (sold four half bags at R7,00 each) and a quarter of a bag of beans. At the beginning of 1980 she owned 18 head of cattle and 12 goats.

Since the household has to depend on outside help, the people who can afford to do so hire other people for the jobs they cannot do on their own. The old residents (who are mostly land-owners and are better educated) hire some of the relatively needy and landless people for domestic work, weeding, plastering houses, collecting firewood, etc. Work-parties, on the other hand, are common among those people with relatively little financial resources. These work-parties involve small groups of people who live in the same neighbourhood, and are used extensively for virtually all the tasks that require much labour, e.g. house-building, ploughing, hoeing, harvesting, transportation of wood and water. In emergencies like death people living in the same neighbourhood assist each other, providing any labour required and making financial donations. Additional financial assistance is provided by the burial societies (masingcwabane) for the families that are members of these societies. Also, the family

is dependent on the assistance of neighbours in carrying out numerous tasks during ceremonial occasions like the initiation of boys, traditional rituals such as 'accompanying' and 'bringing back' the deceased and the unveiling of tombstones. Some of these activities (especially where there is a choice between hiring someone and co-operating with other people) seem to serve an important survival function of redistributing resources obtained by the migrants through the community to those who cannot get jobs outside and who have minimal access to land in Burnshill.

(d) Parents and children

In this section we look into the relationship between generations and later assess the role played by the family in exerting control on its younger members. Among the Xhosa-speaking peoples, a sharp distinction was traditionally drawn between generations. Relations between kinsmen were organised around the principles of seniority and the subordination of children to the authority of their parents.

In trying to understand what is happening to parental authority at present we first consider what age signifies. As a fundamental principle of good manners and morals age is still important in broadly defining the relations between adults and children. For instance, in public gatherings members of different age groups respect each other by sitting, eating and drinking separately. But age is now much less crucial in defining individual behaviour than it was in the past and the educational system ensures that the wisdom-with-age identification is challenged. Some of the relatively young teachers employed locally play a prominent role in community affairs, e.g. at the inkundla, in the Church and in the Farmers' Association when it was still functioning. In these matters the older and less educated men encourage the younger men to give a lead in the community. This tends to be the case also with the more successful men with less educational qualifications who have proved their worth by establishing respectable homesteads in the village. This means that social status, prestige and influence in all spheres of community life are associated largely with individual wealth

(and educational qualifications) and not necessarily with age. The adaptation of traditional values to such extent that the older generation becomes receptive to new ideas is undoubtedly a process that has evolved over a long time. At the same time, our material seems to indicate that there are still many areas in which the values of parents and children come into conflict.

It is necessary here to stress, as Monica Wilson has done in the case of the Nyakyusa-Ngonde, that the relationships between generations are bound up with control of wealth. These relationships vary with the availability and control over the principal inheritable resources - land and livestock. Where a man is dependent on his family for providing these resources, the authority of parents is strongly enforced. A comparison of Burnshill and Shixini in Willowvale furnishes a good illustration of the contrast between a community where a young married man depends almost totally on land allocated to him by his elders and a situation where the family plays virtually no role in this respect. At Shixini distribution of land is linked to the family group. "Each member of the lineage proper is a potential inheritor of livestock held by other members and there is also a corporate interest in land. An eldest son inherits the field used by his mother and the field of a senior brother without an heir goes to the junior brother or his son and so on, depending on the composition of the lineage segment. Failing such inheritance being taken up, or where lands are abandoned, informants say that fields pass to outsiders only when they are 'released' by the lineage or clan group." (McAllister 1979: 41)

