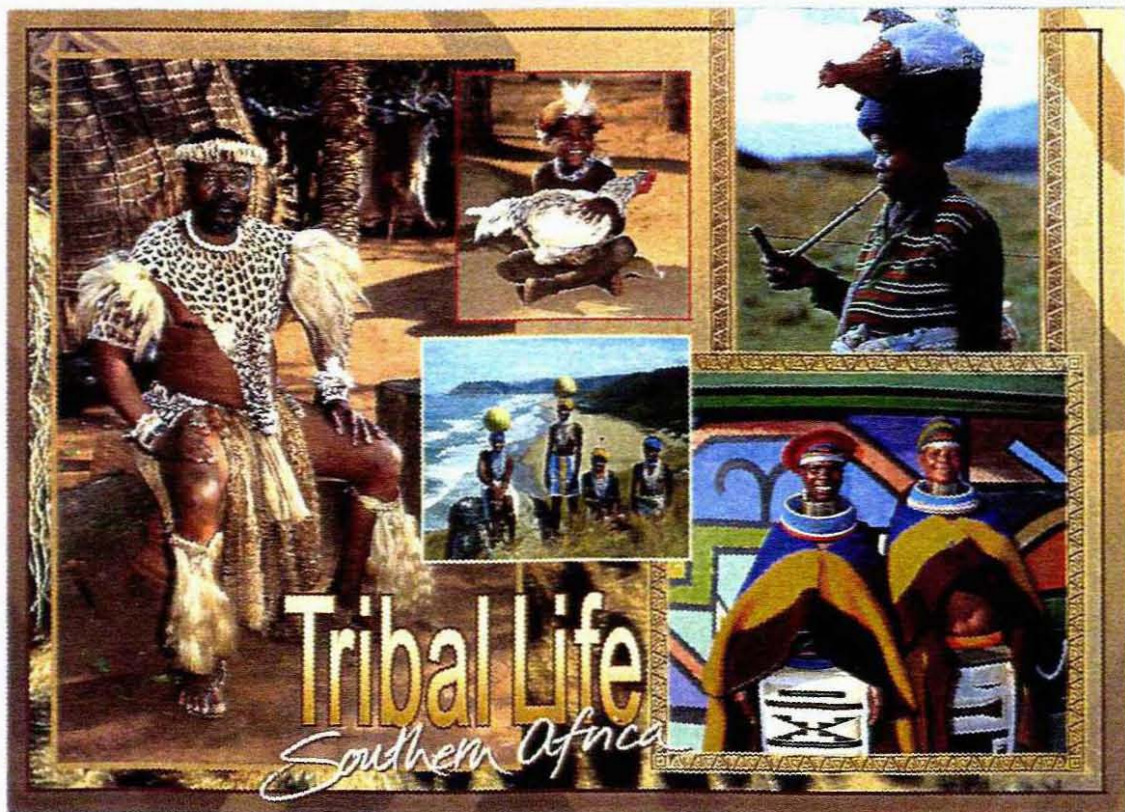


Zulu traditions and tribal life of Southern Africa as they are depicted in tourism promotion brochures and post cards.



**ZULU CULTURAL TRADITIONS: A DRAW CARD  
FOR TOURISM IN KWAZULU NATAL, WITH  
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE LEBOMBO  
SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE**

by

**ARMSTRONG NKOSENHLE ZIBANI**

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SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE LEBOMBO SPATIAL  
DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE***

by

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

In the Department of IsiZulu at the

***University of Zululand***

Promoter: Prof. L.F. Mathenjwa

Date: January 2002

## *Dedication*

This work is dedicated to following people:

1. To my wife, Londiwe Nqobile (uMaHlabisa) and our four children: Nompilo, Mxolisi, Philasande and Mthokozisi.
2. To Prof. J.B. Hlongwane.
3. To Mr G.S. Zulu, his passing away dealt a heavy blow to me personally and the whole lot of people who were close to him, as friends, colleagues and his students. *"May you rest in peace, even though you left us without peace but with many questions and no answers."*



## Acknowledgements

My sincere gratitude goes to the following people for their help, encouragement, academic and professional expertise, their sympathetic ears and shoulders to lean on during trying and happy times.

These are the people who contributed a lot in making this study to see the light:

1. My supervisor and promoter, Prof. L.F. Mathenjwa, the man who gives you a searching eye, asks you a few questions to untangle a few knots in your study and a smile to put you back on the right track.
2. The Governing Body and Management Team of Manzamnyama C.P. School, Thulani Matlena, my colleague, friend and a brother.
3. Ms Thandiwe E.M. Ntsele and Janine Swart for their patience and efforts in typing this work.
4. Prof. L.Z.M. Khumalo whose encouraging advice gives hope even at times when you feel as though you are up against the wall.
5. Dr. L.M. Madondo, a friend, classmate and a fellow comrade in pursuit of knowledge and mystery of life.
6. My sincere gratitude goes to these people whom I interviewed:
  - 6.1 To Mr M Zebon Mthethwa and his wife, Mrs G. Ntombemhlophe Mthethwa (UMaNxumalo) of Embabe area, KwaMbonambi. Their knowledge of Umkhehlo Ceremony and related matters proved to be of great help. I thank them for allowing me to take their time when they were interviewed on 16 December 2001.
  - 6.2 To Celiwe Hlabisa (umama wakwaShandu) of Empembeni Reserve, KwaHlabisa. Her insight about the nature and importance of a clan

song (inkondlo kamakoti) was quite astounding. The interview conducted on 20 September 2001 was very fruitful and informative.

- 6.3 To Patrick Ngwenya, Robert Zwane and Sithembiso Mthembu who were interviewed on 22-23 December 2001. I will always cherish my stay with them at Manguzi, near Maputa Primary School. Their knowledge of their regional food dishes specific to Mbazwana, Manguzi, Ngwavuma and related areas was quite a learning experience.

It was a shock to get the message that Sithembiso Mthembu drowned at Kosi Bay a few days later when they were enjoying their Christmas Holidays. The worst was to learn that his body was never found. There is a comfort when the Bible says when Christ shall come on the Judgement Day, the sea will release its dead (Revelation 20 : 11 ff). May he rest in peace.

- 6.4 To Mrs Elizabeth Mhlanga of Emacekeni Area, Ezithombothini Reserve at Empangeni. She was interviewed about the importance of Umkhehlo Ceremony on 15 July 2001 during the Umkhehlo Ceremony of her daughter, Sibongile Kollie Mancane Mhlanga who was betrothed to Veli Sangweni of the same village.

7. May these people grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. To God be the glory for the things he has done now and forever.

## Declaration

I, **Armstrong Nkosenhle Zibani**, hereby declare that "Zulu Cultural Traditions: A draw card for Tourism in KwaZulu Natal", is my own original work and that all the sources used and quoted have been correctly acknowledged by means of complete reference.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*Armstrong Nkosenhle Zibani*

A.N. ZIBANI

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

*30/04/2002*

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<i>Title page</i>	i)
<i>Dedication</i>	ii)
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	iii)
<i>Declaration</i>	v)
<i>Table of contents</i>	vi)
 <b>CHAPTER 1</b>	
 <i>INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY</i>	 1
<i>1.0 PREAMBLE</i>	1
<i>1.1 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY OR STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM</i>	1
<i>1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY</i>	3
<i>1.3 DEFINITION OF TERMS</i>	5
<i>1.3.1 Tourism</i>	5
<i>1.3.2. Eco-Tourism</i>	5
<i>1.3.3 Host Community</i>	6
<i>1.4 Literary criticism</i>	6
<i>1.5 Methodology or modus operandi</i>	7
<i>1.6 Scope of the study</i>	7
<i>1.6.1 Places in the Mahlabathini District</i>	7
<i>1.6.2 Places in the Eshowe – Melmoth District</i>	7
<i>1.7 The value and significance of the study</i>	8
<i>1.8 CHAPTER DIVISIONS</i>	10
<i>1.9 ABBREVIATIONS USED</i>	13
 <b>CHAPTER 2</b>	
 <i>LITERARY CRITICISM AND LITERATURE REVIEW</i>	 14
<i>2.0 Introduction</i>	14



2.1 LITERATURE ON APPREHENSION AND CONSTRAINTS TOWARD TOURISM	14
2.2 LITERATURE DEALING WITH TOURISM FOR ALL AGE GROUPS	15
2.3 LITERATURE ON CRIME AND VIOLENCE ON TOURISM	18
2.4 LITERATURE ON NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF TOURISM	20
2.5 LITERATURE THAT LAUDS THE BEAUTY OF KWAZULU NATAL	22
2.6 LITERARY THEORIES AND LITERARY CRITICISM	26
2.6.0 Introduction	26
2.6.1 Russian Formalism	27
2.6.2 Defamiliarization	28
2.6.3 New Criticism	30
2.6.4 The Cultural element	32
2.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS	33

### **CHAPTER 3**

THE LEBOMBO SDI AND THE PROMOTION OF INVESTMENTS, JOBS AND THE PEOPLE'S LIVELIHOOD	34
3.0 Introduction	34
3.1 WHAT IS CULTURAL TOURISM?	34
3.2 THE AIMS OF THE LEBOMBO SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE	38
3.3 THE LEBOMBO SDI AND ITS BENEFITS FOR THE REGION	41
3.4 CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN THE LEBOMBO SDI	42
3.5 THE POLITICAL CLIMATE IN THE REGION	43
3.6 LOCAL RESIDENTS AS ACTIVE BUSINESS PARTNERS AND BENEFICIARIES	44
3.7 HERITAGE AND CULTURAL ROUTE IN THE REGION	45
3.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS	45

### **CHAPTER 4**

THE ZULU WAY OF LIFE	47
4.0 Introduction	47

4.1	<i>The importance of land and livestock among the Zulu people</i>	47
4.2	<i>Ubuntu, order and discipline among the Zulu people</i>	49
4.3	<i>The Zulu Cultural Activities and their Importance</i>	52
<b>4.3.1</b>	<b><i>The Zulu Traditional Wedding Ceremony and its Preliminaries (udwendwe)</i></b>	<b>52</b>
4.3.1.0	<i>Introduction</i>	52
4.3.1.1	<i>Marriage arrangements and lobola (Ukucela nokulobola intombi)</i>	53
4.3.1.2	<i>The families' first encounters and its customary etiquettes : the importance of a negotiator</i>	58
4.3.1.3	<i>The families' second encounter and its customary etiquettes</i>	61
4.3.1.4	<i>Getting into actual lobola terms (Ukungena ezivumelwaneni zelobolo)</i>	64
4.3.1.5	<i>Articles forming part of the lobola (izibizo)</i>	66
4.3.1.6	<i>The three-legged-pot as part of lobola articles and its symbolism</i>	68
4.3.1.7	<i>The bridal party visits the groom's place, they bring the articles and lobola cattle</i>	69
4.3.1.8	<i>The groom at the bride's place and the setting of the wedding date</i>	71
<b>4.3.2</b>	<b><i>The bride's preliminary customs before the Traditional Zulu Wedding Ceremony</i></b>	<b>73</b>
4.3.2.0	<i>Introduction</i>	73
4.3.2.1	<i>Thanksgiving for the coming of the lobola cattle (Umbondo ceremony)</i>	73
4.3.2.2	<i>Getting wedding goods ready and Ukucimela Custom</i>	76
4.3.2.3	<i>The Traditional Engagement Ceremony (umkhehlo)</i>	79
4.3.2.4	<i>The bride's Final Farewell Ceremony (Umncamo nomgonqo)</i>	83
<b>4.3.3</b>	<b><i>The bridal party's arrival and the wedding day (Ukungena komthimba nosuku lokuqala lomshado)</i></b>	<b>90</b>
4.3.3.0	<i>Introduction</i>	90
4.3.3.1	<i>The midnight arrival of the bridal company and the competitive dance (Ukufika komthimba nokugqhumushela)</i>	90
4.3.3.2	<i>The secluded place under the tree and rising up to a meeting place (Esihlahleni nokukhuphukela esigcawini)</i>	93

4.3.3.3 <i>At the wedding site on the wedding day (Esigcawini ngosuku lodwendwe)</i>	98
4.3.3.4 <i>The opening prayer in the traditional wedding ceremony</i>	102
4.3.3.5 <i>The traditional marriage officer</i>	108
4.3.3.6 <i>An official incorporation of the bride into the family and the distribution of wedding gifts (Ukuqholisa nokwaba)</i>	112
4.4 <b>THE TRADITIONAL ZULU HOMESTEAD AND ITS FAMILY LIFE</b>	116
4.4.0 <i>Introduction</i>	116
4.4.1 <i>The home and family life, the nature of polygamy</i>	117
4.4.2 <i>The arrangement of Zulu huts around the cattle kraal in the courtyard and its significance</i>	120
4.4.3 <i>The huts constructions; its exterior and interior</i>	123
4.4.4 <i>Men's and women's daily chores around the homestead</i>	124
4.4.5 <i>Games children played in and around the homestead</i>	126
4.4.5.1 <i>The knowledge of birds and other wild animals</i>	126
4.4.5.2 <i>The makeshift houses and playing dolls</i>	127
4.4.5.3 <i>Hide and Seek</i>	128
4.4.5.4 <i>Skipping ropes and catching stones</i>	128
4.4.5.5 <i>Stick fights, bull fights and group hunting</i>	128
4.4.5.6 <i>Devious food gathering methods in the veld</i>	130
4.4.6 <i>The traditional homestead's protection against evils and sicknesses</i>	131
4.4.6.1 <i>Securing the homestead against evil (ukuqinisa umuzi)</i>	131
4.4.6.2 <i>The understanding and healing of diseases in around the homestead</i>	134
4.5 <b>TRADITIONAL ZULU ARTIFACTS</b>	138
4.5.0 <b>Introduction</b>	138
4.5.1 <b><i>Beads artifacts; as jewellery, for communication, religious and ceremonial festivals, fashion and art</i></b>	139
4.5.1.0 <i>Introduction</i>	139
4.5.1.1 <i>Girdles (izigege)</i>	140
4.5.1.2 <i>Hip-belts (iminaka)</i>	141
4.5.1.3 <i>The beaded neck ornaments (imigexo / izidanga)</i>	141

4.5.1.4 <i>Traditional beaded headbands and hairstyles</i>	142
4.5.1.5 <i>Bracelets and anklets as beads artifacts (iziggizo)</i>	144
4.5.1.6 <i>Beadworks as art of communication</i>	144
4.5.1.7 <i>Beads in religious and cultural activities, especially the religious dances of the Shembe Church and the Reed Dance Ceremony</i>	147
4.5.1.8 <i>Beads in fashion and art</i>	149
4.5.2 <i>Basketry and other straw products</i>	151
4.5.2.0 <i>Introduction</i>	151
4.5.2.1 <i>The making of the straw products</i>	151
4.5.2.2 <i>Dyes and designs on straw products</i>	153
4.5.3 <i>Women and pottery</i>	154
4.5.4 <i>Men and woodwork carvings</i>	157
4.6 <i>Food preparation and food dishes among the Zulu people</i>	158
4.6.0 <i>Introduction</i>	158
4.6.1 <i>Amasi or maas (curds of milk)</i>	158
4.6.2 <i>Meat</i>	159
4.6.3 <i>Samp</i>	160
4.6.4 <i>Sorghum beer (utshwala besizulu)</i>	160
4.6.5 <i>Pumpkin and watermelon porridges</i>	161
4.6.6 <i>Mealies or maize</i>	161
4.6.7 <i>Other edible vegetables, fruits and berries</i>	162
4.6.8 <i>Peanuts in various food dishes (Ukuthimbela)</i>	162
4.6.9 <i>Other beverages, especially the palm or ilala plants ale</i>	164
<b>4.7. <i>Zulu culture and child upbringing</i></b>	<b>165</b>
4.7.1 <i>The woman's role in the child – rearing, especially girls</i>	167
4.8. <i>The religious aspects of the Zulu people</i>	170
4.8.1 <i>The effect of Christianity and Westernization on the Zulu way of life.</i>	174
4.9 <i>Traditional community leadership structure</i>	175
4.9.1 <i>The concept of culture among the Zulu people</i>	176
4.9.2 <i>The people's response and involvement</i>	178
4.10 <i>Concluding remarks</i>	179



**CHAPTER 5****THE PLACES OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE AS TOURIST**

<b>ATTRACTION AREAS IN KWAZULU NATAL</b>	<b>182</b>
5.0 <i>Introduction</i>	182
5.1 <i>Why the places of historical importance need to be preserved</i>	183
5.2 <i>Emakhosini, the Graves of the Zulu Kings, Melmoth District</i>	184
5.2.1 <i>The King's palace and its importance</i>	184
5.2.2 <i>Location or direction to Emakhosini valley</i>	184
5.2.3 <i>Zulu's grave</i>	185
5.2.4 <i>Senzangakhona's grave and Inkatha kaZulu</i>	185
5.2.5 <i>The other graves marked</i>	186
5.2.6 <i>Piet Retief's grave, Melmoth District</i>	186
5.2.7 <i>The Battlefield of Tugela 1838, Mthunzini district "Impi Yase-Ndondakusuka"</i>	188
5.2.8 <i>Fort Kwa-Mondi and the Norwegian cemetery, Eshowe district</i>	189
<b>5.3 THE BATTLE OF MAQONGQO, DINGANE'S DEATH AND HIS GRAVE AT KWALIWENI IN INGWAVUMA DISTRICT</b>	<b>190</b>
5.3.1 <i>Mpande's defection to the Voortrekkers and Dingane's death</i>	190
5.3.2 <i>Why did Dingane not murder Mpande earlier?</i>	193
5.3.3 <i>Nodwengu, Mpande's palace at Mahlabathini</i>	194
5.3.4 <i>Ondini, Cetshwayo's palace at Mahlabathini</i>	195
5.3.5 <i>The ultimatum tree, "isihlahla samanqamu" on the banks of Tugela river</i>	196
5.3.6 <i>The battlefield of Ulundi, 1879</i>	199
5.3.7 <i>The battlefield of Etshaneni, Mkuze 1884</i>	200
5.4 <i>Concluding Remarks</i>	203

**CHAPTER 6**

<b>6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>205</b>
6.1 <i>Efforts of the development in the Lebombo SDI</i>	205
<b>6.2 Facing the Challenges of Change and Transformation</b>	<b>207</b>

<b>6.3 Project Planning and Implementation Policies</b>	<b>209</b>
6.4 <i>Elements Learnt by Being Involved in Tourism</i>	210
6.5 <i>Tourism's Co-Operation with other Development Organizations</i>	211
<b>6.6 Co – Operation with Formal and Informal Leaders</b>	<b>212</b>
6.7 <i>Ceremonies and Festivals as Traditional Means of Communication and Cultural Change</i>	213
6.8 <i>The Lebombo Sdi: the Gift for the Nation</i>	215
6.9 <b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	216
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	219
<b>INTERVIEWS</b>	233
<b>APPENDIX</b>	234

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

#### 1.0 PREAMBLE

This introductory chapter outlines the shape this study has to take. It covers the sub-topics: objectives of the study, motivation, definition of terms, literary criticism, methodology, scope of the study, literature review and bibliography.

#### 1.1 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY OR STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Looking at our country in the New Millenium and our government's emphasis, especially the President's emphasis on African Renaissance unlocked and unleashed a desire to put KwaZulu Natal in line with the current issues. In his State of the Nation Address, President Thabo Mbeki entitled his speech, "Unity in Action for Change." This speech was presented in the National Assembly, Cape Town, on 09 February 2001.

The speech is mentioned here because there are many issues and incentives that are drawn there and contributed a lot in the inception and growth of this study. The President says that every individual should ask himself or herself the question, "What am I doing to help build a better South Africa?" He further says that in the spirit of *Ubuntu* we must be proud to be Africans. The success of South Africa depends on the people who are mobilised to become active participants in the projects and processes targetted at the upliftment of their communities.

This study on Zulu cultural traditions and places of historical importance in KwaZulu Natal is an attempt at doing something and showing that something is done in KwaZulu Natal. It is an attempt to show that our province has a past to be revived and admired. It is an attempt at marketing KwaZulu Natal as a tourist

destination that will leave the people from all walks of life mesmerized and willing to come back again and again. The study aims to show that KwaZulu Natal is a province that is rich in cultural heritage, diversity, hospitality, memorable memoirs, beautiful landscape teeming with flora and fauna.

It is the fundamental aim of this study to remind ourselves as the people of South Africa that we have entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century having resolved and declared to ourselves that none but ourselves can extricate ourselves from the curse of poverty, joblessness and marginalisation. We have to unite in action to show that KwaZulu Natal, as well as South Africa as a whole, has a lot to offer in economic development. KwaZulu Natal has the historical sites, unique landscapes, amazing crafts, warm hospitality and heart-thrilling customs and traditions. These can be used to our advantage and benefit to draw tourists to our country.

The problem seems to be that the celebration and festivals that are staged from time to time are purely for enjoyment. The local communities are quite ignorant to realise that these cultural activities are assets in tourism industry for economic development. The study therefore hopes to contribute towards creating awareness and insight into marketing and turning these ordinary cultural events into special tourist attractions. The researcher sees lack of effective marketing strategies to promote these cultural events as part of sustainable economic growth.

Chili (1998: 4) puts the following challenge with regards to tourism and culture:

*There is a challenge to all tourism stakeholders, to the government to see that special attention is paid to the fragility of local cultures. There is also a further need to avoid the exploitation and destruction of the very essence of cultures, which both domestic and international tourists come to experience. This extends to all parties involved in tourism who should ensure that local inhabitants receive real benefits.*



The above challenge shows that the essence of tourism is community development that is sustainable, where the local inhabitants are the beneficiaries of such economic and social developments. The problem is that these local inhabitants lack knowledge of their rightful benefits, and they get exploited in the process. This ignorance can be lifted if research studies and tourism literature becomes available or accessible to the local communities. The lack or shortage of literature is an indication that little research has been undertaken with regards to the impact of cultural traditions to tourism development. This study is a way of accepting that challenge and to look at the role the Zulu cultural traditions can play in tourism development.

It also investigates how each of the three stakeholders, the government, private sector and local communities can contribute towards tourism development. How each of the three stakeholders can contribute to make a meaningful change for the betterment of the local communities. The study investigates the potential of Zulu cultural traditions in tourism development in the areas of KwaZulu Natal in the North of Tugela River to the South Africa and Mozambique Border. The fieldwork will try to establish how cultural tourism is perceived or understood by the local communities in the above delimited areas.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims at re-awakening the interest in the places of importance in KwaZulu Natal, interest in the revival of the cultural traditions, the beliefs, food preparations, crafts and being aware of the job opportunities offered by the government's plans about the Lebombo Spatial Development Initiative (LSDI). The underlying motive of the study is to create awareness that KwaZulu Natal is, and forever will be a tourist attraction destination. It is aimed at encouraging the people in their communities to be involved in one way or another in creating a conducive atmosphere that will make tourists feel welcome in KwaZulu Natal. The satisfied tourists will keep on coming back again and again which will in turn

create job opportunities and result in alleviation of poverty and unemployment in our province. Speaking of the benefits of tourism, Gill (1996: vi) says in his preface;

*Tourism today has been acknowledged as an industry, and both the government and the private sector have planned tourism as an essential component of their economics. For further development tourism needs planning investment and scientific study.*

This acknowledgement of tourism as a viable industry by the government has been shown by our Government by structuring a number of Spatial Development Initiatives, such as Lebombo SDI which is part of this study.

This study serves to show that there should be a link or a relationship between history and tourism and that the two can work wonders in contributing towards the development of the country's economy. Natural resources and the places of historical importance make KwaZulu Natal the most attractive tourist destination of the world, with its World Heritage site at St Lucia.

KwaZulu Natal offers everything in a rich variety – its mountains and hills, valleys, scenic beauty, monuments and memorials, traditional arts and dances, fairs and festivals and dozens of other precious things that make the country a mosaic of living traditions.

So the objective of this study is to remind the people in their communities that, as schools today speak of outcomes based education with its emphasis on entrepreneurial skills and job creation rather than job-seeking, so does the government speak of mobilising communities to work together to bring about change and better life for all its citizens. It is therefore the objective of this study to make the communities aware that it is not too late to start being involved in building our communities. Let us dream and have high hopes and visions for the future of our province, our country and ultimately our future generations.

### **1.3 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

There are only a few terms to be defined here, the rest will be defined as the need arises as they appear from time to time in the ensuing discussion. As the study progresses, it will appear that finer peculiarities which are distinctive of Zulu culture will need to be carefully and objectively examined. Therefore certain definitions will be made to make the study as accommodative as possible. As the study touches on tourism, these few terms need to be defined to eliminate diverse meanings that can cause ambiguities and perplexities.

#### **1.3.1 Tourism**

The South African National Parks Annual Report (1999/ 2000:4) defines tourism as the outdoor adventure activities where people can participate in activities such as the night drives, hiking trails, game viewing, birding and other activities. As for Smith (1995:22) tourism is a set of activities of a person travelling to a place outside his or her usual environment for a particular period of time. The sole purpose of tourism is to relax both mentally and physically by enjoying oneself in the things that matter most in life, such as learning about people, their culture and nature.

#### **1.3.2. Eco-Tourism**

In his book, “ The Eco-Tourism Boom; Planning for development and Management,” Boo (1998) says that eco-tourism can be defined as travelling to relatively undisturbed and uncontaminated natural areas with the aim of admiring, studying and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants, animals as well as any cultural manifestations both past and present. Boo (1998) further emphasizes the fact that eco-tourism needs to be promoted because of its emphasis on environmental and historical issues.

### 1.3.3 Host Community

As the study wishes to see KwaZulu Natal being a prominent tourist attraction destination, something has to be said about its people who are going to be the host communities. Thomas (1991) refers to the host community as the local inhabitants of the region that receive the tourists or visitors. The community has an extended meaning that includes all the stakeholders who benefit from tourism revenue. The host community should be as hospitable as possible. This will mean that the community members should go an extra mile to make the tourist feel welcome. The hospitality of the host community should make the tourist to feel that travelling is a break away from daily chores, daily worries and daily vicissitudes that make one's life truly stressful and full of miseries.

### 1.4 Literary criticism

Critics in reviewing and commenting about literature apply literary criticism. This is done to make their studies balanced and backed by approved literary theories. For Webster (1996:6) literary criticism involves the reading, interpretation and commenting on texts that have been referred to as literature. Literary criticism therefore involves analysing the qualities and characteristics of literary works.

Krashen (1982: 22) when commenting about the reading of a text, mentions that reading entails Input Hypothesis and the Affective Filter Hypothesis. Thus, Krashen further argues that reading involves interaction between the reader and the writer of the text, which results in a communication act. As a result of this interaction, literary criticism takes places.

In their comment about literary criticism, Dietrich and Sundel (1978: 6) say that the rules, principles and traditions of craftsmanship in literary criticism should be understood and followed by the critics.



## **1.5 Methodology or modus operandi**

It is of utmost importance to mention the methods to be used or applied in seeing through this study. The study will be based on both printed and unprinted materials. The printed material will include annual reports, related literature, magazines, newspapers, theses and dissertations. Unprinted material will include oral interviews, pictures or photos where necessary and possible to substantiate the verbal descriptions.

## **1.6 Scope of the study**

The study aims at linking tourism to the places of historical importance and cultural traditions in KwaZulu Natal. Therefore the study will cover, in detail or few notes, the following places of historical importance:

### **1.6.1 Places in the Mahlabathini District**

- (a) Ulundi Battlefields
- (b) Ondini, King Cetshwayo's Palace
- (c) Nodwengu, King Mpande's Palace

### **1.6.2 Places in the Eshowe – Melmoth District**

- (a) Piet Retief's Grave, Mgungundlovu in Melmoth
- (b) Emakhosini, Graves of Zulu Kings, Melmoth
- (c) Fort Nongqayi, Eshowe
- (d) Fort Kwa-Mondi, Eshowe

### **1.6.1 Dingane's Tomb, Kwaliweni; Ingwavuma**

### **1.6.2 Nongoma Battlefields, between Dinuzulu and Zibhebhu**

### **1.6.3 Tshaneni Battlefields, Mkhuze – Lebombo Area**

As the study is written with an objective to link history and tourism, the historical notes on these places of historical importance will be researched and provided for the tourist to appreciate. Traditional food, arts and crafts sites, attire and customs will be featured to awaken the interest in the way of life of the Zulu people. The study will also try to show that tourism does not only benefit the tourists, but also helps the communities to discover themselves, where do they come from, where are they heading for and to preserve their culture for the future generations. Above all tourism helps us to learn how other people live their lives in different places or other parts of the world.

The study will cover the areas between Tugela River and Ngwavuma-Manguzi areas in KwaZulu Natal North Coast. It will then stretch to the areas in KwaZulu Natal Midlands such as Msinga-Muden and Mahlabathini-Nongoma areas.

#### **1.7 The value and significance of the study**

The study is an attempt at bridging the gap between theory and practice in matters dealing with tourism issues. It is hoped that it will help those in tourism industry, especially the host communities, to understand the technicalities and principles involved in the implementations of tourism development. The fertile ground for tourism development in KwaZulu Natal has been exposed, it is now up to everyone to participate in the economic development of our province and our country.

As pointed out in the methodology section, the study will be done by conducting interviews and taking pictures substantiating the need for programmes that will involve the communities. The communities awareness of each other's way of life as reflected in values, institutions and practices will be observed. The interviews will be aimed at developing cultural analysis and awareness through questioning, assumptions, connections and impact on tourism. The ultimate aim will be to create awareness that the communities need to learn to develop, promote and

implement programmes that are sustainable because they are intergrated into their culture.

It is the aim, the value and significance of the study to promote awareness that all cultures, even the Zulu culture, need to occupy their rightful places in tourism development. Every culture need to participate in the objectives of the African Renaissance. The Zulu Cultural Groups can highlight social problems and achievements through song, dance, poetry storyelling and many more in an entertaining manner. In this way, the communities will be aware that tourism is an industry that should benefit the people on a broad spectrum; young and old, black and white, men and women, in cities and rural areas. The communities will be made aware that there are three stakeholders, the government, communities and tourism industries that should co-operate to make tourism a truly labour-intensive industry with a difference. It these stakeholders co-operate they will be able to take jobs to people in some remote areas of the country. These jobs might include catering, entertainment, transportation and accommodation, curio manufacturers, sanitation services, care rentals, beverage supplies and many more.

The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism Annual Report (1999/2000: 8-9) outlines the following points as the Government's Action in growing tourism;

- (a) To provide funds for marketing pruposes.
- (b) To ensure that tourism should be Government led, private sector driven and community based.
- (c) To set up Tourism Branches which will embark on information gathering and feed the information back to the stakeholders.
- (d) To embark on Quality Assurance to ensure that tourism products and services are upo to the international standards.

- (e) To ensure good service by setting up hospitality training initiatives, with some schools offering Travel and Tourism as Matric subjects.
- (f) The Government will help small, medium and micro tourism entrepreneurs to thrive in their markets.

The fieldwork will try to find out whether the communities are aware of these provisions the Government has to help alleviate poverty and joblessness.

## **1.8 CHAPTER DIVISIONS**

### **CHAPTER 1**

#### **INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

This chapter outlines the shape of the study. It introduces and defines the motivation of the study, its objectives, definition of terms, literary criticism, methodology, its scope, literature review and the value of the study.

### **CHAPTER 2**

#### **LITERARY CRITICISM AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

Literary criticism involves reading, interpretation and commenting on literary texts in order to analyse their characteristics and qualities. This will be done to make it balanced and backed by approved literary theories.

This chapter on literary criticism and literature review tries to put the study in a historical perspective and to build a body of accepted knowledge on tourism, cultural traditions and places of importance in KwaZulu Natal.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **THE LEBOMBO SDI AND THE PROMOTION OF INVESTMENTS, JOBS AND THE PEOPLE'S LIVELIHOOD**

This chapter looks at the Lebombo SDI, its acceptance and impact on the people of the region. The key issues in this chapter are the expectations of both the government and the host communities in the Lebombo SDI. The main concern is to see how the people in these communities make use of the tourism opportunities granted to them. The chapter will also look at tourism in other developed countries as a way of looking at problems, challenges and solutions related to tourism.

### **CHAPTER 4**

#### **THE ZULU WAY OF LIFE**

The way of life of the Zulu people in the host communities and the way these people depict their cultural diversities will feature throughout the study. But this chapter will be dedicated to the way of life the Zulu people in general. It will deal with their cultural traditions, how the society is ordered, marriage ceremonies, the leaders in the community, the enrolling of cadets in the regiments, the kind of food they eat, their arts and crafts, treatment of sickness and diseases, and many more. All will be discussed in a way that will create an interest and promote cultural tourism in KwaZulu Natal.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **THE PLACES OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE AS TOURIST ATTRACTION AREAS IN KWAZULU NATAL**

This chapter does not claim to be exhaustive but only deals with a few among many places of historical importance in KwaZulu Natal. These places with their awe-inspiring beauty and majestic landscapes are quite attractive and breathtaking. The visit to these places make the history of Zululand's past come alive and makes one willing to come back again and again. Some of the historical places discussed are:

1. Ulundi Battlefield, Mahlabathini
2. Ondini, Cetshwayo's Palace, Mahlabathini
3. Nodwengu, Mpande's Palace, Mahlabathini
4. Emakhosini, Graves of Zulu Kings, Melmoth
5. King Dingane; Grave, Kwaliweni, Ingwavuma
6. Isandlwana
7. Nkandla Forest, King Cetshwayo's Grave, and many more places in the chapter.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION**

This last chapter summarizes the findings of the study. It also points out some recommendations suggested at the end of the study.

## **1.9 ABBREVIATIONS USED**

- 1.9.1 D.A.C.S.T. = Department of Arts, Culture, Science and  
Technology
- 1.9.2 LEBOMBO SDI = Lebombo Spatial Development Initiative.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERARY CRITICISM AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

One might expect this chapter to deal with literary theories such as the Russian formalism, Western literary theory, Defamiliarisation, Jakobson's theory of Metaphor and Metonymy, New criticism, Cultural element and Cultural images, but it doesn't. Literary criticism involves reading, interpretation and commenting on literary texts in order to analyze their characteristics and qualities, to make the study balanced and backed by approved literary theories as mentioned above. This chapter on literary criticism and literature review tries to put the study in a historical perspective and to build a body of accepted knowledge on tourism and cultural traditions in KwaZulu Natal, what the area has to offer.

#### 2.1 LITERATURE ON APPREHENSION AND CONSTRAINTS TOWARD TOURISM

Literary criticism helps in knowing, understanding, analysis, interpretation and evaluation of the social impact of any literary material. Most of the available literature in tourism emphasizes the economic benefits of tourism. The literature that does deal with the social impact of tourism only highlight the negative social effects of tourism. It mentions the negative sentiments such as damage to people's morals and damages to the environment.

Lickorish (1997) argues that these skeptics lose sight of the many positive and important social aspects to tourism. Lickorish mentions three important things that need to be considered for tourism to flourish. Those three things are: financial benefits, social aspect and the strategies to overcome barriers to participation. All these three areas of tourism development deserve equal attention.



Mbongwe (1998) says that because tourism affect us in many ways, the people should be made aware of the economic, social impact of tourism and the role it plays in improving the quality of life, standard of living, promotion of peace and understanding among other people.

Both Mbongwe (1998) and Lickorish (1997) agree on the point that strategies should be devised to allay the people's fears and apprehensions toward tourism. These strategies might include seminars, talks, literature, brochures and every possible means of educating the people, especially the youth, about the importance of tourism in the economic and social development of their community and the country as the whole.

## **2.2 LITERATURE DEALING WITH TOURISM FOR ALL AGE GROUPS**

Tourism seems to succeed in bridging the gaps between different age groups, between different cultures and the gap among the different racial groups. MacIntosh (1995) says tourism, especial domestic travel, familiarizes people with other part of their country and creates a spirit of patriotism and humanity.

*International tourism* helps the host communities and the outside visitors to be acquainted with each other. The youth and the adults can both benefit in the tourism industry. The youth can find jobs as tour guides, participate in the form of song and dance, theatrical performances whilst the adults get involved as organizers of the events for entertaining the visitors, making and selling their merchandise.

The white paper on Tourism (1996) emphasizes the importance of the government's involvement in the planning of tourism for the youth. Among other things the white paper proposes that programmes should be made available to encourage youth travel market, where special prices for travel and accommodation would be made for the youth, the youth to be employed in the

tourism sector as guides and trackers and also to offer the youth travelling opportunities while also earning some income.

These are the opportunities we hope to see materializing in the Lebombo SDI region. To show that elderly people are not left outside or behind in tourism boom, Mbongwe (1996: 13) says:

*For elderly people in the community, recreation can be enriching. Tourism is also an ideal form of recreation for the elderly because they are free from the burden of raising children and from the hassles of employment. The elderly are sometimes faced with the problem of boredom and loneliness. This time could be used positively in tourism where the aged could form friendship and simply have fun.*

Even though Mbongwe gives reasons here why the elderly should be involved in tourism, it appears that these concerns are the same and applicable for the different age groups. She says the elderly have a plenty of leisure time because they are free from the burden of raising the children and hassles of daily work loads in places of employment. May be she speaks of other races that are free from raising children. Our African counterparts are not free from raising children because the African grandmothers are the ones who raise children for their grandchildren. We do not wish to debate that point but to say that those who are still in the business of raising children and still burdened by the hassles of employment, tourism offers an opportunity to cool off from these daily vicissitudes. The scenic beauty, times of tranquility in the secluded mountains, the jolly care free moments with the one you love, the relaxed atmosphere are the sought after opportunities for everyone. This is what tourism has to offer and KwaZulu Natal's Lebombo SDI region has more in abundance.

Literature on tourism confirms that tourism is one of the means people can explore and find ways that can contribute to mutual understanding and appreciation between racial groups, the recipes for peace, MacIntosh (1995), Ryan (1991), Mbongwe (1998) and Theobald (1994).

These scholars define “peace” as the absence of violence and living without fear. The world leaders acknowledge and regard tourism as very important means in bringing about peace and stability in the international arena.

Many world leaders and statesmen acknowledge that as people move throughout the world they learn to know each other, their customs and general way of life. Thus they are building a level of international understanding which can positively influence the atmosphere for world peace.

Literature on tourism and travel in South Africa emphasizes the effect and benefits of a transitional period. The abolition of the Separate Humanities Act of 1953, Land Act of 1913, Group Areas Act of 1950 and many other segregatory laws paved the way for *mutual understanding, respect and trust among different races* in South Africa. The abolition or scrapping off of these discriminatory laws made it possible for all the people of South Africa to be involved in tourism. They should make a profitable use of this fruitful transitional period by offering a friendly hand and appreciate the rich human, ecological, economical, social and cultural diversity in our country.

Archer (1995) says that domestic tourism has a tremendous impact in the integration of different racial groups and boosting national pride. Travelling within one’s country helps one to appreciate and develop a sense of national pride. Travelling within one’s country helps one to appreciate and develop a sense of national unity that was ruined by regional fragmentation caused by apartheid architects such as Verwoerd. Domestic travel to historical monuments, places of historical importance such as battlefields, game reserves, nature parks helps one to blend the past, present and the future into one dynamic entity and a precious gift for the future generations. This is the hope and vision for the stakeholders in the Lebombo SDI region.

### 2.3 LITERATURE ON CRIME AND VIOLENCE ON TOURISM

South Africa has undergone profound changes in recent years. Before 1994, South Africa was relatively isolated from the rest of the world, which led to tourism stagnation. These profound changes has seen South Africa becoming a competitive player in tourism industry, a crucial partner in co-operative ventures, both locally and internationally. This meant a shift towards self-sufficiency, embracing a far more pragmatic and less inward-looking mindset.

Coupled with these changes and improvements is crime and violence which continue to tarnish the image of our country. To alleviate the problem of crime and violence, stakeholders in tourism development initiatives work together with community structures such as police forums and non-governmental organizations to teach the communities that tourism is there to help the people to free themselves from poverty and degradation. The workshops, seminars and the media help people to understand co-operation between tourism industry and the communities, to address the problem of poverty and joblessness. Based on co-operative education philosophy, tourism seminars and workshops adopt a market-related and career-oriented approach. The strategic transformation goals for tourism are collaboration, delivery and support services. By the pursuit of these goals, economic growth and social stability are relatively sure to be achieved, crime and violence kept under control.

The workable common ground for crime prevention is laid in the above collaborative arrangements among tourism industry, structures in the communities, non-governmental organizations and related stakeholders.

*Violence and tourism debates do not only deal with peace between human beings but also the non-abusive use of our natural environment. The escalating rate of violence in our environment needs urgent attention. MacIntoch (1995) speaks of violence caused by the destruction of forests when people gather firewood and*

building material, poaching, hunting and many other elements that destroy the environment. Taylor (1991: 38) has a picture of a pepper-bark tree (*Warburgia Salutaris*) in the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park which was barked almost to death for medicinal purposes. He cries of the violence of over-exploitation that destroys our environment. Taylor speaks of the joint ventures between the Natal Parks Board and the communities in fight against crimes to natural resources.

Garland (1989) speaks of the efforts that have been made between the government and the private sector in restoring wetlands and improving land use in certain catchment areas of Natal's coastal rivers. He says a remarkable success has been achieved over the years to salvage the land. Tourism therefore has a crucial role to play in developing a custodial relationship between men and their environments. Thus tourism promotes awareness that living in peace and harmony with nature is a responsibility of every citizen of the country. The loss of the natural resources is a loss for the tourism industry which largely depends on these resources. Begg (1990: 48) warns against violence to environment by saying:

*..... good information about the characteristics of a damaged wetland, especially hydrology, careful design and sufficient attention in monitoring and maintenance. Failures in the field of land restorations stem mainly from a lack of reliable guidance, insufficient financial resources, poor understanding of general wetland parameters, poor planning and design, an inadequate monitoring and maintenance.*

Even though Begg here speaks of wetlands only, the comment and warning is relevant for all conservation areas. The point that is prominent in this comment is that poor understanding, inadequate monitoring and maintenance of our natural environments lead to neglect and violence without calculating the cost of such damage. From the look of things, tourism plays a pivotal role in educating the people about the maintenance, restoration and a fight against violence on our environments. Tourism helps people to understand their relationship to natural resources through reliable guidance.

To sum up on the impact of crime and violence on tourism, we have to conclude that people have to be taught that crime destroys the opportunities for economic growth. Tourists fear being raped, their cars hijacked, their houses being broken into, their personal belongings confiscated and fear being attacked by thugs while touring. The communities have to be taught that violence scares tourists away and the result being that opportunities for job creations are shattered. The tourist shy away from places where they might encounter political violence, faction fights and taxi violence which are cases for bad publicity.

Information on crime is readily available from police records and literature related to crime and tourism, Mathison and Wall (1982), Pizan (1984), Ryan (1983). What one can glean from this literature is that it is not only the tourists who get affected by crime but also the local residents become victims in the process. Therefore crime prevention does not benefit the tourists only but the communities as well.

#### **2.4 LITERATURE ON NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF TOURISM**

Mlambo (1998) counts several negative side effects of tourism. Among other things he says tourism development brings with it multi-nationals and their overarching web of influence. He is troubled by the injustices in tourism industry, in that these foreign investors with chain of hotels, import their own people to work in these hotels. The local people often do not get the jobs, if they do get the jobs, the local people are not given specialist jobs. Mlambo points to these injustices as grounds for irritation and negative assessment on tourism.

O'Grady (1981) questions the role of tourism as a development strategy and rather considers it as neo-colonialism, as it is normally controlled by foreign investors and their companies. Mathison and Wall (1982: 149) regard tourism as part of moral decay in the host communities. They say prostitution has always been inextricably interwoven to travel and tourism. Among the moral decays that Mathison and Wall mention, is that tourism creates locations and situations where prostitutes and clients flourish, tourists escape their normal life by shrouding themselves in anonymity. They further state that liberalization of women through tourism is overstretched to result in liberal moral values.

O'Grady further maintains that prostitution sometimes forms part of tourism package in other countries and therefore there are high levels of prostitution in various tourist destination countries.

These and other negative side effects on tourism are too harsh, biased and subjective. These writers have no proven causal relationship between tourism and their conclusions to substantiate their accusations. What these critics fail to discern is that these are unproven apprehensions and perceptions people have about tourism due to being ill-informed and ignorant about the parameters, practicalities and dynamics of tourism.

## 2.5 LITERATURE THAT LAUDS THE BEAUTY OF KWAZULU NATAL

There is a wide range of literature that appreciates KwaZulu Natal as if it is advertising it for the whole world to see and marvel at its majestic mountains and scenic beauty of its landscapes. Hurford (1995: 53) says;

*KwaZulu Natal, the birthplace of parks. What it lacks in size, it makes for up in stature. KwaZulu Natal has a remarkable game parks and nature reserves, all contained within an area that constitutes only eight percent of the country's total land area. Its 570 km shoreline is laced with two-thirds of the nation's estuaries creating specialized wetlands and marine habitats for flora and fauna found nowhere else in South Africa. Its diverse ecosystem range from forest to grassland, bushveld to thornveld, coastal dune forests, swamps and marshlands to coral reefs.*

What Hurford tries to say in a nutshell is that the Lebombo Spatial Development Initiative region is quite a haven suitable for tourism. The region is the place where the tropical and subtropical zones meet. It is the place with the world's most significant wilderness areas – the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park, with its cluster of parks and reserves along the coast as far north as the Kosi Bay. The region has estuarine systems and towering dunes, coral reefs and swamps supporting a variety of animals, birds, marine life, flora and fauna. All these amenities are what the Lebombo SDI region has to offer in abundance.

The Lebombo SDI lies in the region where one feels being in a paradise where the waters are warm and blue. It is the place where the crew of 50/50, SABC's Nature Conservation programme frequent to make their shootings of documentaries about the giant leatherback and loggerhead turtles. These species of turtles swarm the beaches of KwaZulu Natal to lay their eggs in the nests of white sands. The game parks boast of large numbers of black and white rhinos rescued



from extinction. As if not enough to say on the laudatory note about KwaZulu Natal, Hurford (1995: 53) says about the stay in the area;

*Some areas within Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Park can be traversed on foot, hikers have the option of using pack donkeys to cart luggages to bush camps. Both Umfolozi and Hluhluwe sections have hutted camps, lodges and bush camps people can sleep under the stars. These camps are set in surroundings of extraordinary beauty, and visitors are likely to spend several days savouring all that is on offer here.*

The beauty and hospitality of KwaZulu Natal and its people is prominent in all the literature that deals with tourism attraction of the area. Many of the rest camps in the area are rated as the finest in the country. We can point to camps such as the Ntshongwe Rest Camp and Mpila Rest Camp in Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Park, Ndumu Pan at Mkhuze Reserve, to mention only a few.

The special attractions that mostly come to the fore in the laudatory literature are the Guided Wilderness Trails that are organized for tourists. These adventures in the forests are normally followed by jovial and convivial evenings around campfire. As part of the guided Wilderness Trails, tourist enjoys a spectacular view of flamingos that proliferate in shallow lakes and salt pans. They find opportunity to view the hippos that spend the greater part of their day submerged in the water. The scuba diving enthusiasts feast themselves on the rich palette of underwater sights, shoals of fish within the protected boundaries of extensive marine estuaries.

There are curio shops littered along the roads where one can buy beadwork, woodwork, pottery, crafts and other souvenirs. Indeed KwaZulu Natal is quite a land of beauty, breathtaking landscapes, the land of wonder and magic. It casts its spell on everyone who visits it and makes one to come back again and again. If

someone writes about KwaZulu Natal, does it as though it were an epic, an ode or just an advertisement to catch the reader's attention and imagination. This is what Taylor (1991: 5) does when writing about St Lucia and its surroundings;

*St Lucia is a protected natural area with five distinctive ecosystems, each of which has plant life. The purpose of this book is to give you an understanding of the ecosystems so that your appreciation and enjoyment may be enhanced. The Greater St Lucia Wetland Park is a jigsaw puzzle of St Lucia Park, St Lucia Marine Reserve, Sodwana Bay National Park, Cape Vidal state Forest and several other inter-linking pieces. The boundaries of these pieces are artificial but are now linked to form an integrated natural area.*

From the review of literature so far, it is no doubt that the Lebombo SDI is situated in a good region and what remains is for the people involved in tourism development in the area to make a fruitful use of the given opportunity. What is left to be seen is whether the investors make it happen for the tourists to feel the spirit of the place, enjoy and appreciate the ecosystem of the area. What the stakeholders need to take care of, is the shaping of their business enterprises, to find ways and means to get the communities and interested groups to understand the technicalities involved in tourism development.

Among the business enterprises being charted in the Lebombo SDI, is the marketing strategy. Planning is in place to make the tourism prospects a reality, means to attract the people to come and "feel the spirit of the place," as mentioned by Taylor above, are underway. Many of available literature deals with the history of Greater St Lucia Wetlands Park and the surrounding areas, Taylor (1991), Pooley and Player (1995). They tell the story of the sea level changes, fossils and floods, biogeography, climate of the area, the marine ecosystem and many issues which are of interest to both tourists and local residents. All of these issues are readily available in many of the Rest Camps in brochures and narration during the Guided Wilderness Trails or around the campfires. All these form a

package that makes touring the Lebombo SDI region an unforgettable feeling and experience.

There is a book written by Pooley and Player (1995) entitled “KwaZulu Natal Wildlife Destinations”. This book covers Southern Natal Coastal Areas, Durban and Environs, North Coast, Southern Zululand, Central Zululand, Maputoland, Natal Midlands, Northern Natal and Drakensberg Areas. This book is mentioned here because it touches upon the areas that are within the Lebombo SDI region. These two writers compiled a list of game reserves and resorts, private ranches as great destinations in KwaZulu Natal, and what each has to offer.

They included the Name, Location, Features, Description, Historical Notes and Accommodation Facilities. Pooley and Player (1995: 8) are so poetical and passionate when writing about beauty, sights and sounds of KwaZulu Natal;

*In the riverine forests to the north, birds song in spring welled up like a great symphony, fishing owls and kettledrums calls of the crested guinea fowls- but above all else this vibrant sound from the birds and animals alike, there rose and fell like a great tenor the haunting, melodic cry of the fish eagle. In the pans in the far north, surrounded by pale green fever trees and filled by the annual flooding and meeting of rivers, there were tiger fish, black and silver and red, stalking and streaking after their prey in the shallows.*

Pooley and Player here draw a picture of a land of plenty, where one can look and wonder, the land of game and bird viewing. Indeed KwaZulu Natal is the land where one can feel as being part of the crew making nature conservation documentaries such as Nature on Trek, 50/50, Survival and National Geographic Specials. Pooley and Player make it clear that KwaZulu Natal is the place where one can see pans and inlets that form an intricate mosaic providing a habitat for an infinite variety of birds – storks, herons, waders, warblers, white pelicans and

flamingos. They extend the imaginations to the massive shoals of fish surging to the mouth of the lakes up into the narrows, jumping in silver flashes while crocodiles and fish eagles stalk their preys. These are the sights and attractions, the puzzles and miracles that form part of the Lebombo SDI tourism package.

## 2.6 LITERARY THEORIES AND LITERARY CRITICISM

### 2.6.0 Introduction

This section deals with literary theories, the keys to understanding what constitutes a text worthy of studying. The literary theories are used by literary critics or scholars who seek to appropriate a particular kind of literature and invest it with universal values and truths. Webster (1996: 5-6) says the following about literary criticism;

*Literary theories do offer various ways of defining literature, or at least thinking about what the issues might be in attempting any kind of definition..... Literary theory as an area of knowledge then does not propose or offer any easy or watertight solutions as to what literature is or how it should be studied.*

If one looks at Webster (1995) above, literary criticism involves the reading, interpretation and commenting on texts. It is therefore clear that literary theories offer the relevant procedures and explicit methods of coming into assumptions and judgements, and how these were arrived at. Mathenjwa (1999: 50) comments and says the following about literary theories;

*Literary theories should be used in the analysis, interpretation and evaluation of material. Literary criticism functions as a way of knowing and understanding literature. These theories are necessary if we want to find meaning from literature.*

The following theories will help us to make a backing or foundation for this study on Zulu cultural traditions. We will apply these literary theories on texts dealing with tourism industry in KwaZulu Natal, especially the areas north of Thukela River. We shall not deal with many Literary Theories but with only those that we deem necessary to mention for the purpose of backing this study.

### 2.6.1 Russian Formalism

Russian Formalism is one of the Western literary theories that are used in the analysis of literature to uncover its elements. Jefferson and Robey (1989: 27) say the following about the objectives of the Russian Formalism;

*... was largely based on the genetic approach, the critics, or rather scholars, concentrated their energies on uncovering the sources and genesis of particular works and the role of biography, history and history of ideas in these genetic studies obviously reduced the importance of literature itself in literary scholarship.*

The above comment shows that the formalists wanted to justify the independence of literary studies. This is confirmed by Mathenjwa (1999: 53) who says that the formalists recognized the need for a theory that was going to focus on literature and its literariness. This need then required a specific definition of literature that would differ from the ones used by previous or former scholars. It means that the literary theory needed a systematic approach in distinguishing literary works from day-to-day forms of communication. The formalists meant that there should be scientific studies of literary techniques and devices to make literature quite different from other forms of discourse. It becomes clear that then that when we speak of tourism literature, we need to know what literature constitutes. We need to understand the language used in tourism. Thus we can understand the need and

importance of literature dealing with cultural activities in the development of tourism industry.

### 2.6.2 Defamiliarization

Defamiliarization is an offshoot of Russian Formalism and it puts its emphasis on both form and context of the text. It was first introduced by Shklovsky in 1917 as Mathenjwa (1999: 56) says;

*It is important to mention right from the start that Defamiliarization is not a theory on its own but an aspect of the Russian Formalism Approach. Defamiliarization as a theory was introduced by Viktor Shklovsky as early as 1917 in his essay entitled: Art as Technique”.*

Defamiliarization maintains that literary language has the ability to defamiliarize, to make strange the familiar world. It maintains that literature changes the reader's mode of perception. Literature shows that all versions of reality can be constructed and construed. Webster (1996: 38) says the following about defamiliarization;

*His (Shklovsky's) thesis was that in most activities perception becomes a habitual, automatic process where we are often unaware of, or take for granted our view of things and the relations between them. Poetic or literary language could disturb this “habitualization” and make us see things differently and anew.*

Defamiliarization and other literary theories make the reader aware that a text has no single meaning or that there needs to be an accepted and normative way of reading through a text. The text can produce different meanings based on the

conditions and contexts in which it is found and interpreted. Mathenjwa (1999: 56) continues and says the following about Shklovsky and defamiliarization theory;

*Shklovsky was concerned with the fact that the people's views on things and relations between them are usually taken for granted. People habitually do not become aware of the way they perceive things, they do not notice things they just become familiar to them. According to Shklovsky, poetic language disturbs this habitualization.....*

Literary criticism and literary theories should thus be seen as a kind of alignment between the language of the text and the language used to read and interpret the text. This alignment might change for a number of reasons, one being that reading conditions change as do the literary forms. Defamiliarization teaches that meaning is never complete, never fully realized and cannot be contained. In this regard, Mathenjwa (1999: 58) says that literature can be interpreted in various ways, thus defamiliarization helps to discern any basic meaning of the term used in language communication.

Defamiliarization can be fruitfully applied in the study of literature on cultural tourism and tourism in general.

If one looks at tourism literature, especially the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism Annual Reports, one finds that tourism literature helps the reader to look at tourism differently. You begin to look at things anew, with a changed perception. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism Annual Report (1999/2000: 12-13) says the following about the importance of tourism;

*Foreign tourists stay an average of 16.9 days in South Africa and spend R842 a day. More than six million people visit South Africa a year.*

The above report is concluded by a fact file which shows that travel and tourism is the largest earner of foreign currency. According to the above mentioned fact file, tourism brings an estimated R20 billion a year into the South African Economy, which is more than 8,2 million to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The information received from tourism literature points out that for every eight tourists to South Africa, one new job is created which makes tourism to be everyone's business.

### **2.6.3 New Criticism**

New Criticism puts its emphasis on trying to come up with the ways of evaluating the experience brought up by the text in question. Its primary objective is to find relevance of the literary works of art to life, it has a humanistic approach.

New criticism rather concentrates more on the reader rather than the author. In this regard, we find Jefferson and Robey (1989: 74) saying;

*Richards ..... calls for a criticism that deals directly with the distinctive properties of literature, where he differs from the formalists is in defining these properties in terms of human experience and human value. Richards' emphasis was on the reader's response to literature.....*



New criticism enjoys a wide acceptance among the scholars as it seems to be true to literature, life and the historical context. Mathenjwa (1999:61) says the following about the inception of New Criticism;

*New Criticism as a literary theory started in England by I.A. Richards and T.S. Elliot. This was later continued in the United States of America in the forties, fifties and sixties, hence referred to as the Anglo-American New Criticism.*

New criticism proposes that one recreates the reading process, you read the text as a whole and certain ideas take shape in your mind. As you read more closely, these ideas develop and even change your perception and direction. As you read the text and reflect on the details, these add to your sense of what is going on in the text. By the end, your attention to the details of the text, accompanied by your piecing together of your impression enables you to arrive at a coherent understanding of the text as a whole.

Jefferson and Robey (1989: 81-82) deal at length with New Criticism as a literary device and its importance. They say that the writer's experience and history should not influence criticism. They say that the text should be looked at as it is and readily accessible to the reader who has the knowledge of its language and culture. The text is not a vehicle for conveying feelings, but an independent object with distinctive features of its own.

New Criticism can help us maintain that the Zulu cultural traditions should be understood as objects with their distinctive features or properties. These cultural traditions are unique, thus they can be employed as real wealth and boost tourism development in KwaZulu Natal. These cultural traditions can promote the sustainable development and utilization of cultural resources.

#### 2.6.4 The Cultural element

African Renaissance seeks to make it a point that the Africans do not lose touch with their cultural heritage. Its emphasis is on the revival of the sense of being an African. The Cultural element in literature makes it a point that the people cherish what is their own, their culture, language, history and all that makes them a unique people, their sense of being. Mathenjwa (1999: 69) says the following about the cultural element and culture preservation;

*The concept of cultural development and the history of cultural ideas and beliefs are found in literature. Cultural elements reflected in language, belief systems, customs and other aspects of existence need to be tackled and very much engaged with the literary qualities of IsiZulu Culture. ....Should you destroy the people's language, you are indeed destroying their culture, history and their sense of being.*

It becomes clear that one cannot separate a person from his or her culture and every literature has a cultural element. The Government of South Africa has realized the importance of African indigenous cultures in the promotion and development of tourism industry and economic growth. The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology Annual Report (2000/2001: 27) looks at the importance of indigenous cultures to tourism and says;

*There is an emerging realization, both in South Africa and in the rest of the world that culture has a critical role to play in development whether sustaining built and lived heritage, recognizing the impact that culture has in defining identity and fostering a sense of empowerment. The benefits of culture as a tool of development are numerous.*

Indeed there are numerous benefits of culture, firstly employment can be created at a relatively low cost. Culture has the potential to develop identity and community ties among the community members. Culture also has that potential to create sustainable opportunities for revenue generation.

There are many other literary theories such as structuralism and post-structuralism, new historicism, post-colonial theory, post-modernism and many more. These theories mentioned above are sufficient to assist the reader in understanding the purpose of the study and the relevance of Zulu cultural traditions to tourism development in KwaZulu Natal.

## **2.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The literature covered in this chapter reveals that there are pros and cons in the development of tourism industry in the Lebombo SDI region. Whatever the case may be, tourism and nature conservation works co-operatively to realize a common goal – long term social and economic upliftment for the benefit of the host communities. The Lebombo SDI has made awareness that both Tourism and Parks Boards have to work together in looking after the natural resources which are valuable national and international assets. The stakeholders in the Lebombo SDI are working co-operatively with the government in stressing the need to maintain the natural resources, what is termed, “life support systems”. Taylor (1991: 40) says that to ensure a high quality of life, it is necessary for development of any kind to go hand in hand with nature conservation. There are economic benefits in conserving these natural resources as they attract tourists and anglers to these parts of the world, which in turn increases foreign exchange.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THE LEBOMBO SDI AND THE PROMOTION OF INVESTMENTS, JOBS AND THE PEOPLE'S LIVELIHOOD**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

How can popular culture, heritage and the people's way of life be used as a strategic plan to deal with the question of joblessness in our country? This is a pressing question that is the main focus of our attention in this chapter. Our main concern will be a look at the potential for job creation through cultural tourism in the Lebombo SDI region.

#### **3.1 WHAT IS CULTURAL TOURISM?**

This study is an attempt at trying to make people aware that as host communities they should not fall prey from outsiders who come to enrich themselves and demean their culture. The host communities should work out ways to maximize the advantages of tourism industry to their benefit. The control and ownership of cultural activities should fall on the hands of the host communities. They should learn to guard against the dangers of exploitation by the outsiders or foreigners.

Tourism has an irreversible social, human, economic and cultural impact. Its impact is largely felt in the sphere of monuments and historical sites. Cultural tourism is that form of tourism whose main objective is the maintenance, protection and respect of the world's cultural and natural heritage. Conlin and Baum (1995: 35) define cultural tourism as follows:

*Cultural tourism may be defined in broad and narrow terms. In the narrow sense, cultural tourism includes movements of persons for essentially cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts, travel to festivals, visits to sites and monuments, folklore, pilgrimages – in the broader sense, all movements of persons might be included in the definition because they satisfy the human need for diversity, giving rise to new knowledge, experience and encounters.*

From what Conlin and Baum say, one can say that history and arts bring culture, beauty of the land and the sense of continuity to the life of the community. Arts and cultural resources seem to blend and help define the dynamics of tourism. Thus one can say that cultural tourism is an accumulation of daily activities such as ethics, foods, medicines and manners, the way people greet each other. Cultural tourism includes the way people form relationships, conduct their marriages, bury each other in the community, the way people dress up for certain occasions, their sense of time, space, worship and many things that form the fibre of the community.

There is a wide range of cultural tourism activities. These include ethnic tourism where the tourists visit local homes to have a first hand experience on the way people live their lives in the communities. In most cases where the tourists visit local homes in the host communities, their interest is focused on the religious aspects, food preparations and kinds of food people eat, traditional dance and local forms of leadership in the community structures.

Lafant, Allcock and Bruner (1995: 10) say the following about cultural tourism;

*The idea of primitiveness attached to certain places make them attractive to tourists. At the very moment that tourism makes communities emerge from their isolation and set out on the road to modernity, they re-invent their past and keep alive their traditions and maintain their image.*

One can maintain that cultural tourism is educational, adventuresome and personally enriching to both the tourists and the people in the host community. It brings that excitement and the opportunity to experience a different time and space for the tourists, to experience the feeling of patriotism among the residents. Sator research indicates that foreign tourists visit South Africa because they are attracted to the scenic beauty, wildlife but most importantly they are attracted by the diverse cultures and political change.

The interviews with different hotels and lodges managers show that cultural visits feature most in the itineraries that the tourists make in South Africa.

Conlin and Baum (1995) show that aside from the first three favourite tourists activities such as shopping, dining and sightseeing, the international tourists like or prefer to take part in water sport, sun-bathing, touring the country side and visit the historical places. High on the list of things enjoyed most are the enjoyment of local concerts, festivals, craft fairs, purchase of ethnic foodstuff, craft and different types of handwork.

Cultural tourism encourages people to retain their cultures intact, because it is a source for publicity in tourism industry which provides one of the basic things of economic development. Cultural tourism revives what have been bequeathed to us by our ancestors; and should be transmitted to our future generations. It proposes the return to the past, reinforces the feeling of belonging to a system of cultural parentage. It offers the assurance as to the permanent character of society. Cultural tourism revitalizes the cultural identity of a people, which is renewed and enriched through contact with its traditions and values of the others. Every culture represents a unique and irreplaceable body of values because every

people's traditions and forms of expressions are its most effective means of demonstrating their presence in the world.

In the encounter between the locals and the visitors one soon realizes that cultural identity and cultural diversity cannot be separated. It is therefore the duty of the host community to ensure that cultural identity is preserved and protected because its neglect could mean the loss to mankind and the loss to tourism development. What is happening in Lebombo SDI region is an appreciated work on the side of the host community. It is making the Zulu cultural traditions alive in the form of traditional music and dance, craft work, beadwork and other cultural activities programmes.

We would like to conclude this talk on cultural tourism by referring to the words of (Mosibudi Mangena; National Deputy Minister of Education. In his speech, "Cherish Our Cultural Heritage", Educator's Voice Newspaper, April 2001) he says the following about culture;

*Human beings are distinguished from animals by the fact that they have culture. Without culture we are all reduced to animals. That sum total of customs, rituals, norms and values make us human. They regulate and govern the patterns of our daily life.*

One can then see that our values, norms, customs and rituals that form our culture are intricately intertwined with our language, music, dance and dress. People have different languages, dance differently, have their different music and manner of dress, thus every culture gives each group of people its own identity. This intangible thing called identity needs to be preserved, promoted and kept alive in every possible way.

### 3.2 THE AIMS OF THE LEBOMBO SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

What are the aims of the Lebombo and other spatial development initiatives? According to Mafisa (1999: 14) we find that;

*The major aim of the SDI's is to redress the racially unbalanced nature of the South African economy. This is to be done by encouraging joint ventures between new investment plans and new industries run by new entrepreneurs.*

Cultural tourism fits perfectly on this mode because it provides business opportunities to the local people without the need for a large capital and foreign technology. Cultural tourism depends entirely on the local indigenous knowledge. The Lebombo SDI region covers the area of the North-East KwaZulu Natal, South of Mozambique and part of Swaziland. It is a stretch of land that has been identified by the National Government and the Provincial Government to boost tourism in KwaZulu Natal. The new road was built to connect KwaZulu Natal from Hluhluwe through Mbazwane, to Kosi Bay and then to Maputo in Mozambique.

The Greater St Lucia Wetland Park forms part of the Lebombo SDI region – knowing that St Lucia has been designated as the World Heritage Site. The St Lucia Heritage Site has much to offer and attract tourism boom in the region. It is envisaged that the Lebombo SDI will be a magnet for both local and international tourism. According to Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology's Report (1997) tourism is the biggest and fastest sector of the global economy. D.A.C.S.T stands for: Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology.



The fall of apartheid and its discriminatory laws saw many blacks from different classes aspiring domestic travel. It is hoped that domestic travel to the Lebombo SDI region will also improve in order to improve the livelihood of the people in the region. These hopes seem to materialize if one looks at Ghimire (1999: 13) who says that the research shows that there were 7.9 million domestic tourists in arrivals. This remark by Ghimire shows that domestic tourism amongst the African people has increased in the recent years. Tourism was traditionally dominated by the white population with greater levels of wealth, mobility and access to such a commodity.

These opportunities seem to be fruitfully explored in the Lebombo SDI region. The host communities, even though not in a full scale, are doing as much as possible to make tourists to feel that tourism is an electrifying and worthwhile experience. D.A.C.S.T. (1999) say that the Lebombo Spatial Development Initiative is a programme joint-ventured by the governments of Swaziland, Mozambique and South Africa. The area was earmarked because it was ravaged by poverty and neglect that was caused by apartheid's policies. As a result of this initiative, opportunities are open to both local and international investments, for all the people who would like to make use of this region's unexplored potential.

Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology Report (1999: 155) identified the following priorities for the Lebombo SDI;

- i) To maximize private sector involvement and to create an attractive and stable climate for investors.
- ii) To maximize job creation by ensuring that the new industries being stimulated are competitive and have a long term future in the area.

- iii) To encourage the creation of small business and that outside investors should form joint ventures with local entrepreneurs and communities.
- iv) Ensure co-operation between all levels of the three governments in order that the development strategy be implemented with extreme speed and urgency.

As a tourist attraction area suitable for tourism industry to fulfil the above objectives, the Lebombo SDI region is distinctive by its geographic beauty and cultural diversity. This geographic beauty and cultural diversity is combined with rich agricultural soils and subtropical climate. When one is walking or driving through the region, one is amazed at the diversity of its plant life, game reserves and beautiful coastal lines. These regional assets, if well marketed, the region is suitable for both domestic and international competitive tourism and agricultural industries, seeing that the region is relatively well supplied with water. The Lebombo SDI is easily accessible by air, the region is not very far from the Richards Bay Airport. It is also accessible by sea through the Richards Bay Harbour, from where the people can travel by land through well-built national roads. The new road specially built for this region starts from Hluhluwe through the small towns of Phelindaba and Mbazwana to the Mozambican Border of Maputo.

The Lebombo Spatial Development Initiative encourages co-operation and link between tourism and other sectors such as building and construction, production of agricultural products and production of arts and crafts. All these sectors are viable means in job creation and stable climate for investments to come to the region.

### 3.3 THE LEBOMBO SDI AND ITS BENEFITS FOR THE REGION

The people living in the South African portion of the Lebombo are faced with the greater level of poverty, lower level of literacy and the highest level of unemployment. The Lebombo SDI is aimed at uplifting the social and economic status of these people. It is hoped that developments will come with improvements on the basic needs such as the need for more clinics, more schools, clean water and transport facilities. The poor infrastructure in transport facilities has sealed off the rural areas from their commercial potential. The rural areas felt removed and isolated. The new road infrastructure that has been identified as a key project, built and finished will excite new regional economy and development. It is hoped tourism boom and provision of basic needs will mean that the people of the region will no longer remain poor amidst plenty. They will no longer feel deprived despite the potential for prosperity.

It is hoped that the infrastructure laid thus far will see the rise on economic improvements on the main products of the region such as sugar cane, subtropical fruits, vegetables, citrus, poultry and cattle farming. The Lebombo SDI region is a strategic area for tourism because of its variety of environmental and cultural assets. The literature about the area shows that its coastline teems with dolphins and humpback whales, replete with many species of tropical fish in the lakes such as Lake Sibayi, Kosi Bay, St Lucia and many more. The game reserves in the area boast of the Big Five – lions, elephants, Buffaloes, rhino and leopards.

The Lebombo SDI region also boasts of its archaeological sites such as the Border Cave on the ridge of the Lubombo Mountain. Above all else, the region boasts of the different cultures and lifestyles of its different indigenous people such as the Zulu, Swazi, Thonga and Shangaan. The blend of ecological, physical and

cultural assets of the Lebombo SDI region are potentially major attractions that will enhance it to become an internationally acclaimed tourism destination. The successful development of tourism industry in the area will benefit people by offering jobs and economic growth in the hotels, lodges, Bed and Breakfast catering industries, arts and crafts stalls, traditional dance festivals and many more benefits.

### 3.4 CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN THE LEBOMBO SDI

The region is known for its cultural activities; music and dance, and craft manufacture. There are quite a number of cultural villages and crafts markets where traditional products such as woodwork, beadwork, weaved baskets, woodcarvings, oxide drums and shields are made and displayed. What is remarkable about the area is that the Zulu people living there are still living in a relatively primitive, unspoilt rural life such as beadwork, marriage rituals, ancestral worship, traditional gear and many more interesting aspects of rural life. What is so striking and distinctive about this rural way of life is that traditional medicines, meals and ways of preparing these ethnic meals are still highly cherished. There is a clear evidence of a renaissance in cultural pride among the people, who seem to do everything in their power to uplift the standards of hospitality and generosity to visitors. There are many music, dance and theatrical groups who incorporate traditional styles in their productions which seem to be number one attraction for tourists and a source of income for the local people.

The areas which are actively involved in the cultural activities include Mfekayi, Hluhluwe, Mbazwane, Ntshongwe, Sodwana Bay, Ndumu and Ngwanase.

### 3.5 THE POLITICAL CLIMATE IN THE REGION

Talking to traditional community leaders in the area reveals that the revival of interest in Zulu cultural traditions, history and patrimony has helped a great deal in alleviating political struggle, sectarianism and conflict. The tribal leaders, although hesitant to spell it out boldly, they seem to have had an experience where the younger generation was somehow dismissive of Zulu heritage. There is a feeling that the youth perceived Zulu heritage as backward. The revival of cultural pride and promotion of tourism in the media after the transitional period of 1994, eased the generations gap that fuelled strife. At present there is a warm co-operation between traditional community leaders and the youth of the region. This is observed in the representation and presence of the youth in the development programmes discussed in the councils. The culture of respect and political tolerance seems to prevail. The youth is no longer reactionary and it no longer perceives the traditional community leaders as uncivilized.

The other contributing factor in political calm might also be attributed to the Shembe Church which seem to dominate other religions groupings in the rural areas. The Shembe Church draws both the young and old into their ranks. The Shembe or Nazareth Church practice a form religion that is fused with traditional dress, traditional dance and rituals. The members of the Nazareth Church are also involved in various cultural events, festival and displays that enhance tourism appeal in the regions.

The Tourism Board of KwaZulu Natal suggested the enlargement of a present ferry culture that links various lodges scattered throughout the Lebombo SDI region. The cultural activities such as the music and dance groups, praise poetry and storytelling from part of the ferry to enhance cultural tourism. This has a potential for leading cultural projects that are commercially viable.

### **3.7 HERITAGE AND CULTURAL ROUTE IN THE REGION**

The Lebombo SDI region has an extremely rich cultural heritage. The residents of the place at the mouth to the Kosi Bay still use the ancient style of fishing using the fish trapping kraals. There is still a tradition of using and conserving this ancient form of fishing and the conservation of the botanical life that is peculiar in the region. The heritage route through the region take in the historical sites, oral tradition, cultural sites, literature and talks about the resource management. The heritage route also includes tradition and folklore of the Tembe-Tsonga, Zulu and other inhabitants of the region. Accordingly, the historical sites in the area include the Dingaan's Grave at Kwaliweni, Ngwavuma area and the Border Cave at the precipice of the Lebombo Mountain. The heritage and cultural routes are linked to the cultural projects in order to channel tourist and maximize benefits to the local communities.

### **3.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

It seems like the objectives of the Lebombo Spatial Development Initiative are gradually realized. The co-operation manifested between the private sector and the local people involvement in the cultural and other related projects does encourage the mushrooming of small businesses. The prayer that is offered in every sphere of the communities is that these social and economic developments initiatives should have long term future benefits. These economic and social

developments seem to impact positively on the provision of basic needs such as transport infrastructure, clinics, schools, community halls and clean water. It is believed that the communities will no longer feel deprived despite the potential for prosperity.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE ZULU WAY OF LIFE

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces us to the Zulu cultural traditions. It tries to get into deeper details and understanding of how the communities are ordered, their marriage ceremonies, the leadership structures in the communities, the kind of food they eat, their arts and craft. It will also deal with ubuntu –humanity, the values, the beliefs, treatment of sickness and diseases. These issues, and many more, will be discussed in a way that aims at creating an interest and promoting Zulu cultural traditions; a draw card for tourism in KwaZulu Natal.

#### 4.1 The importance of land and livestock among the Zulu people

Walking through KwaZulu Natal, everywhere one finds landscapes of more native beauty. Looking along the hills and valleys that stretch out, up and down the country covered with flowers of various hue, shape and grass of richest green, sweet, fragrant smells, one fancies to have found a paradise of perennial spring. This is the land that forms part of the Lebombo SDI region, an area targeted for economic and social upliftment through tourism.

The lifestyle of the people living in the region has not changed much from ancient way of life. It is still a lifestyle that revolves around cattle herding and living in close relationship to nature. The cattle still provide an important source of food – milk, maas and meat. The cattle still provide skins for clothing and shields. They



also play an important role in the spiritual life of the Zulu people. The wealth and status of man is still gauged by the number of cattle he has. The cattle played an important role in the spiritual life of the Zulu people, they were, and still are, sacrificed to the ancestors to ensure harmony with the dead and after life. Knight (1995: 25) says;

*The Zulu speaking groups believed that the spirit world, inhabited by the generations of long dead ancestors, co-existed alongside the daily world of ordinary people, and that any misfortune was the result of a disequilibrium between the two.*

Because of this importance laid on the cattle, the Zulu people chose to settle in places that were suitable for cattle grazing. The area that is designated as part of the Lebombo SDI has wet summer months, and a series of majestic river systems that cut gorges through the green rolling mountains. The region has the carpet of grasslands with their rich variety of sweet and sour grasses which make it possible for pastoral people to raise their livestock without migrating greater distances in search for pastures. In such grasslands cattle flourish, the human communities also prosper.

This attachment of man to land, and importance of cattle in the spiritual life of the Zulu people was noticed by Elliot (1991: 7) where he says:

*. . . . . a person carries into the next world the influence that he had during the lifetime. The spirit of the Zulu King will watch over the whole nation, while the ancestral spirits of a family will care for that family, as well as their cattle, goats and crops. The ancestral spirits "like to be remembered", and cattle offerings will be made to them to show they have never been forgotten.*

Tradition has it that at family festivals, it is usual for the head of the family to sit besides his cattle kraal and pour a little beer on the ground for the ancestors or forefathers before he himself starts to drink and then give to others to enjoy the beer. This inalienable relationship with the spirit world means that every member of the society should cherish the idea that their forefathers sustain the nation and control family affairs. The forefathers fought to forge a strong nation, idea of nationhood and patriotism enhance the opportunities of living peacefully with others. It is expected that the moral fibre and value systems in the society should be learned and cherished with utmost reverence.

#### 4.2 Ubuntu, order and discipline among the Zulu people

In the Zulu cultural traditions, *Ubuntu* – humanity is the hub of all social entities. When the Zulu people speak of Ubuntu, they actually mean that a person has qualities that distinguish him from animals and other creatures. *Ubuntu* means that a person has the inner correctiveness that makes one at peace with oneself and everything around one's environment. The humane person, for the Zulu people, is the person who makes it possible to distill the best in life in order to make the world a habitable and desirable place. Higgs and Smith (2000:58) say the following about *Ubuntu*:

*The central ethical idea in traditional African thought is Ubuntu . The idea of Ubuntu is related to human happiness and well being. Ubuntu is usually translated into English as humanity. A fuller meaning of the word Ubuntu can be found in the expression: "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu". This means: A human being is the human through other human beings. In other words I am because you are Ubuntu recognises that human self only exist and develop in the relationship with other person.*

Higgs and Smith above show that *Ubuntu* proposes and promotes a commitment to peaceful co existence among other people. *Ubuntu* bears the fruit of caring, sharing, forgiveness and reconciliation. *Ubuntu* serves as a cohesive moral value and a shield in the field of diversity. *Ubuntu* is one single gift that African people, especially the Zulu people, can give to the world. The cornerstone of *Ubuntu* include honesty, integrity, responsibility, love, chastity, accountability, caring, empathy, forgiveness, gratitude and respect for people and property.

*Ubuntu* requires that a person should have a conscience and a nerve not to disappoint one's parents and the Creator who teach respect for human, plant and animal life.

For the qualities of humanness or humanity to be manifested, the society is structured in such a way that order and discipline is maintained in all levels of the society. In this regard of discipline and order, Knight (1991: 47) says;

*...there was clearly a sufficiently evident degree of order and discipline within the Zulu Kingdom to impress the outsiders. Zulu society was intensely hierarchic, it revered all forms of authority.*

These qualities of revering all forms of authority and others make the Zulu people disciplined. They are never afraid to venture into an unknown and succeed against a variety of odds. Wrinch-Schultz (1984: 2) say the following about the Zulu people;

*Today the Zulu is one of the many races tightly woven into colourful fabric of South Africa – powerful of physique, handsome, intelligent, good*

*natured and virile. The Zulu is to be found in all fields of human endeavour: In industry, commerce and the professions, in shipping, education, medicine, mining, agriculture and engineering, contributing materially to the sub-continent's dynamic growth and prosperity.*

What Wrinch-Schulz says is both an incentive and an assurance that the Zulu people are capable of contributing materially to the dynamic growth of the economy of their region through involvement in cultural tourism and other business ventures. Since South Africa's entry into a democratic dispensation, tourism is already making a contribution to the coffers, and it is being hailed as a possible contender to mining and other industries. Zulu cultural traditions has a major role in showcasing tourism in KwaZulu Natal. The major assets of promoting tourism development in South Africa, the people and their way of life are the major contributing factors for tourist attractions.

Hurford (1995: 8) says the following about the people's way of life and tourism;

*But what gives a country life is her people. Depending on their origins and attitudes, the people of South Africa have been anxious or exhilarated by the fast moving events of the past few years.*

*..... to take ownership of their optimism, there is a sense of national energy, drawing on collective reserves to secure the future of this lovely country.*

It is true, what gives a country life is her people. Tourism in KwaZulu Natal is alive and kicking because of the people and their hospitality, their optimism towards tourism, their arts and craft, their woodwork, wood carving, their weaved mats and baskets, their beadwork, their sense of national energy to maintain their culture without fear of prejudice and discrimination.

### 4.3 THE ZULU CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND THEIR IMPORTANCE

#### 4.3.1 The Zulu Traditional Wedding Ceremony and its Preliminaries (udwendwe)

##### 4.3.1.0 Introduction

There are many colourful cultural activities that are staged and cherished by the Zulu people. These activities which form part of tourists entertainment are actually staged to promote the love and pride of Zulu cultural heritage, to pass on the customs, beliefs, norms and values from generation to generation. These cultural activities have the potential to promote peace and tolerance among the nation. These cultural traditions help to nurture the people's talents and develop a spirit of patriotism.

The cultural activities include traditional Zulu tribal songs, traditional wedding songs and parades on traditional attire or regalia. The wedding songs' performances remain one of the important events, this is because weddings are important occasions for both traditional and modern societies. It is at the weddings where young and old adorn themselves lavishly and enjoy themselves to the fullest. It is in most cases where the young and old meet their future spouses. It is for these regards that weddings are the best social events. The Zulu traditional wedding ceremonies attract huge crowds as they are the events where everybody, both invited and uninvited guests feel welcome and treated with dignity. All the guests look at their best, whatever they do is done the best possible way. They dance at their best, they sing the best songs at their best. There are two groups that perform in a competitive spirit, the first group comes from the bride's company (*umthimba*) and the other group belongs to the bridegroom's company (*ikhetho*). The whole ceremony has a religious tone as the elders of the respective families call upon their ancestors to bless and monitor the whole event. There are negotiations and preliminaries that precede the actual

wedding ceremony. Let's get to these preliminaries before coming back to the details of the traditional wedding ceremony in a true African sense.

#### 4.3.1.1 Marriage arrangements and lobola (*Ukucela nokulobola intombi*)

The Zulu people inculcated discipline in their youth by educating them to be honest, conscientious, loyal, respectful, patriotic, and to take their share in the responsibilities and teaching of their nation. These values were seen in all aspects and spheres of the Zulu people's lives, especially when it came to marriage, home and family life.

After the boy had reported to his father that he had found a girl of his dreams to be made his wife, the preparations for marriage negotiations would begin. Normally, the boy would not report directly to his father but would do so through his mother, an uncle or any relative who was believed to be tactful in approaching the father as the head of the family. The father would then ask a respected man in the neighbourhood to go to the would-be-bride's family to negotiate marital terms and *lobola* (dowry or bride's price). The man sent for marriage negotiations is called *umkhongi* (negotiator). Before the negotiator goes on his mission, the boy's father gathers his family members and close relatives to discuss the terms and *lobola* arrangements. From now on the *umkhongi* will act as a tactful and trusted Master of Ceremonies between the two families; that of a bride and a bridegroom.

The day before the negotiator (*umkhongi*) and his companions go out on their mission, the family head slaughters a beast, normally the goat, to report the event to the family ancestors, praying them to make the journey and negotiations a success. The negotiators are given some of the meat and sorghum beer as their

provision for the journey. Sorghum beer is always brewed to form part of the religious sacrificial offering. In Zulu, the first visit to the bride's family is referred to as "the lighting of the fires", *ukokha umlilo*". It is referred to as such because "fire" is a symbol of "warmth", thus the two families are from there supposed to be linked to each other in a warm relationship.

The negotiator and his companions, either one or two, wake up early in the morning to reach the bride's homestead before they wake up. They stand by the main gate, the Zulu custom says that you don't enter into another man's homestead without announcing your arrival (*uyakhuleka emzini wendoda*). This saluting or announcing your arrival at the gate is supposed to be done by anyone visiting the homestead. You receive a quick and hearty welcome if you announce your arrival by shouting or singing the clan praises (*izithakazelo*) of the family. If you come to the Zibani homestead, you will be given a warm welcome if you would say, "Eh! Zibani, Zikhonjwa, wena kaMancinza kaSobhejile, Nontanda!?".

To differentiate between announcing one's arrival for social calls and marital arrangements negotiations, the *umkhongi* would make it clear that he is sent by a certain family to request for "a beautiful relative" (*isihlobo esihle*).