In Burnshill, the point at issue is not so much about the power of elders over land as about the declining importance of land in a community where most men migrate and yields are small. As we have seen, possession of Quitrent or Freehold land is by no means the sole determining factor as to whether a working person will maintain contact with his home or abandon it entirely. Likewise, livestock has declined in significance since only few families own stock (and many cannot do so even if they want to do so) such that generally cash is considered more important than wealth in stock. Migrant labour has thus increased the relevance of cash earnings versus patrimonial inheritance. Economic

power has shifted from the senior to the working generation such that parents generally are dependent on their childrens' earnings. Although it is true that even in the past parents were largely dependent on their children for labour power, increasing reliance on wage earning means that in many instances the parents who no longer work depend on the goodwill of their children for support. The economic power of parents has declined to such extent that it is generally accepted that a boy should bear virtually all the expenses incurred during his initiation. When time comes for him to go through initiation, he saves enough money while in town so that the necessary purchases for the initiation can be made. The actual expenses incurred for the whole process would vary but would include at least two goats (about R90,00), large amounts of groceries (about R120,00), two blankets and a rug (about R35,00) and a new set of clothing (about R80,00). Similarly, when he gets married he not only pays his own lobola, but must provide for any ceremony or ritual he may arrange. This, as we have seen, has far-reaching consequences for marriage in that it diminishes the role parents can play in choosing spouses for their children.

The processes of increased marginalization of the older generation and the transformation of the kinship system we observe in Burnshill are not inevitable in every community that is involved in migrant labour. What makes a difference between the situation of parents who live in Burnshill and that of the non-migrant adult population of the village Robin Palmer (1980) refers to as Abbazzia in Italy is the fact that in Burnshill there is almost entire dependence on migrant remittances while in Abbazzia the people who remain behind are able to earn an independent livelihood from agriculture. In Abbazzia there are heavily subsidized agricultural projects which enable even the older people to be employed and substantial government welfare benefits. The local people there are not dependent on those who go out to work in places like London, however much wealthier they may be. These pensions in Abbazzia were about R120,00 per month in 1973,¹ while in Burnshill in 1977, as we have already noted,

1. Palmer: Personal communication.

old age and disability grants varied between R16,00 and R19,00 per month. Although the cost of living in Abbazzia is higher than in Burnshill, the pensions there support mainly the old people since most of the children emigrate. In Burnshill, the pensions are almost invariably shared by many fostered children and other relatives.

The Abbazzia case shows that the state can, if it so wishes, manipulate some variables in order to create a viable rural area, albeit one which is heavily involved in migrant labour. Heavily subsidised agricultural projects plus adequate welfare payments and freedom of movement for the migrants has led in Abbazzia and other Italian mountain villages to a more stable society. There is a similarity in demographic structure between Burnshill and Abbazzia - both communities include many elders and children but relatively few people of working age - but in Abbazzia the continuity of substantial material income has been assured to give the elders independence and dignity if not much patrimony. The agricultural subsidies ensure that the land (which is the main element in patrimony) retains economic value, hence strengthening the position of the generally elderly land owners.

Apart from the fact that the older generation has lost the economic power it wielded in the past, the present changes in the relationship between parents and children can be related to the educational mobility of the younger generation. About three decades ago the conditions of schooling in the district were generally unsatisfactory and a significant proportion of parents were not sending their children to school. For instance, the questionnaires sent out in 1949 by the Bureau for Educational Research of the Union Education Department showed that about a third of the parents in the district did not send their children to school. (Wilson, M. 1952: 144-145) We have already noted that at present parents value education highly and virtually all children do attend school for at least a few years. The increase in the number of schools in the village¹ and the

1. Primary schools have recently been built at the Lenye and Ngxondoreni sections (one school for each section). A secondary school was established in the main section of the village in 1950 and this school was up-graded to a high school in 1979.

improvement in the qualifications of teachers¹ would seem to be some of the factors that have contributed to the educational mobility of the present generation.

Table 4 in chapter 2 illustrates the educational gap between people aged 50 years and over and those who are below this age. That the younger people are better educated than the older ones is shown by the fact that 31% of those in the older category had never attended school and a comparative figure for those in the younger category is 16,6%. We can further observe from this table that the disparity in educational levels is more pronounced among the people residing on the S.A. Trust land, the 'squatters' and the tenants. In this section of the community we also encountered a number of older women who had never gone out to work in the towns.