Msimang, Hlongwane and Ntuli (1986: 220) have an example of negotiators from Ngema family to the Gumede family. They are quoted saying :

*"Ei! Nina bakwa Gumede ! Siyakhuleka maQwabe amahle. Nina basemzini bakaKhondlo kaMnguni, Sithunywe abakwaNgema oMadlokovu bathi asizobacelela isihlobo esihle. Simemeza ngesithole esinkone ngokubomvu esijoli ngeshoba, simemeza ngomthantazana omasavuthiwe ..."*

*(We salute the Gumede family. We salute the beautiful Qwabe people. You of the family of Khondlo, son of Mnguni, the Ngema family, the offsprings of Madlokovu, they sent us to you to ask for a beautiful relative.*

*We salute you herding a beautiful black and white spotted heifer, another red-to-greyish coloured heifer with white spots all over the body. We also have ...)*

The negotiators are mentioning the cattle by colours to entice their in-laws to welcome them. They mention heifers with beautiful colours as they know the heifers mean wealth as they are going to give birth and make the cattle kraal full, the pride and wealth of a Zulu man. They are mentioning the cattle by colours to show that they are fully prepared for the *lobola* to be negotiated. The mentioning of the *lobola* cattle at the gate is oratory and precious technique in itself. The Zulu people loved the cattle to such a point that they were known by their colours and horn structures (*imibala nokumisa kwezinkomo*). As the negotiator is tabulating the *lobola* cattle by their colours, he shows that he knows them as he prizes them. He would say, "I am coming with a black heifer with a white neck (*imfezikazi*) having horns twisted towards the back (*igoqwazana*). I also have a black cow with a white face (*impemvu*) having inward-curving horns pushing downwards but towards the front (*igubudu*). I have a black and white spotted one, small spots (*ematshezulu*).

*Umkhongi* would go on describing the *lobola* cattle according to their colours and characteristics. You will find Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1966:57-64) and Khumalo (1997:35-40) very helpful for more colours and horn structures of the cattle.

As it has been seen, this custom of shouting the clan praises and tabulating beautiful colours and description of *lobola* cattle is a way of softening the family head, the father of the bride. It is meant to make him proud that he is a man because of addition to the number of cattle he already has in his kraal. In this regard of a good negotiator who is an orator, Msimang (1975:254) says :



*Kuyinto encomekayo ukuba umkhongi amemeze ngezinkomo ezinhle futhi ezisencane, kuthi nemibala kube eyekhethelo. Konke lokho okokuxhophama umnumzane abone ukuthi nizimisele ngomntanake.*

*(It is praiseworthy that the negotiator announces his arrival with beautiful and young cattle, their colours being breathtaking. This is purposely done to lure the bride's father into seeing that you mean business about his daughter).*

The point of young and beautiful *lobola* cattle is very important. It is regarded as an insult or taboo to use aged cattle for *lobola*, as it is also not welcome to use calves. Either way shows that the groom's family is not well-to-do, it put the *lobola* cattle from tit-bits (*ubecacamezela*).

Khumalo (1997: 42) says that it is recommended that as the negotiators are announcing the *lobola* cattle at the gate, they should not reach number seven. The seventh finger is used for pointing, therefore reaching number seven when announcing request cattle (*izinkomo zokucela*) is tantamount to pointing at the bride's father.

By custom, the negotiators would be fined if they tabulated their cattle up to number seven. The other thing is that by going beyond six cattle when announcing at the gate, shows that the negotiators are pompous and alluding that the family head has no cattle, therefore he needs the ones they are bringing.

The way the negotiators (*abakhongi*) are treated at the bride's homestead differs from place to place. But usually, it is the right of the family head to welcome the strangers at the gate of his homestead. The other members of the family are not allowed even to speak to the negotiators at the gate if the family head has not yet said anything about them. The negotiators never give up announcing their

presence even if they see that they are being ignored. At times the family head tells the negotiators to get away from the entrance of his homestead. If they resist leaving the entrance, he threatens to beat them up. They run away and report back at the groom's place how they were treated, but soon find themselves at the gate the very next morning. When they are chased away or beaten up, they don't fight back to show that they are prepared for whatever situation that comes their way. They would not give up until they get what they are pleading for, the wife for their brother or son. They would love to see their family member receiving a precious gift, therefore the negotiators withstand all sorts of hurdles coming their way. The negotiators know that he who finds a wife finds a good thing and he knows the Lord is merciful to him (Prov. 18: 22).

The negotiators therefore remain patient, rain or shine they stand and announce their presence. Khumalo (1997: 48) says about the negotiators' ordeal :

*Oyokhipha izwi lokubangenisa uSokhaya. Kuyoze kuthi makhathaleni uSokhaya athumele umfana abangenise abakhongi.*

*(The family head is the one who gives them permission to enter. After a long delay the family head sends a boy to tell the negotiators to come in).*

The family head takes his time to test the patience of the negotiators, to see how dedicated they are to their mission. Normally, the family matters are dealt with in the main hut of the homestead (*indlunkulu*). The main house is the house belonging to the first wife or chief wife. The main hut is regarded as the temple of the homestead. It is here in this hut where the sacrificial ceremonies and family matters are conducted. As the negotiators are directed to the main hut, they never cease to politely saying their respectful greetings and appreciation. Even if they don't speak, the manner in which they walk shows respect. The negotiators know that the hut they are directed to is where the family ancestral

spirits dwell, therefore any disrespectful conduct would discredit them and possibly make them pay a heavy fine (*inhlawulo*).

#### 4.3.1.2 The families' first encounters and its customary etiquettes : the importance of a negotiator

We need to say something about the choice of a negotiator and his companions before we delve deeper into details of customary etiquettes. There might be two or three negotiators, whatever the number they are never beyond four people. Among the negotiators, there must be the main negotiator (*umkhongi omkhulu*) and the minor negotiators (*abakhongi abancane*). The main negotiator is normally the trusted man in the neighbourhood. It is unusual to have a family member as the main negotiator. These negotiators are the ambassadors of their family and they are advisors to one another. They are sent to establish a new relationship between the two families, that of a bride and a bridegroom. The negotiators are the eyes and ears, the mouthpiece of the groom's father who sent them. Therefore they have to speak fluently and respectfully, listen very carefully and help each other to convey the messages between the families correctly. They are therefore there to remind and complement each other about the proceedings in the *lobola* negotiations. They are there because there is an adage that says two heads are better than one. This is true in Zulu idiom, "Injobo ithungelwa ebandla". The person outside the family is purposely taken as a negotiator because it is believed he can listen, judge and act responsibly. He may not be like a family member who might find himself easily overwhelmed by jealousy and hatred for the good things happening for the other family member. He might find himself turning up against the whole *lobola* negotiators and tangle things up on purpose. Therefore the negotiator from outside the family unit is preferred on these grounds, and that he might become a friend who sticks closer than a brother. This thing of being the main negotiator does not end with the wedding ceremony. It goes beyond than that, the negotiator becomes the counsellor, confidante and mentor for the newly formed family unit. The man easily approaches his main

negotiator when things go tough in their marriage. The bride is also free and feels comfortable to talk to her negotiator for advice on marriage and related issues.

So, let us go back and see what happens when the negotiators are ushered to the main hut of the homestead. As they enter the main hut, they either find the family members seated in the hut or they are soon followed by the family members. These family members, which might include the family head's brothers, fathers, grandfathers and close relatives in the neighbourhood, were gathered or sent for by the family head during the time the negotiators were delayed at the gate.

If the family members had not yet gathered when the negotiators were ushered in, there must be someone in the hut as the strangers cannot be allowed to be alone in the presence of the ancestors.

The main negotiator is the first to greet the whole house and ask for their well-being (*abingelele abuze impilo*). He greets them politely and respectfully including their clan praises or names to make himself and the people gathered at ease. After a long pause, the family head responds and says something about their well-being. He asks them the purpose of their visit, with the main negotiator responding by outlining their mission. On behalf of the family, the family head tells the negotiators that they were not prepared for such a big event. He tells the negotiators that actually they are quite a big family, so these presents are only a drop in the ocean. Then he gives the negotiators the date on which to return when he had found time to convene his whole family and looked upon their request. He then bids them farewell. The negotiators do not complain or rush things up but accept the date and go back home to report about their first encounters with the bride's family.

The good report brought by the negotiators shows that the ancestral spirits of the two families have been brought together to drive the negotiations peacefully forward. The time given to the negotiators allows the bride's father enough time to report the matter to the ancestors of his family. It also gives enough time to find out whom among his girls acknowledges the coming of the negotiators. He orders the girl to be examined for virginity by the elder women, as virginity has to do with the number of the heads of cattle to be asked for *lobola*. If he does not order the virginity test to be done, he would be charged and penalized for having stolen some of the *lobola* cattle should the girl be found to have had lost her virginity before marriage.

These are the preliminaries done before the family head sends messengers on errands to invite the family lineage (*uzalo*) from far and near notifying them of the date given to the negotiators (*usuku lwabakhongi*). These family members from the lineage form the family council to discuss the *lobola* terms. In the meantime, the family head makes his own proposals before the family council makes its own amendments and recommendations.

The council gathers a day before the negotiators come to the homestead. The council discusses the proceedings and procedures to be followed when the negotiators come, they outline their approach and get into deeper details of the matter. They appoint the person from their midst who is going to chair the proceedings. They make sure that they polish up everything to avoid debates and disagreements before the strangers. If there is still an elder grandfather among the family members (*umkhulu/ubaba omdala*) he is appointed to chair the *lobola* proceedings. He leads the proceedings by virtue of being the eldest in the family, it is also because he knows most of the deceased who are now the ancestors on whose behalf he has to speak. As the council discusses the matters to be dealt with the next day, the women are busy with the final touches on the brewed beer.

The family head, after preparations were over, orders the slaughter of a goat and burn incense (*ashishe impepho*) reporting and praying to the ancestor asking them to bless the day of the negotiators and the whole proceedings.

#### 4.3.1.3 The families' second encounter and its customary etiquettes

When the negotiators come for the second encounter with the bride's parents, they also announce their arrival by saluting (*khuleka*) and singing the clan praises as they did at the first arrival. They also tabulate the number of the heads of cattle in their colours and body descriptions. The only difference is that they are no longer ignored for long outside the gate. The young boy or any member of the family is sent to usher them in and direct them into the main hut (*indlunkulu*), the temple and common venue for serious family matters. The negotiators are respectfully shown the men's side (*isilili sabesilisa*). They are given the men's side of the hut even though the women's side (*isilili sabesifazane*) is empty, as the women are called late in the proceedings to come and take their place.

The interior of the main hut is compartmentalized into various parts. The left side of the fireplace or hearth, which is at the centre of the hearth, belongs to the women. The left hand side of the fireplace belongs to the men. The upper section (*emsamo*) is a dwelling place for the family ancestors. This place is at times encircled with oval-shaped line of clay blocks (*amasoyi*) plastered with cow dung. The upper section is where the maas calabashes (*amagula*), household claypots (*izinkamba*) and meatplates (*izingqoko*) are placed. It is also the place where the sacrificial meat and sorghum beer spend the night before used the next day of a sacrificial feast. By custom, nobody is allowed to sit with one's back facing the upper section of the hut (*awuhlali ufulathele umsamo*), as it is regarded as an insult to the family ancestral spirits.

The place next to the door on the men's side belongs to the family head (*kuhlala umnumzane wekhaya*).

The negotiators and men of the family sit on one side of the hut, this symbolizes unity and acceptance that as from this day onwards, these two families are incorporated into one. The main negotiator is again the first to greet the family council :

*Sanibonani nina basemzini!*

*(We greet you all of our in-law family)*

This greeting in a plural form among the Zulu people is done even if the person greeted is alone. The custom behind this pluralistic greeting is the belief that a person is greeted in the name of his whole family, including his ancestors. Thus the speakers greet and respond on behalf of their families. As the negotiator greets the family council, he also greets the ancestors of the family. The family head or the family representative will also respond to the greetings on behalf of his family and its ancestors :

*Yebo, sibona nina. Ninjani empilweni?*

*(Yes, we greet all of you as well. How are you?)*

After the exchange of these formal greetings, the family representative who acts as a chairperson, will then request the negotiators to embark on the intent of their mission (*abahlale phezu kwendaba*).

The negotiator would start explaining that they are sent by so-and-so family, they are coming for requesting the permission to marry one of the beautiful girls whom their son or brother had seen in this family. He further states that they are ready

to negotiate as they have the lobola cattle, he again tabulate them in their colours and characteristics. The negotiator is always careful not to make any mistake in his speech, as he can be heavily fined. As he finishes to speak, the negotiator finds that nobody responds and there is a long pause and complete silence. This silence is broken by a family representative who cautions the negotiators that something has to be given to the family head to allow him to speak in this gathering (*imvulamlomo / ingqaqamazinyo*). Traditionally, this something was a cow, but nowadays a sum of money is decided by the family council. This beast or money never formed part of the *lobola* cattle, but it formed part of the preliminary customs that were observed before coming to the actual terms of the *lobola* proceedings. Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1966:65) say the following about this first beast :

*Imvulamlomo noma ingqaqamazinyo yinkomo ekhishwa kuqala kusalungiswa ilobolo inikezwe uyise wentombazane ilobolo lingakaphumi.*

*(The first beast allowing the bride's father to speak is availed at the beginning of the lobola negotiations, it does not form part of the lobola cattle).*

As they speak, there is a beautiful embroidered sitting mat (*isicephu esibhonqiwe*) placed before the negotiators. It is the mat where the negotiators place the necessary items they put forward towards *lobola* payments. If the first beast is given in a monetary form, the money is put on this mat. If the first beast is a live animal, the negotiator describes its colour and other characteristics (*inkomo yemvulamlomo ishiwo ngombala*). The family representative tells the negotiator that even though the first beast has been paid, the family head cannot speak because there is still someone from the family members who is up in the tree by the gate. The negotiators need to pay something to let that someone down from the tree (*isehlanthini*). These preliminaries are just the formalities to create a relaxed mood before embarking on the essential procedures of the *lobola* negotiations.



Even though the family representative speaks and chairs the proceedings on behalf of the family council, the members in the council are free to speak, add, recommend and question things where necessary (*umndeni uyenanela, ufakaze, ubuze lapho kudingeka khona*). When things get heated up, the negotiator and his companions are free to ask for a break, go outside to find time to share ideas about tactics to tackle the proceedings (*abakhongi bayochama behlanganise namakhanda*).

As one clears phlegm from his voice before speaking, the family representative requests the negotiator to clear the bride's father's voice. Normally, that would cost the goat which is known as "*isikhwehlela somnumzane*" or else a few rands will be paid to redeem the goat. As this is a known customary goat, the negotiators bring along the goat and rope it by the gate. As soon as it is needed, one of the minor negotiators quickly goes and brings the goat by the door of the main hut for everyone to see it. The goat is then taken by the family boys to rope it somewhere in the yard. The family head can now speak authoritatively with a clear voice.

#### **4.3.1.4 Getting into actual lobola terms (Ukungena ezivumelwaneni zelobolo)**

The number of cattle required for *lobola* differs according to the status of the bride's father in the community, as well as whether the girl was a virgin or had a child or two before marriage.

The status meant that the ordinary citizen received eleven cattle, the ten belonging to the father and the eleventh cow belongs to the mother of the bride (*inkomo yesifociya/kanina*). The headman received sixteen, while the *inkosi* received between twenty and thirty heads of cattle. The Royal Family received up to a hundred heads of cattle, as they are the kings and respected members of the whole Zulu Nation.

The family representative would ask the negotiators if they know the number of the *lobola* cattle apportioned for the family. The truth is that the negotiators knew the number of the cattle as they had siphoned information from their bride who had in turn asked her mother. But even though they knew, they never dared to say yes they knew the number of the *lobola* cattle. They can be fined, how do they know the family matters as strangers?

The family representative would then outline the number of *lobola* cattle and other normal procedures followed by the family in these circumstances. The eleventh or the mother's cow needs a special attention. Its importance is seen in that it is called by many names (*inkomo yesifociya, kanina, yohlanga, yengquthu*). It is only requested by the mother only on the grounds that her child has been examined and found to be a virgin. The bridegroom pays the eleventh cow in the hope and thanksgiving that his bride-to-be has kept her virginity until marriage. Khumalo (1997: 76) attest to the relation between virginity and the eleventh cow by saying :

*Umndeni uyibiza (eyeshuminanye) kubakhongi ngoba ngeqiniso wazi ukuthi umntwana uyaphila phi, futhi ugcwele.*

*(The family request the eleventh cow in full knowledge that their girl is a true virgin).*

This means that the family cannot request the eleventh cow if the girl is no longer a virgin, not just on the ground that she never had a child, although she was sexually active before marriage.

Khumalo (1997: 76-78) maintain that the girls cherished and valued their virginity to such an extent that they avoided sleeping together with their loved ones before marriage or else practiced external sex (*ukusoma*). If the loved one insisted on having sexual penetration before marriage, the girl rather insisted they take separate ways (*akwehlukwane*) rather than being a disgrace to her mother and her

whole family. She always looked forward to a white marriage with heavily beaded white veil (*imvakazi*) and a short wedding knife (*isingindi*). The girl who had lost her virginity before marriage never wore a veil or had this knife on her left hand on her wedding day. These were precious cultural traditions that could be revived to ensure that there is no spread of HIV/Aids and related scourges. These were the cultural traditions that ensured pure and upright behaviour among the youth, the future of the society.

Traditionally, the family council decided and requested that all the lobola cattle be the live animals, not redeemed for cash as it is the case nowadays. The negotiator, if knowing that they don't have all the *lobola* cattle, would request their in-laws to consider what they have and give them their child in marriage. The remainder of the cattle would be paid after the wedding day. After the short discussion among the family council, the representative would concede to their request. They all know that the wife is never paid for all at once as one would do when buying any garment (*umfazi akagadwa engebhayi*). At times the negotiators promise to bring what their in-laws request all at once, there is nothing wrong with that as well. The core of the matter is that all the agreements concluded on the lobola proceedings will also be revealed on the wedding day. The marriage officer, would request the lobola agreements to be revealed and kept as a record for all present at the wedding to know and testify later should anything happen.

#### **4.3.1.5 Articles forming part of the lobola (izibizo)**

Once the agreements about the *lobola* cattle have been concluded, then comes the stage where the negotiators are told or given the list of articles (*izibizo*) forming part of the lobola negotiations. It is traditionally known who are entitled to receive articles (*uzalo olubizelwayo*). As in the case when the bride will distribute gifts (*ukuhlambisa*) the family head and his elder brother, their wives, their heirs and last borns are the people who are entitled to articles or gifts. Therefore the family head issues the list of all those entitled to receiving these articles. Among

the articles belonging to the father of the bride, one would mention the long overcoat (*ijazi*), a broad-brimmed hat (*isigqoko*), a number of spears or umbrellas (*imikhonto noma izambulela*) and other articles. We say “other articles” because these articles differ from place to place. But the ones mentioned as belonging to the bride’s father are commonly found forming part of articles in many places. The spears or umbrellas will be used by the bride’s father and his brothers to distinguish them on the wedding day (*oyise bomntwana*). Speaking of this long overcoat forming part of the *lobola* articles, Khumalo (1997:83-84) says :

*Lalibalulekile kabi lelijazi ngoba indoda eganisile yayibonakala ngalo futhi uyibona ukuthi iyagabisa.*

*(The overcoat was very important as a man who had given his daughter in marriage was distinguished by it, and you could see he showed off).*

The articles that formed part of the *lobola* were meant to dress the in-laws in a dignified manner on the wedding day and thereafter. These articles used to be of high quality as the bridegroom showed her love and appreciation to his in-laws. Even today if you are wearing nicely in warm or decent clothes some people would taunt you by saying you are wearing “bridal articles” (*ugqoke izibizo*). They are actually not taunting you to make you angry or fun of you, but appreciating your cosy look.

Among the articles the women put on their list, one would include light rugs (*amatshalo*), head-coverings (*amaduku asekhanda*), aprons (*amaphinifa*) and other articles. These articles should make them dignified when in the presence of their in-laws (*omama bahlonipheke kubakhwenyana*). As by custom, the mother-in-laws should have their heads covered, neatly dressed and having their shoulders draped in shawls or light rugs when in the presence of the negotiators and other in-laws. This is a customary sign of respect. The way the mother-in-laws are dressed in the articles requested from the bridegroom, is a sign and a training that the bridegroom needs to buy and dress his new bride. They also show their bridegroom that they have inculcated the proper dressing codes in their

daughter who is going to be his wife. As the mothers look dignified in their motherly looks, it is because of their son-in-law who bought these dresses, he is therefore from now on responsible for the dignified motherly look of his wife.

#### 4.3.1.6 The three-legged-pot as part of lobola articles and its symbolism

Over and above the dressing articles mentioned above, the mother-in-law requests the big three-legged-pot (*ugalaza*), normally size 20 and above. This big pot is the one the family uses when cooking meat and brewing sorghum beer for the big sacrificial offerings and related big festivals for the family. The big pot is something usually very difficult to come by, therefore the lobola articles for her daughter gives her an opportunity to own something she had long hoped to possess. To have her own big three-legged pot is something of which the woman prides herself as she will no longer go from one neighbour to another borrowing pots for cooking and brewing for her big functions. The successful and lucky woman is seen by having many such big legged-pots which she gets when her daughters get married. The bridegroom who wishes to be in his mother-in-law's good books (*ukungaconsi phansi*) buys the biggest pot of durable quality.

The three-legged pot has its own special symbolism, it is the only thing that is not negotiable and the wedding day is never set or is simply postponed if the three-legged-pot is not made available. Khumalo (1997: 90) confirms the importance of the three-legged pot by saying :

*Izinto zingama nse uma lelibhodwe lingakhishwa.  
Ngumasekomathathu lelibhodwe. Yuphawu loburye bemindeneni emibili  
ehlanganiswe yuthando lwababili abamiselwe nguMdali. Ngamafuphi  
iseko lesithathu nguMdali.*

*(Everything can come to a standstill if the three-legged-pot is not made available. This is a pot which symbolizes the unity between the two families brought together by the love between two people/persons anointed by the Creator. In short, the third leg represents the Creator).*

If you look at the symbolism of the three-legged-pot as it forms part of the lobola articles, you will find many interesting things about the religious aspects of the Zulu people. The three legs represent the love triangle that should exist in the family unit. The bride and the groom are represented by the two legs of the pot. The pot cannot stand on two legs, therefore for the pot to stand needs the third leg. The third leg represents the Creator, who creates and sustains marriage.

The three-legged pot also symbolized the relationship between the bride's and the groom's families which is supported and sustained by the Creator. The two families cannot on their own help the family of their respective offspring unless they call upon the third leg, the supernatural power to intervene.

After the whole event of tabulating the lobola cattle and related lobola terms, the negotiators are given refreshments. As they were expected on their second visit, the family had brewed plenty of beer and prepared food for the negotiators. The grandmothers (*izalukazi*) come to ask for their snuff (*ugwayi wezalukazi*) and bid farewell to the negotiators. The grannies will be given a few rands to buy their snuff, whilst the negotiators get to know the elderly members of the family. The negotiators go back to report the day's proceedings and lobola agreements concluded or reached.

#### **4.3.1.7 The bridal party visits the groom's place, they bring the articles and lobola cattle**

Before the articles and the lobola cattle are brought to the bride's place, it is customary that the father of the bride and his entourage go to the groom's place to see the lobola cattle. They need to get there at dawn, the perfect time to see the cattle before they are let out for grazing. The negotiator welcomes them in the name of the family and introduces them to the groom's father, who then directs them to the cattle kraal. The boys are ordered to let the other cattle out until the

lobola cattle remain in the kraal for the entourage to see and appreciate. Msimang (1975:272) says the father of the groom could be heard saying :

*Nakho-ke nami Mlingani engikuyenga ngakho.*

*(Here is what I present to you as a way of enticing you).*

The Fellow-in-law (*uMlingani*) and his company are thereafter taken into the hut. They are then shown a big castrated goat (*intondolo*) to be slaughtered partly as a sacrifice to the ancestors reporting their presence and the purpose of their visit. The goat is also partly slaughtered to seal the relationship between the two families as well as allowing them to freely partake and share in whatever the family eats (*indlakudla*). The bride's father would give a vote of thanks on behalf of his company and the whole family and its ancestors for the manner in which they were welcomed by their fellow-in-laws.

As a sign of a warm welcome at the groom's place, the bride's father is given the whole breast (*isifuba*) and skin of the sacrificial goat to take home. The rest of the meat is cooked and eaten at the groom's place. The breast is cooked when the bride's father gets home and the whole family enjoy the meal. The skin is tanned to be used as the sitting mat (*isikhumba sokuhlala*) for the bride's father. It remains a souvenir of his warm welcome by his in-laws.

The articles (*izibizo*) and the *lobola* cattle can be sent to the bride's homestead once the above custom has been observed. It is either the articles are the first to be brought (*izibizo zihamba phambili*) or they are brought together with the *lobola* cattle. Usually the articles precede the bringing of the *lobola* cattle.

On the date of bringing the articles and *lobola* cattle, the negotiators are accompanied by the women folk who are going to help spread and present the articles for the women folk on the bride's family. The wife of the main negotiator and the elder sister of the groom are the suitable candidates for this job. The

bride's family members who receive the goods or articles are made to wear them to see if they fit. This is accompanied by shouts of joy (*ukukikizela*) and performance of a traditional war dance (*ukugiya*) to show how happy they are to receive such articles.

The cunning negotiator, or should we say a good negotiator, would use this time when everybody is happy to settle down to business. He would request to be given a date for the wedding ceremony. He knows that everything builds up to this big event, the hallmark of transition from boyhood to manhood, from girlhood to womanhood. Unfortunately, the negotiators are told not to hurry things up. They are given a date on which the bride's father would like his son-in-law to visit his homestead and spend the night. The negotiators are given a goat to take back home, the goat is a token given to the main negotiator for doing his job properly and bringing the required articles and lobola cattle.

#### 4.3.1.8 The groom at the bride's place and the setting of the wedding date

The bride's father requests his son-in-law to spend the night at his homestead for two main reasons. He wants to observe what kind of a person his son-in-law is, and secondly to let him to be seen and blessed by the ancestors (*akhothwe ngamadlozi*) before being given a date for the wedding.

The son-in-law is accompanied by his main negotiator and one or two of his sisters. The groom spends the night with his negotiator and one of the boys of the family. The groom's sisters spend the night getting to know their sister-in-law. Early the next morning they are shown the goat to be slaughtered to allow the groom and his family to partake of any food given to them by their in-laws from then and in the future (*indlakudla yomkhwenyana*). Msimang (1975: 273) says the following about the bride's father's purpose of inviting the groom into his homestead :



*Mkhwenyana! Okokuqala ngithi angibonge ngezinkomo ongilobolele ngazo. Okwesibili ngithi yemukela nasi isijingi sakho. Ngaso ngithi usungumntanami, ngikuzele namuhla.*

*(Son-in-law! Firstly, I would like to thank you for the lobola cattle you gave me. Secondly, I say take this pumpkin porridge. Therewith I say you are my son, I have beget you as from today.)*

The “pumpkin porridge” the in-law refers to is that goat slaughtered for the groom and his company. He is sealing the relationship which has been established between the young couple and their respective families. As from this day, the son-in-law is no longer a stranger in the family, but one of the family. If the modern couples can learn a lesson from these traditional ones, we would see less of divorce cases as experienced nowadays. If the partners in marriage can fully understand that their relationship goes deeper than being the two on their own, we could see marriages lasting for a lifetime till death do them part. If the modern couple could know that their respective families pray for them, their families have a welfare and truly wish to see their marriage survive the storms, they would stick together come rain or shine, storms or tornadoes, cyclones or general global warming. The Christians would always remember that Jesus said the clever man built his house on the rock, the Rock is Jesus. The house build on the solid rock never moves or shakes. They would definitely remember that Jesus prayed for us that our faith might not be shaken and enter into temptation. If they have faith that can move mountains, their faith can keep their marriage through tick and thin. The traditionalists who truly believe and have faith on their ancestors will always be reminded not to shame their ancestors. They would stick together in marriage in faith that it was grounded and sealed by the blood and gall of sacrificial animals. Even today the Zulu people who still truly believe in the powers of their ancestors never divorce. They know that divorce disquietens the ancestors and turns them against the one who errs and breaks the marriage vows. In the case when the women or wife has committed a terrible sin or misconduct, she is never divorced, instead she is sent back to her homestead. The father of the bride would

come and help to iron things out with the in-laws. He will bring the sacrificial beast to appease (*ukushweleza*) the ancestors.

The groom was given an opportunity to know his in-laws family council. The groom and his negotiator were given the wedding date. They set out with joy in their hearts to bring the good news to their family.

#### **4.3.2 The bride's preliminary customs before the Traditional Zulu Wedding Ceremony**

##### **4.3.2.0 Introduction**

There are a lot of preliminaries and precautionary measures that the Zulu people have to go through before the actual traditional wedding day. These range from weaving, knitting and buying the articles for distribution as gifts (*ukwaba*) among the bride's in-laws, *ukucimela custom*, *umbondo custom*, *umkhehlo custom*, *ukuncama custom* to *ukukhulekela umntwana customs*. All these customs and other related preliminaries to be discussed here are engaged upon as soon as the lobola negotiations are completed. These customs show that everything is heading towards the great event; the traditional Zulu wedding ceremony.

##### **4.3.2.1 Thanksgiving for the coming of the lobola cattle (Umbondo ceremony)**

Sometimes words are not enough to show your true feelings, so you try to show by practical examples. The Zulu people loved to show their inner feelings by actions; it is for this reason that they sacrificed beasts when communicating to their ancestors. They registered their gratitude or sorrow for wrongdoing. They crafted beadworks to convey their true feelings and messages to their loved ones. They at times promised big and next to unaffordable gifts such as promising to buy a train or an aeroplane for their loved ones.

To show how grateful they are for the arrival of the lobola cattle, the whole of the bride's family acted out. The boys spread or showered the newly arrived lobola cattle with cattle compost (*umquba*) and burnt a dried cow dung (*bazithunqisele amashwaqa*) to incorporate them into the family herd. The bride's father sacrificed a goat to report their arrival to the ancestors and had a family feasting with friends and neighbours. The bride and her mother brewed beer to be poured in many claypots. They told their neighbours that they are brewing beer for the thanksgiving ceremony for the arrival of the lobola cattle (*umbondo / ingqibamasondo*). The neighbours and friends willingly and readily helped by brewing their own beer to add on what the bride's family had prepared (*baletha iminjonjo*). They also bring all sorts of food to be taken together with pots of beer to the groom's place on a set date. They would bring fresh maize cobs, dried maize, pumpkins, watermelons, sweet potatoes and various available fruit and vegetables harvests. These fruits and vegetables are loaded on dishes, claypots or straw dishes and baskets. On the set date for the thanksgiving ceremony, the young girls and young men of the community carry these food parcels to the groom's place. They are accompanied by a few number of adults. The food dishes and drinks is called *umbondo*, and the whole ceremony is called *ingqibamasondo*, which can be literally translated, "covering the hoofs trail of the lobola cattle". The bride showed by this ceremony that the groom's family should not feel loss by the cattle that have been subtracted from their kraal because in turn they have received someone to be of help around the homestead by providing the whole family with food. As the bride leads the entourage of the ceremony, she shows that what she brings is not enforced on her by anyone or culture. She is grateful for being honored and having been seen worthy of becoming a wife, a special privilege. She is actually taking an oath (*isifungo*) that as the lobola cattle have been accepted, sacrificed for and shall never be returned, she too will never return back home after the wedding day but remain part of her new family and its homestead.

The bride, by this *ingqibamasondo ceremony*, is substantiating what Msimang and Ntuli (1986: 235-236) say about the beauty of lobola custom :

*Ilobolo singalibala njengelinye lamasiko esiZulu amahle kakhulu. Labe liyisipho ... intombazane iyigugu. Wayethi epha ngesinye isandla naye emukela ngesinye ukuze kugcwaliseke izwi labadala eliithi, "Imikhombe iyananana".*

*(Lobola can be counted as one of the most beautiful Zulu customs. Lobola was a gift to show ... the girl is precious. The person gave in one hand and receive in another hand to fulfil the adage, "A good turn deserves another".)*

The whole thanksgiving for the arrival of the lobola cattle revolved around this idea of a good turn that deserves another good turn. As the bride and her entourage or company enter the groom's place, they are welcomed by huge applauses and hurrays (*kuyakikizwa*) from the groom's family members, their neighbours and relatives who quickly come to witness this spectacular event. The head of the family (*uyise womfana*) quickly orders the cow to be slaughtered. The skinning and distribution of the meat portions is left to the bride's company. Khumalo (1997: 114) comments a great deal about the distribution of the meat portions. The front legs are given to the groom and his father, the hind legs are given to the groom's and the bride's mothers respectively, the back parts (*isininqe*) is given to the negotiator (*umkhongi*). The rest of the meat is left on the skin for the family, friends and the bride's company to cook and feast. Khumalo (1997: 114) remarks that the front legs are given to the males because they are the heads of the family and they have to walk in front in directing the social and civil matters of their families. The women are given the hind legs as they are following the lead of men as helpers. After the festivity, the girls from the bride's company take containers to fetch water and others collect firewood (*bakhe amanzi batheze*) for household use after they had left. The girls do not carry these things inside the homestead but leave them at the gate for collection by the family members. The whole ceremony comes to an end and the whole company packs and go.

#### 4.3.2.2 Getting wedding goods ready and Ukucimela Custom

The bride, with the help of the whole family members, prepared for the wedding ceremony soon after the *lobola* negotiations were over or drawing to a close. She would be helped to knit and buy sleeping mats (*amacansi okulala*), serving mats (*izithebe*), small sitting mats (*izicephu*) and many other articles to be used as gifts for her in-laws (*izimpahla zokwaba*). Her brothers would help by carving meatplates (*izingqoko*), headrests (*izigqiki*), wooden spoons (*izinkezo*) also to be used as gifts for her in-laws. The knitting of mats, sewing what needed to be sewn and weaving what needed to be woven was not a problem as most of the young girls learnt these skills from their mothers and grandmothers who had learnt from the previous generations. The grandmothers were models and custodians of handicraft, the younger generations learnt by observing and learning as apprentices. They learnt the art of cutting and collecting all sorts of grass species (*ikhwani, ingcobosi, ibhuma, ilala, incema, isikhonko*) for making straw products for sale, use around the household or as wedding gifts. The Zulu people were skilful makers of straw products such as beer strainers (*amahluzo*), beer sieves (*izikhetho*), clay or straw baskets lids (*izimbenge*), serving mats (*izithebe*), doormats (*odomede/omata*), brooms (*imishanelo*), baskets (*amaqoma / izikhwama*) and many more. The Zulu people were also makers of clay pots of various sizes, shapes and uses. These straw products (*ezotshani*), clay products (*ezobumba*) and wood carving products (*ezokhuni*) were used as wedding gifts to the bride's in-laws. The gifts were a way the bride made herself a favourable wife or sister-in-law or daughter-in-law (*ezicubuzela ukuze abe yintandokazi*). The bride who distributed the best gifts always shined and remained the best loved bride of the family as the whole family and those present at her wedding always remark and remember her by the gifts she shared among her in-laws. By these gifts the bride introduced herself and tried to secure her place in the family which held her future.

The way the bride prepared and collected her goods for the wedding was the way she showed by example to her family, friends and peers the kind of a wife she would be in her new homestead. The way she knits and decorates in embroidery, she is never haphazard. She makes the neatest stitches and stunning decorations.

We all know that when preparing for any big event, you need the help and support from your friends and relatives. The *Ukucimela custom* came in handy for it provided a proper avenue to approach the bride's friends and relatives for support towards the gifts or goods for the wedding. The *Ukucimela custom* made it sure that the bride visited her friends and relatives near and far, notifying them of her wedding date. In turn these friends and relatives spread the news by the word of mouth to others as the bride would not be able to cover or visit all of them. Those visited or heard of the bride's *Ukucimela custom's* campaign helped by giving anything as a present towards her goods for the wedding. It was a known custom that if someone came or told you about her wedding date, you were morally bound to give her something. No matter how small, little or big that something was, it counted towards the wedding goods that formed part of gifts to one's in-laws (*izimpahla zokwaba*).

Among the gifts the girl received was the pleated leather skirt (*isidwaba*) which the father gave to her daughter as her wedding garment. We shall deal with this leather skirt or kilt when we come to the *Umncamo custom*, the farewell ceremony the day before the bride's wedding day.

Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1966:118) say the following about *Ukucimela custom* :

*Ukucimela yisiko lokuhambela izihlobo lapho intombi isizogana, ihamba ivalelisa bese beyipha izipho eziningi. Lezi zimpahla yayizisebenzisa emzini ezinye igezise ngazo.*

*(Ukucimela custom is a custom when the girl who was about to get married visited relatives, bidding farewell to them and they would give her*

*presents. These goods were useful around her new homestead or used as presents to her in-laws).*

Khumalo (1997:142) agrees with Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1966) above about the importance of the *Ukucimela custom*. However, Khumalo (1997) adds a few important comments about the whole custom. The bride's father ordered the brewing of the beer and the slaughter of a sacrificial goat before she set out on the *Ukucimela* campaign. The custom prescribed that the bride should begin from her elder uncle (*umalume*), her mother's eldest brother. The eldest uncle was taken as her rightful guardian in case her parents and grandparents have died. The bride would spend the night at her uncle's place and the goat was sacrificed for her the next morning. She was given a skin armband (*isiphandla*) which she put on her right wrist. The armband was a sign to show that a sacrificial prayer was made on her behalf asking the ancestors to be merciful to her, bless her wedding day and her married life. The other uncles also gave her goods which might also include goats which she took with her to her new homestead.

The girl who behaved herself properly until marriage, showing respect and earning herself a good reputation among the people in her community received as many goods as possible to such an extent that she and her family broke into tears in disbelief of the people's response. Thus the proper behaviour and respect was encouraged and rewarded during the *Ukucimela custom*.

The most important thing about *Ukucimela custom* is that the girl was accompanied by her maids as she was no longer allowed to speak too often and unnecessarily, she had to begin to learn to be reserved. She had to learn to control her tongue, otherwise she will be a talkative wife (*uzodlula akhulumele futhi*).

The whole *Ukucimela custom*, the knitting and collecting of wedding goods, the help and support from the friends and relatives showed that the Zulu people prized communal ownership of events and helping one another in all occasions. In good times, bad times, sad times and happy times the Zulu people stood as one,

unified community. The girl's maids and peer group assisted in sorting out goods received and prepared them for keeping and distribution as gifts to the in-laws on the wedding day. We hope the revival of these and other beautiful Zulu cultural traditions would bring back the good things of yesteryears. If we could succeed to bring back the yesterday, with its love and beauty, we could be remembered as the repairers of the bridges that link us to the reservoirs of wisdom that needs to be passed on to the next generations.

#### 4.3.2.3 The Traditional Engagement Ceremony (*umkhehlo*)

The Traditional Engagement Ceremony (*umkhehlo*) is a very important custom among the Zulu people. It is a ceremony that signifies a transitional stage from being a maiden to being a wife. It is a public statement that the girl is now betrothed or engaged to a man, and the wedding ceremony is not too far. It is a ceremony that makes those still interested to throw in the towel as she is a fiancée (*ingoduso*). The whole engagement ceremony was a collaboration between the two families, that of a bride and a bridegroom. The negotiator (*umkhongi*) is a link and a master of ceremony, he takes it upon himself that nothing goes wrong as the two families are making the preparation for such a big cultural event. Khumalo (1997:130) says about *umkhehlo* :

*Yisiko leli elingaphuthi ngaphambi kokuba umntwana asine. Limqoka ngoba liqopha isigaba umntwana wentombazane angena kuso. Lesi isigaba sokungena ebungodusini.*

*(This is a custom that is never overlooked before the wedding day. It is very important as it marks a transition to a new stage. That is the stage from girlhood to womanhood.)*

The *Umkhehlo Ceremony* is very important as it gives the girl a new status, that of being a betrothed woman. The girl is given a foretaste experience of wearing a traditional pleated leather skirts (*isidwaba*).



Mbeshe Mthethwa and her wife, Ntombenhlophe (uMaNxumalo) of eMbabe area, KwaMbonambi were very outspoken about Umkhehlo Ceremony. The two were interviewed in on 16 December 2001 during the Umkhehlo Ceremony of the Ngema girl who was soon to be married to their son, Bongumusa. They say the ceremony preparations differ from place to place. It is either the bride's father requests *umkhongi* to bring a cow on a set date for the *Umkhehlo Ceremony*, that cow is outside the lobola cattle. Or else the bride's father sets the date on which the negotiator (*umkhongi*) will bring along the groom's family and its relatives, with the ceremonial beast provided by the bride's father either from within the lobola cattle or his own cattle. Either way, the beast is provided with pleasure as each family feels it is its duty or responsibility to make this *Umkhehlo ceremony* a success. The goat is slaughtered before the ceremonial beast, the goat is slaughtered to report to the ancestors about the big stage in the girl's life. The groom's company comes to the bride's place carrying sorghum beer, food provision and other beverages to make the ceremony a joyous occasion. Their arrival is welcomed by joyous shouts and hoorays.

The actual engagement ceremony takes place on a open field venue (*isigcawu*) pointed by the brides' father immediately before the ceremony begins. It is the venue where there will be traditional Zulu dances in their various forms and exchange of gifts. The open air meeting place (*isigcawu*) is never pointed to be known by many people beforehand in fear of those who might cast their evil spells to spoil the ceremony. The bride's father had known the meeting place, which is normally outside the courtyard, preferably below the cattle kraal. He might have also ordered his family herbalist to sprinkle it with special plants and herbs to ensure nothing goes wrong (*achele izintelezi*).

Once the meeting place has been pointed, the bride and her company are the first to enter the stage in singing and dancing. All eyes are fixed on the bride adorned in her beautiful traditional attire. The bride is seen wearing a pleated leather skirt (*ufake isidwaba*). She has gall bladder armlets and skin armlets (*iziphandla*

*zemyongo nezesikhumba*). These armlets were taken from the sacrificial beasts that were slaughtered for her ceremony. The contents of the gall bladder were sprinkled on her body in sacrificial prayer to her family ancestors requesting them to bless her and be their guardians all the way as she enters the new stage in her life. The upper parts of the bride's body is covered with a peritoneum (*wemboze isingenhla ngomhlwehlwe*) of the beast slaughtered for her *Umkkehlo Ceremony*. The peritoneum is a fatty membrane covering the internal bowels of a best, even in humans. The Zulu people believe the peritoneum is favoured by the ancestral spirits, therefore they will favour anyone who wears it. The bride's head is covered with a top-knot headpiece (*inhloko*). All these dressing codes designate her as a wife as she is introduced into the world of womanhood. Both the bride's and the groom's family are responsible for dressing up the bride during the ceremony. This is seen in that today the groom's family bring along special dresses for their new wife. Among these dresses we can mention aprons (*amaphinifa*), head-covering cloths (*amaduku asekhanda*), scarves (*izikhafu*) and many other clothes fit for a married woman.

As the bride and her company, which includes her maids, young amen and young women who help her sing her clan song (*becula inkondlo*). As they are singing and dancing, the meat of the sacrificial beast is cooked and getting ready for the rest to feast at the end of the ceremony. Traditionally, as the bride and her company are singing and dancing, the members of both families and community would come and present their gifts to the bride. These presents of all sorts would help towards the goods for presents to the bride's in-laws.

Today we see something relatively new during the *Umkkehlo Ceremony*, the pinning of money on the top-knot headdress (*uchonywa imali enhloko*). The bride and her bridesmaids, normally three or four, sing and dance having spears in their hands. They dance towards the crowds, who are clearly divided into two, those belonging to the bride and those belonging to the groom. If they stick the spear to the ground before you, you are bound to take the spear back to them as they had

stuck the spear in front you and danced back to their singing and dancing company. You bring the spear back, stick it to the ground in front of the bride and you use the safety pins on the bride's headpiece to pin the banknotes ranging from R10 to R200.

The mostly targeted members of the crowd are those belonging to the groom's party (*abakhwenyana*). These members come prepared with banknotes, ready to show-off to the bride's company, as they know they also have prospective wives among them. The pinning of banknotes during *Umkhehlo Ceremony* is another way to raise funds to meet with the demands of preparing for the wedding ceremony.

Towards the end of the ceremony at the meeting place, the men's regiments (*amabutho ezinsizwa*) do their war-dance and mock stick-fightings to entertain the crowds (*amabutho ayagiya aviliyele ukunandisa*). The headman or his representative is always there at such big gatherings to monitor peace and stability. The headman or his representative is normally the one who calls out to end the gathering after the bride's father had given his vote of thanks and announced that all his visitors are requested to have some refreshments at his place before they disperse to their various destinations.

These are some of the colourful events of our cultural traditions. They are still widely practiced in Lubombo SDI region. Therefore with proper revival and marketing strategies these cultural events can benefit the communities as they are open to everyone.

#### 4.3.2.4 The bride's Final Farewell Ceremony (Umnccamo nomgonqo)

The Final Farewell Ceremony is the most solemn, sacred and ranging amongst the top of the important preliminary ceremonies before the actual traditional wedding day.

Traditionally, before one embarks upon a long journey, he or she was given enough time to eat and pack some of the food for the journey. The food for the journey was known as *umnccamo* (provision for the journey). Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1966:273) define *umnccamo* as follows :

*Umnccamo ukudla okulungiselwa umuntu ohambayo.*

*(Provision is food prepared for a person who is going to embark on a long journey).*

Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1966) above, are supported by Dent and Nyembezi (1969:419) in their definition of "*ukuncama*" and "*umnccamo*" :

- ncama (v) eat before going on a journey.
- Nccamo (um-) (n) food eaten before a journey.

As it has been mentioned above, the Zulu people believed that a person should be given enough time to eat and have some food packed as one's provision for the journey.

The *Umnccamo Ceremony* was a final farewell ceremony where the bride's father slaughtered a cow for her daughter to eat her final meal before her long journey to her new homestead where she will spend the rest of her married life. Therefore the *ukuncama custom* prescribed that a beast had to be slaughtered for the girl and

the whole family to join her on her last meal before her wedding day, the next day. This was the solemn ceremony the father prepared for his daughter to leave her homestead (*ukuphuma komntwana*), her birthplace to her new environment. This is the day before her wedding day.

The final farewell ceremony (*umncamo*) forms part of confinement week (*isonto lomgonqo*). This last week at her homestead, the bride is confined and cocooned in her hut, she is attended to by her bridesmaids. At the first day of her confinement, her father slaughters a goat to make a sacrifice notifying her ancestors (*ukubikela abaphansi*) that her daughter is leaving for marriage to a so-and-so family. Msimang (1975:280) says the following about the *Umncamo ceremony* :

*... kubikwa kuqala kwabaphansi ngembuzi. Iyona ecelela umntwana indlela nenkambo enhle nomendo omuhle.*

*(... the ceremony is first reported to the ancestral spirits by sacrificing a goat. It is a sacrificial prayer for wishing the girl good luck, safe journey and a prosperous marriage).*

The bride's father burns incense (*ushisa impepho*) as the goat is slaughtered to pray for the girl's safe journey and a fruitful marriage free of hiccups. The girl is given a gall bladder armband to wear, given a big shawl to cover herself as she enters her confinement house where she is attended to by her bridesmaids. It is the week when the bride is praying together with her whole family for the future which she does not know what it holds in store for her. The week is spent there in the hut where she prays for the success of her wedding day to be without natural and man-made disturbances. She, together with her family and friends, mourns and prays for her welcome and adjustment in her married life. As the name confinement (*ukugonqa*) suggests, she is confined to her hut and no longer seen moving up and down around the courtyard. She is no longer mentioned by her first name but referred to as "a child", (*umntwana*). Khumalo (1997:172) and Msimang (1975:279) suggest that the shunning of the bride's first name has

mystical powers to control people not to become riotous and violent on her wedding day. The confinement week is the time when, traditionally, she sits leaning against the pillar (*weyama ngensika*) as the customary belief that she will stand firm as a pillar when facing the storms and trials in her married life.

The confinement period (*ukugonqa*) is the time when the people, especially the elderly women, come and spend many hours with the bride in her mournful prayers. These elderly women, her blood relatives and friends come and give her advice, admonishments, words of comfort and courage that will remain the true pillars of hope and strength through both good and bad times in her married life. The people take their turns to share their experiences in marriage, their joys and hardships, and ultimately how to keep her marriage intact despite of all the evils that might come her way in married life. They tell the bride that as she is sitting and praying for the success of her wedding day, prayer is the only weapon she can successfully use to overcome all evils. The bride has to develop faith that she is serving the God who is so big and wonderful. In God, there is no mountain that is too high, no valley too low, no water too cold, no weather too hot and no storm that he cannot calm. Krige (1936: 136) says the following about the advice the girl receives before leaving for marriage :

*The girl is brought before the elders of the sib and is instructed on how to behave at the other kraal. She is told that she represents her sib and told that whatever she does will be blamed on her people.*

Amidst the shedding of tears the elders tell the bride that she must brace herself to be strong and hold firm to her marriage even though called by all sorts of bad names, a harlot and a wizard. Khumalo (1997: 174) says the following about the last day before the wedding day :

*Yisikhathi lapho inzalabantu ishintshana khona ngomntwana. Ingena idedelana emgonqweni ngoba nje izodonsa ngendlebe umntwana. Ziyameluleka ukuba aqine alungele ukubekwezela noma sekunjani.*

*(This is the time when the elders gather around the bride. They take turns to advise her. They encourage the bride to remain strong no matter what happens).*

As the bride is confined to her hut, she is given the herbs and plants which form part of her cleansing medicines (*udla ubulawu*). Gumede (1990: 32) says that these purification or cleansing medicine (*amakhubalo amhlophe*) are prepared by the traditional healers from barks of large trees. Basically, these purification medicines made the person who used them very attractive, loved and respected among others. They were believed to be connected with the ancestral spirits. As the girl is given these medicines, she is also given enough time to eat properly. By the time she leaves the confinement hut, she must look radiant, plump, fresh, rosy, attractive and a beautiful princess worthy of getting married. Everyone who sees her must see beauty unparalleled.

The final farewell ceremony (*umncamo*) has variations according to various places as to the procedures followed when slaughtering its sacrificial beast. The common among these variations is that the beast is slaughtered two days before the wedding day. This is done to allow the next day to be the day of preparations, the day also when the bride is given a chance to do a demonstrative dance (*ukulinganisa*) to show how she will perform on her wedding day. The demonstrative dance is done for those who will not go to the wedding day. Her mother is one of those who will not see her at her wedding day because traditionally the girl's mother does not accompany her daughter on her wedding day (*umama akayishadisi indodakazi*). The bride's father takes his daughter and her bridesmaids, the whole or a few members of the family into the cattle kraal to show them the beast to be slaughtered. Krige (1936: 135) and Khumalo (1997: 180) agree that it can either be one of the *lobola* cattle or one of the family's cattle. In many cases the family heads prefer to use their family cattle as a sign of being happy for what the girl has done, being an obedient child until she left for her marriage. What is important is that the beast has to be a female without blemish and very fat. The blemish here being a barren cow (*inyumba*) or the cow

having a problem with her teats (*imfamibele*). The beast has to be healthy and fat heifer (*isithole esihle*) because the father is presenting the best he can offer as he is praying and bidding his daughter farewell. He describes the beast by its colours and characteristics as he is pointing at it, this is purposely done to make it clear even to the ancestors which beast is to be slaughtered. There is a shout of joy from those present, calling the father with his clan praises (*izithakazelo*). As per custom, the girl is not allowed to speak, it is therefore the duty of her uncles, aunts and other family members to take turns thanking the father on her behalf. The girl and her bridesmaids return to their confinement but before or after the beast has been slaughtered.

The slaughtering of any sacrificial beast is never done by any spear or knife but a special spear referred to as "the homestead spear". Berglund (1976: 229) says the following about the killing of ritual beasts :

*Ritual killings may be performed with a spear reserved for ritual purpose. The ritual spear is known as "umkhonto wasekhaya" or "umkhonto wamadlozi".*

The ritual spear is kept in a safe, sacred place under a careful eye of a family head. Msimang (1976:126) supports or confirms that there was one ritual spear that was always given to the family head for safekeeping after slaughtering a sacrificial beast.

Gumede (1990:10-11) give some very important things that are observed when slaughtering a sacrificial beasts. The beast has to be carefully chosen, there must be sorghum beer to go with the sacrifice, the incense has to be burnt to appease and pray the ancestors, the sacrificial beast has to bellow or bleat to show a sign of being accepted by the ancestral spirits. The slaughtering of the *umncamo* beast has to follow these tenets. It has to be slaughtered soon after dusk, the time when the ancestors are believed to come and roam around the homestead. The meat portions (*izitho zenkomo*) are cut according to strict Zulu customs. The meat is



hung on the poles of the kraal to allow the dripping and draining of blood before taken into the main hut. The meat is kept overnight in the main hut to be seen and blessed by the ancestral spirits. The Zulu people never eat blood-drenched meat. The most important part of the meat is the gall bladder. Its contents is used by the bride's father to sprinkle her on the feet and forehead as a way of reporting her to the ancestral spirits that she is leaving for another homestead in marriage. The bladder itself is used as an armlet (*isiphandla senyongo*) on her right hand next to the skin armlet made from the goat (*imbuzi yophaphe*) which was slaughtered for her at the beginning of her confinement period. These armlets are mentioned here because we shall refer to them later when we deal with "the Burning of armlets Ceremony", which is called *umshisanyongo* in Zulu. This is one of the ceremonies that are observed after the wedding day is over, about a month or so.

Some of the meat portions of the *umncamo*, farewell ceremony beast have to be kept as a provision for the bride (*isithebe somntwana*). The girl and her bridesmaids are not allowed by custom to eat meat of her bridal homestead until officially given permission to do so by slaughtering a goat.

The day before the wedding day is a day of final preparations before the bride leaves her homestead. In the afternoon, when the meat and other refreshments for festivity is ready, the bride's father takes her into the cattle kraal. There he reports the whole proceedings to the ancestors, and singing their praises now and then. He thanks the child and commend her to the care of her ancestors, to bless her to be fruitful and multiply making a name for herself and her family. Once the prayers in the kraal are finished, the band walks out the kraal into the courtyard. The bride and her bridesmaids do their farewell dance (*ukulinganisa*) to show what they will be doing on the open air meeting place (*esigcawini*) on the wedding day. Bryant (1949:544) says the following about the day before the wedding :

*The afternoon was spent in feasting, followed by a short farewell dance within the cattle-fold, which you must know was the family's sacred spot.*

Bryant (1949) says the farewell dance was within the cattle-fold, we have no objections as there are variations from place to place. The kraal is a sacred place, therefore the common practice is that many people prefer the courtyard outside the kraal for this farewell dance. The beer pots are beaming with foamingly matured sorghum beer, brewed within and some brought in by the community to help make the day a truly joyous day. There are people appointed to be responsible for the various parts of the occasion. There are those who welcome and direct the visitors and those who bring presents and food cuisines. There are those responsible for seeing to it that meat and beer is served accordingly. These are the people given the responsibility to see to it that order is maintained and that everybody feels welcomed and honored.

The bride and her bridesmaids return to their designated hut to rest for a while before a showdown the next day. It is a rest for a few hours as the bride and her company (*umthimba*) have to leave at midnight to be at the groom's place at dawn (*intathakusa*). Before setting out at midnight, the bride's father takes her with her kist for a final round in the kraal. When they leave the kraal, the bride is told never to look back but straight ahead until she reaches the groom's homestead. It is believed if she looks back, she will always remember back home and return, not a sign of being happily married. Her mother bids her farewell and brushes the bride's mouth shut, a sign that silence is golden, nobody will accuse her of ill-speaking if she keeps her mouth shut. As the bride and her company leaves home, she is cocooned among them, they are sign the clan's song (*ihubo lozalo*). The negotiator (*umkhongi*) had come to collect or meet the bridal company to take it home.

### **4.3.3 The bridal party's arrival and the wedding day (*Ukungena komthimba nosuku lokuqala lomshado*)**

#### **4.3.3.0 Introduction**

The way the bridal company (*umthimba*) is accepted at the groom's homestead differs from place to place. It is either they arrive at dawn, sing their clan song (*ihubo lomndeni*) as a way of saluting the groom's homestead at the gate. They are shown their designated place under a tree (*esihlahleni*) usually near the river. The bridal company is then given a goat (*imbuzi yasesihlahleni*) to slaughter and have something to eat. All is done amidst the shouts of joy (*kuyakikizwa*) by the women of the groom's homestead. These women dance around the homestead carrying small sticks, freshly picked palm branches or any beautiful trees. Other women show their joy by carrying sitting mats (*izicephu*), serving mats (*izithebe*), brooms (*imishanelo*) in their hands, showing how happy they are to receive a new member into their family.

The most detailed arrival of the bride is when the bridal company arrives at midnight, spend the whole night at a groom's place and leave at dawn for the designated place under the tree by the river. This arrival at midnight is marked by the singing and dancing at the groom's place (*ukugqumushela*) all night long. Let us dedicate a few paragraphs about this midnight arrival and its activities throughout the night.

#### **4.3.3.1 The midnight arrival of the bridal company and the competitive dance**

##### ***(Ukufika komthimba nokugqumushela)***

In the traditional wedding in its true sense, the bridal company (*umthimba*) has to reach the groom's place at midnight (*phakathi kwamabili*). They come singing their clan song and following all of the traditional customs involved or observed

in a traditional wedding. The arrival of the bridal company marks the beginning of the celebrations, as Krige (1936: 138) puts it :

*On the arrival of the bride at the bridegroom's kraal the marriage celebrations can be said to begin.*

The negotiator and the bridegroom's company welcomes the bridal party in singing and dance, exchange of greetings and customary rites to be observed and gone through. The bridal company enters and walks on the right hand side of the cattle kraal, have a short pause and singing of their clan song as they are directed to their designated huts where they will spend the night singing and dancing before going to their designated tree at dawn. Krige (1936: 139) says about the arrival of the bride at the groom's place :

*... still singing their ihubo, the bridal party proceed with the bride invisible in the centre, up the right side of the village and halt and cease at indlunkulu hut at the top.*

Khumalo (1997: 250-251) says this entering on the right side is the way the bridal party prays to the ancestors, who are believed to be in the main hut. They are praying the ancestors to welcome the bride as the new member of the homestead. The women of the groom's homestead show their welcome by hoorays and shouts of joy, and Khumalo (1997: 252) remarks about this custom :

*Isiko lokulilizela lidala kakhulu kodwa okusenamuhla lisenamandla. Yisiko lendabuko elibika injabulo nokutusa.*

*(The custom of giving hoorays and shouts of joy is very old, but still very powerful and prominent today. It is a custom of showing one's happiness and appreciation).*

As the bridal party tries to enter its given huts, the groom's party (*ikhetho*) blocks the way. This is a known custom where the bridal party has to pay a requested sum of money to buy the breaking of the blockade. Msimang (1975: 281) refers to this custom when he says :

*Uthi ufika emnyango umthimba zibe sezivimbile izintombi zekhetho kanye nomkhongi zifuna imfibinga.*

*(As the bridal company reaches the door, the girls from the groom's party, and the negotiator, had already blocked the way requesting for the payment to break the blockade).*

Once the bridal party has paid the requested sum of money, it can refuse to enter the hut requesting payment for carrying some of the bridal goods on behalf of the negotiator. All these delays and exchange of gifts enlighten the traditional wedding ceremony and makes it a happy memorable event. The delays are purposely done to sneak in the bride unnoticed into the given houses, Khumalo (1997: 255) and Msimang (1975: 281). Once the bridal party is in the given huts, it is given food and beer to drink. The groom's party soon withdraws to the left side of the courtyard to begin its singing and competitive dance (*ukugqumushela*). Khumalo (1997: 260) says this about the competitive dance :

*Ukugqumushela kusuke kusinwa ngendlela ethile esakuqholosha, esakuqhubukusha nokho okuhle. Kuyahlonishwa njengoba kusinwa phakathi kobusuku.*

*(The competitive dance is when the people sing and dance in a show-off manner with acceptable extravagant exaggeration. It is performed in a respectful manner as it is in the middle of the night).*

Khumalo (1997) says that this type of dance is performed as the way of reporting the arrival of the bride, dancing for them to watch as they are all present at this time of the night. It is very important to mention that as the groom's party is doing its competitive dance on the left side of the courtyard, the bridal party also gets out of their given huts and join the festive mood by sing and performing its own competitive dance on the right side of the courtyard. It is also very important to mention the point that as the parties are performing outside, the bride never leaves the given hut. The most remarkable aspect of the singing is that each part sings the songs that have a message to be heeded by the other party. The messages embody the expectations of each side, what the bridal company expects

from their groom and what the groom's company expects from their bride. In sum total, the songs contain the messages revolving around the advice, expectations, acceptance and general behaviour, all of which has a bearing to the dignity and success of the wedding anointed as from today. The competitive singing and dancing comes to an end when the groom starts singing his clan song (*inkondlo kamkhwanyana*). The groom's clan song concludes the competitive dance and the whole welcoming session of the bridal company into the groom's homestead. By singing his clan song, the groom is reporting to his ancestors that he has carefully listened and accepted all the messages conveyed in both the bridal and groom's singing and performances throughout the night. He now acknowledges before the witnesses that he will do all in his power to maintain his newly formed family and uphold his new status of being a married man. The women break into shouts of joy, the men, young and old, leap into war-dances (*izinsizwa zigiyе kuthi isifazane sigize*). They all retire to their respective huts where they drink and dance the night through, with short naps in-between. At dawn, the bride is the first, together with her bridesmaids, to be up and go out unnoticed to find their way to their designated tree not far from the river. The rest of the bridal company follows to this secluded place under the river.

#### **4.3.2.2 The secluded place under the tree and rising up to a meeting place**

##### ***(Esihlahleni nokukhuphukela esigcawini)***

There are many reasons why the bride and her company are given the secluded place under a tree and especially near the river. We are going to mention only a few of these reasons. The first is found in Krige (1936: 140) where she says :

*... before daybreak, the umthimba surrounding the bride, return to a spot in the veld called esihlahleni usually under a tree or in some bush so as to be able more effectively to hide the bride from the bridegroom's people. There umthimba spend the morning washing, dressing in their finery and eating food they have brought from home.*

Firstly, the secluded place under the tree is a safe place to hide the bride from the groom's people. To make sure the bride is shielded, she is covered with a rug or a traditional sleeping skin (*ugubuzele ngesiphuku*) and surrounded by the young men who cover her with their shields. Secondly, the place under the tree is where the bridal company can find a relatively private place for bathing and dressing as they are far away from home. Thirdly, the place under a tree is a place where they can find enough time and space to divide food among themselves so that they get up to the meeting place refreshed.

Fourthly, there is a religious aspect involved about a place under the tree and not far from the river. As the bridal company has to be at the river at dawn and walk up to a place under the tree, the belief is that the river is the place where all the ancestral spirits of the nation meet. These ancestral spirits find their resting places under the trees not far from the river. As the bride and her company go to bath at dawn, it is with the belief that she will receive their blessings before they leave the place at sunrise. Khumalo (1997: 273-276) supports this religious aspect of staying under the tree :

*Uhlala kuwona (umuthi) entathakusa ngoba kuyuphawu lwesigcawu sabanumzane kwasendulo. Kusobala uhlezi esigcawini samathongo esizwe ukuba amgcobe, amyale, ambusisele izinga angena kulona. Uyokwamukeliswa amandla amathongo ...*

*(The bride is seated under the tree at dawn as it is the meeting place of ancestors as from ancient days. It is clear that she is at the meeting place of the nation's ancestors for them to anoint her, to give her their advice and bless her for the new stage she enters. She is there to be given the ancestral strength ...).*

The river is the place where the bride and her company will bath themselves to get ready for the wedding ceremony. There is a spiritual cleansing as well, because the river with its many fords symbolizes the fording, the crossing and the transition from one stage to the next. The future of this transition lies in the hands of the Supernatural Powers. The washing in the river embodies the knowledge that marriage is something beyond human understanding and control but needs

the blessing of the Supernatural Being. The Zulu people understand that for the marriage to be a success, the married couple needs to fear God and give Him glory, and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains or springs of waters.

As the bridal company is seated under the tree, they are given a goat to slaughter (*isiwukulu / imbuzi yasesihlahleni*). Msimang (1975: 282) supports us :

*... kulethwa imbuzi ilethwa umkhongi. Le mbuzi kuthiwa isiwukulu noma uthuli lwezinsizwa.*

*(... the goat is brought by the negotiator. This goat is called isiwukulu, or the dusting off of the young men's feet.*

The negotiator shows his gratitude for the way in which the young men assisted in accompanying and shielding the bride all the way and thanking them for cooperation and respect they have shown so far. The goat is actually their breakfast as the groom's father later sends a beast for slaughtering and provide enough food for his in-laws (*inkomo yasesihlahleni*). The people at the tree are treated well because even the community sends food dishes, beer and drinking porridge to see to it that there is enough food for their visitors. The future is unpredictable, the host might find itself hosted at the bride's place next time. They have to make sure they treat their visitors well, so that they can be treated with kindness and hospitality should they find themselves visiting the bride's place. Besides, the Zulu people prized themselves of being hospitable to strangers in general. This hospitality and kindness towards strangers is seen in many of their idiomatic expressions. For an example, they say that mistreating other people is evil, you will soon find yourself mistreated (*unya lwabasha luyaphindana*). Therefore, because of this custom of practicing courtesy towards other people, the Zulu people are always ready to be hospitable. As the rest of the bridal company arrives in the morning, they find themselves greeted with festivity.



At noon, the father of the bride dresses up his daughter as he did when she had to be taken into the kraal before she left her homestead. The bride is dressed by her father to get ready for singing and dancing as they will soon be going up into the open air wedding site (*esigcawini*). Her father, assisted by his heir because everything that pertains to the ancestral spirits has to be done by the family head, not women, dresses her. Otherwise her mothers should dress the bride, but because the custom forbids them to be the forerunners in things pertaining to ancestors, the women step back and let the bride's father take the honours due to him. All the people in the bridal company dress themselves in their best traditional garments and adorn themselves in their best decorative beads and feathers. The best dressed and best decorated of all the bridal company is the bride, the one to whom the whole day is owed and dedicated. Msimang (1975: 282) remarks about the beauty of the bride :

*Umakoti ubopha amachama amabili phezu kwesidwaba.  
Amanye alenga ngapha nangapha ezinhlangothini.  
Emamhlombe wembeswe izikhumba zensimba ...*

*(The bride is adorned with beaded girdles overlapping above her leather skirt. Over her shoulders hangs the skins of genets.)*

Bryant (1949: 547) emphasizes the beauty of the bride when mentioning the lengthy fringe of goatskin hair (*isiphunga seziyephu*) which the bride wears round her neck. These fringes of goat-skins are made from the skins of the goats slaughtered for her during the preliminary ceremonies leading to her wedding ceremony. On her head, the bride wears a top knot headpiece (*inhloko*) decorated with a beaded strap (*umnqwazi*). The veil (*imvakazi*) is suspended from her head, covering her face but she is able to see through the dangling pieces of the veil. Krige (1936: 141) describes the veil as follows :

*... the most noticeable distinguishing mark is her veil (imvakazi) of cloth decorated with beads or consisting of a fringe of beads which conceal her face while allowing her to see.*

The veil covers the bride's face as a way of showing respect to her new family, both the ancestors and the living. The veil also prevents the bride from being seen by the crowds. Khumalo (1997: 288) says the veil has those hypnotic and magical powers of controlling the crowds to remain calm. He further says that if the bride can remove the veil, it is believed the crowds would turn riotous and ruin the whole wedding ceremony.

Traditionally, the veil was strictly worn by the bride to signify that she was still a virgin. It was a sign of purity and chastity. The other mark of the bride was that she was seen with her armlets of gall bladders and skins (*iziphandla zesikhumba nezonyongo*) on her right wrist. These armlets were signs that she went through the necessary preliminary rites before marriage were satisfied, otherwise her marriage will not be a success.

The way the bride puts on her finery (*indlela yokuvunula*) differs from place to place among the Zulu people, but these traditional regalia mentioned above have been observed and found to be common among the different regional groups. You will find it common that the bride carries a white shield without decorations (*ingcwayi*) on her left hand, and carries a short knife or assegai (*isingindi*) on her right hand, according to Krige (1936:141), Msimang (1975:129) and Khumalo (1997:205). These traditional items are symbols of victory, they are therefore given by a father to her daughter showing that he wishes her victory against all odds in her marriage. This victory will be accomplished if the bride uses tactics such as love, patience, respect, humility, kindness, faithfulness and self-control. These are the fighting tactics she learnt as she grew up, and when the elderly people gathered about her, advising her to be of courage despite whatever happens.

#### 4.3.3.3 At the wedding site on the wedding day (*Esigcawini ngosuku lodwendwe*)

At noon, the groom's party (*ikhetho*) gets down to fetch the bridal party (*umthimba*) from their secluded place under the tree. The men from both companies are characterized by their colourful buttock skin-coverings and shields (*amabheshu namahawu anhlobonhlobo*). These men are wearing colourful decorative feathers on their hands, colourful skin straps on their knees and upper arms. They are carrying knobkerries (*amawisa nezagila*) not for fighting but for the beauty of the wedding ceremony. The bridal company may rise up from their designated tree in their different groups or just one group. What is important is that they first have to sing songs and dance towards the groom's place before going to the wedding site. This going to the groom's place first is a way of saluting the groom's place on behalf of the bride (*ziyokhulekela umakoti*). They are believed to trample down the bad omens and evil trails (*bagxoba imikhokha*) that might have been cast by the enemies of the families. The mothers in the bridal company have the duty of requesting the family ancestors to accept, welcome and protect the bride. Khumalo (1997: 312) confirms:

*Kunesidingo ngokwesiko ukuba onina bayomkhulekela umntwana emzini, ezinyanyeni zekhaya.*

*(It is necessary, as a custom, for the mothers of the bride to go and make prayers to the family ancestors on her behalf)*

The role played by the bride's mothers at her wedding is very important. Each and every step they make is observed, to know if they know the customs and whether they had done their job of instilling these customary rules in their child. Their manner of approach, their respect, their attitudes and knowledge of customs will depict the values and behaviour to be expected from their child who is going to be the bride.

Msimang (1975:283) says that as the women from the bride's company make their rounds in the groom's homestead, they have burning firebrands. The firebrands symbolize many things and we can mention one or two of those symbols. The burning firebrands symbolize the wishes the women make to the ancestral spirits. The women request the ancestral spirits to lighten up the paths the married couple still to travel in their married life (*abakhanyise izindlela zonke*). The firebrands are the response to the negotiator's request. He came requesting for the "lighting of the firebrand" (*ukuzokokha umlilo*), therefore the bride is the "firebrand" to warm up the homestead. As the mothers of the bride carry new brooms, they symbolize the usefulness of the bride around the home. The broom is also used among the Zulu people for sprinkling herbal medicines (*izintelezi*) for chasing away the evil spirits and bad omens. The mothers of the bride therefore wave the brooms to chase away the evil spirits and spells that might disturb the wedding ceremony. The bridal company come up to the wedding site after having made sure that the place left behind is tidied up. All the bones and refuse have been burnt down to make sure nothing evil is done to spoil the wedding day. Bryant (1949: 548) and Krige (1936: 141) agree on this point of burning up the rubbish on the spot where the bridal company had been staying.

The bridal company goes up to the wedding site in an orderly manner, with the bride's fathers on the front row, the young men on the second row, the young women and the mothers forming the third and fourth rows respectively. These rows are there to make sure that the bride is shielded within the bridal company. Msimang (1975:283) says :

*... uyise womntwana eseme phambili nomnewabo ozomphathisa umsebenzi, zifike izinsizwa zingene ngemuva zisithe umntwana ngamahawu. Kuthi emuva kwazo kube udwendwe lonke nezimpahla zikamakoti.*

*(... with the bride's father standing on the front row, with the heir to assist his father, the young men join behind the first row shielding the bride with*

*their shields. Behind the young men comes the rest of the bridal company carrying her goods.)*

The stunning beauty of the Zulu traditional wedding ceremony is short of words to describe it to the fullest. The singing of traditional clan songs, the attire, mostly white items to brighten the day, the brandishing of shields and spears, the dignified manner in which everyone who speaks form part of this beauty of a traditional wedding ceremony. Bryant (1949: 548) says the whole group moved off in one compact group, men in front, and the young men behind with the bride hidden away out of sight. The group marched slowly and sedately to the dancing ground, chanting with uplifted shields the national anthem of their clan (*ihubo lomnden*).

The dancing-ground which Bryant (1949) above refers to above remains a family secret until the family head points at it shortly before the start of the wedding ceremony. The homestead and the dancing-ground is fortified and secured (*siyachelwa, siqiniswe*) by using special herbs (*izintelezi*) to ward off the evil spirits and spells that might be used by the envious people. The dancing-site is often the open space below the homestead, or else anywhere around the groom's homestead as long as it is a suitable place to contain a large number of people. The dancing-ground is appointed shortly before the start of the ceremony as supported by Khumalo (1997: 329) where he says :

*Ngesikhathi udwendwe lunyakaza selwenyuka, usokhaya nabafowabo baphuma bayokhomba isigcawu ... njengoba umthimba wenyuka nje usungaqonda ngqo esigcawini.*

*(As the bridal company prepares to rise up, the family head and his brothers go out to point the wedding site ... with the purpose that the rising bridal company should go straight to the wedding site).*

By the time the bridal party reaches the wedding site, the groom's party (*ikhetho*) and the local king's officials, the headmen, messengers and councillors are

already in there. The groom's party together with friends, relatives and the community leap up into dance and shouts of joy as they go to meet and welcome the bridal party (*bahlangabeza umthimba*). The bridal party enters and begin to dance before the big crowd of spectators, as Bryant (1949: 548) attests:

*Having reached the ground where the great crowd of spectators had already assembled and seated, the bridal company's men drew up in a line in front of the girls.*

The shouts of hoorays are spontaneous among the crowds as the bridal party dances in the wedding site. They sing and perform various styles of Zulu traditional dances. The most prominent of all the dances they perform are the *umgqiggo* and *isigekle* dances.

The *umgqiggo* dance is where the girls make a single file, one behind the other and dancing in forward and backward movements alternatively. What is remarkable is that backward movement is shorter than the forward movement. This is purposely done by the girls to symbolize the message directed to the bride. She is being told that her only movement is a forward march, never to make backward movements. She is getting married to stay and never to make backward movements that would lead to divorce, something unheard of and never experienced among the traditional Zulu people. It was a shame to fail in marriage.

*Isigekle* dance is the dance pattern where the girls, either from the bride's or groom's party, sing loudly but steadily and softly stamping the ground in slow movements. The important thing in the *isigekle* dance is the message contained in the songs. They convey messages in a sarcastic manner referring to the behaviour of their respective in-laws, both the good behaviour expected and the bad behaviour which should be discouraged and discarded. It might be that the bridal party is quite aware that the mother-in-law and the sisters-in-law are hot-tempered, prone to evil ways and gossips. They might know that the groom is a

ladies man, and thus they would sing songs discouraging such behaviours. Khumalo (1997: 336) says the following remarks about the *isigekle dance* :

*Isigekle ukusina okuhambisana neculo elisakubhinqa. Umthimba ubhinqa abasemzini, kokunye ikhetho libhinqe umntwana ongumlobakazi. Kusuke kutshelwana amaqiniso kwezikabhoqo ... kwenziwa sakudlala ngenhloso yokuthi okugondiswe kuye angakwenzi abhinqwa ngakho.*

*(The isigekle dance is a dance accompanied by a sarcastic song. The bridal party criticizes its in-laws and the groom's party criticizes the behaviour of the bride. The painful truth is spoken in a joking manner ... all is done in the name of discouraging the behaviour of the person referred to).*

The *isigekle dance* is normally performed towards the middle or the end of the wedding ceremony, the time when the large number of the spectators have come and are enjoying themselves. The time should be for everyone to listen to the message carried in the *isigekle songs*.

#### 4.3.3.4 The opening prayer in the traditional wedding ceremony

The *umgqigqo* and *isigekle dances*, and related items mentioned above were just like the song service before the pastor comes in to deliver the message of the day. Or should we say they were like singing the national anthem to create the right mood before the president presents his speech, the gist of the gathering? After the *isigekle dance* and other related items, then comes the part which everybody never dares to miss. This is the time when the bride sings her clan song (*inkondlo kamakoti*) which marks the beginning of the important issues in the traditional wedding. It is the time when the bride sings in her loudest and loveliest voice, and dances as jubilant and lively as possible as she can. It is the time when she crosses the bridge from her girlhood to womanhood. It is the time when she sings and dances to bid farewell to her peers and makes her mark and name among the married women in her new community. Msimang (1975: 284) says about the way the bride performs her clan song on her wedding day :

*Uyozwakala esempompoloza ngenkondlo yakhe (umakoti) esephumela obala, lapho eseyodlala khona sengathi uyazibulala.*

*(The bride will be heard in her loud and clear voice leading the rest in her clan song, it will be as if she dances for the last time before she dies).*

Bryant (1949: 548) and Krige (1936: 143) agree that the bride begins her clan song, springs forward and dances in a most stunning performance. She dances so beautifully to mark the day as the most memorable day for the rest of her life, the day she became the wife and mother of the nation.

What is most important is the message contained in the clan song, which might be a composition of the girl herself or the song used by all the girls in her family on their wedding days. The message of the clan song (*inkondlo kamakoti*) is a prayer for an acceptable welcome and treatment in her new homestead. The bride prays for welcome and fitting into the living and departed members of her new homestead. The informants we interviewed spoke highly and reverently about their clan songs. Celiwe Hlabisa of Empembeni Reserve, KwaHlabisa was interviewed on 20 September 2001. Celiwe Hlabisa remembered her clan song as follows :

*Ngizidelile mina namhlanje,  
Ngashiya ikhaya likababa.  
Uz' ungiphathe kahle Nkosi yami.  
Ngikweny'indawo namhlanje.  
Wen'uyazi weMkhululi wami.  
Wen'uyazi sophila kanjani.*

*(I've dedicated myself today,  
I've left my father's homestead.  
Pilot me and guide me, O Lord.  
I am at a foreign place today.  
Only you knows my Redeemer.  
Only you knows how we shall live our lives!).*



This is the clan song Celiwe Hlabisa of Mpembeni Reserve, KwaHlabisa, sang on her wedding day, 12/12/1987. She was getting married to Fisimpilo Mbatha of the same reserve. The message in the clan song is loud and clear. The bride has dedicated herself to take up her new stage of being a wife. She has left her father's homestead with all its happiness and warmth to become part of another family, she does not know how she will be treated. Her only prayer is that the Lord might pilot her and guide her every step of the way. She prays to the Lord whom she knows as her only Redeemer, who knows her future. She does not know what the future holds for her, but she knows who holds the future. She prays to be accepted as one of the children in the family, to be given advice and guidance, and to be told and forgiven her wrongs as any of the members of the family.

Everybody is touched by the way the bride performs her clan song. The not-yet-married wishes for the same on his or her wedding day, those who were married a long time ago break into tears as they are reminded of their own wedding days. Khumalo (1997:342) illustrates the emotions of the spectators when the bride performs her clan song :

*... kuqubuka uhlevane kuhlengezele izinyembezi kunoma ubani uma isihlaba iphelekezela ngengila intokazi yomuntu. Iqiniso elimsulwa ngelokuthi kaphambana inzalabantu esigcawini.*

*(... everybody gets overwhelmed with emotions, and everybody breaks into tears of joy as the bride performs accompanying her clan song with a dance. The plain truth is, the women break into shouts of joy and dance joyfully into the wedding site).*

The singing and dance performances when the bride takes the centre stage on her wedding day is quite a spectacular scenery. Bryant (1949:549) describes this moment as follows :

*... the matrons of the family rushed into the arena and strutted everywhere about, uttering their joy-cry, Li! Li! Li!*

These matrons of the family which Bryant (1949) above refers to, are the mothers / women of both the bridal and the groom's parties. Msimang, Hlongwane and Ntuli (1986:116) say the following about the importance of a clan song:

*Amahubo lana akuyona into entsha kwaZulu.  
Inkondlo nayo isathi ayibe yilo ihubo kodwa yehluke ngoba ngeyomuntu ngamunye. Uma intombi isichanguza iye ihaye inkondlo yayo, kanjalo nenkosi uma ibekwa ihaya inkondlo yayo. Bese sike sasho sathi ihubo lingumthandazo.*

*(The songs are not something new in KwaZulu, our remote grand fathers sang. The clan song is almost like a national anthem, the difference is that the clan song is for individuals. If the girl gets married, she sings her own clan song, so it is with a king who is enthroned, he sings his own song. We have already said that the clan song is a form of a prayer).*

Indeed the clan song is like a national anthem, it is a solemn prayer. When it is well sung, all spectators and singers alike break into tears. Both the clan song and the national anthem are only sung on very special and solemn occasions.

We all know that prayer is divided into many and various parts, all having to deal with the conveyance of our innermost cravings to the supernatural powers. There is a solitary prayer when one prays alone in a secluded place. There is an intercessory prayer where one prays on behalf of the others, there is a communal or public prayer where the group of people pray together on a public place. So, as the bride is singing and dancing, she is praying for herself to the supernatural powers. After she finishes, she retires back to her company. It is now the time for the elderly men of the bridal company to come forward and make the second part of the prayer session. They come to make and intercessory prayer to the ancestors of their family on behalf of their daughter, the bride.

There at the wedding site, the fathers of the bride order the spectators and everybody present to keep quiet as they are about to offer their prayers to their family ancestors. Everybody readily obeys the order to keep quiet, as this opening prayer is a known and respected custom for the fathers of the bride to introduce their own ancestors to the ancestors of the groom's homestead. They are all believed to be there, as Msimang (1975:349) says:

*... kuba nesizotha esikhulu kuthule wonke uwonke kuthi cwaka. Sekusuka amakhehla amabili angasemthimbeni ... asezokhuleka.*

*( ... there is a solemn calm as everybody keeps quiet. The two elderly men from the bride's party rise up ... they begin to pray (to their ancestors).*

The elderly men are deemed suitable because they are experienced in these matters and they are also regarded as the living ancestors because of their age and status. They are also the ones who know the majority of the departed ones before they went to the world of ancestors. Therefore they would speak as one speaks face to face with his brothers or fathers. The question one might ask is : Why two elderly men instead of one to pray on behalf of the bride? Khumalo (1997:350) comes with a plausible explanation :

*Izinto ngokwesiko ziyaphathiswana ngoba zidinga ubufakazi. Ngakho –ke ikhehla lesibili ngisho lingezokukhuluma lutho, ubukhona balo obokufakazisa ukuthi okushiwo ngumnewabo kunjengoba kunjalo.*

As the elderly men are making their traditional opening prayers by speaking to their ancestors (*ukuthetha amadlozi*), the rest of the spectators are seated, with the bridal and the groom's parties bowed to the ground facing each other in rows. They are showing respect to the prayers. The two elderly men speak, salute and sing praises to their ancestors. They are pacing up and down between the two lines formed by the couple's parties. Msimang (1975:282) and Khumalo

(1997:352) note that everybody is quiet as they know and respect the time when the ancestors of the two families are brought together (*kuhlanganiswa amadlozi*) to witness, bind and bless the wedding vows.

The Zulu people, by these prayers, show that they know and understand that the traditional wedding ceremony is not only for binding the bride and the groom, but also the binding of the living and departed members of the two families. This is the backbone of the traditional wedding which is not bound by the marriage certificate that can be easily torn into tatters. The traditional wedding was bound by willingness and commitment of the bride and the groom who are dedicated to their vows made before their supernatural powers and their respective families. It was for these reasons that there were no divorce cases among the traditional marriages. It was a shame and taboo to fail in marriage after so many sacrificial slaughterings and intercessory prayers made for the marriage to last for a lifetime.

If it did happen that there were misunderstandings in the marriage to the point where the bride was sent back home, urgent actions were taken to resolve the matter. If reprimands and resolutions taken by the two families' council failed, which was a rare case, the girl was not re-admitted to her homestead. She was given her own site outside her father's homestead or far away from home. She was always tagged as "the one who failed in marriage". The Zulu word for a divorcee (*isibuyakwendeni*) is pregnant with sarcastic messages. It is unlike these modern times where to be a divorcee is something regular as if it is a fashion. To be referred to as a divorcee (*isibuyakwendeni*) was a shame to be avoided at all costs for it was regarded as an insult. Therefore as the elderly men were offering their prayers, they requested the ancestors to shield their child and protect her from falling into such a debasing shame.

Once the elderly men have finished their solemn duty of speaking to the ancestors on behalf of the bride, they return to their place among the bridal company. This is supported by Msimang (1975:286) when he says :

*Emuva kokucela asezobuyela emthimbeni amakhehla, sekwedlulwe belu ezingeni elinesithunzi. Umntwana usecelelwe umendo ngenkolo nangegunya lokuthi amathongo ezwile futhi akwemukela ukukhuleka.*

*(After having made their requests the elderly men return to the bride's company, they have performed the solemn and respected stage of the wedding. The prosperous marriage has been prayed for on behalf of the bride, with the hope and faith that their prayers have been accepted and answered by the ancestral spirits).*

The elderly men leap-dance (*bayagiya*) before vacating the stage for the next event. The next event will be that of the king's messenger (*iphoyisa lenkosi*) who will officiate as a marriage officer. The crowds sing and dance, leap-dance as an interlude between the elderly men and the marriage officer.