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1. In 1949 two-fifths of the 77 teachers included in the Keiskammahoek Rural Survey had gone no further than standard 6. (Wilson, M. 1952: 150) At present all the teachers in Burnshill hold at least a Junior Certificate plus a teacher training course. A minimum Junior Certificate for those taking teacher training courses was enforced in African education in the late 1950s. Statistics obtained from the school records in Burnshill also showed a significant increase in school enrolment during the past few decades. At the Lenye Primary there were 78 pupils enrolled in 1955, 140 in 1975 and 221 in 1980. The Burnshill High School had 117 pupils in 1952 and 521 pupils in March 1980. The number of teachers and classrooms have increased as well in more recent years. In 1955 the primary at Lenye had two teachers and no officially approved classrooms (small rondavels were used as school buildings). In 1980 there were five teachers in the school and three officially approved classrooms. The present high school (which functioned as a secondary school until 1979 when it was upgraded) had two classrooms when it was established in 1950 and these had increased to 11 by 1980. There were three teachers in 1952 in the school and 11 in 1980.

It seems the divergence of values and interests particularly between the older people who live permanently at home and the younger people who are frequently away is not only based on varying educational levels between the two categories but also on the extent to which the younger generation is exposed to the new influences which tend to undermine traditional values. It is in this context that the increasing individualism should be viewed. There are many children who do as much as they can to fulfil their traditional obligations regarding their homes (particularly to support their parents). But, as we have already noted, there are many who no longer have contact with their country homes. Even among the men who are attached to the country, their earnings are directed mainly to their families of procreation after their marriages - a distinction (between families of orientation and procreation) not made nor relevant in the traditional extended umzi.

Migrant labour does not only tend to separate geographically the older and younger generations but also fosters a divergence in outlook between the local community and the migrants. We noted earlier that migrants generally spend a substantial proportion of their earnings in town; that even while they are at home some of them make only small financial contributions to their homes and spend the rest on personal needs like the purchase of liquor for themselves and their friends. Some do little work while at home; and many migrants view the rural areas merely as places for rest from work and do not show much interest in some of the issues which are considered important by the local community, e.g. the affairs of the inkundla. In a rural Italian community where most of the people migrate to London Palmer (1980) observed a development which also implies the differentiation and separation of the people who go out to work from their community of origin. He explains this in terms of 'estrangement' which operates at the level of the individual and the family and 'disengagement' which refers to the separation of the groups or categories (the migrants and the local community) involved in the migratory labour situation. Some of the problems we mentioned in connection with the relation between the individual and his family (e.g. migrants who remit little or nothing

home) are an indication of the 'estrangement' of migrants from their rural homes. Likewise, the separation of the migrants as a group manifests itself most clearly in the conflicting interests between the people who spend most of their time in town and those who live permanently in the country.

The young people who leave Burnshill for work in the towns do so in a situation that is much different from that which their parents encountered in their youth. The rural family is now much more dependent on the earnings of the migrant who must send money home for virtually all the basic needs of the family. These expectations cannot be fulfilled without much sacrifice and throughout his career the young worker makes decisions which ultimately determine whether he will become estranged from his home (send very little or nothing and fail to visit his relatives) or will forego some of his urban needs in order to fulfil his traditional obligations. At the same time, the rural economy has declined to such an extent that many of the young people who have been able to gain a foothold in the towns have not returned to the country. This is not only indicative of the increasing extent of individualism but also of the process of disengagement that is separating the people who migrate from their community of origin. Although this is not a new development, it would seem it has been growing in extent during the past few decades. Further, it reflects the conflict in values and interests between the more conservative older generation and the younger people with a new outlook on life.

(e) Child-rearing

Child-rearing in traditional African societies was an undertaking that was shared by the whole family and the neighbourhood. This meant that the training of the young was not only the duty of parents and other kinsmen but extended to the community in general. Also, in these societies all the institutions concerned with the socialization of the young functioned within a homogeneous framework and the individual was presented with more or less a single set of values and behaviour patterns, the acceptance

of which ensured the smooth functioning of the traditional system.