#### 4.3.3.5 The traditional marriage officer

The king's messenger (*iphoyisa lenkosi*) acted as a traditional marriage officer, by the powers vested in him by the king himself. Msimang (1975:286) says about the traditional marriage officer :

*... sekuzongenwa kwelinye iqophelo lapho sekuzo suka khona isithunywa somthetho senze okwaso kokuhlanganisa labo ababili.*

*(... the time is now for the next stage where the king's messenger will officiate in binding the two in marriage).*

The king's messenger will order the crowds to be quiet once again. He might be assisted by the headmen and councilors present by raising their shields, a respectful manner of quietening the noise. Once again the bride and the groom's

parties draw closer to the marriage officer. They might be seated or bowed to the ground to show respect and dignity due to the wedding ceremony. The marriage officer would request the heads of both families or their representatives, together with the negotiator to step forward. This is the time when there would be disclosures of the lobola agreements. The marriage officer would ask whether the lobola cattle and articles had been paid in full or there are some remainders. If there are some remainders, what agreements were put into place as the manner in which they would be paid. Khumalo (1997:377) touches on this stage when he says:

*... isithunywa somthetho sibhekisa kuyise womntwana sifuna azisholo mlomo esigcawini. Sibuzo ukuthi, "Nilobolelene kanjani ngomntanakho?" Kufanele achaze kahle ngoba kugcinwa ubufakazi manje.*

*(... the marriage officer asks the bride's father to state with his own mouth before the crowds. He asks the question, "How did your in-laws pay the lobola for your daughter?" The bride's father has to state clearly all the terms agreed upon as it is now the time to keep the records straight).*

If the records of the lobola proceedings have been stated as a witness before the crowds, the marriage officer is ready to proceed. Mismang (1975: 286) states the marriage officer's procedure as follows:

*Sizobuza isithunywa bangathula abantu sithi, "Uyabuza umthetho uthi wena ntombazane ungaze ume esigcawini nje uyamthanda na?"*

*(Once the crowds are quiet, the marriage officer would ask, "The law wants to know from you young lady, as you stand before these crowds gathered in this place, do you love the groom?").*

The marriage officer is asking on behalf of the king and these people who are gathered as witnesses if the young girl was never coerced. He wants to know if she voluntarily and lovingly come to bind herself as the wife of the groom who is

also at the wedding site. Traditionally, the bride would not speak in response but she would leap-dance (*agqize*) towards the marriage officer and pat him softly with a beautifully embroidered sitting mat (*isicephu esibhonqiwe*) and return to the group. The marriage officer would patiently repeat the same question, with the bride repeating the same dramatic act. As someone who knows the Zulu traditional customs, the marriage officer would be very patient and repeat the same question for the third time. This third time the bride responds by another traditional dramatic act of pointing the bridegroom with a short assegai or knife on her right hand (*umakoti akhomba umkhwenyana ngesinqindi*). She shows that she loves the bridegroom and that she came out of her own will without being enforced by anyone. Msimang (1975: 287) says about this dramatic act of pointing to the bridegroom with a bridal knife:

*Uma umntwana ekhomba usokela ngesinqindi esigcawini usuke ekhombisa isifungo azithathela sona sokumemukela abe yindoda yakhe.*

*(If the bride points at the bridegroom with her short assegai or knife at the wedding site, she vows to accept him as her lawful husband).*

There would be thunderous hurrays and long breathtaking hand-claps if the bride finally agrees by herself before the crowds that she takes the bridegroom as her lawful wedded husband. The bridegroom jumps and dances towards his bride, his friends also dance together with him and sing his praises congratulating him for crossing the bridge to manhood. This is a very important part of the traditional wedding ceremony as the couple makes a public declaration that they are officially man and wife.

The marriage officer turns to the bridegroom to ask him the same question he asked the bride. He asks if the groom loves the bride. The groom responds either by the word of mouth or by raising or lifting up his white shield. Khumalo (1997: 378) looks at the bride's joy as her bridegroom publicly accepts her:

*Umlobokazi akazibekile phansi, uyagqashiya khona esigcawini kanye nomyeni wakhe. Kukhona okwedlula ukuvunywa ngumyeni esigcawini? Kukhona okwedlula ukuvunywa phambi kweziphathimandla namathongo esizwe? Akukho!!*

*(The bride leaps and dances gracefully next to her bridegroom. Is there anything surprisingly joyful as being publicly acknowledged as a loved bride? Is there anything surprisingly beautiful as being accepted before dignitaries and ancestors of the nation? None!!!)*

With the bride and the bridegroom officially bound in holy traditional matrimony, the aim of the whole ceremony has been fulfilled. The bride presents the beautifully embroidered sitting mat of a special grass species (*isicephu esibhonqiwe sencema*) to the marriage officer. He blesses the couple and wishes them good luck.

The bridal party leaves the wedding site with its clan song, leaving the groom's party singing and dancing as they entertain the crowds. The groom's party also soon leaves the wedding site with its own clan song. This is the first day of the Zulu traditional wedding ceremony. Both the bride's and the groom's parties spend the night at the groom's homestead waiting for second and last day of the traditional wedding ceremony. The next day will be the day when the sacrificial beast is slaughtered to officially incorporating the bride by sprinkling her with gall contents (*inkomo yokumqholisa ngokumthela ngenyongo*). Therefore, there are no customary nitty-gritties after the marriage officer had finished binding the bride and the bridegroom on the wedding site. As the people leave the wedding site on the first day of the wedding ceremony, they go home for feasting and beer drinking. The bridal company is ushered to its rooms. They all wait for the sacrificial slaughtering the next day (Khumalo, 1997 and Msimang, 1975).



#### 4.3.3.6 An official incorporation of the bride into the family and the distribution of wedding gifts (Ukuqholisa nokwaba)

The second day of the traditional wedding ceremony is the day when a sacrificial beast is slaughtered for officially incorporating the new bride into the family of both living and departed members. The sacrificial incorporation beast (*inkomo yokuqholisa*) is followed by a number of customary issues to be observed to make sure the two families, the bride's and the groom's families, brief each other about the matters of concern in their respective families.

Krige (1936:148) says the following about the incorporation sacrificial beast :

*The first step in the aggregation of the girl is the slaughter of the umqholiso beast in honour of the bride. The gall of this animal is poured over her head, and once she has touched this sacred part of the cattle of the kraal, she has taken the most important step in her incorporation into the kraal.*

The parts sprinkled with gall differ from place to place. It happens that the bride is sprinkled with gall over her head, shoulders, knees and feet. The feet are the common place of sprinkling, and the sprinkle on her feet is sometimes enough to report her presence as the feet are always closer to the ground, the dwelling place of the ancestral spirits. The Zulu word for the "incorporation sacrifice" is "*qholisa*". The verb "-qhola" means "to spray with a sweet-smelling scent". The gall is regarded by the Zulu people as having the scent the ancestors like and accept. The sprinkling of the bride with the scent preferred by the ancestors means that the bride will be accepted by these ancestral spirits.

The sacrificial beast for the incorporation of the bride ceremony has to be a female, a young heifer preferably. Sacrificing a male or an old cow regarded as an insult. The old cow suggests that the new bride is an old lady whose

marriageable stage was long overdue (*umakoti useyisalukazi*). The young female cow, heifer, is preferable because it is at its prime stage for proliferation. Before the incorporation beast is slaughtered, the girls from the bridal party have to come for its inspection, to see if it is the right animal, female, young and fat. The girls have a right to reject the first offer and request it to be exchanged for a better beast. If satisfied, the marksman is requested to stab it once, if the beast needs a second stabbing the negotiator has to pay a requested sum of money. There are many other nitty-gritties (*imicikilisho*) about the slaughter of this incorporation sacrificial beast, but what is important is that the gall is used to sprinkle the bride to incorporate her into the new homestead. For more information or details about this beast, you can read Msimang (1975:289), Krige (1936:147-150), Bryant (1949:552) and Khumalo (1997:440-474).

The second day of the traditional wedding ceremony is also the day when the bride's and the groom's families get together to inform each other about the biographies of their respective children (*ukuthetha ubulanda*). The parents outline what they know about their children, the strong points, weak points, ailments and observed behaviour. They make each other to have an idea of what kind of a person a bride is or a bridegroom is. Msimang (1975:284) says it is normally the father of the bride who initiates these talks by thanking the *lobola* cattle and reviewing the *lobola* agreements. He then proceeds to describe what type of a person the bride is. Then the groom's family members take their turn to say what kind of a person the bridegroom is. They then share what expectations do they have about the new family.

In the afternoon after everybody had eaten their apportioned meat of the sacrificial beast, the bridal party prepares for the distribution of wedding gifts (*ukuhlambisa / ukwaba*). The bride eats the meat or food brought for her from her homestead.

Krige (1936:151-152) says the following about the preparation for the distribution of wedding gifts :

*At about noon, when the girls have finished eating, they all return to the cattle kraal where the male members of the bridegroom are awaiting them. The girls will be carrying gifts – mats, blankets, beadwork, beer strainers, brooms, etc.*

The bridal company enters the kraal singing, with the bride having her bridal knife (*isingindi*) pointing downwards. She is pointing downwards as a sign that she is no longer a virgin after sleeping in her husband's hut the night before. Khumalo (1997: 515) also agrees that the distribution of gifts is done inside the kraal even though by custom the bride is not yet allowed to enter her groom's kraal until a special ceremony. But she enters today for the ancestors to see the bride for whom the cattle left the kraal for lobola. In other places the distribution of the wedding gifts is done at the entrance of the kraal (*esangweni lesibaya*) or between the cattle kraal and the main hut in the courtyard. This placing of the venue between the main hut (*indlunkulu*) and the cattle kraal is done in the fear of allowing the new bride to enter the kraal. As the whole ceremony of distributing the wedding gifts is called "Ukuhlambisa – the cleansing", there must be water that symbolizes something. Msimang (1975: 294) introduces us to the beginning of this ceremony :

*Sekuzosuka umakoti athathe udewu lwamanzi, afake amanzi nezinhlamvu zobuhlalu obumhlophe. Sekuzosondela umkhwenyana ahlale phansi esiceshini esendlalwe umakoti. Uzothi ukumgeza izinyawo bese emthela ngamanzi emzimbeni.*

*(The bride begins by taking a clay pot, fill it with water, and put a few white beads in the water. The groom comes and sit on the spread mats. She begins to wash his feet and pour him with water all over his body).*

Both water and white beads referred to above symbolize purity in marriage. The water from the pot is also used to sprinkle the wedding gifts before they are distributed to their rightful owners. The first dramatic act of washing the groom's feet symbolize the bride's prayer to have a baby boy as the firstborn in their marriage or to have a boy who is going to be an heir to the groom. The beads that are spilt to the ground when the bride pours water on her bride are the special presents she gives to the ancestors before distributing gifts to the living members of the family.

There will be presents for the parents-in-law and other members of the family. The gifts differ according to the status of the one who receives them. Those who are worthy of receiving gifts are traditionally known to everyone. It is also known what gifts are expected to be given to whom, the bride is free to add gifts according to what she can afford. As it is known who deserve the gifts, it does not matter whether they had died or left home to stay elsewhere or got married, they receive what is due to them. Among those known to receive the wedding gifts, we can mention the father of the bridegroom, his elder and younger brothers (*inkosana nomagcino wakwabo*), the bridegroom, his elder brother and his family's last-born, his elder sister. The recipients are called out by name to come forward to receive their gifts. The routine is always to start from the eldest to the youngest. The clay pots, beer strainers, brooms, sleeping mats, blankets, sitting mats are commonly used items as wedding gifts. The negotiator is also given his gifts. For more details about the gifts distributed, you can read Khumalo (1997: 538).

After the bride has finished distributing or sharing the wedding gifts among her in-laws, she is given a child to carry on her back. The child is usually one of the baby boys in the family. Her mother-in-law gives her the child. The child is smeared with fats or Vaseline, she kneels before her parents-in-law who come and kiss and play with the baby on the bride's back. This is a custom that symbolizes

the time in future where she will be carrying her own child on her back, especially a baby boy. It is therefore an indication that she is ready for being a mother.

The bride sings her clan song, and the bridal company leaves the kraal and returns to the huts. The bridal company packs its belongings and gets ready to go back home leaving the bride and her helper (*umhlalisi/impesesi/umakotshana*) who remains with her for a few months while she gets familiar with her new environment. The Zulu traditional ceremony is officially over, the bride will be there at her new homestead with her husband until death make them part.

The traditional weddings lasted for a lifetime as they were based and grounded on firm religious foundations. The couples believed in the consent and blessing of their parents. The traditional weddings were nothing like what we see today where the man asks the girl if she can marry him. If the girl consents they go the very same time or the very next day to the priest or home affairs offices to register their marriage. In a matter of few minutes, they are fully and legally married. Even the decision to divorce each other is as quick as it took to decide whether to get married. Maybe if we can return to our roots, our cultural traditions, do things as they were done ancient ways, maybe we can see a drop in the high percentage of divorce cases among our people, and other people of the world.

#### 4.4 THE TRADITIONAL ZULU HOMESTEAD AND ITS FAMILY LIFE

##### 4.4.0 Introduction

This sub-section introduces us to the way the Zulu people organized their family units. It gives us a glimpse at the way the family head (*ummumzane*) looked after his family, which includes the organization of his huts around the homestead and the position of the cattle kraal in the courtyard. It introduces us to the measures taken by the family head to protect his whole family against the evil spirits and his important role he played in the family's religious ceremonies. The sub-section

also looks at the way the family head looked after the welfare of his wives.) It also looks at the games the children played and their educational value in instilling the traditional beliefs, values, behaviour patterns and the general outlook at the family life.

#### 4.4.1 The home and family life, the nature of polygamy

(The traditional Zulu people have a strictly patriarchal and exogamous system organized under the strict rules of behaviour and codes of respect and honor. The nuclear family usually consists of a man and his wives together with their children.) The extended family is also a common norm among the Zulu people. Dalrymple (1983:77) says about the family structure among the Zulu people :

*The smallest unit is the house (indlu) or a nuclear family that includes a man, his wife or wives and children. Among traditionalists, polygamous and extended families which were the norms in former times, still exist although the trend seems to be towards monogamy because of changing social and economic factors.*

The extended families that Dalrymple (1983) speaks of above might consist of a man with one or more wives and their children. To extend the family more, the sons of the family remain with their parents when they get married. They just build their own houses within the homestead. The senior man of the homestead remains the head of the extended family, and is respected by all the family members. The senior man (*umnumzane*) together with his siblings, who have their own homesteads and extended families form what is called lineage (*uzalo*). When the extended family gets bigger to be contained in one homestead, the senior man gives his sons a site (*inxiwa*) not far from the homestead when the sons get married. As a result of the multiplication of the homesteads of a very same surname or clan, we get districts named after the surname of the multiplied homestead. That is why we have districts (*izigodi*) such as KwesakwaMthethwa (the Mthethwa clan District) at Embabe-KwaMbonambi area, the eBathenjini (the Mthembu clan District).

The lineage traces its origin from its male common ancestor. The members of the lineage are forbidden intermarriages. It is culturally taboo to marry within the lineage because it forms a corporal localized community. The senior members of the lineage form a link between the tribal ancestors. Culture is like a tapestry with different inter-linking threads, we are now trying to discuss the home and family life but soon found ourselves touching upon the ancestors and the religious aspect of the Zulu people. This is because the religious aspect of the Zulu people filters through the different spheres of their daily life. The religious ritual behaviour patterns reinforce and maintain solidarity of the lineage.

What constitutes proper behavioural patterns within the family structure is our main concern. The basic belief is that everybody under the care and security of the ancestors. Everything that is done in and around the homestead has to be done with the knowledge that the ancestors reward good behaviour and punish any disrespectful manners. The behaviour pattern means that the family head is the link between the ancestors and the living members of his family, he therefore commands respect as the head of the family unit. It is through the family head that the whole family achieves communion with the family ancestral spirits who maintain the stability and welfare of the homestead. Dalrymple (1983: 79-80) says the following about the behaviour patterns in the traditional Zulu homestead:

*The act of paying respect (ukuhlonipha) takes many ritual forms in the family. The rituals are part of the Zulu way of life, and are a reflection of the store set by the traditional Zulu on order and discipline. These ritual behaviour patterns are reinforced by religious beliefs.*

As we all know, domestic activities involve preparation and consumption of food, disciplinary measures and mutual respect and other related issues that take place within the homestead and form part of the home and family life. These activities and domestic scenes are characterized by the presence of people; mothers, aunts, brothers, sisters and many others. These people are further characterized by the

need of group survival that largely depends on enculturation. The family life is therefore suitable for discharging this function of enculturation. Harris (1971:270-272) says that the senior members of the homesteads form a prestigious and powerful group working as a board of directors in their family units, and nobody speaks with authority except the senior member of each family unit. The senior member is responsible for making managerial decisions about domestic and societal matters, thus they are responsible for enculturation of the young. Enculturation is a vast program of conscious and unconscious learning that the older generation bequeaths to the next generations. Enculturation if properly bequeathed leads to the belief that one's behaviour patterns are naturally good, ethnocentrism.

We have been occasionally referring to extended families and polygamous marriages. Polygamy is a hot topic that normally troubles many people, but let us look at the nature and status of polygamy among the Zulu traditional people. It was an honour for a Zulu man to have as many wives and many children as possible. To assume the status of being a polygamous man meant that a person had many cattle, enough wealth to maintain his wives and their large families. But at times the man sought for a second wife as the first wife could not have a boy who was to become an heir in the family, Krige (1936:40).

There was no cause for conflict and envy among the wives in polygamy as each wife was allocated her own hut, fields to cultivate and provide food for her own family. Each wife was allocated her own cattle for milking and oxen for ploughing her fields. The words "own cattle" should not be understood as if she owned the cattle and could do as she wished. No, the cattle belonged to the family head but allocated to be used by the wife allocated to her. These cattle allocated to a wife were inherited by her son in the case the family head died. So, even though the man had many wives, this apportioning or allocation and distribution of resources assured that everything ran smoothly, and should run smoothly in case the head of the family died. To allocate quality time with each



of his wives, the man had his own private hut (*ilawu likababa*) where each wife had to be alternatively invited weekly or fortnightly, depending on time available and the number of wives. Bryant (1929:29) says the following about time allocation among the man's wives:

*Each wife was allocated her own separate hut, and oftentimes her own milk cows, so also did she receive her own separated garden plots to be attended by herself and her daughters to furnish foodstuffs for her family and her allotted time.*

It will be a mistake to suppose that polygamy was barbaric and unjust after looking at the privileges that were granted to the women in polygamous marriages. It would be much safer and acceptable if one would put it as mildly as Dalrymple (1983:77) that polygamy is no longer practiced because of changing social and economic factors.

#### **4.4.2 The arrangement of Zulu huts around the cattle kraal in the courtyard and its significance**

∟ The Zulu homestead shows a remarkable masterpiece of organisational structure. The big Zulu homestead is called *inxulumu*. The homesteads are usually built on hillocks, especially on the side where they would be protected against the strong winds. This style of building big Zulu homestead on hillocks can be seen today in places like eMpushini, Eshowe area under Chief Khoza, and Ndundulu-Melmoth areas.]

∟ Logs tightly knit without wires usually fence the courtyard. Where there are enough stones, the courtyard is normally hedged in by stones build into walls (*umthangala*) as one would build a masonry house. The fencing is usually in a circular shape with the cattle kraal at the centre of the courtyard. The cattle kraal or byre is also built like the outer fencing for the courtyard, tightly-knit logs or

stones. They used strong trees that would last for a long time, trees like acacia (*umthole*), mimosa tree (*isingawe*), stinkwood (*isitingawoti*) and others. The cattle kraal was regarded as the temple or the holy place of the homestead as it was where the ancestral spirits found their dwelling place. The upper section of the cattle kraal had an enclosure for calves. The cattle kraal, as a holy place, was the place where the family head (*inhloko yomuzi*) communicated with the ancestral spirits during the family sacrificial ceremonies and where he prayed on behalf of the whole family to request the ancestors to guard the welfare of the family members. The cattle kraal and the main hut (*indlunkulu*) served as the sacred places of the homestead.]

⌈ The cattle kraal was also the place where the grain-reservoirs were dug. The grain-reservoirs were underground storage pits where grain harvests were kept for later use. These storage pits had small mouths enough for one person to enter, the interiors were large and hard-pressed and polished with pumice stones (*kugandaywa ngezimbokodo*). The clay or ant-hill soil (*isiduli noma ubumba*) was used to prevent dampening of grains. The reservoir was smoked to harden it before putting the grains like maize, miller, beans etc.]

⌈ The Zulu homestead is a bee-hive of activities where one would see that everything is done according to a plan. You would see women, both young and old, going about doing their daily chores. They would be seen going in and out for fetching water from the fountains below, collecting firewood for cooking, grinding maize, doing the washing and other daily chores. You would see men milking cattle, spanning the oxen, tanning the leather, bringing logs for repairing the cattle kraal or courtyard fencing and more of their daily chores. The huts in the homestead are arranged in a very specific and important way. Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1966:39) say the following about the arrangement of huts in the Zulu homestead:]

*Maqondana nephakathi nesibaya kunendlu yendlunkulu, inkosikazi yomnumzane ezozala indlalifa. Ekuyeleni kwesoburxele yindlu yeNggadi, elandelwa ngezinye zomakoti okuthiwa babheke ingqadi. Kanti kwesokudla yindlu yeKhohlwa.*

*{(Between the upper section of the cattle kraal and the outer fence is the main hut belonging to the first wife, the one who bears an heir. On the left hand is the hut belonging to the third wife (ingqadi) and the houses of minor wives regarded as assistants to the second wife. On the right hand is the hut belonging to the second wife (ikhohlwa).}*

{ As one can see in the above description, the main hut (*indlunkulu*) of the homestead belonged to the first wife. This is the wife who had to provide or give birth to the heir of the family. The main hut is the most important hut of the whole homestead as it served as the temple where the ancestral spirits found their abode in the upper section (*emsamo*). The sacrificial meat was taken from the kraal and spent the night in the upper section of the main hut. This was done in good faith that the ancestors blessed the meat before being eaten as part of the sacrificial ceremony. The main hut was the heart of the homestead as the weaponry of the family was kept there, it was also where the family visitors were entertained and housed even if they had to spend the night.}

{ The left section of the courtyard belonged to the third wife (*ingqadi*) and the minor wives who were regarded as her assistants or attendants, and the whole of her family. The right hand section of the courtyard belonged to the second wife (*ikhohlwa*), her attendants and her whole family. Next to the main entrance of the homestead you will find the huts belonging to young men (*amalawu ezinsizwa*). The huts of the young men were built next to the main entrance as they were seen as the security guards of the homestead. This style of having security guards house near the entrance was copied from the king's palace where you would find security guards (*ogqayinyanga*) next to the entrance.}

Each wife had huts for her young men (*amalawu ezinsizwa*) and visitor's huts (*izindlu zezivakashi*) on her section. The girls had no special huts as they slept with their mothers and grandmothers.

#### 4.4.3 The huts constructions; its exterior and interior

The whole building is made from locally available materials. The men were the construction managers and labourers, as they provided most of the building materials. The Zulu people liked helping each other in many of the daily chores. The men from the neighbouring homesteads would come and help by digging holes for putting construction poles, construction of walls and roof trusses. The neighbouring women would help the family by cutting grass for thatching, plaster the walls with mud, press the floors with stones to harden them before polishing with fresh cow dung (*ubulongwe*). For thatching, the men use an awl (*itulo*) and rope made from barks (*inxoza*) or fibres from species of also (*uhalibhoma*) to sew or tighten the thatching grass to the trusses. The grass is first made into overlapping rows, which are later planed using a wooden plane (*isishayo sotshani*). The logs for walls and roof trusses are first debarked and made to dry up before being used. This debarking is made to prevent the logs from decaying so easily. The top of the roof is sealed by spreading a tightly-knit sheets of grass or skins to prevent leaks during the rainy seasons. This top sealing sheet is called *isihlandla*. The plastering of walls, thatching and sealing with a tightly-knit sheet of grass concludes the exterior of the Zulu hut. The Zulu idiomatic expression, "*Akudlulwa ngendlu yakhiwa*", which can be translated, "You don't just pass by when the house is built", emphasizes the point that the Zulu people were communal and that they enjoyed helping one another without expecting to be paid for the services.

The interior of the Zulu huts was marked by one or two pillars at the centre. Next to the pillar (*insika*) there is a fireplace (*iziko*) which has three stones (*amaseko*) for supporting pots when cooking. The hut, especially the main hut, is divided into sections. The left hand section of the fireplace is the section for women (*isilili sabesilisa*). The upper section (*umsamo*) is marked by a ridge, and it is regarded as a sacred place where the ancestral spirits of the family found their resting place (*indawo yamadlozi*).

The upper section (*emsamo*) is where the meat for sacrificial ceremonies is kept overnight to be blessed by the ancestors of the family. As a sacred place, nobody was allowed to sit with one's back facing the upper section (*awuhlali ufulathele umsamo*). The upper section of the hut is the place where the household kitchenware is kept. It is the place to keep the milkpails (*amathunga*), claypots (*izinkamba*), meatplates (*izingqoko*) and calabashes (*amagula*).

Looking up at the interior of the roof, you will see many items neatly placed there. You are likely to see leather or straw pouches (*izimpontshi / imigodla*) for keeping the wooden spoons (*izinkezo*). You will see ropes or wooden hangers (*imigibe*) for sleeping rugs or mats. These wooden hangers are usually beautifully decorated.

#### 4.4.4 Men's and women's daily chores around the homestead

Life around the homestead was never boring, there was a lot of activities upon which both men and women engaged themselves in, separately or collectively. These daily chores will be highlighted here as they will be dealt with when we later deal with the traditional artifacts among the Zulu people.

The women collected species of grass for making baskets, sleeping and sitting mats, beer sieves, pot lids and other straw products. They collected clay for making clay pots of various sizes, shapes and uses. The women went out in groups to collect water, firewood. The women collected grass for thatching new or renewing thatched houses, they plastered and renewed plastered houses belonging to their parents, husbands, brothers and aunts (*bephahleka izindlu*). Men and women worked together in ploughing fields. The men would span the oxen (*bebophela izinkabi*), control oxen-drawn ploughs (*bebamba igeja*). The women or boys would spread the seeds of maize (*ummbila*), millet (*amabele*), beans (*ubhontshisi*), runner beans (*imbumba*) and other seeds. The women followed by hoeing (*ukuhlakula*) and harvesting (*ukuvuna*) in the fields. The men would come and collect the harvest in oxen-drawn sledges (*izihlibhi*). The women specialized in cleaning and polishing the huts. The men specialized in carving wood utensils such as meatplates (*izingqoko*), wooden spoons (*izingxwembe nezinkezo*), headrests (*izigqiki*). The men also care walking staffs (*izimboko zokudondolozela*), milkpails (*amathunga*), wooden hangers (*imigibe yokhuni*).

They collected logs for fencing courtyards, building or repairing cattle kraals. The men built food storage barns (*izingqolobane*), they dug food storage pits in the kraals (*imigodi yopata*). The men, especially young men, looked after the cattle, they slaughtered cattle for sacrificial festivals or ceremonies. The men also tanned skins (*beshuka izikhumba*) for various leather products. The tanned leather was used for making buttock-covering attire (*amabheshu*), shields for various functions (*amahawu emicimbi ehlukeni*), women's leather kilts or skirts (*izidwaba*). There were leather skirts for various functions. There was a special leather skirt which was worn by the brides on their wedding ceremonies. These served as the marriage rings. There were leather skirts which women wore as they were doing their daily chores (*izidwaba zasekhaya*), there were leather skirts for special occasions (*izidwaba zokuhamba / nozokuvumula emicimbini*). The

tanned leather was also used to make the big sleeping rugs (*iziphuku*). There were many other daily chores that the people engaged themselves in, but these mentioned above are sufficient to show that life among the Zulu people was quite fascinating.

#### 4.4.5 Games children played in and around the homestead

The children played together as boys and girls most of the times but there are games where you would only find either the girls or the boys playing the games specific or relevant only to their sexes. Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1966:26-35) mention quite a number of the games that the children played in and around the home. We will mention only a few of those games and show how important they were, as there is more to the game than the fun of it.

##### 4.4.5.1 The knowledge of birds and other wild animals

The children would form opposing groups, each group had to select its representative in the competition of naming the birds or any wild animal. The first representative would first explain the rules of the game. For an example, if he points up in the sky, the contender must give the name of the bird, if he points down, the contender must mention the name of an animal that cannot fly. Or else the first person would request the contender to mention the number of birds or herbivorous, or carnivorous animals without a pause. The opposing group members are there to help or see to it that not a single animal is repeated. The groups may also compete by making bird or animal calls, and the first group representative make an animal call while the representative of the second group tries to figure out quickly what animal call was being mimicked.

This game about the knowledge of birds and other wild animals quickened listening skills, encourage quick thinking and memory. Thus they learned to work co-operatively, they learned animal sounds and their characteristics. The kids learned to love nature and their environment. The game served purposes served by the modern television programmes such as 50/50, Living Edens, Nature on Trek, National Geographic Specials and many others dealing with Nature Conservation. They would learn to know birds like vulture (*inqe*), hawk (*uklebe*) stork (*ilanda*), hornbill (*ingudududu / insingizi*). They learnt about wild animals such as lion (*ibhubesi*), tiger (*ingwe*), cheetah (*ingulule*), elephant (*indlovu*), crocodile (*ingwenya*) etc. The riddles also played a major role in guessing and knowing about many things in one's environment.

#### ( 4.4.5.2 The makeshift houses and playing dolls

{The daily chores around the home were learnt and practiced in the makeshift homesteads that the children built. The boys played the roles of their brothers and fathers while the girls played the roles of mothers and their children. They acted out and mimicked the things they saw the adults do around the homestead. This called for adults to act responsibly in front of the children, as they would copy these things and practise them when they become adults. This game is still played, and it is where one would observe the child at play to see if the child has a good family setting and upbringing or not. The child who grows up in an abusive family would show abusive behaviour when interacting with other children in the makeshift households. The girls would act the roles of being mothers bathing and dressing dolls made out of maize-cobs. }



#### 4.4.5.3 Hide and Seek

The hide and seek is an old game which the Zulu children played among themselves. The children would form groups or choose to play in pairs. The first goes to hide and the other seeks where one is hiding. ]

#### 4.4.5.4 Skipping ropes and catching stones

The skipping of a rope (*ingqathu / ingqabeshu*) is a game played by the girls only, but sometimes boys to partake jokingly and play it well. The rope is held at each end by a girl who swings it over the head and under the feet of the competitor. The skilful and experienced competitor can skip the rope for a long time. Her friends sometimes sing along to encourage her to go on and on. When the competitor stumbles over the rope, she quits and gives the turn to the next person. ]

The girls would also play the game of tossing the stone in the air (*umagenda*) whilst picking one or two or three on the circle. As she is picking up the ones on the circle, she quickly catches the one in the air. The number of stones she picks up and collecting them to her won circle determines the winner of the game. The game teaches nimbleness, concentration, hand and eye muscle coordination.

#### 4.4.5.5 Stick fights, bull fights and group hunting

These are the games in which only the boys participated. The boys practiced stick fights (*ukungcweka*) which was very important and came in handy when the boys had to defend themselves. They used a short striking stick (*umshiza*) and a long

defending and stabbing stick (*ubhoko*). The defending and stabbing stick was either used or held alone or together with a protective shield (*ihawu*). The skilful stick-fighter at times asked two or more young men to fight against him. This stick fighting against many assailants taught the boys to defend themselves courageously when attacked by enemies in groups (*ukuhlanganyela*). The stick fights practice continued until some of the contenders ask for a ceasefire (*umaluju*). The call for ceasefire was respected even in real fights, as the one who called for ceasefire showed that he could not take it anymore, he is pleading for mercy. It was cowardice to continue fighting after the other person had called for a ceasefire. Any elder person was justified to beat the person who continued to fight after the call for a ceasefire was made. The best thing about the stick fights was that there were no deaths or serious injuries. The person who sustained injuries was taken by his assailant to the river and washed the blood stains, wounds bandaged and peace negotiated (*izinsizwa zigezana amanxeba*). The stick fights taught respect, as you grew up knowing and respecting your seniors, peers in similar age-group and those younger than you are. There was no knife and gun brandishing that make the youths disrespectful, prone to criminal offences and die young.]

⌈ The boys also made the bulls of clay (*izinkunzi zobumba*) and made them fight (*beziqhatha*). At times they made bulls out of tree forks to fight but sometimes they made the bulls from their respective herds of cattle to fight, this was a forbidden and punishable practice. The bulls sometimes fought and killed each other, which sparked tension and hatred between the respective families where their bulls fought and killed each other. The boys knew that to make the bulls angry and be able to fight viciously, they had to sprinkle the bull with a species of ants that made ant-hills (*ukuyithela ngezibonkolo*). The boys of the village also participated in an organized group hunting (*inqina*). They would set a date on which they would take their knobkerries (*izagila*), pack of dogs (*umhlambi wezinja*) and necessary hunting equipments. The boys would hunt using the

tactics used by King Shaka's regiments of organizing themselves into an ox-horns shape. They divide themselves into three groups, the first two form the horns (*izimpondo zempi*) and the third group forms the head (*inhloko*). The game (*inyamazane*) sprints in one direction, it comes across the side flank which quickly moves to encircle the animal. If the game sprints out and gets chased by the dogs and disappear with it over the hill, the rule says the dog that disappeared first with the game is the one that is given the honour of having caught the game (*ibanjwa ngeshone nayo*).]

#### 4.4.5.6 Devious food gathering methods in the veld

[ The boys spent most of their time looking after the cattle in the veld. They survived the days by eating wild fruits and berries (*izithelo zasendle*). They were sometimes tempted to enter into the nearby fields to gather food using all sorts of devious methods of collecting food for the day in the veld. It was not considered stealing but the survival game (*ukuqwagela*). This was a very risky and dangerous game in which the boys engaged themselves in as they were severely punished if caught playing it. They stationed the watchman (*umqaphi*) to warn them as the boys crawled under the fences into the fields. Like baboons, they quickly picked up a few maize cobs (*izikhwebu zombila*), watermelons (*amakhabe*), millet plants (*imfe*) and other quickly picked harvest, and quickly dash off the field. There in the ravines and gorges, the boys would make fire from woods collected. They usually stand far from the smoking fire as it drew adults. Once the smoke had subsided, the boys came down to roast maize cobs (*ummbila wokosa*). At times they made fire to roast meat from the game killed in the veld or roast birds that they shot with their slings (*izinyoni ezishaywe ngesihlilingi*). This is how the boys survived out there in the jungle while looking after the livestock.]

#### 4.4.6 The traditional homestead's protection against evils and sicknesses

##### 4.4.6.1 Securing the homestead against evil (*ukuqinisa umuzi*)

It is the duty of the family head to see to it that his homestead is protected against any evil, both spiritually and physically. One may never know the difference between true friends and sworn enemies. One therefore takes no chances but make sure that his homestead is secured against any evil that might strike at any time and from any angle. The family head therefore hired an experienced herbalist (*inyanga*) to come and secure the homestead (*ukuqinisa umuzi*) using the traditional medicines for evil protection. Khumalo (1997:166) says :

*Kuyisiko nomgomo ukuthi umnumzane azihluphe ngokuqinisa umuzi kayise, kungadlaleli yonke imimoya.*

*(It is a custom and a procedure that a family head should worry himself about the security of his father's homestead, it should not be a playground for any evil spirits).*

By ordering the herbalist to use traditional medicines to secure the homestead, the family head lived by example to his heir and the whole family that one should live the life that satisfies the ancestors. The herbalist who came for securing the homestead ordered a sacrifice of either a cow or goat to the family ancestors. Mbiti (1970:179) says the following about sacrifices to ancestors in African religious aspects :

*Sacrifices and offerings are acts of restoring the ontological balance between God and man, spirits and man, and the departed and the living. When this balance is upset the people experience misfortunes and sufferings or fear. Sacrifices and offerings help, at least psychologically, to restore the balance.*

Therefore, before doing anything to help secure the homestead, the herbalist first solicits the blessing of the ancestors. The sacrifice is a symbol of fellowship and recognition that the ancestors are the true guardians of the homestead. Gumede (1990:9) says the following about the religious aspect of the Zulu people :

*The Africans have always been a highly religious people for centuries upon centuries. They left no shrines and no temples as monuments to their religious zeal. They never worshipped inanimate objects such as stones, trees, forests or the sun as objects of their beliefs. Their religion was for everyday living.*

When terror strikes, the Zulu people believed the ancestors had their backs against the homestead. Anything unusual and out of run of normal things was seen by the Zulu people as an indication that the ancestral spirits register their displeasure in no uncertain ways.

The homestead was secured (*umuzi wawuqiniswa*) for many reasons. The herbalist secured the homestead against lightning (*ukuvikela izulu*), against familiars (*izilwane zabathakathi*), witches and wizards (*abathakathi*) and evil spirits (*imimoya emibi*).

On this regard of securing the homestead against all sorts of evils, Gumede (1990:101) says :

*A specialist in this field is called to fortify the homestead. The herbalist collects fortification pegs which are made out of either *umtulwa* or *umgwenya* (plants bearing edible fruits). The pegs are doctored with special medicines, fats and *izinsizi* which keep away thunderbolts and lightning streaks. The whole job is done under cover of darkness so that neither wizards nor familiars knows where they are.*

The pegs, once doctored, are put in the holes and covered with soil to protect the homestead on all directions of the compass. Every hut within the homestead is also fortified by anointing the doorposts using the mixture of animal fats and plant roots ground into powder. The members of the family are fortified by incision (*bagcatshwe*). The incision marks (*izihlanga*) are anointed with concoctions (*izinsizi*). The double incisions are usually made on the anterior fontanel (*ukhakhayi*), front and back of the neck (*ngaphambili nangemuva kwentamo*), both shoulders (*emahlombe*), on the solar plexus (*ucabango*), ante-natal cleft (*umzinsila*), arm's wrists (*izihlakala*) and down on the feet (*ezinyaweni*).

The incision marks remain there as a reminder that the incised made the vow to keep the rules laid down by the herbalist. Among the rules, the homestead has to be sprinkled (*akuchelwe*) with special medicines as directed, the drinking water from the fountains must not enter the homestead after sunset because this would be letting in the river-dwarf (*ukungenisa utikoloshe*) and other familiars. The incised and fortified people should not lend out salt, as their enemies would render it useless as a protective charm. They should not lend out the needles as they can be doctored by their enemies to cause illnesses such as sharp pains on the sides of the chest (*izibhobo*). There are many other rules and behavioural patterns that needed to be observed by the people when their homestead had been fortified with traditional medicines.

The final session of the fortification service was the time when the herbalist made the family members to lick the fatty mixture (*ukuncinda*) from a red hot pot lid or clay pot broken piece (*udengezi*). The herbalist's payment was a beast, according to Krige (1936:33), Nxumalo (1969:30) and Gumede (1990:90). The payment by a beast showed that the Zulu people prized life and cherished the security of their homesteads.

#### 4.4.6.2 The understanding and healing of diseases in around the homestead

{The healing of diseases and the religious aspects of the Zulu people are intractably interwoven with their way of life. To understand their belief systems, likes and dislikes, temperaments and moods, and related issues one has to understand their way of life in its totality. Gumede (1990:38) says that unlike the Western people who knew the germ theories such as Bacteriology, Parasitology and Pathology, the Zulu people had a different understanding of the causes and healing of diseases. They had many and various traditional medicines that were effective in curing the diseases. Instead of understanding that the diseases were caused by the breach of the laws of nature that could lead to the spread of germs, bacteria, viruses, parasites and many more, they believed these as being caused by witches and wizards who wished to do bodily harm to the family. The Zulu people also believed that the diseases were the manifestations of anger by the ancestral spirits who were no longer recognized as the custodians of family welfare. Gumede (1990:39) supports the Zulu idea of diseases being caused by the witches by saying :

*The African mind loves the concrete and eschews the abstract and the functional. From time immemorial, custom, tradition and usage has always offered explanations which were understood and accepted by the African people. The diseases were understood to be a spell cast upon the patient through witchcraft.]*

{The herbalist was called in to secure the homestead against such evil spells (*amalumbo*) and evil spirits (*imimoya emibi*). The witches (*abathakathi*) were hated for their antisocial characters, and for being perpetrators of evils. Khumalo (1997:167) says the following about securing the homestead with traditional medicines :

*Noma ngabe hlobo luni lomcimbi, kumele inyanga yekhaya izoqinisa umuzi. Lokhu kwukuvikela nokunqanda ingozi yanoma yiluphi uhlobo. Akudingekile ukuba kuze kubenezinsongo ngaphambi umnumzane aqinise umuzi.*

*(For any event, the herbalist is called in to fortify the homestead. This is done to protect and prevent any danger from happening. It is not necessary that there should be threats before the family head fortifies his homestead).]*

The Zulu people always believed there should be medicines to protect the homestead, prevention is better than cure. The witches are believed to have learnt the black magic for causing illnesses and spiritual trauma. They are believed to use both supernatural and mundane means to cause sufferings. Their common mundane means is poisoning by toxic herbs. The wizards peddle all sorts of social problems ranging from ill-health to death, and killing without compassion or discrimination. They can also function as assassins by being hired to use their evil ways to kill at a prize. The witches are believed to have supernatural powers to harness beasts and birds to use them as their familiars (*izilwane zabathakathi*). Among their familiars, the witches can use snakes (*izinyoka*), owls (*izikhova*), baboons (*izimfene*), cats (*amakati / izimpaka*). The witches employ these familiars to cause havoc by anti-social acts such as evil trails causing flitting pains (*umeqo*), make people and livestock barren etc.

As pointed above, besides being caused by the wizards and witches, the diseases were caused by the visitation from the ancestors. The ancestors were believed to cause illnesses and deaths as a way of punishing the family head for disregarding certain rituals or customary rites. Thus they caused diseases as corrective measures. The Zulu people understood diseases and misfortunes, good health and ill health as a result of disturbing or securing the intricate balance between man and his relationship with the spirits of the departed members of the family. If this



intricate balance had been disturbed, the family herbalist was called in to administer his services. Gumede (1990:85) refers to herbalists as follows :

*This group of doctors practise straight therapeutics. These medicine men learned more about the uses of plants and herbs for healing purposes. They master the use of roots, barks, leaves, fats, mineral matter etc. They learnt the art and sciences from others through serving apprenticeship, he is then the equivalent of a general practitioner.*

The herbalists use their traditional medicines as the western doctors use pills, capsules, injections and related measures to remedy diseases. They are the respected members of the society as they help the sick and the suffering. Among the methods of administration of medicines, the herbalists used medicines that were taken orally (*ephuzwayo*). Their medicines were made by mixing roots, barks and leaves crushed and mixed in either cold or boiled water. They also steamed their patients (*ukugquma*) by using special medicines which were boiled and used while simmering. The patient was covered with blankets and steamed up. The steaming was commonly used for headaches and skin problems (*izinduna / isidina*). The herbalists also used the smoking out (*ukushunqisela*) method. The special dried barks, animal fats and skins were burnt on a wide-mouth clay pot (*udengezi*), and the sick person was made to smell or sniff at the medicines (*ahogeliswe*). At times the herbalists made special infusions and decoctions (*izimbiza*) to be administered orally. These orally administered infusions were taken with copious amount of water to induce vomiting as they were emetics (*imithi yokuphalaza*).

The Zulu herbalist also acted as specialists in the fields of gynaecology and protection against lightning. They also carried sympathetic magic medicines that enhance dignity and personality (*ukugqaba ube nesithunzi*). As gynaecology

specialists, the Zulu herbalists were able to cure infertility. For a Zulu woman to be referred to as infertile (*inyumba*) was a matter of serious concern, therefore the gynaecologist did everything in his power to counter-act infertility. Besides counteracting infertility, the herbalists knew certain decoctions that helped to ensure easy, prompt and uncomplicated childbirth (*izihlambezo*).

To sum up, the Zulu people had their own pharmaceutical codex wholly embedded in their traditional way of life. Their traditional way of life was in turn intricately interwoven into their religious aspects. The religious aspect permeated or filtered through every sphere of their daily life. The Zulu herbalist accumulated an extensive knowledge of medicinal plants, roots, tubers and herbs. They made use of these therapeutic herbs and plants to make infusions and decoctions. They also knew animal fats and skins that had medicinal values. These medicines were used as drugs to expel worms, cure internal and external diseases, as aphrodisiacs, for gynecological purposes, chest complaints, gastrointestinal tracts and for protecting their homestead against evils caused by wizards and witches.

## 4.5 TRADITIONAL ZULU ARTIFACTS

### 4.5.0 Introduction

The artifacts dealt with in the following discussion are for regular use around the house, and for selling in the roadside market stalls all over KwaZulu Natal. These roadside markets are the most important primary levels of economic activity in the informal sector. The local people, sometimes with the help of local businesses and other agencies but left to be managed and expanded by the local people create them. The roadside markets form the basis of economic and social developments. The economic and social development, the involvement of new needs among human beings is integrated with their own culture to bear the stamp of sustainability. This relationship between socio-economic development and cultural aspect was noticed as very important by Lemmer (1980: iii) who said:

*Any system of marketing is in one way or another influenced by cultural and socio-economic factors. The economic system is often not much more than an expression of cultural system, and traditional patterns certainly do not change overnight.*

The Zulu women are largely involved in tourism developments and benefits, especially in the Lebombo SDI region. They are the custodians of cultural activities, the makers of clay pots, of different sizes and shapes. The women are the plaiters of beer sieves and the weavers of mats and baskets. The women confirm by their activities that the Zulu cultural traditions do not change overnight as they are the essence of developing tourism industry in KwaZulu Natal. There are many and varied artifacts that the Zulu people produce and sell in the roadside market stalls.

The women make and sell straw products, clay products, beadworks products, cultivated fruit and vegetable products. The men produce and sell traditional leather products and wood carved products. The Zulu people supported themselves by caring for their livestock and cultivating their crops. The

Westernization shifted this primitive and traditional lifestyle by introducing the idea of working for money to meet the economic needs. Both men and women found out that tourism industry and the roadside markets challenged them to use their talents and skills to explore their old homecraft of producing artifacts for sale. The sales of these artifacts proved to be quite fairly a prosperous business. Some of the busiest market stalls are found at Mtubatuba-Hluhluwe region, Mtunzini and Nsingweni region, Mkhuze-Ubombo region, Ngwavuma-Ngwanase region, Eshowe-Melmoth region and many more.

#### **4.5.1 Beads artifacts; as jewellery, for communication, religious and ceremonial festivals, fashion and art**

##### **4.5.1.0 Introduction**

{ Beads were, and still are, very precious and worn for decoration or adornment. If one talks of a Zulu person dressed in his or her finery, one means that there were colourful beads, feathers and leather artifacts. The beads are prominent items of adornment, the reason might be that the Zulu people knew how to make their own beads long before the white man came with glass beads. Hlongwane and Msimang (1986:178) say the following about beadworks among the Zulu people :}

*Ubuhlalu lobu yinto eyaziswayo KwaZulu. Abantu babekwazi ukuzakhela obabo ubuhlalu. Babesebenzisa izinhlamvu eziyimbewu kanye namagobolondo eminenke nokunye, nawo amathambo ayesetshenziswa. Ubuhlalu kwakuhlotshwa ngabo futhi bubuye bube yincwadi.*

{ *(Beads were very precious among the Zulu people. They knew how to make their own beads. They used plant seeds, shells and other things, the bones were also used. Beads were for adornment and also used to convey messages).*}

{ The beadworks variations have become so wide and distinct among the different Zulu ethnic groups. Morris (1994:9) attributes these variations to the fact pointed

out by Hlongwane and Msimang (1986) above. Morris (1994:9) says that the Zulu people made their beads from wood, shells, animal teeth, seeds (*ulozisi, umsilinga, umkhuhlu*) and other materials.

Hammond-Tooke and Nettleton (1989:32) say that the regional variations in beadworks is made distinct by the main colour combinations that the different regions prefer, as well as decorative patterns. The regions that boast of their distinct colour combinations and decorative patterns include the Mthembu and Mchunu of Msinga-Tugela Ferry region. This region shows a remarkable colour combination of pink, green and translucent yellow beads made up of rectangular patterns. The Ceza-Nongoma region boast of beads artifacts that are predominantly white with red, green and yellow colour combinations made up of simple triangular patterns.

The kings traditionally regarded the other distinct artifacts as the rewards for the feats of courage and valour shown by the cadets of conquering regiments. The beads wearability is enhanced by their desirable characteristics of being durable and available in their infinite variety. The beads artifacts have the beauty imparted by use and effects of time in different cultural contexts, as they are found forming part of many cultures of the world. (As part of cultural contexts, beads tell us a great deal about the social, political, economic and religious aspects of the people who wear them. The following are some examples of the beads artifacts made and worn by the Zulu people)

#### 4.5.1.1 Girdles (*izigege*)

The girdles are the loin-coverings worn by the Zulu girls as part of their daily dress or when dressed for special ceremonies. The girdles have details of intricate designs with a variety of colours and styles reflecting local styles and colour preferences. The colour combinations of blue next to the white identify the wearers as originating from Greytown-Msinga region. The predominantly white

beads detailed with red and blue identify the wearers as originating from Natal Midlands and Northern KwaZulu Natal. The girdles as beads artifacts show visual expression while frequently symbolizing the values and cultural traditions among the Zulu people. The girdles fulfill both functional and decorative requirements.}

#### 4.5.1.2 Hip-belts (*iminaka*)

The girls adorned themselves in hip-belts worn to overlap above the girdles in stunning beauty. The hip-belts also came in different designs, colour combinations and widths depending on the interest of the manufacturer and the amount of beads colours available. The belt was sometimes plain, single colour preferred by the wearer. At times the hip-belts were made by knitting beads of different colours on ropes, then the ropes were knitted together usually between three and five ropes depending on the desired width the wearer wanted. At times the beaded ropes were twisted and sewn together to make a hip-belt. The picture in the appendix or addendum will help to show the different hip-belts. These hip-belts show that the Zulu people have a distinctive mode of adornment that mirrored cultural and individual expressions. The Zulu beadwork artifacts show that they possess a distinctive national dress and elaborate traditions in their culture. Leather or canvas backed inside the hip-belts. The most common of the hip-belts is the white single string of beads (*ucu*). This white string of bead worn around the waist has a long history and tradition. The girl took out this white string as a way of accepting a love relationship between her and her lover. If the girl refused to accept the love relationship, she would say the beaded white belt or string does not fit (*ucu alulingani*). This white string of beads was either worn around the neck or around the waist.

#### 4.5.1.3 The beaded neck ornaments (*imigexo / izidanga*)

⊆ Beads are kaleidoscopic items designed, combined and recombined to make a wide range of astonishingly beautiful materials. They are reasonable accessible

units that can be arranged in almost endless configurations for the purpose of adornment. Among the popular beaded artifacts the necklace is the most familiar form of adornment. The Zulu people have a variety of necklaces made of beads. The women wear *izidanga*, the necklace that is made by weaving a rope of plant fibres or species of grass that are decorated with beads of different colours. The *umazitike* is a necklace worn by both men and women. It is a necklace made of a beaded rope that goes around the neck, with a square frontal piece of beads that hangs in front of the neck. *Umazitike* necklace is also worn as a headband or on the waistline as a belt. It is also known as *amagcagcane*.]

*Ibulezi* necklace is made of beaded squares of a few centimeters attached to a beaded string right around the neck and shoulders. Both young men and women as an adornment for special occasions use it. *Umbhijo* necklace is made of strings of beads twisted to make a beautiful rope that could be worn as a necklace or a waistband. *Isithabatha* is a beaded rope with unbeaded intervals, it could either be worn as a necklace or hanging over the shoulder, across the chest to the opposite hip. All these necklaces and decorations for covering the upper parts of one's body are collectively known as *izidanga* or *imitamatama*. We do not claim to be exhaustive in the descriptions of these necklaces and other beadwork artifacts, but these described here are sufficient to show that the Zulu people have special adornments for daily life and special ceremonies or festivals. We are not exhaustive because we have not mentioned the special necklaces and sacrificial adornments worn by traditional herbalists and medicine men. These people wore necklaces and armlets made of twigs, animal shells like that of snails and tortoises, teeth and claws of animals, like tigers, and leather strips dotted with beads.

#### 4.5.1.4 Traditional beaded headbands and hairstyles

Among the tribal peoples of Southern Africa, the Zulu people have produced and maintained a beaded art form that is creative and distinctive despite outside

influences. Their distinctive styles are suggestive of their social patterns, values and preferences. As in the case of the necklaces described in the previous sub-heading, there are many traditional headbands for both men and women.

The women decorated their top-knot headpieces (*izinhloko*) with belts of beads called *umnqwazi*. This *umnqwazi* item covered the ridge of the headpiece and overlapped to the forehead. It was often worn by the bride on her wedding day, but it can be seen today worn by the Shembe / Nazareth Baptist Church members on their religious dances. The headpiece is also decorated at the top with a beaded piece called *isithwalo*, this is also common among the Nazareth Baptist Church women. It is fortunate that my mother is a member of this church although I am not. These beaded headbands for women are distinctively white with exquisitely coloured geometric patterns. The men wore a special headband called *umqhele*, the word which can be literally translated "a crown".]

According to Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1966:2), this *umqhele* headband was made from beads combinations and worn by men only, and mostly on special cultural occasions. It was also made from a leopard's skin, it had beaded or skins pendants for having over one's face and shoulders.

There were not many or various beaded headbands because men liked to use animals' skins and feathers rather than beads to make their headbands. There were many of these conventional headbands. We can mention *isiluba*, a headband made from short feathers of any beautiful bird. These feathers were threaded together in a rope to be worn hanging around one's head. The most famous of the feathery headbands is *ubuthekwane*. It is also known by various names such as *isidlodlo*, *isidlukulo* and *isisaka*. Elderly men (*amakhehla*) in wedding ceremonies often wore this headband (*isidlukulo*). The headband was made from the *quill* feathers of a black-tailed finch (*isakabuli*) or any other long-tailed feathered bird. The other common headband among the elderly men is the headring (*isicoco/ungiyane*). The headring traditionally meant that the wearer



was a brave warrior who had fought in many of the king's armies, it also meant that the wearer was a retired soldier or warrior. Later the headring was worn as a token of age and wisdom.

There were no salons but there were traditional methods of looking after one's hair. To keep the hair soft, the Zulu people washed and plastered the hair with clay soil (*ukutambula ngebumba*) as a relaxer. The clay soil and red ochre (*ibomvu*) were used as the traditional hair conditioners. The women also made their hair into knots (*beluka amagoda*). The Zulu people, both men and women, plaited the hair into dreadlocks (*impithi*) and have them decorated with beads at the ends (*isiyendane*). The normal person did not decorate the hair extensively as the diviners, they only made a few dotted lines on the plaited hair to differ from the diviners. The men liked to keep the hair combed and pushed upwards into the famous Afro-Hair (*isihluthu*). The animal fats (*umfuma*) were used to keep the hair moist and easy to comb. The Zulu people never cut their heads bold, except when in mourning.

#### 4.5.1.5 Bracelets and anklets as beads artifacts (*izigqizo*)

The availability of beads made the Zulu people to create distinctive bracelets and anklets, for personal adornment and modes of artistic expression. These beads artifacts were worn as essential parts of everyday and ceremonial dress that communicated ethnic affiliation, age-grade, marital status and social status. The well-known of these anklets and bracelets are *izigqizo*, which are the beads made into belts and worn around the ankles, wrists and below the knee-caps. *Amadavathi* are rectangular beaded belts worn around the ankles.↓

#### 4.5.1.6 Beadworks as art of communication

The Zulu people could convey messages in the way they combined beads patterns. As pastoral people, the Zulu people used green colour to represent life, the green grass sustained the livestock. The white coloured beads represented

purity as milk was a sign of wealth and other pure things. The red colour represented blood and strong emotions. Dubin (1987:151) says the following about beads as art of communication :

*Beads were, and still are, used in Africa to create objects representing spiritual values basic to the survival of the community. In societies without writing, art objects can acquire extraordinary importance as visual records. On a deeper level, works of art are endowed with complex meaning and serves as repositories of traditional knowledge.]*

The beads were, and still are, intimately connected with love and courtship between young men and women. The girl gave the lover a strand of white beads (*ucu*) to show that she accepts the love relationship (*isiyaqoma*). These strands of beads were used as gifts and love letters between the lovers. Msimang, Hlongwane and Ntuli (1986: 178) illustrate the use of beads as communication art as follows :

*Ubuhlalu lobu kwakuhlotsywa ngabo futhi buyincwadi kaZulu. Izintombi zazibika ubunjalo bazo ezinsizweni ... Uma intombi ikhomba ukuthi insizwa isiyayithanda yayithumela ubuhlalu obumhlophe, kanti obuphuzi babubika isikhwele. Obuluhlaza uthando olujulile, obubomvu busho inhliziyoyophayo ngenxa yothando.*

*(Beads were for adornment and served as communication means for the Zulu person. The girls stated their case to their men ... If she sent white beads she meant to accept the love relationship, the yellow showed jealousy. The blue-sky beads meant deeper love. The red beads meant bleeding heart as she missed her boyfriend).*

The messages were conveyed without using words but they were incorporated in decorative designs and coded coloured beads. These designs and coded beads acquired extraordinary importance as visual records of the inner feelings of the sender. The messages in decorative designs and colour combinations could easily be read by beadworks recipients as they were repositories of traditional knowledge.

Even to this age where people can read and write, the messages are still coded in beadworks. They now make words in squares or rectangular shapes of beads hanging on strands and worn as necklaces. In the appendix, you may find one of these necklaces with coded message, "USOLANI", which can be translated as "WHAT ARE YOU SUSPICIOUS OF" or "WHAT DO YOU SUSPECT". This coded message can be translated or decoded in many ways. Firstly, the girl might be asking her boyfriend why he takes long to pay lobola and make her his wife. Is it because he is suspicious she cannot make a good wife or he suspects there is a secret lover? What is he suspecting that makes him lukewarm about their love? The trend is either to send the necklace with coded message to the lover or to wear the necklace oneself. The girls we met at Msinga, Tugela Ferry, Muden and Emawozeni areas had different coded messages on their necklaces. The coded messages on their necklaces included "ENELA", which means "BE SATISFIED", "HLALA WAZI", which means "ALWAYS KNOW", and "NOMA MINI", which means "ANYTIME".

There are many other coded messages, these are sufficient to show some of the examples. We leave it to the reader to try and expand or decode the messages coded in the last three examples which were not decoded as the first one, "usolani".

Levinsohn (1984:84) gives an important comment about decoding the messages coded beads artifacts:

*To the Zulu, the white bead means love and purity, black is darkness, difficulty and misfortune, green signifies sickness, yellow symbolizes wealth, and red ... sore eyes which looked in vain for their lover. In spite of these noted general similarities in colour symbolism, precise interpretation can be made solely by one who knows the specific local origin of the love letter and the colour code native to it, because an ambiguity of meaning continues to pervade translations.*

As Levinsohn (1984) puts it, it is very important to remember that different regions might attach different meanings to the colours of beads. The study reveals that the white colour possesses a consistent message. White colour is always attached to positive attributes such as love, purity, goodness, appreciation and good luck. The other colours such as black, green, pink, yellow and red beads each have several interpretations depending on specific local origin.

#### **4.5.1.7 Beads in religious and cultural activities, especially the religious dances of the Shembe Church and the Reed Dance Ceremony**

There is no denying the fact that traditional and modern lifestyles live side by side and affect each other. We have seen in the foregoing discussion about the traditional wedding ceremony that the groom's and the bridal parties adorned themselves in colourful beads. The bride was lavishly adorned in beads artifacts and she used white beads as the gifts to the ancestors at the beginning of her *umabo/ukuhlambisa* ceremony, the distribution of gifts to her in-laws. In Zulu religious thought patterns, the white beads are connected with the ancestors.

Beads artifacts are essential components of Zulu dress. The traditional ceremonies such as the Reed Dance Ceremony, are the spectacles for full Zulu traditional regalia. It is in such traditional ceremonies where one finds the Zulu people in proud display of their cultural heritage, in full display of the beaded artifacts such as girdles, hip-belts, headbands and necklaces of all sorts and stylistic designs.

The Reed Dance Ceremony (*umkhosi womhlanga*) used to be predominantly attended by the Zulu people. The tendency has shifted to reflect the rainbow audience of democratic South Africa, all races are today teeming to have a view of this colourful event. The Reed Dance Ceremony is held every year in September, the suitable time, with mild weather and no heavy rains experienced.

It is held at Enyokeni Royal Palace, home to the present Zulu Monarch Goodwill Zwelethini. Enyokeni Royal Palace is at Nongoma. What happens on the Day of the Reed Dance Ceremony is that the girls on their adolescence stage bring the reeds to the palace. Traditionally, the reeds were used by the king for thatching the palace huts and make granaries for storing food for the palace residents. Besides the bringing of the reeds for various uses in the palace, there are many other cultural activities that are observed and performed on the day. Basically, the Zulu monarch and his dignitaries dressed in traditional attire of beads and leatherworks, get the opportunity to address the girls and the nation about what the Zulu people should cherish most about their culture. It is the day when the monarch reminds the nation about how and why should the people preserve the beauty of the Zulu cultural traditions. The monarch gets an opportunity to address the nation about the plagues that tear down the society structures, such as drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, women and children abuse and many more issues. The central issues are respect, safety, hospitality towards all and overall human empowerment through education. What makes the Reed Dance Ceremony Day so special is that food, drinks and entrance is free and open to everybody.

The colourful beads artifacts are lavishly used by the Shembe/Nazareth Baptist Church members in their religious dances and worship. Morris (1994:66) says the following about beads in the Shembe Church:

*In the July Festival of the Shembe Church, no conflict exists between the Christian message of salvation and the use of Zulu tradition, they are celebrated together with utmost ceremony and reverence. It is predominantly in the costumes of women that beadworks proliferates. A distinctive feature of Shembe beadwork is a predominance of white beads in ornate designs.*

The Shembe people wear beads artifacts with ornate designs having images of a Zulu shields, other zig-zag, rectangular and triangular shapes. The Zulu people use the shield for decoration and protection. The Shembe Church members use

the beads artifacts and traditional regalia to identify themselves with traditional ethos.

The Nazareth Baptist Church members take pride in their religious dances as part of entertaining tourists and crowds on cultural days. They practice these partly traditional and partly religious dances for their annual gatherings at Inhlangakazi – Matabetule area at Inanda. The Shembe people are also involved in the informal business ventures as they sell handicraft which include clay pots, straw products such as baskets, floor mats, table mats, straw curtains, brooms and other items which are partly promotional for their church. The Shembe followers are concerned with the preservation of the Zulu cultural traditions and beliefs. They adhere to most of Zulu socio-cultural thought patterns such as polygamy, proper relationship between men and women, marriage customs, moral behaviour and many more Zulu cultural traditions, the draw card for tourists attraction.

#### 4.5.1.8 Beads in fashion and art

Beads, fashion, art and tourism have become synonymous with a welcome source of income for many emerging talents. A wide range of translucent and highly lusted beads are used to make fashion garments that are pleasing to the eye and at the same time giving expression to the skill of the manufacturing designer. Morris (1994:75) says the following about beadworks in tourism, fashion and art :

*Over the last decade an increasing number of entrepreneurs, both black and white, have realized that a growing market exists for a wide range of goods that have "an ethnic flavour". As tourism has become "big business", so traditional culture, Zulu culture in particular, has come to be an increasing selling point in brochures that lure both local holiday makers and overseas tourists to the region.*

As tourism has become "big business", as Morris (1994) says, lucrative arenas have opened up for selling beadworks found among the Zulu people. These arenas include curio shops and roadside market stalls where beadworks and other

traditional artifacts are sold on high demand from local and international tourists. The international tourist prefer high fashion beaded jewellery and other beads artifacts. The most active and very busy of such places are the Shakaland, en route between Eshowe and Melmoth, Mkhuze-Maputuland Art and Craft Centre, at Mkhuze en route between Hluhluwe and Pongola, Zamimpilo Market Stalls, en route between Mtubatuba and Hluhluwe, and many other market stalls in KwaZulu Natal.}

Beads in fashion and art are combined and shaped into many designs according to the tastes, cultural traditions and trade patterns of the regions where the items originate. Dublin (1987:149) says that African culture has evolved distinctive patterns of beads artifacts. It is for this reason that Zulu beads artifacts have such a strong aesthetic presence, and their beads combinations are made to be noticed.

Among the Zulu beads artifacts used in fashion are : beaded decorative pins (*iziqhano*), such as that having AIDS ribbon or the South African flag. Sometimes the beaded artifacts are worn as decorative pins for fastening overlapping skirts or to hold the ties in place. There are also modern beaded coasters, small mats for protecting table tops. The informants interviewed during the field research pointed out that the bright colours such as pink, mauve and orange are fast selling colours when selling to overseas tourists. The fast selling items in art are curio items such as wooden assegais with beaded handles, wooden spoons or forks with beads decorated handles, the specimen of ceremonial spears with handles decorated with beads and decorated traditional medicine bottles. Many of the curio items are locally made but some are brought from as far as Mdukutshani Beadwork Project at Tugela Ferry, Msinga and other places that specialize in fashion and art products. The beaded claypot coverings (*izimbenge*) are among the fast selling art products. These items are very valuable as they are used for serving food and beer to special guests during big ceremonial festivals. The clay pot coverings (*izimbenge*) are usually embellished in special designs with predominantly white beads. They are used as wedding gifts for the groom

and the father-in-law. They are very versatile as they can be used for a variety of purposes rather than as pot lids.

There are many beads artifacts that are worn alongside the western fashions. We can mention the bangles and necklaces. There are designers who can now make the caps and waistcoats wholly made of beads, see the Appendix.

## (4.5.2 Basketry and other straw products)

### 4.5.2.0 Introduction

Among the verdant valleys and undulating hills found throughout KwaZulu Natal, you will find people collecting sheaves of botanical species of reeds, palms, rushes and grasses from damp valleys, glades, stream banks and swampy areas of rural places. They are going to create mats, coiled baskets, floor mats, table mats, pots, door mats, washing bins, fruit dishes, beer strainers, brooms, straw curtains and other straw products to make a living out of tourism industry that is booming in Lebombo SDI region and other places. These people are primarily rural, possessing a rich cultural heritage, and their material culture continues to yield valuable evidence attesting to their cultural values and traditions. It is mostly the women who sell these straw products in the roadside market stalls to supplement what their husbands earn and send home from their places of work in big cities and towns. At times the women make and sell these straw products as their only source of income to maintain their families.

#### (4.5.2.1 The making of the straw products)

(The making of straw products, especially basketry, form part of the tradition that is typically handed down from one generation of women to the next. Levinsohn (1984:38) reflects on the making of straw products and says:



*Basketry making among tribal people of Southern Africa is a long established art in transition. It is numbered among the most firmly rooted of historical traditions among the Zulu.* }]

The tourism industry has seen the rejuvenation and reincarnation of this art form which was almost at the brink of extinction. Its rejuvenation is marked by its high demand, as it is readily attractive to both African and Western consumers. The most attractive characteristics of straw products are that the raw products are not hard to find and that the finished products are easily transported. The straw products can be woven into various shapes to serve a variety of utilitarian domestic needs. They can be bulb-shaped baskets, pot-shaped containers with lids, flask-shaped or saucer shaped bowls. They can be used for storing grains and liquids for household use or for major social gatherings.

{ Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1966:21-23) and Levinsohn (1984:41-66) give a number of straw products found among the Zulu people. They have *isichumo*, an example of bulb-shaped pots made from ilala or palm leaves. *Isichumo* is for carrying, storing and serving liquids such as beer and water. *Iquthu* is a cylindrical basket with lid, it is for storing agricultural/grain products. If it is smaller in size, *iquthu* is used as a carry-case for provision (*umphako*) for a journey. *Iqoma* and *isilulu* are big cylindrical pots with lids for storing food. There are also flared straw bowls (*izimbenge/imicengezi*) which are made to meet different utilitarian domestic functions. These come in different widths, depths, sizes and designs. The flared straw baskets are used for winnowing (*ukwela*) agricultural products such as maize, millets and beans after being thrashed (*sekubhuliwe*). These flared baskets can be used as eating utensils such as plates and basins. The flared straw baskets or bowls can be used as lids (*izimbenge*) for covering beer or maas pots. They can be used for serving food and vegetables, or just plates for keeping the beer stirrer (*isigoqozo sothwala/isishikizo*) or beer skimmer (*isikhetho*) and a drinking gourd (*inkezo*) when serving beer. }

[ There are many other straw products such as beer strainers (*amavovo*), mats and curtains mentioned at the introduction to this sub-section. Many of the straw products were connected with ceremonial and sorghum beer preparation. This is because sorghum beer served to bind together people in social gatherings and forming friendships. But most importantly, sorghum beer was used as a votive offering to the ancestors of the family. To render the straw products waterproof and preventing liquids leaks, the straw product or container was tightly knitted. The hot and thick porridge was poured into the new container to make the inner follicles to swell and render the vessel watertight before used for containing liquids.]

#### 4.5.2.2 Dyes and designs on straw products

Most of the straw products are constructed by using the coiled weaving technique. The straw products are usually cylindrical, broad girth with wide mouths. The weavers use penknives to scrape and prepare their raw materials. These knives are also used to trim the edges of the products. They continually use water to moisten their hands and raw materials as they are weaving the split leaves of grasses. Levinsohn (1984:48) says about the dyeing process of the straw products:

*Metal containers such as buckets, pails, bowls or discarded clay pots are employed for soaking materials in water. The tripod pot acts as a mordant when the leaves are boiled in vegetable dyes prepared from indigenous roots, barks, bushes and leaves.*

The dyes mentioned above are used to decorate the straw products in different patterns and designs. The weavers knew roots and barks to boil to obtain colours ranging from mauves, pink, orange, brown to blue. Gumede (1990:124-125) attests to the fact that the Zulu women used plants and herbs for dyes :

*Zulu women made very artistic mats with variegated colours. They had a rich collection of plants and herbs to produce many colours they wanted,*

*as they had a natural flair for art. Here are some of the plants that were boiled with the material to be used to produce the desired dye : umgwenya (elephantorhiza) roots imparted a light brown colour, umhlakothi / isihlokoshiyane (*Rhusviminalis*) bark imports a reddish brown colour.*

Gumede (1990) above, mentions *umdoni* (*Eugenia cordate*), *umganu* (*Sclerocarya caffra*), *umthole* (*Accacia Caffra*), *umphekambedu* (*Indigofera Arrecta*), *amathungulu* (Wild plum) and many other berries. The knowledge about the trees for dyes was handed down from one generation to the next, or in the Arts and Craft Classes at schools.

The designs found in most straw products are primarily those that are also found in beadworks. There are shield shapes, zigzags, diamonds, triangular and rectangular shapes. These geometric patterns are used as decorative motifs, they can be used separately or combined to create vertical or horizontal designs. The striking thing is that the weavers and pottery makers know their designs by specific names. The Zulu people are among the leading manufacturers of straw products of high quality and innovative decorations. The Zulu people do all it takes to maintain the quality of these souvenir objects, and to ensure the survival of this traditional art form.

#### { 4.5.3 Women and pottery }

☞ The clay pots are among the traditional Zulu artifacts that are used for many utilitarian household purposes. We hope the revival of cultural traditions will see a change on what Levinsohn (1984:73) says about the future of pottery:

*Zulu pottery making possesses a long history, and today small numbers of Zulu women continue the tradition. In fact, Zulu pot making today must be reduced to a consideration of individuals, persons intent on keeping the fragile tradition alive. }*

☞ Levinsohn (1984:73) wrote the above article more than sixteen years ago, thanks to those few women who still continue to preserve the fragile tradition, we still

see the potmaking kept alive. We hope the commercial value of traditional artifacts ushered by tourism industry will see the rejuvenation of the art of making clay pots.]

[The clay pots are used to carry and store liquids, grain products, used as eating utensils as they are used to serve beer and for eating maas. The Zulu women have earned themselves the reputation of being the masters of pottery craft. Once the claysoil, as a raw material, has been collected from the river banks or quarries, it is prepared by softening and kneading. The pliable lump is flattened into a disc-like bottom of the pot which is placed on a small grass wreath or any flat object. The coiling technique is then used, coils of increasing lengths are added on the disc to build up the walls of the clay pot. The potter pinches the coils to flatten and position the sides of the pot to reach its desired shape and size. The potter is always attending to symmetry, form and thickness of the walls which are later smoothed and polished inside and outside using a pumice stone or any smooth object. When the pots are dry after being placed in the sun for three or six days, they are ready for firing or baking process. The pots are put in fire for extra hardness and quality. For this firing or baking process, the potter makes a shallow pit and make fire out of dried aloe, dried cow dung and wood. The aloe leaves are believed to burn intense heat which gives glowing embers. The pots are then put in this intensely burning furnace for hardening. The last stage of the pot making process is rubbing these fire-blackened pots using the gooseberry leaves and animal fats. The animal fats are polished with the pumice stone to give a glossy touch to the final product.]

The complete clay products are used around the house for various domestic purposes or for sale to the community and tourists in the market stalls. The biggest of the clay pots is *imbiza*, which was used for preparing beer, stored therein before poured to the small serving beer pots (*izinkamba zotshwala*). *Imbiza* was also used for cooking, and it was normally so big that it was not easy to move around. The second biggest clay pot is *iphangela*, which was used for

storing beer and other liquids. It was also used for storing grains and other agricultural products. The smallest of the clay pots is *umancishana/e*. It usually served as a jug for serving beer to the family head when he was alone. The name, *umancishane*, suggests stinginess, as it was to give only a small amount of one's beer to strangers while there is plenty of beer in the big pots. The collection of clay pots of different sizes and shapes is called *izinkamba* (the clay pots). *Ukhamba* is a medium sized clay pot which can either be used for serving maas (*ukhamba lwamasi*) or for serving beer (*uphiso / ukhamba lotshwala*). The beaded or straw flared bowls (*izimbenge*) were used as lids for covering either the beer pots or pots for serving maas. These flared bowls or saucer-shaped beaded or straw products were very important, and they showed greater respect for the one served, thus they were treasured artifacts.

There were smaller basin-shaped clay pots that were used as plates or basins for serving food or as eating utensils (*umcakulo/umcengula/umcengezi*). The other smaller clay pots such as *ikhanzi* and *isiyoco* were used as cooking pots or pans. Today women make vases and other decorative clay artifacts. This shows improvement and innovation on the art of pottery.

The clay pots were either plain, smooth or decorated. The decorated ones were usually those for serving food and drinks. They were decorated with motifs incised on them using graphic designs ranging from diamonds, rectangular, triangular, cross-hatched lines and all sorts of beautiful floral patterns while still moist. These incised motifs and decorations were usually around the middle of the claypot to enable easy grip.

We hope and pray that something is going to be done to save the pottery tradition from extinction. We extend our gratitude to those who are still keeping the pottery tradition alive. We recommend that the projects and attempts should be made to see to it that the pottery tradition does not remain the preserve of the few. Those who can make the clay pots should make themselves available to share

their knowledge to the willing members of their communities. If possible, the headmasters of schools should invite the masters of claypot making to come to their schools to share their knowledge and expertise of this fine art. This way, we hope nothing whatsoever, even the arrival of the plastic imitations of clay pots, will substitute the beauty of traditional clay pots as parts of our cultural traditions, the draw card for tourists attraction.

#### 4.5.4 Men and woodwork carvings

While the weaving of straw products, pottery making and beadworks production remained a women's prerogative, the sculpting of woodwork remained a men's prerogative. The art of carving wood was learnt and handed down from generation to generation. The son learnt the art of carving from his father, a traditional carver or the boys taught each other at the veld while looking after the cattle. Hammond-Tooke and Nettleton (1989:36) say the following about woodcarving:

*Like the nineteenth century counterparts, contemporary Zulu carvers are skilled makers of utilitarian artifacts including headrests, meatplates, milkpails and spoons. ]*

These articles mentioned by Hammond-Tooke and Nettleton (1989) above, are still made and used around the traditional household, they are also sought after by tourists as they form part of the Zulu cultural traditions. The wealthy men were recognized by having a large number of cattle, therefore they were collectors of milkpails (*amathunga*) and meat-trays (*izingqoko*) on which he milked his cows and served meat during his ceremonial festivals. [The wooden products or artifacts were carved out of strong, quality trees such as mahogany, oak, mimosa tree (*isingawe*), acacia caffra (*umtholo*) amarula tree (*umgamu*) and others (*imbondwe, umncaka*). The wooden artifacts included wooden spoons (*izinkezo nezingxwembe*). The smaller wooden spoons were used when eating maas from

the clay pots. They were then placed in straw containers (*izimponishi / imigodla*) which were hung up on the interior of the thatched roof or hung on the pillars of the hut. Besides the carved eating utensils, the men also carved other important items to be used around the household. They carved and decorated items for hanging their sleeping mats (*imigibe yamacansi*) headrests (*izigqiki*) which were used as pillows at night and benches by the day. The Zulu carvers also made beautifully carved knobkerries (*amawisa*) which were used as weapons or items of decoration or adornment during festivals. The carved walking staffs (*udondolo*) were also among the most prized carved artifacts.]

∩ The commercial value of carved items has seen the rise of new wooden carving in KwaZulu Nāfal. The young men now carve wild animals for sale to the tourists, along the roads leading to the game reserves. You may find the exact replicas of the rhino's, hippos, buffaloes, elephants, giraffes, warthogs, different bucks and species of birds.]

## [ 4.6 Food preparation and food dishes among the Zulu people ]

### 4.6.0 Introduction

As in many cultures, food preparation is the special task done by women and young girls. The cooking is done in the hearth (*iziko*) inside the house. The hearth is usually in the centre of the house or kitchen. The following discussion looks at some of the favourable foodstuffs among the Zulu people.

#### [ 4.6.1 Amasi or maas (curds of milk) ]

∩ The Zulu people loved cattle for they provided maas and other useful products such as skins for clothing, meat and by being the means of sacrifices to the ancestors. For maas, the cattle were milked, the milk poured into calabashes containing curds of milk from previous milkings or helpings. For fast curdling of milk, the calabashes were sometimes placed in the sun, thereafter they were put in

the upper section of the house (*emsamo*). Maas were prepared in clay pots (*izinkamba*) and eaten with wooden spoons (*izinkezo*). Maas were mixed with ground mielies (*umcaba*). The mielies was first boiled to cook, drained of water and then ground on a millstone (*itshe lokugaya*). In addition to the use of dried mielies when preparing ground mielies for mixing maas, the fresh mielies was also ground and prepared into a lump or bread.

The bread was then crushed to make *umcaba*. Maas of the household could only eaten by the people of that household, no stranger could partake of maas from another household. The girl could not partake of maas of her own household if she was on her menstrual period. It was considered taboo to partake of maas during the menstrual period. }

#### 4.6.2 Meat

The Zulu people like to eat a lot of meat, but occasionally when there is a beast slaughtered in the neighbourhood, people flock there regardless of whether invited or uninvited. Besides cattle, the Zulu people kept a sizeable number of goats, sheep, fowls and other domestic animals. These other domestic animals did not have much ritual value as the cattle. The cattle were primarily used as sacrificial animals. But in the case where the person did not have cattle for sacrifice, he could slaughter two goats for the value of one cow. In the case of slaughtering the cattle and the eating of meat, Krige (1936:55) says :

*Best of all food, the Zulu loves his meat. Meat is eaten on great occasions only : when a sacrifice has been made, an important event celebrated or a highly honoured guest welcomed.*

The animal was cut into pieces and placed in the hut overnight, with the belief that it was first to be blessed by the ancestral spirits. Those who skin up the animal got the tiny pieces (*amantshontsho*) for quick roasting. The next day, the meat was boiled and some roasted. The meat, when cooked, was divided



accordingly, some for married woman (*eyamakhosikazi*) some for the young unmarried women (*eyezintombi*) and some for men (*eyamadoda*) and some for the boys (*eyezinsizwa*). Collectively, these portioning of meat was called “the meat mats” (*inyama yesithebe*).}

It was also customary to set aside meat for those close relatives who could not attend for some unforeseen circumstances. The slaughter of cattle for sacrifice as seen from the above apportioning of meat, revived the spirit that brought the people together in solidarity. This means that the sacrificial feast did not make the Zulu people only to be in touch with their ancestral spirit, but also to be in touch with their friends, extended families and neighbours.

#### 4.6.3 Samp

The Zulu people ate samp made by pounding maize in mortar and pestle (*isigqulo nesigqisho*). Mortar was a wooden utensil shaped like a big tin in which maize could be poured in and crushed into samp. The samp was cooked and poured in big meat trays carved out of wood (*izingqoko*). The samp was eaten as white as it was; without beans as it is done today. The soup was mixed with the samp to provide enough food for the people to enjoy themselves in great occasions like weddings and sacrificial days. Plain samp is also known as *ikalipense*.

#### { 4.6.4 Sorghum beer (*utshwala besizulu*) }

{ Sorghum beer plays an important role among the Zulu people. The beer was prepared by using the millet or kafir-corn. The corn was first soaked in water and left for sprouting. When sprouted, corn was called malt (*imithombo*). The malt was then poured into boiled water and left to cool overnight. The next day, a small quantity of mealie meal was added into the malt to make it into a porridge and left to ferment. The fermented mixture was sifted or strained with a woven grass strainer (*ivovo*) leaving a reddish grey liquid which was then ready for drinking. It was wise however not to drink it soon after being prepared. It was

usually strained a day before and left for thickening or final fermentation overnight.]

Besides being used during sacrificial festivities, wedding and other important ceremonies, sorghum beer was also of another social importance. A man could tell his wife to brew the sorghum beer and invites his friends and relatives in a relaxed social setting, thus man entertained his friends. Beer also had another social value as it was also used to effect forgiveness and reconciliation. The individuals who had a quarrel and had settled in either in a family circle or before the council, were ordered to brew the beer and come together on an appointed date in a ceremony of reconciliation (*ukuthelelana amanzi*). The man in the council praised or thanked the concerned individuals for reaching amicable solution to their quarrel. They enjoy beer together and promised never to go the same route again. The Zulu people drank beer to enjoy themselves, not to get drunk, and be drunkards and addicts. It was a shame to be referred to as a drunkard. The senior members of the society approached the person who indulged excessively on beer. He was told to stop drinking if he could not control himself (*kuyeke ukudla uma kukwehlula*).

#### 4.6.5 Pumpkin and watermelon porridges

[The Zulu people liked agricultural products such as pumpkin and watermelons. The pumpkin was sliced into smaller pieces, cooked and mixed with maize meal to make the porridge called *isijingi*. The same thing was done with watermelon but the porridge from the watermelon was called *isinambathi*. Both types of porridge were eaten with or without sugar.]

#### 4.6.6 Mealies or maize

[Mealies was an agricultural product that was used among the Zulu people to make various dishes. The fresh maize was cooked with its cobs (*ifutho*). You eat such maize by just stripping (*gumuza*) from cobs and eat as one would now eat roasted

peanuts. Fresh maize could also be roasted in the hot coals (*umbila wokosa*), the dried maize could also be boiled and eaten just as such. The dried maize could also be crushed on the mortar and pestle to make samp to be eaten on the various social gatherings as shown above, fresh or dried maize also be crush on the grinding stone or millstone (*itshe lokugaya*) and be used as a mixture or for preparing maas. It was also cooked and mixed with any kind of beans. The maize mixed with any kind of beans was slightly crushed in the pot when cooked and eaten (*izinkobe ezixutshiwe*). }

#### 4.6.7 Other edible vegetables, fruits and berries

The Zulu people also cultivated a variety of nuts (*amantongomane, amakinati*) fruit of calabash they also ate common weed resembled spinach, they ate black beans with climbing plants (*imbumba*) and other vegetables.

Besides cultivated vegetables, they ate a lot of fruits and wild berries. They ate black berries (*amajikijolo*), kafir plum (*umgwenya*) wild figs (*amakhiwane*), gooseberry (*ugqumgqumu*), apricots-like shrubs (*amabhonsi*), waterboom (*izindoni*), wild plum (*umthunduluka*) and many more edible plants.

#### 4.6.8 Peanuts in various food dishes (Ukuthimbela)

The visit to the areas in Northern KwaZulu Natal is quite an eye-opening and unforgettable experience. These places include areas such as Mkhuze, uBombo, Jozini, Bhambanana, Ngwavuma, Mbazwane and Manguzi-Ngwanase. The lifestyle of most, not all, people in these areas shows the cultural influence of both Mozambique and Swaziland, their foreign immediate neighbours. Their food preparation is unique when compared to the rest of KwaZulu Natal. They have

peanuts in most of their food dishes. They call this addition of peanuts to their food dishes *ukuthimbela*. They have *isigonyongwane*, which is a mixture of green or raw banana and peanuts. The green banana is first cooked separately, the peanuts are also cooked separately. The peanuts are then pounded into dough and mixed into a thinly sliced cooked banana. The peanuts are sometimes roasted and pointed into powder that is then mixed with the sliced banana. This food dish can either be eaten as a staple food or salad.

The peanuts are also cooked, pounded into dough to be mixed with cooked vegetables. They are a special delicacy when cooked with pumpkin plants (*imifino yezintanga*) or edible green plants (*imbuya*). There is a food dish called *umbhunqu*, samp cooked with beans and then pounded peanuts are added for flavour. The peanuts are also added to the sweet potatoes (*ubhatata ofakwe amantongomane*) and into cassave tree roots (*umdumbula*).