With the accelerating rate of change today this process has undergone many changes and growing up in the rural areas like Burnshill at present is a vastly different experience to that which obtained in the past. The Church and schooling have exercised a considerable influence upon the training of the young: while they urge filial piety as a general principle, at the same time what they teach is not always consistent with Xhosa tradition. Among other things, they foster individualism and a belief in the desirability of change. It is against this background that we try to assess the role played by the family in exerting control on its younger members. Impairment of the effectiveness of the family to control the behaviour of children can largely be attributed to the absence of a large percentage of fathers and other adult males of the family for long periods. For most of the time the child is not subject to the discipline of both parents and grows up without much appreciation of his father's authority. When the father returns home, he is not in a position to exercise much discipline on his children and, it would seem that some fathers react to this by lavishing love and affection on their children during their brief visits home, thereby tending to 'spoil' them. This means that the whole burden of the training and guidance of children becomes the responsibility of women although in theory the men are regarded as the main disciplinarians in their homes.

On the whole the women who rear their children in the country do as much as they can to discipline them. Many of them give their children practical experience in the skills they need to acquire for adulthood and diligence is still regarded as one of the most important values the family must transmit to the children. Commenting on how they reared their children, some of the mothers said that they were managing to keep their children occupied with the many tasks that must be done within and outside the home. After school girls help with the younger children and with housework and boys look after stock, doing general repairs around the home and ploughing. While the work of the girls confine them mainly to their homes, boys have greater freedom to engage in activities outside their homes.

There are many families in which children are not a problem to their parents, where a friendly and pleasant relationship exists between the older and younger family members. But there are others in which complaints about the behaviour of the children - that they are 'ill-mannered', 'show little respect for the elderly people', 'seldom do as they are told', 'take little interest in their work' - indicate some of the problems parents encounter today. The extent to which the older children are freed from the supervision of adults depends largely on whether the child concerned is at school or not. Boys who have lost interest in school commonly play truant and it seems there is little a mother can do to force her son to return to school if he is no longer keen to continue.

Once the older boys leave school their movements become much less restricted; they spend very little time at home and are usually in the company of their friends. At this stage in their lives many of the boys (especially at the more conservative sections of the village, Lenye and Ngxondoreni) take a very active part in the affairs of the influential youth groups known locally as ibhavu. In the early 1950s ibhavu was a recreational association of boys¹ of one category. Apart from the assistance given by ibhavu in economic duties like weeding, its activities included overnight parties (itimiti) and stick sparring competitions. (Wilson, M. 1952: 159-160) At present it no longer performs any economic duties and functions entirely as a recreational association for boys. Its overnight parties range from the playing of records (igumbagumba) to the practising of the traditional boys' dance (umtshotsho) in preparation for any initiation ceremony the members may have to attend. The group recruits its members by locality (village neighbourhood). During the day its members wander around the village and spend a great deal of their time in isolated places like deserted huts or in the veld. Not all the boys in a locality belong to these youth groups: schoolboys are expected, by both the adults and their teachers, to stay out of ibhavu. There is much opposition

1. Girls did not play a prominent role in this association.

between schoolboys and ibhavu which sometimes persecutes school going boys.

In the ibhavu it seems the most influential members are the boys who have been out to work since they have more experience of the wider world and perhaps money as well. When members of the ibhavu return home from work they are expected to throw a party for the other members of the group. We were told that some of the older boys frequent the 'shebeens' where they drink with other boys. The fact that boys are now able to sit and drink in these 'shebeens' in the same way as the men seems to be viewed by men as a development that threatens the traditional distinction between men and boys. Also, some men feel they can no longer move about freely in the village at night without running the risk of being assaulted by members of the ibhavu and in one instance a young man (who was said to have been drunk) was attacked by boys during day time and suffered serious injuries. Violence occurs frequently during the initiation ceremonies which are preceded by an all-night boys' party, umguyo. During December 1977 the inkundla decided to ban the holding of any umguyo in the main section of the village¹ in an attempt to prevent the fights and the destruction of property which commonly occur during such occasions. We were also told that some of the boys are responsible for the stealing of small stock and fowls in the village - a problem that seems to be common in many other rural areas of the Ciskei.