The peanuts are also eaten as raw or roasted and eaten as such. Our informants also told us that they also eat peanuts mixed with the species of tree (*umkhuhlu*). The seeds of this tree are soaked in warm water and mixed with pounded peanuts (*izinkuhlu*). Our informants, Patrick Ngwenya, Robert Zwane and Sithembiso Mthembu live at Manguzi – not far from the Mozambique and South African Border Gate. These were interviewed on 22-23 December 2001. They told us that peanuts are added in almost every food dish that they eat, including meat and fish. They told us that they eat *amajukunyane*, freshly picked maize cooked and mixed with peanuts.

Their area is suitable for peanuts and other subtropical products. The peanuts are rich in proteins and fats or carbohydrates that improve one's health. The peanuts are also believed to improve one's fertility, which is what our informants told us.

#### 4.6.9 Other beverages, especially the palm or ilala plants ale }

(The Zulu people could make a variety of beverage concoctions just to enjoy themselves in their social gatherings. They made ale by digging next to the roots of the palm trees or ilala plants. They then made incisions on the roots from which the juices of these plants were drained into containers overnight. These plants juices were then fermented to make an ale called *injemane* or *ubusulu*.

The ilala plants were important for various reasons. Its leaves were used in basketry, its roots were used for making ale as pointed out above. The roots were also used to make brooms. The leaves of ilala plants were also of spiritual value as they were milked (*ukusenga ilala*) by the people as a way of sealing their forgiveness ceremony (*ukuthelelana amanzi*) after resolving their quarrel before the council.)

The Zulu people also drank *umlaza*, the liquid that remained after the curdling of milk. This was not drunk as a beverage in social gatherings but by the family members, as *maas* should never be eaten by a person outside the family unit (*amasi awadliwa ngumuntu wangaphandle*). They also made ale from amarula plants (*utshwala bamaganu*). The ripe amarula fruit were squeezed and its juices fermented or drunk as a fruit punch without fermentation. The other wild fruits such as wild plums (*amaviyo namathunduluka*) were used to make ale.

The Zulu people especially in and around Hluhluwe where there is plenty of pineapple growing there, make an ale from fermented pineapple mixed with brown bread (*utshwala bophayinapha*). These are some of the beverages that the tourists to the Lubombo SDI region will find very pleasing.

#### 4.7. Zulu culture and child upbringing

It has been mentioned time and again that the tapestry of culture filters through the life of the Zulu people. No culture is completely without its religious beliefs and practices in child rearing. The conception and every aspect of the child's development is seen as a matter of special importance to the parents and the ancestral spirits. The parents have to work co-operatively with the ancestral spirit for the well-being of the child in the family. The sacrifice is made to the spirits soon the child is born. The goat is slaughtered to welcome the child to the family, and this goat serves as a thanks-offering for the safe delivery of a new member into the family in Zulu, this is so called **imbuzi yokumkhunga**.

Knight (1995:48) says the following about child rearing among the Zulu people ;

*From conception, every aspect of the Zulu child's development was hedge around the ritual to ensure that it grew free of misfortunes. Strict observance had to be kept during pregnancy and labour, and the new born baby was subjected to a number of important ceremonies before it could be exposed to the danger of daily life.*

The number of an important ceremonies that Knight (1995) mention above include **Umemulo** and other rites of passage ceremonies to be discussed in the fourth discussion. These ceremonies related to the child rearing were aimed at initiating the child to be absorbed into the society that is structured. These rites and ceremonies were designed to show that everyone has a role to play in the society and that the society is sustained by the religion beliefs. These ceremonies were aimed at teaching the younger generations that as they grow older in different stages, they need to acquire certain knowledge and skills they would need as an adults making them to be of service to the society. Knight (1995:48-49) stresses the point that the Zulu child is taught that the individuals identity and achievements are framed primarily by the need to belong to the society.

The concept of age-group (**Intanga**) helped to mould the child and offered an opportunity to learn what is acceptable and unacceptable in the society. The boys were given the task of looking after the live stock, the younger boys started looking after the smaller livestock such as calves, sheep and goats. They were later given a role of looking after the cattle, the position of great responsibility. Thus they were taught to assume responsibility and be accountable for what the elders and ancestors prized highly. Cattle herding and hunting taught the boys rudimentary skills of surviving outdoor environment. They learnt what the meanings of caution, prudence and wisdom, especially in social matters as they interacted with their peers and superiors.

The girls helped their mothers with household chores doing domestic task such as cleaning fetching water, cooking, grooming hoeing the field etc. When the girl reaches puberty the time when is ready for courtship and ultimately marriage, a beast is slaughtered for her **umemulo** (coming of age ceremony). Tyrell (1971:99) says the following in this regard;

*The spirit ancestors have decree that every female of the tribe must have a certain cow killed for her to protect her from illness throughout her life. This is known as **Umemulo***

The Umemulo ceremony is characterized by song and dance, happy times, plenty of beers and meat for everyone to enjoy the festivity. Dalrymple (1983:155) says that Umemulo dance is performed by the initiate and her companions. Songs and dance are seldom a privately performed but they are usually part of a public function with an aim to demonstrate that something significant is happening in the family or in the tribe.

Krige (1936: 103) refers to **UMEMULO CEREMONY** as the stage where the child reaches a marriageable stage. She says it is a stage anywhere after the girl has reached puberty. In the Memulo ceremony the father of the child slaughters a beast for her daughter, by so doing he acknowledge that she is ready or worthy of

getting married. He is actually liberating her from her sexual abstinence, but which does not mean she has to be free and reckless about her sexuality. At this time the girl is under supervision and guidance from the older girls (*Amaqhikiza*) in the society. The young girls were coached how to speak to their wooers (*Izesheli*). They were not to fall in love until they had been given permission to do so (*ukujutshwa*). The young girls were then freed to choose and make known their chosen loved ones. The accepted wooer would leap and dance showing gratitude for being accepted. The man would run home and raise the white flag on the cattle kraal to show his peer and parents that he had found the loved one who would be a future wife (*ukumisa iduku*). The day when the flag is lowered was normally the day when the delegation from the man's family will meet the delegation of the family of the girl's family in a secluded place. There would be much celebration, beer drinking and exchange of gifts and promises of taking good care of the newly found relationship. This is called a thanks-offering ceremony (*umbongo*) which was soon followed by the wedding negotiations and Lobola. Harris (1971:279) defines lobola as the bride - price, the institution or contractual relationship of exchanging daughters for wives using the cattle. The wife receivers do not own the woman as owning anything from the markets. The bride - price is a sign and contract that the bridegroom will treat his bride with care and tenderness. The lobola or bride price is the way of establishing the legal rights of a man as the father to a woman's children, and to establish a social significant relationship between the husband and wife's domestic group. The lobola is paid to conclude the legitimacy of the marriage.

#### 4.7.1 The woman's role in the child – rearing, especially girls

It was as it is still, a duty of a woman to care for the girls, teaching them how to behave as the women and what is expected of a woman as a wife. Looking after children, children are the work which women are expected to carry out as a labour of love. It is the duty for which they can expect neither wages nor a great deal of



thanks, and sometimes without being told that their effort's are appreciated and valued. This, however, does not mean that women struggle all by themselves individually, they depend on the moral support of their partners, friends and family members, all working together to install in children those values that are cherished and accepted in the society. The women had to teach by word and example that marriage and motherhood were very important for the survival and continuity of the society.

Richardson (1993:112-113) accept that there are fundamental differences between the sexes, material instincts existed in women but they should not be seen as subordinate to men. The Zulu society believes that the ancestors bestowed women with domestic qualities which could also count for more in public life.

The women were seen as having been given special talent and virtues which they developed as wives and mother. These virtues such as being caring, sympathetic and tender made them capable of to participate in social life outside her home. The women helped the young girls in the society to learn that they were the saviors of the race. They were expected to engage themselves in the duty of moulding the future generation.

The environment in which one lives has a considerable influence on his or on her way of life. Understanding one's behaviour, the place where one lives and grows helps to shape the way how one behave. The mothers or women in the society have a major role in creating a conducive atmosphere, without the exclusion of everybody's participation. Whyne – Hammond (1985:9) says the following about humans' behaviour and perception:

*"We have already seen that the environment has a considerable influence on human activity. It is here that his personal nature becomes decisive, the way he perceive and evaluate the environment and how he behaves under different conditions. Only occasionally are actions the result of chance or scholastic influences the Zulu people and their cultural traditions under."*

The Zulu people and their cultural traditions understood that the society has a major role in shaping people's experiences, conditioning their attitude and value systems. The process of enculturation helped people to make correct choices, form acceptable ideas thus the people's value judgements were determined by culture.

Rosman and Rubel (1995: 257) say that the socialization of the child is grounded in culture. Thus one can say that culture is transmitted from generation to generation as children, both boys and girls, are taught proper ways to behave in the society. It is through enculturation that the child learns the rules, values and becomes increasingly motivated to act according to those values.

The motivations that have been built in during the enculturation process lead people to conform to these rules of the society, but not without deviations and defiances here and there. But these deviations from cultural values normal produce guilt in the persons concerned as they regard themselves or being regarded by others as unstable individuals who are not well-integrated to cultural to cultural behaviours. Irvine and Sanders (1972: 119) say the following remarks about child-rearing;

*“This powerful cultural institution, the family, stimulate individual's emphatic response, organizes his focus of attention, directing him to persons, operations, myths and resources and regulating his share of the available values according to the way he responds.”*

The observation of cultural traditions among the Zulu people shows that the dynamics of growth and normal interaction with one's social environment are stimulated and given the fullest chance. The cultural responses and activities which come into play during child-rearing among the Zulu people are manifold. These cultural manifestations minimize the frustrations and anxieties by inculcating a deep sense of security and belonging. The child has many role

models – the grandfathers, uncles, grandmothers, aunts and peers who have greater or lesser authority over him or her. The idea of individual autonomy is completely oppressed among the Zulu people. The cultural traditions attributes all values and categories of thought that foster personal and social integration. The cultural activities help to develop a high level of solidarity and co-operation among the members of the society.

#### 4.8. The religious aspects of the Zulu people

No culture is completely without its communal religious beliefs and practices. Religion is another dimension that is close related to earthly human interrelationship. It is however not easy to define the concept of religion because there are many religious systems. What is quite interesting to note is that there is one thing common among these different religious systems. They are all concerned with the expression of what is natural, what is supernatural, the relationship that exist between the earthly and the sacred heavenly order. The difference between profane and sacred is the foundation of religious systems that are found in all cultures. Mathenjwa (1999: 18) says about Zulu's religion:

*“The Zulu people believed that there is UMvelinqangi (He who appeared first) from whom everything came. UMvelinqangi is not the sole ruler, there is Princess Nomkhubulwane, who acts as his assistance. Nomkhubulwane is responsible for rain, fertility, food and female affairs. On the other hand there are ancestral spirits who mediate between the great ancestor, uMvelinqangi, and the living.”*

As seen from above quotation, the Zulu people believed that the ancestral spirits spoke to Mvelinqangi on behalf of the living. Mathenjwa (1999: 20-21) points out that the Zulu people believed that uMvelinqangi's dwelling place was the heaven, thus they have a special reverence for the heaven and they dare not point a finger at heaven, instead they would rather a clenched fist to indicate or point at the heavens. As a result of such reverence, the ordinary man cannot communicate

directly to Mvelingqangi, the power too great and too holy. The petitions of the earthly people reach him through his representatives such as priests and ancestral spirits.

Irvine and Sanders (1972: 78) give the following remarks about the Supreme Being and the ancestral spirits, whom they call the lesser duties:

*“Africans believe in a Supreme Being, the creator of the world and all things in it. This belief in a Supreme Being is held along with belief in lesser duties who are charged with power, both beneficent and dangerous.”*

Irvine and Saunders (1972) maintains that there lesser duties or ancestral spirits take notice of man's actions, they desire human attention and are pleased with honour given to them, they are also displeased with neglect. The ancestral spirits are believed to further man's welfare, they make crops grow, increase fertility and harvest, sanction established reality. The ancestral spirits are capable of punishing man's disobedience by bringing misfortunes, diseases, disasters or even death itself. In total, the ancestral spirits are believed to be the source of life, as they show anger as well as pleasure, they listen to prayers and institute rites in which the living should partake. Mathenjwa (1999: 21) says that the ancestral spirits are believed to be responsible for the safety and security of the living members of their respective families, and nations in respect of kings and chiefs.

The heads of the families are directly responsible for their immediate families, seeing to it that their ancestral spirits are rightly remembered and given the proper respect they deserve.

Rosman and Rubel (1995: 190) define religion as a cultural means by which humans deal with the supernatural or vice versa, the way the supernatural deals with humans. The basic questions to ask with regard to the relationship between

humans and the supernatural are: Why do humans propose, the existence of the supernatural in the first place? What is it about human life that compels humans to conclude that life or the world is governed by the forces beyond empirical observations?

The Zulu people's belief in the supernatural is the way they use to inculcate values and sentiments necessary to the promotion of social solidarity, and the society's ultimate survival. They understand that human are part of the social world as well as the natural world, this means that humans are dependent upon the action of others as well as the forces of nature. As social beings, they cannot control certain action and forces such as human suffering, good rain for good harvest, good health birth of children, coming to term with death and many more natural forces. That is where religious act and influences come in handy, the belief in all power – full duties and super natural help to ease the pain and anxieties in the face of the unknown.

The religious aspect of the Zulu people are deeply embedded in culture. In this sense, culture can be metaphorically referred to as a tapestry composed of many facet and threads in which the whole is more important than the sum total of threads. When one takes a helicopter view of the Zulu culture, one no longer sees the individual threads but an overall design consisting of customs and beliefs that are overlapping and intertwined.

The influence and presence of ancestral spirit is seen in every sphere of human life. According to the Zulu beliefs, if someone gets ill, comes across any disaster, it is believed that the ancestors have been offended somehow or are no longer acknowledge as the driving force behind every thing that is living. The draught, the floods, plaques of any sort or any other natural calamity may be seen as a result of the anger of the ancestors.

Writing about these customs, traditions and religious beliefs of the African people, Werner (1933:18-19).

*They (the Africans) believed in survival after death and believed that the ancestral spirit of the death can interfere in any extent in the affairs of the livings. They do seem to have an idea of immortality. The man gets directions. The man gets the direction from his father's spirit before starting any undertaking.*

It is always necessary to keep in mind that the religious system of the Zulu people does not exist as a body of knowledge and practices that operates outside the social structure. Werner (1933:82) says that the ancestral spirit of are honoured while they are remembered by the living. The spirit of the parents and grandparents are sacrificed to, and commemorated to carry it on. The exception of commemoration is reserved for the outstanding personalities such as kings and chiefs who are remembered beyond the circle of their immediate descendants. The Zulu people believed that the spirit world inhabited by the generation of ancestors, lived in close communication with the world of living and there should nothing to disturb this equilibrium.

There is social value in the religious aspect of the Zulu people. The belief in the ancestral spirit as part of the Zulu culture, serves as social cohesion.

Vilakazi (1986:11-12) says that the vital religion of the Zulu people is based on the ancestor worship, the ancestors are the invisible members of the society who continue to care for their kinsmen. Vilakazi (1986) is supported by Bryant (1929) who says that the ancestral spirit are the center of the Zulu way of life. All hopes and fears are centred in the ancestors, nothing of any importance can be undertaken without first propitiation and asking them of their wishes

The previous paragraphs have shown that the beast was slaughtered, beer brewed, friends and relatives invited to partake of the sacrifice. That is why we have said

above that ancestral belief served as a social cohesion, bringing different people together to partake of the sacrifice.

The Zulu people's views of man in society lay more emphasis on his or her membership in a group than the individuality. The membership of a group continues beyond death into life beyond the dead, the lung, and the unborn form an unbroken family unit, and this relationship is given emphasis in the religious institution and rituals.

#### **4.8.1 The effect of Christianity and Westernization on the Zulu way of life.**

The long exposure to western and Christian ideas, especially education and religious practices, has resulted to a change in the Zulu way of life.

Dalrymple (1983:75) says that this change caused a division into traditionalists and non – traditionalists. The traditionalists being those regard themselves as the custodian of tribal customs, and the non – Traditionalist being those who have changed their traditional way of life to completely adopting Westernization. Sbiya (1981) refer the abuse divisions as the learned and the unlearned, the learned being those who have adopted western life.

It is however important to note that these group are not geographically distinct, but they live side by side in their communities and share many aspect of their social life.

It is however important to note that these groups are not geographically distinct, but they are live side by side in their communities and share many aspect of their communities and share many aspect of their social life. It is important to note that there are also these who have been westernized but they are still interested in maintaining a typical tradition Zulu way of life. These are those people who are Westernize and Christianized but still interested in maintaining the African heritage. As it has been seen thus far, this study is interested in those Zulu people

who, despite the social changes, have adhere to lifestyle that is the tribal Zulu people of former times.

Among those Christianized and Westernized there are those fully deny the existence of the ancestral spirit. They claim that the belief on the ancestral is a folly, the belief on the immorality of the social is like believing the lie and trick devil used to attempt Adam and Eve in the Bible. The Christians believe that the rising from the dead are resting, buried in their graves as the biblical Lazarus (John 11: 17-44) was laid to rest until Christ came and called him out of the grave, in which he had spent four days.

This is no time for biblical exposition and debating biblical issues, what we highlighted was just that the religious aspect of the traditional Zulu people has been challenged by Westernization and Christianity. But thanks be to those who have kept the traditional Zulu way of life despite all odds and challenges.

#### **4.9 Traditional community leadership structure**

The king is the supreme ruler of the Zulu people. He has the legislative and judicial powers, rules by customary laws. The king is not autocratic as he is assisted by his councilors who sit the legislative assembly. The king has the regional chief who presides over the region under the king's jurisdiction. The chiefs have the councilors who are the eyes and the ears of the king in their reserve or district. Neither the king nor the chief should make a final decision, judgement or legislation without the consultation of the council.

Krige (1936: 219) says that the councilors are normally the head of the leading families in their communities and they have hereditary rights. Beside being in the in legislative council because of hereditary rights, some men forge their way through to the council because of their personal influence or status in the society.



#### 4.9.1 The concept of culture among the Zulu people

Anthropologists agree unanimously that culture is at the centre when one tries to define humanity. There is a wide range of definitions of what culture is, but what comes prominent in those definitions is that firstly, culture is a way of life typically of a group. Secondly, it is a system of symbols meaning and cognitive schemata transmitted through symbolic codes. Thirdly, culture is a set of adaptive strategies for survival of the group's identity.

Altman, et al (1980:9) define culture as follows:

*Culture may be said to be about a group of people who have a set of values and beliefs which embody ideals, and are transmitted to members of the group through enculturation.*

The Zulu people understood that culture should unite the people. The habits, manner, roles and behaviour patterns should be induced to people both young and old. They knew that the culture forms enhance good relationships between the things people do in their environment, the relationship between the things people do in their environments, the relations between the people and their counterparts, and the culture is a random assemblage of behaviors and beliefs.

Cluckhohn (1962:25) define culture as follows:

*Culture is one facet of human life. It is that part which is learned by the people as a result of belonging to some group, and it is the part of learned behavior which is shared with others. It is the main factor which permit us to live together in a society. Giving us solution to our problems, helping us to predict the behavioral of others, and permitting others to know what to expect from us.*

The religious aspect of the Zulu people discussed above, shows that the Zulu people understood that culture is supposed to regulate our lives at every turn.

They understood and made the younger generation to understand that culture was there the time we were born. Culture controls our conscious and unconscious pressure to follow certain types of behaviour. We sometimes drift away from certain behaviour but soon find ourselves drifting back unwillingly.

The traditional leadership structure discussed in the previous paragraphs ensured that life was organized around cultural traditions amazed at the Zulu way of life Mann (1879:5) said

*The Zulu people dwelt so closely together that each was kept to his family or tribe owned a particular tract of country, not infringing upon territory of some next door or neighbor. The Zulus possessed flocks of sheep and goats and herds of oxen and cultivated lands. They subsisted principally upon milk of their cows, millet maize and pumpkins of their gardens and spent a life of indolence and ease.*

Besides family life and relations in the society, Mann (1879) also remarks that if there was a dispute between individuals or tribes a day was fixed beforehand and the people decide their quarrel in single encounter. these were the good old days before the arrival of the western people, the days when the Zulu people lived in peace and content, in the interchange of friendly intercourse and service. Many of the people living in rural areas still live this life, as simple and primitive at the present day as it was before the so-called civilization. In some of the rural places in Kwa Zulu Natal, especially in the Lebombo SDI, the people still live in the culture of indolence and ease, preserving among themselves their early habit and tradition. They still make the same glass or thatched houses, live in the village grouped on the hill – sides. They still bask on the warm sunshine in fine weather. They still keep cattle, sheep and goats herded or looked after by boys. They still cultivate millet and maize. They still brew sorghum beer, sleep on mats spread on the bar ground. They are still bound together by the cultural tradition, they have Chiefs amenable to customary laws and the laws of their central government.

What they are not, is what the western think of them as savage and blood thirsty horde (Mann, 1879: 4). They are not blood thirsty and intruders as the voortrekkers regarded them (Brooks and Webb, 1965: 50). On the contrary, culture taught the Zulu to be brave and proud of being the Zulu people. Culture taught and still teaches the Zulu people to be peaceful and live in harmony with each other, (*Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu*).

#### 4.9.2 The people's response and involvement

The opportunities and prospects offered by the Lebombo SDI for the people of KwaZulu Natal seems to help to prevent a large number of people from living on charities and related programs. The people must have jobs and homes, children must be fed, clothed and educated. Tourism development in KwaZulu Natal helps people to look at realities around them as sober pragmatists, not as ideologues. The opportunity offered by the Lebombo SDI promises to be a solution to thousands of jobless people who flock from rural areas to the cities in search of jobs. These people who flock from poverty stricken rural areas normally find themselves living in vast spreading slums and squatter camps or informal settlements. The development of tourism industry in the Lebombo SDI region offers prospects for the elimination or lessening of a horrendously high rate of unemployment in KwaZulu Natal and in South Africa as a whole. It offers an important survival activity in the informal sector of economy, as people create many forms of cottage industries.

The democratic dispensation made it possible for all people to participate freely and fairly in the economic development of their communities. They are now free to make choices and participate in the economic growth of themselves and their communities. This is the freedom and liberty that many people have long awaited. Buthelezi (1990: 23) says;

*For me, liberty of South Africa will hopefully mean that we will all have a chance, to reach out to each other with open hearts and on equal basis and to constructively build human resources and all other forms of resources of the nation. My vision of the future for South Africa is simply one of unqualified growth in human, spiritual, political and economic terms.*

That future which Buthelezi hoped for is now. Now is the time when everybody is offered an opportunity to show their talents and participate in the economic and social growth of their communities. These opportunities are in line with the Bill of Rights that stipulate that everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the province, to enjoy arts, to share in the scientific advancement and its benefits, and to participate in the free and full development of one's personality.

#### **4.10 Concluding remarks**

The above discussion showed that the cultural traditions can contribute a lot in the development of tourism industry in KwaZulu Natal, especially in the Lebombo SDI region.

The rural development programmes that are design with the rural people, being sensitive to their specific needs and cultural traditions, involving their representative structures, both traditional, and modern tend to improve like people's livelihood. These programmes mentioned above improve the people's access to the resources, important services, and supportive infrastructure. The Zulu cultural traditions displayed in the Lebombo SDI form one of the ways to secure and improve adequate livelihoods that are economically, ecologically and socially sustainable.

The new participating approaches encouraged in the Lebombo SDI seem to be working in empowering the rural people with the responsibility for planning, decision-making and implementing the aims of their projects. These approaches allow sustainable resource management practices. The Lebombo SDI seems to be promoting policies that will improve the quality of life for the rural people without destroying their indigenous institutions embodied in the cultural traditions. The knowledge and revival of the Zulu cultural traditions and customs enhance the capacity for participation in the regional and national economic growth.

The coming together of people in their community projects make them realize that they depend on one another and that together they become strong and mighty to face the storms of this life. They learn that nothing should drift them apart, and that together they possess a tremendous power to make their communities the happy places to be.

It is strongly recommended that there should be a local museum in the Lebombo SDI region, where the local products and artefacts can be kept. This museum will have to benefit the local producers of pottery, beadworks, woodworks, leatherworks, straw products and many other items of art.

It is also recommended that the local producers should form consortiums or associations. It will be in such consortiums where the producers can learn to form partnership and how to conduct workshops. At the present, most of the producers who sell their products in market stalls work as individuals, with no business skills. The consortiums or partnerships will teach the people about modern business standards. They will learn pricing mechanisms, not reducing or increasing the price of their goods depending on the customer. They need to be

taught the keeping of records and calculating productivity ratios. The consortiums and partnerships can teach the people to empower themselves, to know distribution policies and warehousing. They need to learn more about free business enterprise, product displays and making their customers aware of their lower prices than their competitors. Above all, the local producers need to be applauded for the role they play in shaping development in their communities.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE PLACES OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE AS TOURIST ATTRACTION AREAS IN KWAZULU NATAL

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter on places of historical importance in KwaZulu Natal does not claim to be exhaustive but only deals with a few among many of such places in KwaZulu Natal. These are the places with breath-taking, awe-inspiring beauty and mostly with majestic landscapes. The visit to these places of historical importance makes the history of Zululand and its confrontations with the British and the Boers to come alive. The sight of Battlefields brings to mind the phantom pictures of warriors rushing down the slopes in pursuit of their opponents. All that comes to mind in the end are the questions. What did the concerned parties achieve by going to war? Couldn't they have resolved their differences by negotiations? Who were the perpetrators and who were the victims of such violent acts? How does the thought of what happened in these places affect the people nowadays? The list of questions is endless and it seems there are many questions than answers. Even the answers we might receive might be inadequate to satisfy our curious minds. But what is of crucial importance is that if we can succeed to highlight the importance of these places of historical importance as part of our cultural traditions and include them in our community development programmes, much can be achieved. These historical places have a major role of play in the social, economic and ecological development as they are part of who we are as a Zulu nation.

## 5.1 Why the places of historical importance need to be preserved

There are many reasons that can be cited for the preservation of the places of historical importance. Firstly, there is a commercial value in preserving these destinations. As they are part of the antiques, they tend to increase in value and appreciation. Secondly, the places of historical importance are rich in geological, cultural, anthropological, ethnological and archaeological remains which are of scientific value. The researches in these scientific fields mentioned above occasionally come to make their studies for their respective discipline.

Thirdly, the places of historical importance, with their relatively unspoilt natural resources, their intimate homeliness to wild animals, flora and fauna, they offer an excellent form of relief and escape from the hassles, confusions and pressures of this modern life. Thus the visit to these places offer an opportunity of satisfaction, tranquility and obliviousness as one takes time to ponder about the creator of these wild jungles with a soft touch and endless horizons.

Fourthly, knowledge and appreciation of these historical places derives a pride in one's heritage and blends the past, the present and the future's ideals of patriotism. These places are parts of the puzzle that still needs to be brought together, studied and bequeathed to the future generations.

The protection, preservation and cherishing of battlefields, historical grave sites, contents of the caves, mountains, ancient settlements, fortifications, geological formations will prove to be of historical cultural and economic value.



## **5.2 EMAKHOSINI, THE GRAVES OF THE ZULU KINGS, MELMOTH DISTRICT**

### **5.2.1 The King's palace and its importance**

The Zulu Kings were traditionally buried in the Palaces or Kraals as they are usually called. But we will adopt the use of Palace when we refer to the king's homesteads in this study. There are many fascinating incidents that were directly or indirectly connected with the king's palaces. Oberholster (1972: 207-271) says that the palace was the capital city of the empire, it was the embodiment of the king's power. It was from his palace where the king made orders to his nation to observe national ceremonies. It was also where he made orders to his regiments to go and fight against recalcitrant chiefs and small clans and place them under his judicial powers. Besides the palace that served as the capital city or the headquarters of the empire, there were also a number of military kraals that spread all over the king's empires. These kraals were the places where the regiments were recruited; trained and stationed to be called to protect the nation should the need arise.

### **5.2.2 Location or direction to Emakhosini valley**

The Emakhosini Valley's direction or location is given by Oberholster (1972: 268) as about 24 km from Melmoth on the way to Mahlabathini – Ulundi, and about 8km from the turn off at the top of Mthonjaneni escarpment. This area is remarkable for its low rolling hills, babbling brooks and is dotted with Zulu palaces. This is the area which is regarded as the birthplace of the Zulu Nation and its nationhood. It is the place from here that King Shaka kaSenzangakhona master-minded the subjugation of the smaller tribes and built a mighty Zulu nation.

The famous palaces on the foothills of Mthonjaneni escarpment are Nobamba, Esiklebheni, Dingane's Mgungundlovu and Bulawayo are situated here. Oberholster (1972: 272) suggests that as the kings were traditionally buried in their palaces, the graves marked by Historical Monuments Commission of South Africa indicate where their kraals or palaces were situated.

### 5.2.3 Zulu's grave

The graves marked are those of Zulu (c 1597 – 1691), whose name was adopted by the Zulu tribe. The names are marked by means of a bronze plaque. Zulu was regarded as the founder of the Zulu Royal Dynasty. Zulu's grave is near the entrance to the Emakhosini Valley, (Oberholster, 1972: 272).

### 5.2.4 Senzangakhona's grave and Inkatha kaZulu

The grave of Senzangakhona (c 1757-1818) lies among the bushes on the right where the road to Denny-Dalton turns off to the right and the road to Babanango runs uphill. Senzangakhona's grave lies on the site of Esiklebheni Palace. This Senzangakhona was the father of Shaka, Dingane and Mpande, who later succeeded each other as the Kings of the Zulu Empire or Dynasty. It is also believed that Esiklebheni was the palace where the original Inkatha KaZulu (Royal Ring) was made. Tradition says that the Royal Ring was made from special grasses and medicinal plants and covered with a skin of a python. The Royal Ring was believed to have magical powers. Therefore before going out on any expedition or military campaigns, the kings, in their successive orders, had to make hold pilgrimages to Esiklebheni Kraal to pray for victory or success of any venture.

### 5.2.5 The other graves marked

The other graves marked at Emakhosini Valley are those of Phunga (c 1657-1727), Jama (c1727 – 1816), Ndaba (c16597 – 1763), Dinuzulu (c1884-1913) and many others. The visit to the place will help anyone to learn more about the cultural traditions of the Zulu people and their general way of life.

### 5.2.6 Piet Retief's grave, Melmoth District

There are many recollections about Piet Retief, his visits to Mgungundlovu, Dingane's Palace, and his death together with his men, the Voortrekkers. Holden (1963: 88-93) and Oberholster (1972: 268-272) agree on many aspects about Piet Retief's fate. They agree that Retief was buried by Gen Andries Pretorius at the foot of KwaMatiwane, not far from Dingane's Mgungundlovu Royal Palace, in December 1838. Why were Piet and the Voortrekkers killed by Dingane? This is a very important question, but it seems there is no straight forward answer.

According to Oberholster (1972: 271-272) Piet Retief went to Dingane at Mgungundlovu Palace in the middle of 1837. He and about sixty-nine of his men went to obtain a grant of land on which the Voortrekkers could settle and graze their cattle. Dingane ordered that before he could look at their request, the Voortrekkers should go and recover some cattle that were stolen chief in Northern Basotholand. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 1838, Piet Retief and the Voortrekkers returned with the cattle to Mgungundlovu Palace. The treaty was drawn on which the Voortrekkers were given the land between Tugela and UMzimvubu Rivers in the South. The document was dated the 14<sup>th</sup> of February 1838, and signed on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February. The 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1838 was the date of final interview and farewell between the Voortrekkers and Dingane. Retief and his men were ordered to enter the kraal unarmed, as it was against the Zulu custom to get into the kraal

with arms or armaments. When all the Voortrekkers were inside the kraal, Dingane ordered his regiments to kill them. They were overpowered and later hauled to KwaMatiwane, the Hill of Execution.

This killing of Piet Retief and the Voortrekkers by Dingane at Mgungundlovu led to the Battle of Blood River and the destruction of Mgungundlovu Palace. Oberholster (1972: 271) concludes the story about Piet Retief thus:

*After Gen A.W.J. Pretorius had defeated the Zulu army at Blood River on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 1838, he marched to attack Mgungundlovu. At the approach of the Voortrekkers Commando, Dingane left his kraal and from a distance sent a word to Velenjeni, his personal servant to set it alight. When the Voortrekkers arrived, they found Mgungundlovu already in flames and deserted. On KwaMatiwane, they found the remains of Piet Retief and his men as well as the leather bag containing the treaty.*

The remains of Piet Retief and his men were buried by Andries Pretorius and his Commando at the foot of KwaMatiwane. Oberholster (1972) above is supported by Chadwick (1983: D11) who says that Mgungundlovu was visited by Piet Retief and his small deputation on 5 November 1837. He says that Piet Retief camped at Mgungundlovu until their death on 6 February 1838 and the mass graves in which they were buried are at KwaMatiwane, on the extreme southern end of Mgungundlovu. Holden (1963: 83-93) also agrees that Piet Retief was requested by Dingane to recover the cattle that were stolen by Sigonyela. On their return with the cattle, the Voortrekkers were given the 4<sup>th</sup> of February 1838, as the date for signing the cessation of land. The missionary, Rev. Owen, who was residing with Dingane was requested by the king to draw out and witness the signing of the deed of grant on which Dingane and his councillors affixed their marks. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1838, Dingane ordered the Voortrekkers to enter

unarmed for farewell. Soon after the Voortrekkers had entered the kraal, Dingane exclaimed, "Bulalani abathakathi – kill the wizards."

Cubbin (1980) suggests that the death of Piet Retief and the Voortrekkers resulted from Dingane's suspicious about their good intentions in requesting for settlement and grazing land. Dingane had made unsuccessful campaigns against Sigonyela, the chief of the Basotho and Mzilikazi, the chief of AmaNdebele. Dingane thought of the Voortrekkers as wizards as they recovered the cattle from Sigonyela without difficulty. They also went to an extent of hand-cuffing and later released Sigonyela without bringing him back to Dingane. This act of hand-cuffing and release angered Dingane because he wanted Sigonyela to be brought to him for execution. Thus, Cubbin (1980: 95-96) suggests that Dingane was so dubious of having the Voortrekkers as neighbours and the fact that they had made war with the mighty Mzilikazi. Dingane was also suspicious and uncomfortable about the Voortrekkers because of their great numbers and their phenomenal military skills which Dingane saw as a threat to the Zulu Dynasty. Cubbin (1980: 146) concludes that Dingane killed the Voortrekkers because he was suspicious of their intentions, suspicious of their war-like behaviour, jealous of their power, dreading their arms. He thus felt justified to massacre them clandestinely as he could attack them openly.

#### **5.2.7 The Battlefield of Tugela 1838, Mthunzini district "Impi Yase-Ndondakusuka"**

As for Chadwick (1983: D22) the Voortrekkers crossed Thukela River on 17 April 1838 towards Ndondakusuka Palace. The Zulu army positioned itself on South Eastern slopes of the Ndondakusuka Hill. Oberholster (1972: 261) says that the Voortrekkers attacked Ndondakusuka Palace, built by Dingane on the

high ground near Tugela River, as a retaliation for the murder of Piet Retief and his men at Mgungundlovu early in February 1838. It was also a retaliation for the murders of other Voortrekkers at Bloukrans and Bushmen's Rivers. Oberholster (1972) says that the combined forces of Boers and British were unexpectedly attacked by the Zulu army on 12 April 1838. The Zulu army was led by Nongalaza, both casualties and deaths were high on both sides. Chadwick (1983: D22) concludes by saying that the Zulu army was at an advantage which led to the defeat of the settlers force.

The National Monuments Council of Southern Africa marked the Tugela Battlefield as part of the historical places of importance in KwaZulu Natal. The unfortunate part of the battlefield is that it is now covered in canefields and quarrying areas.

#### **5.2.8 Fort Kwa-Mondi and the Norwegian cemetery, Eshowe district**

Eshowe is about 24 km from Tugela River. The outbreak of the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879 was not greeted with great enthusiasm either in Natal or in Zululand. Duminy and Guest (1989: 195) say that after the ultimatum had expired on 11 January 1879, the invasion of Zululand commenced promptly. One column advanced from Tugela and took possession of the abandoned mission station at Eshowe. This British Column was under Col. Pearson.

Brooks and Webb (1965: 136) say that this British column was threatened by the Zulu army and was later besieged in the Norwegian Mission Station, also known as KwaMondi at Eshowe. The besiege army could not move or defend itself, the dead soldiers were buried inside the laager.

Oberholster (1972: 263) says that it was only on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 1879 that Lord Chelmsford returned from Isandlwana and was able to relieve the fort. After the departure of the military forces, the Norwegian missionaries as a cemetery used the larger.

### **5.3 THE BATTLE OF MAQONGQO, DINGANE'S DEATH AND HIS GRAVE AT KWALIWENI IN INGWAVUMA DISTRICT**

#### **5.3.1 Mpande's defection to the Voortrekkers and Dingane's death**

The previous discussion on Mgungundlovu Palace shed some light on the early life of Dingane on the throne, his dealings with the Voortrekkers, his involvement in the Battle of Blood River. What is of interest now is how he came to the end of his reign and his final death. The plans pursued by the Zulu kings were that of victorious progress, conquering other tribes to form a formidable Zulu nation. The tribes escaped the onslaught by prompt submission and be received into the Zulu ranks as vassals and recruits.

It was primarily king Shaka who formed a powerful and invincible Zulu nation. According to Mann (1879: 16) Shaka's kingdom stretched as far as St John's River in the South and Delagoa Bay (Maputo) in the north. The threats and enemies of this vast and formidable power were treachery, rivalry and power struggle. This is seen in that Shaka was assassinated by Dingane, his brother. When Dingane was in power, he eliminated many people who could be a possible threat to his throne. Despite his wariness and circumspection, Dingane was ousted from the throne by his brother, Mpande kaSenzangakhona.

Knight (1995: 37) introduces the events that led to the dethroning of Dingane as follows:

*In 1849, Dingane's brother, Mpande kaSenzangakhona defected to the enemy, the Voortrekkers. Such was Mpande's support in Zululand that this incident is known as "the breaking of the rope" that held the nation together. With limited power of Boer support, Mpande defeated Dingane and drove him out, but the price of Boer support was the alienation of huge tracts of land of Zulu territory.*

Knight (1995) above dwells on the incidents that happened to the voortrekkers at Mgunungdlovu, the events that led to the Battle of Blood River and the subsequent skirmishes between the Zulu people and the Boers.

Duminy and Guest (1989: 87-96) deal at length with Dingane's internal and foreign policies. They also trace why Dingane did not murder Mpande as a possible threat to the throne. Duminy and Guest (1989) say that Dingane faced manifold dilemma stemmed from the growing white people's presence in the outer reaches of his kingdom. There were the Portuguese at Delagoa Bay (Maputo) in the north, the British Settlers in the Natal Colony and the Voortrekkers in the Transvaal-Zulu border. These communities posed a commercial, political and territorial challenges to the Zulu Kingdom.

Whilst Dingane was faced with many troubles with regard to foreign relations, there was no peace within the kingdom as there were chiefs who did not want to be under the Zulu Kingdom's rule, but wanted their autonomy.

Bryant (1964: 389, 413, 493-4, 614) list some of these chiefs as Zihlandlo of Mkhize tribe on the middle reaches of Tugela Valley, the Cele Chief in the coastal



lands to the south of Tugela River, Chief Bheje of the Khumalo tribe at Ngome, the Hlubi chief in the strategic Mzinyathi Frontier zone. Duminy and Guest (1989:86) says that Dingane used coercive measures to solve both internal and foreign challenges. These measures disrupted community life, which disheartened the people and affected their allegiance to him as a king of the Zulu people. These disruptions and the life of fear made many people to join Mpande as he defected to the Voortrekkers, as mentioned by Knight (1995: 37) above. Illustrating this point of defection, Mann (1879: 33-34) says the treaty was formed between Mpande, the Boers and the English, by which it was arranged that the combined forces should attack Dingane's stronghold. The foreign mercenaries were under the command of Andries Pretorius. Mpande's followers were led by a brave war-chief Nongalaza.

Mann (1879: 33-34) says the combined forces marched into Zululand at the beginning of 1840, across the Sunday River. These combined forces met Dingane's army between the Blood River and the White Umfolozi River. During the fight, many of the men from Dingane's army defected to Mpande's side.

This defection of Dingane's men to Mpande's side determined Dingane's fate of the day. Dingane's army turned and fled, they were chased as far as Phongolo River. Tradition says that Dingane could not cross to Swaziland as he was known for his savage and ruthless attacks, instead after Mpande's men stopped the chase Dingane and his loyal men sought for a hide out in the Lebombo Mountains. It was here where he was finally killed by one of the local chiefs. Mpande was enthroned as king after Dingane.

Shamase (1996: 38-40) confirms that Mpande entered into an alliance with the Voortrekkers under Andries Pretorius. He says that Mpande's amabutho led by

Nongalaza kaNondela Mnyandu freight those of Dingane's amabutho led by Ndlela kaSompisi on 29 January 1840. These two powerful factions converged at Maqongqo plains. After his defeat at Maqongqo, Dingane fled towards uBombo Hills where he was finally killed by the Nyawo people of Samana kaNhlolalualo with the help of the Swazi people. Duminy and Guest (1889: 93-94) locate the battle of final defeat of Dingane in January 1840 as the Battle of Maqongqo near the present day village of Magudu, not Maqongqo at Pietermaritzburg as many people suggest. They also say that short after the Battle of Maqongqo, Dingane was finally killed by Silevana of the Nyawo clan with the help of the Swazi people.

Today a monumental grave is built in remembrance of Dingane at Kwaliweni, Ngwavuma District. This historical site could be a good tourist attraction with the surrounding natural forest of Hlathikhulu. The forest has now been declared the heritage site.

### 5.3.2 Why did Dingane not murder Mpande earlier?

With Mpande on throne after ousting Dingane from power, one question remains: how did Mpande survive the purges that Dingane made when he eliminated the would-be threats to the throne? Duminy and Guest (1989: 94-95) say that Dingane's attitude towards Mpande was more complex, for he even let Mpande to exercise a limited degree of authority over the South-eastern reaches of the kingdom. It is suggested that Dingane's trust of chief and Dingane's trusted councillor. Ndlela pejoratively, repeatedly referred to Mpande as of inferior genealogical status, a coward with poor physical and mental capabilities. It is also suggested that Ndlela did this on purpose, not because Mpande was all that Ndlela referred to, but Ndlela saw that Mpande could guarantee the continuity of the Zulu Dynasty as he produced heirs.