Child-rearing, as we can see, is undertaken at present in a fluid social situation that is characterised by the absence of the adult males from the home. Since the children have to be guided and trained almost entirely by their mothers, the control of older boys seems to present a major difficulty in the rural areas. Although the existence of youth groups is a long-established feature of the culture of Xhosa-speaking peoples, the influence of the ibhavu in places like Burnshill poses a problem for the homes where most of the fathers and adult males are absent.

1. Although the other two sections are under the control of the inkundla which is always held in the main section of the village, men from the other sections rarely attend the inkundla.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: ADAPTATION TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES

The well-being of a society depends on its adaptation to the circumstances in which it finds itself. We have seen that from the middle of the 19th century the occupation of Burnshill by the first group of Mfengu immigrants brought about many social and economic changes which accelerated the transformation of the community from a 'traditional' to a 'modern' way of life. Making considerable adaptations to the new conditions, Burnshill accepted not only Christianity and education, but also the availability of land (Quitrent and Freehold) enabled the residents to take advantage of the wider market economy of the time. Primarily on account of opposition from white agricultural interests and limitations on further acquisition of land¹ peasant farming declined after a brief period of prosperity. This shift from self-sufficient peasant farming to dependence on wage employment apparently fostered an acute awareness of the value of education and, while earlier generations in the community did not have a high standard of education, many of their descendants went further than the elementary education their parents received. Increasing commitment to education thus prepared children for life outside the village and made emigration easier. Education tends to increase one's desire for new goods faster than it provides one with the commercial skills to obtain them - particularly in a society practising systematic discrimination. It is the search for effective means to meet new wants which is the initial factor getting people to move from country to town.

With the immigration of a large number of landless families into the village from 1945, the community became less homogeneous and could be readily divided into two categories of people who vary in terms of economic standing, education and association with Christianity. Differences in cultural backgrounds - the Red versus the School - predispose people toward particular values and choices. But the varying

1. Quitrent sites and fields were granted only between 1868 and 1869 and the residents could not accumulate more Freehold since no additional land was available for purchase.

patterns of migration between the old residents and the immigrants are sustained not by a rejection or acceptance of change and modernization but by the varying options the two categories of people have in the migrancy situation. Some of the old residents abandoned Burnshill long ago and settled permanently in the towns. The main reason why they have been able to do so is that schooling has given them better chances of competing for jobs in the cities and many of them have been able to stay long enough in a particular city to qualify for accommodation for their families. Others can afford to be 'long-term migrants', visiting their homes very infrequently, since they can return to their Quitrent or Freehold land when they retire. The majority of the immigrants, on the other hand, are handicapped by their lack of formal education and are largely confined to contract employment which limits their freedom of movement more than in the case of the people employed in the factories and other business enterprises in the towns.

Similarly, the marriage patterns of the old residents and the immigrants are different, reflecting the varying modes of adaptation of these sections of the community to the demands of labour migration. That many of the immigrants maintain relations with the rural community - marrying at home and leaving their families behind when they go out - does not emanate from a respect for tradition as much as from the fact that it is their rural homes which can provide them with ultimate security. Among the old residents, on the contrary, the search for effective means of earning a living has made it necessary for many of them to marry privately and live independently in town, some returning home with their families only when they are no longer in employment. These are the varying strategies by which the two sections of the population try to make a living under present conditions. In the final analysis it is the economic variables which are linked with educational qualifications and land tenure and not cultural preferences which account for these different responses to labour migration in Burnshill. Further, among both the old residents and the immigrants tradition has lost much of its influence on young people and the general process of synthesis taking place is most noticeable among them.

In societies which are changing rapidly the structure of the family reflects the pressures which are brought to bear on it. In

Burnshill wage employment and education are two of the most important factors which have led to the growth of individual independence which impinges on virtually every aspect of the family relationships. The greater measure of choice and personal freedom is affecting particularly the relations between the generations and the sexes. We have seen how the power and hence the status of parents has declined vis-a-vis that of their children and how this contributes to the emergence of new patterns of behaviour among young people, making it possible for them to marry not only without parental consent but also without lobola. In these circumstances young people are able to evade kinship obligations and the traditional reciprocity between parents and children is undermined. Parents who emphasize traditional standards of behaviour face a major adjustment problem and the carry over of traditional requirements into the new situation almost invariably leads to tensions within the family. We noted, for instance, that the clashes which occur between mothers and their daughters-in-law manifest a divergence of values and interests between the older and the younger women who are not only better educated but (in most instances) have the experience of working independently in the towns. These disputes are more noticeable in situations where poverty is acute. The competition for resources which are barely adequate for physical survival is expressed ideologically in the value that a woman should be subservient to her parents-in-law (and her husband to his parents) on the one hand and that a man's first responsibility is to his wife and children on the other. This, of course, is the classical problem of relationship - traditionally resolved by avoidance and hlonipha rules. The structural problem in a sense remains the same - competition for the resources generated by or controlled by the son/husband. The shift in the relative value of those resources as patrimony declines and earnings increase in the umzi both enhances the conflict (the son/husband is more valuable to his mother and his wife than before) and increases the probability of a split as the wife has less patrimony to lose for her children and a better chance of getting a share of her husband's earnings if she has an independent household.

Change in the relationship of men and women is manifesting itself in the enhanced position of women in their homes and in the community. As we have seen, the migrant's wife in Burnshill makes the day-to-day decisions affecting the home. This arises out of a situation in which

husbands spend a longer time away from their homes than they normally do in the more traditional areas. Apart from the men who cannot be gainfully employed (the old and the sick), virtually all the men go out to work and they spend about a month at home each year. In the relatively traditional community of Shixini in Willowvale, on the other hand, half the men of working age are at home at any time and they stay at home for nearly as long as they spend at work. (McAllister 1979: 29) Further, many of the women in Burnshill are not only in employment but they also tend to be more responsible than men with regard to the support of their homes. Similarly, with the prevalence of the matrifiliation, the patrilineal ideology is weakening and domestic relations tend to be focussed on women. These conditions are producing marginalised males whose responsibilities are diminishing, while the rural homes and the community are to a large extent relying on the dedication and the diligence of women.

In some areas the response of black workers to the demands of labour migration is a 'conservative' one in the sense that low wages and lack of security in the urban areas force the workers to identify themselves with their rural homes throughout their working careers; virtually all Tonga men who go out to work retire to their villages after a lifetime in the towns and, that they have a vested interest in the continued functioning of their villages they play their social and political role despite their absence. (van Velsen 1960) Similarly, at home Chopi migrants have access to some land which is worked by their wives and children and this provides them with the security they can hardly enjoy in the towns. (Webster 1978) In Burnshill, people are involved in a process of situational selection from a range of alternatives in which their choices are influenced, among other things, by education, values of the urban areas, enhanced status of women and the difficulty of making a living in the rural areas under present conditions. Although many people still find it necessary to retire to their homes, wage earnings have increased in importance as the value of land is declining. For many migrants in Burnshill there are hardly any material interests to be protected at home and the difficulties of oscillating between the towns and the country force many people to abandon the country entirely when they can.

The common matrix of virtually all studies on labour migration in this country is the wider South African society and economy which affect the lives of black workers profoundly. By focussing on how

people live on the ground we are not trying to divert attention from the destructive role which this system plays on rural residents. We have sought instead to provide information on how people respond or try to adapt to the situation in which they find themselves. The rapid pace of change we have observed reflects the various attempts the residents make to adapt to the new social situation in which the material resources of the rural areas are shrinking while expectations for a 'modern' style of living are rising. In the process attitudes change and certain values have to be compromised or even abandoned.

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