Dingane later realized the mistake he made in believing Ndlela kaSompisi about sparing the life of Mpande. Shamase (1996: 38) says that after being defeated at the Battle of Maqongqo, Dingane killed Ndlela at the place of the people of Klwana kaNgqengelele in the Ngome Forest.

### **5.3.3 Nodwengu, Mpande's palace at Mahlabathini**

Guy (1994:13) says that Dingane's power was weakened by the defeat at the Blood River. Mpande, seeing that Dingane was no longer powerful and popular, took this opportunity to ally himself with the Voortrekker to overthrow Dingane from the throne. The above discussion on the Battle of Maqongqo has shown that Mpande had a large following and won the victory over Dingane's forces.

Oberholster (1972: 266) say that Mpande was recognized by the Voortrekkers as the Paramount Chief of the Zulu Dynasty, and in 1845 Mpande built the Nodwengu Palace north of the White Umfolozi River. Like his predecessor, Mpande experienced a great deal of internal unrest in his kingdom.

Duminy and Guest (1989: 103-110) point to the civil war that ensued between Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi, Mpande's sons. The civil war led to the Battle of Ndongakusuka in 1856. The seriousness of the Battle of Ndongakusuka was that both Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi as protagonists in the civil war, had at various stages sought the support of the Voortrekkers. As a result the Voortrekkers were given or allowed to occupy much of the Zulu territories, which did not give peace to Mpande in his old age, Duminy and Guest (1989: 110).

Despite his ill-health, Duminy and Guest (1989) point out that Mpande continued to perform rituals, his sanction was still required in important policy matters. Mpande died in his old age at Nodwengu in 1872 leaving his kingdom bruised but intact.

Oberholster (1972: 266) says the following about Mpande's death:

*Mpande live at Nodwengu until his death in 1872. When his son, Cetshwayo succeeded him, the Nodwengu Palace was destroyed in accordance with Zulu custom. Only Mpande's grave and trees round it remained as evidence of the former existence of the kraal.*

The location of the Nodwengu Palace's remains are right given by Oberholster (1972: 265). He says that from Eshowe the road leads northwards across a picturesque landscape of fertile rolling hills and deep forested kloofs into the heart of the Zululand. You pass through Melmoth, crosses the Mthonjaneni Hills and the White Umfolozi River to reach Mahlabathini. Then about 8km north of White Umfolozi and within a radius of less than 6km you find three places of historical important in Zulu History: Nodwengu, Ondini and Ulundi Battlefields.

#### **5.3.4 Ondini, Cetshwayo's palace at Mahlabathini**

As seen in the above description, Cetshwayo's Ondini Palace was located on the left bank of the White Umfolozi River and some few kilometers South-east of Nodwengu in the Mahlabathinin District. According to Duminy and Guest (1989: 107) Cetshwayo's reign started shortly after Mpande's death in 1872.

Cetshwayo had to cope with a number of problems both within and outside the borders of the Zulu Kingdom, especially Transvaal-Zululand dispute. Guy (1971: 557-570) says that as a result of political turmoil, Cetshwayo had initiated a large-scale firearm procurement programme with the hope of securing the Zulu state against external threats and any princely challenge that might arise after Mpande's death. This procurement of armaments is supported by Brooks and Webb (1965: 137) who say that to meet considerable challenge, Cetshwayo had probably from 40 000 to 50 000 soldiers, trained men of magnificent physique and high morale, and some of them had rifles.

According to Oberholster (1972: 226-267) Cetshwayo succeeded his father, Mpande, in 1872. In accordance, with Zulu custom, Cetshwayo destroyed his father's palace, Nodwengu and built a new one for himself in the same vicinity. The new palace was called Ondini, and it was modelled on Mgungundlovu, Dingane's palace.

### **5.3.5 The ultimatum tree, "isihlahla samanqamu" on the banks of Tugela river**

The "Ultimatum Tree" or "Isihlahla samanqamu" as it is known today, is at the right bank of the Tugela River, just below Fort Pearson.

Guy (1994: 48-50) says the main point of contention was the question of the boundary between Transvaal and Zululand. But the question of boundary dispute was complicated by Theophilus Shepstone, Secretary for the Native Affairs in Natal Colony until 1877. He purposely complicated Transvaal-Zululand boundary dispute for his own political gain. Guy (1994: 40-41) says that Shepstone wanted parts of the Zulu Kingdom under Cetshwayo to be incorporated

under Natal Colony. He considered Natal Colony a poor colony isolated from commercial centres and markets, no raw materials, no means of encouraging investments and immigration.

These pressures made Theophilus Shepstone to engage himself in aggressive expansionism campaigns. Many of his attempts to obtain access Zulu territories and more African labourers failed. In order to gain control and eventual domination of Zululand, Shepstone exploited the Transvaal-Zulu border dispute.

Guy (1994: 47) says that Shepstone wrote a letter to Sir Bartle Frere, the British High Commissioner, stating the dangers of the Zulu military system to Southern Africa. He reported and portrayed Zulu society as a vicious military despotism in which every male had been taught from childhood that the sole object of his life was fighting and war. The letter suggested that had Cetshwayo's military warriors been changed to labourers working for wages, Zululand would have been a prosperous and peaceful country instead of being a perpetual clanger to itself and its neighbours.

Because of these and many of Shepstone's accusations and suggestions, Sir Bartle Frere persuaded the British Government to realize that Cetshwayo and the Zulu Kingdom was a threat to peace in Southern Africa and to British Colony in Natal. Cetshwayo turned to Sir Henry Bulwer, Natal's Lt. Governor, for mediation on the Transvaal. Zululand border dispute. It was towards the end of 1877 that Bulwer appointed a Boundary Commission to inquire into the border dispute between the Zulu people and the Boers. The findings of the Boundary Commission supported the Zulu's position. Oberholster (1972: 260-261) says that in reaction to the decision of the Boundary Commission, Sir Bartle Frere took up a very strong

attitude towards Cetshwayo. Frere did this to placate the resentment of the Voortrekkers of Transvaal.

In his message conveying his sentiments about the decision taken by the Boundary Commission, Sir Bartle Frere sent an "Ultimatum" which embodied a number of demands. Among the demands in the "Ultimatum" were:

- (a) Cetshwayo was ordered to deliver up murderers of African women who had been kidnapped on the Natal's side.
- (b) To pay compensation for the molesting of two white men.
- (c) To disband the military organization of the Zulu.
- (d) To guarantee the right of any accused person to a fair trial.
- (e) To allow missionaries to return to Natal and to move freely between Zululand and Natal.
- (f) To accept a representative of the British Government.

Cetshwayo was ordered to respond to these demands within thirty days. Moodie (1968), Brooks and Webb (1965) and Guy (1994) say that the "Ultimatum" was handed on the morning of 11<sup>th</sup> December 1878. The British delegation, according to Oberholster (1972: 260) consisted of John Wesley Shepstone, Charles Brownlee, Henry Francis Fyn and Lt-Col Forester Walker. These British delegates met fourteen of Cetshwayo's representatives under this tree which is today known as the "Ultimatum tree".

Cetshwayo could not reply to all the demands on the "Ultimatum", he requested for the extension of time. Failing to accept the request for the extension of time, the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879 broke out. Guy (1994: 50) summarises the story of

Zulu invasion by saying that the British troops under Lord Chelmsford entered Zululand on 11 January 1879 to enforce the terms of the Ultimatum. The British troops retired in confusion when the Zulu destroyed the British headquarters column at Isandlwana.

### 5.3.6 The battlefield of Ulundi, 1879

Duminy and Guest (1989: 200) say that after the battles at Khambula and Isandlwana, there were two other columns of the British Army available for the final onslaught at Ulundi. Major-General Crealock's and Major Newdigate's Divisions leaguered their forces at Mthonjaneni Heights overlooking Mahlabathini Plains where Ondini Palace and other military kraals were concentrated. The Battle of Ulundi took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1879 between the British and Cetshwayo's forces.

Oberholster (1972: 266) says that the Battlefield of Ulundi was very close to the site of Nodwengu, Mpande's Palace and about 3km due west of Ondini Palace. Laband and Thompson (1979: 67) say that Lord Chelmsford advanced to Ulundi from his entrenched camp on the White Umfolozi Valley. The British mounted troops provoked the Zulu army into attack and retreated. The Zulu army stormed and charged to within 30m of the British Garrison, where they faltered under heavy British gunfire. The Zulu army was commanded by Ziwedu, Mnyamana, Dabulamanzi and Ntshingwayo.

Knight and Scollins (1991: 9) say that Lord Chelmsford reached Ulundi on 4 July 1879, burnt Ondini Palace and thus suppressing the last patches of Zulu resistance. Duminy and Guest (1989: 200-202) say the British burn Ondini



Palace and returned to their Mthonjaneni Camp victorious. Cetshwayo had fled the onslaught to find safety at EsiKhwebezi, one of Mnyamana's residences. Mnyamana Buthelezi was one of Cetshwayo's prime ministers.

They say Cetshwayo was later captured and arrested at Ngome Forest on 28 August 1879. This is confirmed by Oberholster (1972: 267) who says that after the war of 1879, Cetshwayo was exiled but he was reinstated as Paramount Chief by Queen Victoria. After his return from exile, Cetshwayo built a second Ondini Palace to the north of the first one. On the civil war that followed Cetshwayo's reinstatement, he was driven out on the 21<sup>st</sup> of July 1883. The new second Ondini Palace was destroyed by Zibhebhu of Mandlakazi. Today the Battlefield of Ulundi is marked by visible four cairns of white-washed stones and there is a small graveyard nearby where those who fell in war were buried. There is also a monument on the battlefield with the inscription: **"IN MEMORY OF THE BRAVE WARRIORS WHO FELL HERE IN 1879 IN DEFENCE OF THE ZULU ORDER"**

### 5.3.7 The battlefield of Etshaneni, Mkuze 1884

The Battlefield of Etshaneni is a site of war between Usuthu and Zibhebhu of Mandlakazi. According to Gibson (1911: 27) the Battle of Etshaneni broke out on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1884. Etshaneni is located as where Mkuze River enters the gap in the Lebombo Mountain, about 20km to the north-east of Bhangano, Zibhebhu's Palace. The battlefield is called Etshaneni because the mountain on the southern side of the gap forms a lofty peak of bald rock which the indigenous Zulu people call "Itshana", which can be translated as "a small rock or stone."

Dlomo (1968: 35) says the following about the Battlefield of eTshaneni;

*Ngalenkathi uZibhebhu owayenesibindi nokuhlakanipha okumangalisayo abone ukuthi luzile uSuthu ashise umlilo awususe eTshaneni aze awufanke eMkhuze. Awuhele, impi yakhe iza ngemuva komlilo ihamba ehlungwini ize ihlangane ngezifuba.*

*(At this time the clever and cunning Zibhebhu saw that uSuthu regiments were upon his army, he set the veld alight from Tshaneni driving the fire towards Mkhuze. As he was driving the fire his army followed on the burnt ground until it was upon the unsuspecting uSuthu regiments.)*

Dlomo (1968) says that Dinuzulu's regiments included abaQulusi, isiDindi somtshiki, uSuthu, uMgazi, uButhelezi and iBhande. Zibhebhu's regiments were conquered, they fled the scene leaving the herds of cattle behind. Zibhebhu himself fled his territory to find refuge with the Whites in the British Colony of Natal.

Guy (1994: 170-179) traces reasons that led to the war between Zibhebhu and Dinuzulu, Cetshwayo's son. Guy (1994) says that when Cetshwayo was taken a political prisoner to England after the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879, the British extended Zibhebhu's boundaries to include many of Cetshwayo's territory. Zibhebhu was given the Territory that was occupied by the people of Emgazini.

Duminy and Guest (1989: 209) and Guy (1994: 172) agree that when Cetshwayo was reinstated as a king in 1883, he found himself among the hostile chiefs and his kingdom diminished. Among the hostile chiefs was Zibhebhu of Mandlakazi who enjoyed the support of the British officials. These officials supplied

Zibhebhu and his district in north-eastern Zululand with firearms and horses. Probably this was the British's deliberate check to the king's ambitions.

The return and reinstatement of Cetshwayo saw the rise of tensions and civil war between Zibhebhu and Cetshwayo. Guy (1994) says that Zibhebhu showed no regard or respect for Cetshwayo's reinstatement as he rode his horses and shouted during the ceremony. Duminy and Guest (1989: 212) say this tension led to the Battle of Msebe on 30 March 1883, where Zibhebhu, assisted by Hami of Ngentsheni dealt a heavy blow on Cetshwayo's army. The razed down the second Ondini Palace, forcing Cetshwayo to flee and find refuge at Eshowe, where he finally died and was buried at Nkandla Forest where his tomb is still found. Dlomo (1952: 119) remarks the following about the Battle of Msebe;

*.... Kuyimpi leyo yamagqubu kwazise uSuthu noMandlakazi babeyizitha ezinkulu. Yalwa zingamashumi amathathu kuNhlaba 1883. Usuthu lwaluluningi kunoMandlakazi kodwa lwashesha ukwehlulwa. Yayilwela phakathi kwamagquma iNgxongwane neNhlophenkulu. Sesuka uMandlakazi useyoshisa umuzi omusha wasOndini. Wawumusha emuva kokushiswa yimpi yamaBhunu.*

*(..... this was a war of grudges as uSuthu and Mandlakazi were sworn enemies. They fought on 30 March 1883. Although uSuthu was greater in numbers, they were soon overcome. The battle was fought in the plains between Ngxongwane and Nhlophenkulu hillocks. The victorious Mandlakazi went to burn the newly built Ondini Palace. It was newly built after it had been razed by the Voortrekkers during the Ondini Battle)*

Duminy and Guest (1989: 212) that Prince Ndabuko and Chief Mnyamana as guardians of Dinuzulu, Cetshwayo's 15 year old son and heir, struck bargain with the Boers from Transvaal to help uSuthu against Zibhebhu of Mandlakazi in revenge to the Battle of Msebe and recover the land. On 5 June 1884 the uSuthu

and Boer allies defeated Zibhebhu at Etshaneni Battlefield, forcing him to flee. Dinuzulu was put to the throne after his father, Cetshwayo.

#### 5.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study on historical places of importance in KwaZulu Natal does not claim to be exhaustive and perfect. But it is with the deepest desire and hope that it will create an interest to those visiting the Lebombo SDI region to visit these places inside the designated boundaries of the SDI, but some are close neighbours of the SDI region. It is also hoped that the historical notes supplied about these places of historical importance will be found helpful, fascinating and unlocking the desire to visit these places to say fascinating should not mean that these events narrated were wholesome and well-accepted, but it should mean that we need to ponder over these things and pray they do not repeat themselves, we should learn the lessons and choose the paths we tread with circumspection.

Besides visiting these places of historical importance, it is truly hoped the discussion will open our eyes and desires to tap deeper into the reserves of knowledge we have about our past and our cultural traditions. It is truly hoped that the stakeholders in the Lebombo SDI should include the visits to these places of historical importance in their brochures, their programmes, organized tours and projects. They should note that these places form part and parcel of our Zulu cultural traditions, the very essence of who we are as the Zulu people, and our history.

Gebhard (1988: 1-11) says that South African historiography is a subject surrounded by controversy, but it has enjoyed considerable attention in recent

years. Despite controversies and shortcomings encountered in historiography, some reliance is placed on these published documents because they have an implied or explicit interpretation of the past. It is believed that the people, both the tourists and local people will pride themselves on these historical places in and around the Lebombo SDI region. Their visit will help to put KwaZulu Natal in the limelight as the place rich in cultural diversities and share in the cultural traditions of the Zulu people.

## CHAPTER 6

### 6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 6.1 Efforts of the development in the Lebombo SDI

The link between the Zulu cultural traditions and tourism industry, as seen in this study, is a viable means to serve the cause of development and economic stability of the region. It provides the pragmatic and human response to the cry of anguish and hope. The success of this link is the art of making a lasting record of the effort of human beings to provide for their basic requirements. The foremost of these requirements is the need to feed themselves and their immediate families. The link is working to improve the lives of the rural populations and to achieve economic security, amounts on clearing the ground and sowing the with a view to a harvest whose gathering time is a long term sustainability of the community and its members. One thing certain, is that success occasionally to be found amid apparent failures.

The term development does not always refer to one single phenomenon or activity, nor does it mean a general process of social change. All the societies, rural or urban are changing all the time. The change affects the norm and values, the society's institution, attitudes, customs, and practices which are continually evolving into new and different forms. Development and cultural traditions in the Lebombo SDI are building up people so that they can build a future for themselves, to choose what to do to improve social organization. Efforts in development start with the people potential and proceed to their enhancement and growth.

The process of development contains three main elements; economic; and human social and human development. Economically, the people should be able to

provide goods, materials and cultural activities necessary for their economic base. Socially the people should afford the provision of a range of social amenities such as health, education, welfare, transport infrastructure and other social needs

Human development means that the people both individually and communally, should be able to realize their full potential, to use their skills and talents they should play a vital and constructive part in shaping their own future. Social development should therefore concentrate on all these elements without the exclusion of the other. These are the things we see happening in the Lebombo SDI, in the places like Ngwanase, Hluhluwe, Mkhuze and St. Lucia.

The economic base of any society is critical and it must produce the resources required for livelihood of its members. Attempts are made in the Lebombo SDI to ensure that developmental strategies involve the active participation of the local people. There are strong reasons why resources should be put in rural development in the Lebombo SDI. Most of the rural families still live at subsistence level. Tourism and agricultural industries form a vital part of the economy in these rural areas. These industries create employment opportunities to absorb the societies' work force. The concern to improve livelihood of the majority of the rural people is usually expressed in terms of projects and programmes of rural improvement.

Tourism industry is rightly the objective in the development, but rural improvement should also embrace other aspects of rural life, such as the cultural traditions. The link between the tourism and cultural traditions equates rural development with the far reaching transformation of the social and economic life.

## 6.2 FACING THE CHALLENGES OF CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION

The Lebombo SDI represent a watershed for the tourism industry in rural areas, underpinned by a determination to face the challenges of transformation. There are many issues involved but development stands out, the need to grow black tourism ownership and understanding the ways to encourage tourism among emerging groups. As these developments occur, more and more workshops and seminars need to be conducted with an aim to consider ways to develop and market events and products. These workshops need to delve into greater context of transformation, examine the complex role and relationship within the community tourism initiative. Practical measures need to be advised to keep tourism industry a float or buoyant through tough times. The workshops are needed to produce a number of innovative recommendation such as sensitizing entrants to the industry, macro events that are impacting on local tourism in the Lebombo SDI, the role of local authorities in relation to tourism, appropriate decision-making, public, private partnership, community ownership, assessment of tourism impact on environment and many other important issues.

The link between rural development, indigenous knowledge of cultural traditions and tourism industries is a relatively new concept in South Africa. The Lebombo SDI has committed itself in uplifting communities and its focus is on increasing the efficiency of community tourism. The communities are at liberty to deal with the challenges by formulating strategies to further the development of tourism. The communities have to consider ways to integrate Zulu cultural tradition into the tourism experience. This is the challenge not to be avoided the challenge not to avoided, the challenge which is both invigorating and exciting. The hope is that these challenges strengthen the psychological effect of unifying the community's sense of identity and continuity.

The Lebombo SDI is at the advantage because it is initiated on a self contained wild life and birdwatchers paradise. The region boast of unique eco-system,



accommodations ranging from wilderness camping sites, air conditioned thatched cottages and conference centres, tree houses, tree lodges, luxury lodges, and ethnic restaurants serving superb meals. The region boasts of horse safaris, one can explore the country side and unspoiled shorelines with high dunes, stunning beaches and admire the vastness of the region.

The essence of any development is the human being. The promotion and participation in social and economic development cannot be achieved if the people do not develop themselves. Basically, development hinges on the participation of human beings, they ask relevant questions and seek plausible answers to their plights. They make and implement the decisions that affect development in their own community. This means that development takes place only if the majority of the people are involved in the decision making process and implementation of matters affecting their community development.

Tourism offers the opportunity for the people to form primary production sector, where they produce articles that can be sold to satisfy their basic needs. The satisfaction of these basic needs ensures a peaceful living as the people have something worthwhile to live for. The people should be aware that a principle of any operational strategy such as this Lebombo SDI has to be a dynamic, on-going learning process requiring frequent monitoring, evaluation and modification according to experience and needs. As part of general development, the Lebombo SDI has a huge potential for speeding up economic empowerment and transformation. It offers opportunities for job creation and better life for all who participate in community developments.

The absence of adequate tourism education strategies is still the great deficiency in the industry. There is still a lack of knowledge among the communities of what tourism is all about, its importance and opportunities it offers for economic empowerment. Many African still regard tourism as a white owned industry. They lack education and awareness that tourism is supposed to benefit all the

people of the rainbow nation, including the previously disadvantaged people. The people still lack knowledge that tourism could help turn around the fortunes of the people living in depressed areas, areas with social conditions such as the prevalence of unemployment and neglect.

The most important thing about development is that the projects should address the needs of the people in the community. These projects should be labour-intensive and sustainable rather than once-offs.

These projects should be well-planned and monitored to ensure that nothing is wasted. The prime objective should be that the projects should be finally owned and controlled by the concerned communities. To ensure sustainability of programmes and projects for communities' development, the government should make sure that capacity building is in place through training of authorities.

### **6.3 PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES**

As it has been observed, rural development strategies take the form of programmes that implement the plans and projects. Such programmes form the basis of government and non-governmental organisations' efforts to help the rural people. These programmes and projects suggest a number of broad principles that should be followed to guide their activities. The principle might include access, independence, sustainability, participation and effectiveness.

Access in project implementation means that the programmes should support the communities and help them not to be dependent on such programmes plans and solutions are relevant to the local economic and social situations, helping the communities to go forward on their own. The sustainability, independence and go forward can be achieved by seeking out the local people's ideas and their involvement in the developmental projects. Effectiveness of any project or

program is based on the effective use of local resources, the cultural tradition or anything within the capability of the community members.

We have to understand that development is a term that is open to a wide variety of interpretations. Every community has its own understanding and knowledge of what constitutes development. Such understanding and knowledge is sometimes based on past experience or communicated by outside agent who help the rural people or communities to change their outlook toward the disposition. It needs to be emphasized that tourism industry is not only concerned with physical and economic development but with also the total well – being of people themselves. It helps people to gain a clearer insight into who they are, what they are, what their own cultural tradition can do to help them out of their livelihoods. Tourism helps people in their productivity and also develop their abilities to direct their future development

#### **6.4 ELEMENTS LEARNT BY BEING INVOLVED IN TOURISM**

There are many things that can be acquired by being involved in tourism industry. This study would like to highlight elements such as knowledge and skills, technical advice and information, community's organization, motivation and self confidence.

Although communities have a lot of knowledge about their environment, tourism can bring awareness and information of which the community does not have. The application of newly acquired knowledge often means that the community adapts to new changes of various kinds.

This suggests that tourism provides advice and information to help communities in making decisions and generally enable them to take actions in the acquisition

of knowledge and technical advice from various agents. The communities realize that they need some form of organization to present their interest and to give them a means for taking collective action. The community might establish things like the community tourism associations for championing the cause of development and examine tourism issues from a practical perspective.

One of the problem in tourism development, or any development, is that the people often feel that there is nothing or very little they can do to change their lives, the tourism initiatives, as in the Lebombo SDI, work closely with the communities, helping these communities to take part in development by coming along with their cultural activities. Thus the people are made aware that they can do things themselves, they have an ability to break out their poverty. Tourism in the Lebombo SDI motivates people to be self-confident and patient in their endeavours to extricate themselves from perilous situations. In this case, tourism is seen as an initiative that works with the people, not working for them. The people in their communities need to learn how to make decisions about how they wish to live their lives and be accountable to their decisions. Experience teaches that the people have more confidence in decisions and programmes which they have made themselves, and develop self-confidence in what they have achieved. An important aspect in measuring tourism development success is the extent to which the living standards of people, rural or urban, have improved as a result of being engaged in tourism activities.

## **6.5 TOURISM'S CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS**

It needs to be emphasized that tourism has to work closely with other organizations that provide essential services within the rural areas. Tourism industry is one of the many economic, social and political activities that aim to bring about change for the betterment of rural and urban societies. Therefore

tourism must be prepared to collaborate with other organizations and to take them into account when preparing its project and programmes.

The political institutions, tourism agent must consider political leadership structures when dealing with the rural communities. The support organizations that supply other inputs marketing services and others need to be recognized and co – operated with if tourism industry aims to be of any use in the rural communities. The local health services have to be consulted with so that tourism agents are kept aware of the health problems and that tourism activities should conform to local standards. The schools should also be considered in rural developments because the communities are easily accessed through the schools.

Tourism industry has to work closely with community development workers to break down local social, cultural barriers to change, and to encourage community action programmes. All society have accepted ways of doing things and these ways are directly linked to the culture of the societies. The people's attitudes and desires are influenced by the society's culture. Therefore the success of any tourism activity depends on the knowledge and understanding of the local people's cultural tradition. It is essential for tourism agents to know and use the culture and structure of the concerned rural community. The success of any tourism venture largely depends on understanding the community structures; the local leadership, the concern and interest of the community, their specific needs and expectations.

## **6.6 CO – OPERATION WITH FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEADERS**

At the based of co – operation with other rural development organization is the consultation with the leadership structured. The formal and informal leaders are men and women who make decisions on behalf of others. These are the respected members of the society. They have major influence on the attitudes and behaviour of the people they lead.

These leaders can be very important for the success of the development venture in the community. These people are easily recognized once the pattern of leadership in the society has been pinpointed and understood.

The formal leaders in the rural society include the chief, the headman, religious leaders, local leaders of political parties or elected councillors. The exact form or pattern of leadership will differ from society to society. But the influence of the local leaders run deeper and is a key to the society. The local headman is a link between the community development initiatives and the he has powers to allocate land or venues for projects. The support of the local leaders helps to encourage members of community to participate and invest in new enterprises. So, any form of rural development flounders because the external agents of development lack the knowledge that without gaining the support of leadership structures. It is through the support of these formal and informal leaders that rural community development agents win the trust and confidence of the members of the society, without them nothing will succeed.

#### **6.7 CEREMONIES AND FESTIVALS AS TRADITIONAL MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AND CULTURAL CHANGE**

The study has shown that traditional form of entertainment can be used to bring about social and economic developments in the rural communities. Songs, dance and plays convey information as to who these people are, these have proved to be a major tourist attraction devices. These traditional devices such as ceremonies and festival form a central feature of culture. Has been defined as an accepted way of doing things in a particular society. It is the way in which people live their customs, traditions, methods of cultivation, wedding ceremonies, values and behaviour. It has been observed that culture is learned by each individual of the society, the people learn by seeing how other people behave in an acceptable manner.

The cultural traditions are not accidental collections of customs but have been evolved to help people in their daily chores. Each aspect of culture in a society has a definite purpose and function and therefore related to all other aspects of culture. Changes in one aspect of culture may have an effect on other aspect of culture. This includes religious festivals, celebration to mark important seasons and stages in life and ceremonies for events within the life of the family or community such as marriage, birth initiating rites, rituals related with death etc. All these are cultural events, which are major attractions for both tourists and anthropologist.

The performance of traditional songs, praise poetry, music and dance, religious dance, religious gatherings and village meetings are just a few of traditional cultural traditions that can be successfully exploited to attract tourist and enhance economic and social development. The understanding of local cultural traditions gives visitors an insight into the local people's understanding and knowledge of their environment, their attitudes, behaviour, and deeply held feelings about their dispositions. The contacts with other cultures bring about cultural changes. Cultural changes and adaptation will include new styles of music, new religious beliefs, new political ideas and so forth. What is crucially important is that in spite of these cultural contacts, the people should know what is originally their own and preserve it as unique as possible.

The people need to take pride in their own traditional way of life and regard it as the best. Every individual within the society has a responsibility to promote and preserve one's cultural traditions. These traditional ceremonies, festivals and means of communication have both social and economic value.

The rural development proposed by tourism industry in the Lebombo SDI aim to address the needs of all groups and individuals within the region, improve the quality of life for the rural people. The development in the Lebombo SDI aim to improve the livelihood of the people of the rural area without destroying their

indigenous institution and cultural traditions. The study also pointed out that for rural development to materialize, it has to be designed with the rural people, be sensitive to their specific needs and involve their traditional and modern representative structures.

## **6.8 THE LEBOMBO SDI: THE GIFT FOR THE NATION**

In conclusion, the Lebombo SDI is the gift to the nation, a successful venture in alleviating poverty and marginalisation for the rural people. This is because the area designated for this rural development is a pristine part of South Africa, with its rugged beauty softened by the sea breeze. This is a place of contemplation and reflection because here one discovers the secret of that after climbing a great hill, there are many more hills to climb and many more unique cultural traditions to find very thrilling. The Lebombo SDI is choked with hills and valleys through which rivers slither like fat colorful snakes. As a whole the Lebombo SDI region has a tremendous tourism potential. The job creation and development opportunities have been a primary concern in its conceptualization, and these goals seem to be realized as many people are benefiting in one way or another. The local art and crafts production is growing day by day. The spending spree of tourist benefits the local people. Importantly, the cultural tradition activities instill a pride, creating awareness and appreciation of indigenous customs, culture, the heritage of the present and future generations. Tourism in the area also creates an awareness and sensitivity to the challenges and hardship facing the rural communities. Above all else, tourism in the area proves that with the private – public partnership, the participation of local communities in the developmental initiatives, the rural life is not all deprivation and hardship.



## 6.9 RECOMMENDATIONS

The stakeholders, the Government, private sector and local communities need to improve market-oriented economic reforms for stabilizing economic development in the area, Lebombo SDI region. The private sector needs to educate the people about partnerships, especially tourism sector and local communities partnership. The Government needs to monitor that the multi-nationals and large business do not exploit the local communities. These local communities should be guided mainly by profit motives to show concern for the sustainable development. All the three stakeholders should take a more enlightened approach and adopt an ethical code of conduct, new institutional arrangements should be worked out among the stakeholders. In reviewing the development priorities, the stakeholders should work co-operatively in developing, promoting and implementing anti-poverty programmes. The long term investments such as infrastructure, education and health services should be worked out co-operatively to ensure economic growth and better living conditions for all people.

The implementation of anti-poverty programmes has to be improved significantly in order to make proper use of programme resources. To permit participation of the communities and to enable the targeted population to benefit from these programmes should be a priority. The utilization of the local communities' potential in tourism development and economic growth should be encouraged and improved. The information about tourism research and benefits should be readily accessible to the communities.

This can be done by opening up tourism branches or offices in the communities not just in towns and cities far away from these communities. The tourism branches in the communities should be responsible for conducting workshops and

training seminars about specific tourism business skills. These workshops and training seminars will help with capacity building, one of the fundamental areas on which the success of community development depends. The tourism branches stationed in the communities will ensure the development or acquisition of skills and professionalism necessary for tourism development within the local communities. The skills mostly required are that of organising, advertising, funding and managing cultural events necessary for tourism development.

Dlamini (1999: 30) gives the following important points about the management styles and methods when it comes to cultural events;

- (a) Events need a co-ordinator who knows precisely what to do and how to meet deadlines.
- (b) The co-ordinator needs to have a more authoritarian style of leadership as events are task-orientated.

These points show that the stakeholders in tourism development should take training facilities into consideration for their programmes to be a success.

The study recommends that there should be a local museum in the Lebombo SDI where the local producers of different artefacts will display their wares. The local museum might prove to be more of a steady income generating investment for the local communities in addition to curio shops and market stalls.

The study is also aware that some cultural events such as traditional weddings might not be easy to come by and make them coincide with tourism for

commercial purposes. The study recommends some possible ways of making these Zulu traditional weddings to feature in tourism packages. Firstly, the tourism branches stationed in the communities might gather the information from the communities as to the number of the weddings that might fall within the months known to have many tourists. Or else the tourism branches might inform the communities as to which months the tourists usually prefer, and then the communities use these months for their weddings.

Secondly, the tourism branches in the communities might keep the traditional weddings and other cultural events in videos and played at particular venues as part of entertaining and educating the tourists about the Zulu cultural traditions.

The study is also aware that certain ritual, such as funerals, demands dignity and respect, and thus should not be exposed to tourists. The study recommends that the stakeholders in community developments should consider employing knowledgeable people as tour guides. It should be the people who understand the thin line between commercialization and preservation of their cultural traditions. These people will then inform the tourists about the Zulu way of life and their cultural traditions. These suggestions and recommendations are not final but open to discussion and improvement.

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## **INTERVIEWS**

1. Mrs Elizabeth Mhlanga of Emacekeni area at Ezithombothini Reserve, Empangeni. She and her daughter, Sibongile Kollie Mancane Mhlanga were very resourceful with regard to Umkhehlo Ceremony and finer details about the Zulu Traditional Wedding Ceremony. They were interviewed on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2001.
2. Celiwe Sibongile Hlabisa-Shandu of Empembeni Reserve KwaHlabisa. Her knowledge of different clan songs was of great help. She was interviewed on 20 September 2001.
3. Mr Zeblon M. Mthethwa and her wife Ntombemhlophe G. Mthethwa (uMaNxumalo) of Embabe area, KwaMbonambi. Their knowledge of Umkhehlo Ceremony and Zulu Traditional Wedding Ceremony was of great help. They were interviewed on 16 December 2001.
4. Patrick Ngwenya, Robert Zwane and Sithembiso Mthembu of Manguzi-Ngwanase Area, they live between Shayina High School and Maputo Primary School. Their knowledge of different regional food dishes seasoned with peanuts proved to be very helpful, resourceful and educational. They were interviewed on 22-23 December 2001.



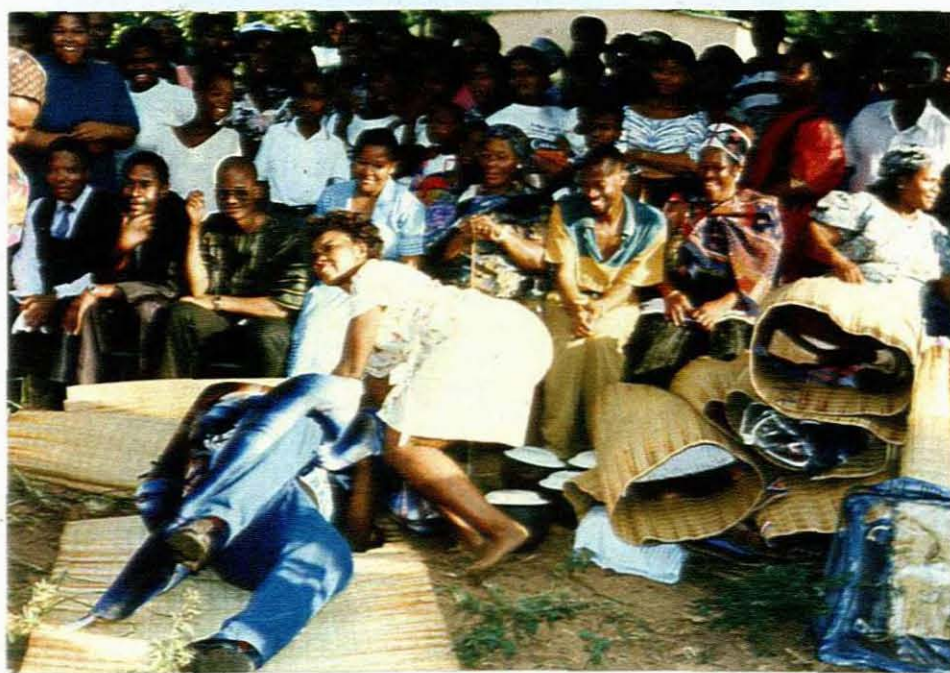
The bride, Londiwe Nqobile Hlabisa-Zibani, as she is showing her leather kilt (*isidwaba*), top knot headpiece (*inhloko*), beaded artefacts (*ubuhlalu*) and as she is singing her clan song (*ecula inkondlo kamakoti*) on her traditional wedding ceremony. The photo was taken at Nkonjane Reserve, KwaDlangezwa on 28 April 1996.





The bride, Londiwe Nqobile Hlabisa-Zibani, as she is showing her leather kilt (*isidwaba*), top knot headpiece (*inhloko*), beaded artefacts (*ubuhlalu*) and as she is singing her clan song (*ecula inkondlo kamakoti*) on her traditional wedding ceremony. The photo was taken at Nkonjane Reserve, KwaDlangezwa on 28 April 1996.





The bride Londiwe Hlabisa-Zibani and her bridesmaids during the distribution of gifts to her in laws (*umabo*) on her traditional wedding ceremony. The photo was taken on 28 April 1996, Nkonjane Reserve, KwaDlangezwa.



The mothers from the groom's party (*ikhetho*) Ntombemhlophe Mthethwa and Khethiwe Zibani welcoming the bride in ululation (*bekikiza*) on the traditional wedding ceremony. They say their wishes and expectations from their new bride and a new member in the family. The photo was taken on 28 April 1996, Nkonjane Reserve, KwaDlangezwa.





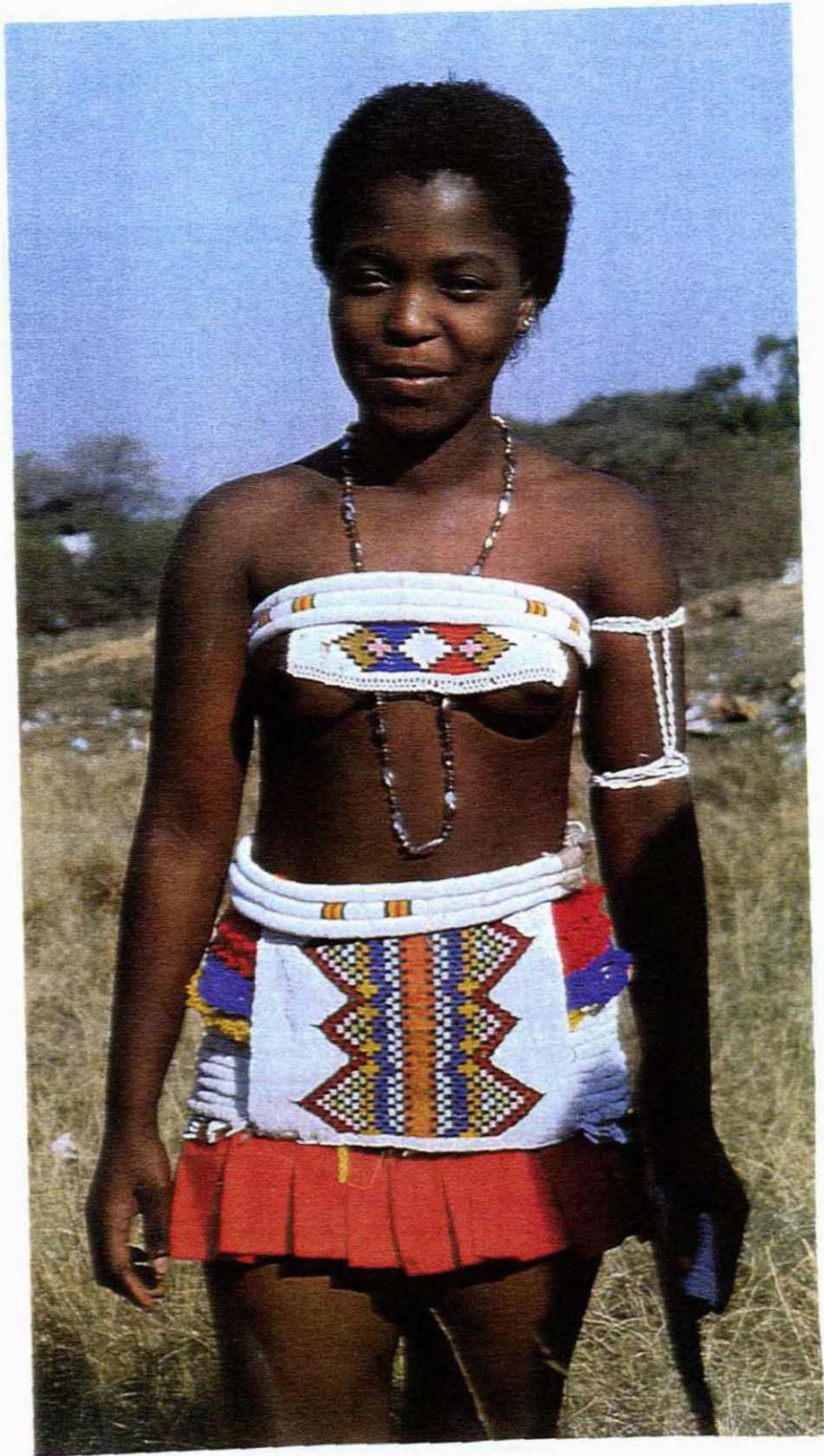
The bride is dancing her best on her traditional wedding ceremony. She is leaving behind girlhood and enters motherhood. She therefore performs the best she can, the way she will be remembered when one thinks of her wedding day. The photo was taken on 28 April 1996 at Londiwe Hlabisa-Zibani 's wedding, Nkonjane Reserve, KwaDlangezwa.



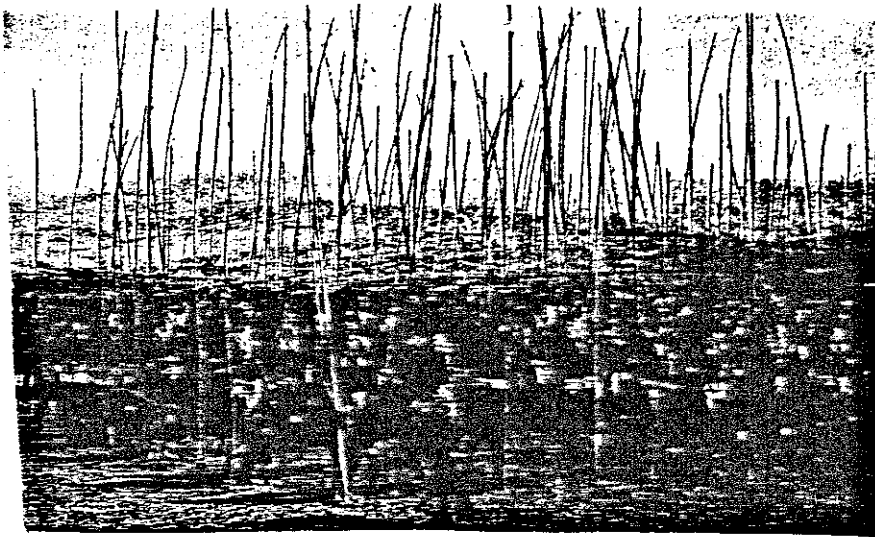


High fashion necklaces in translucent glass beads, showing innovation and modern trends among the Zulu producers of beaded artefacts. (Nhlankazi, 20 January 2001).

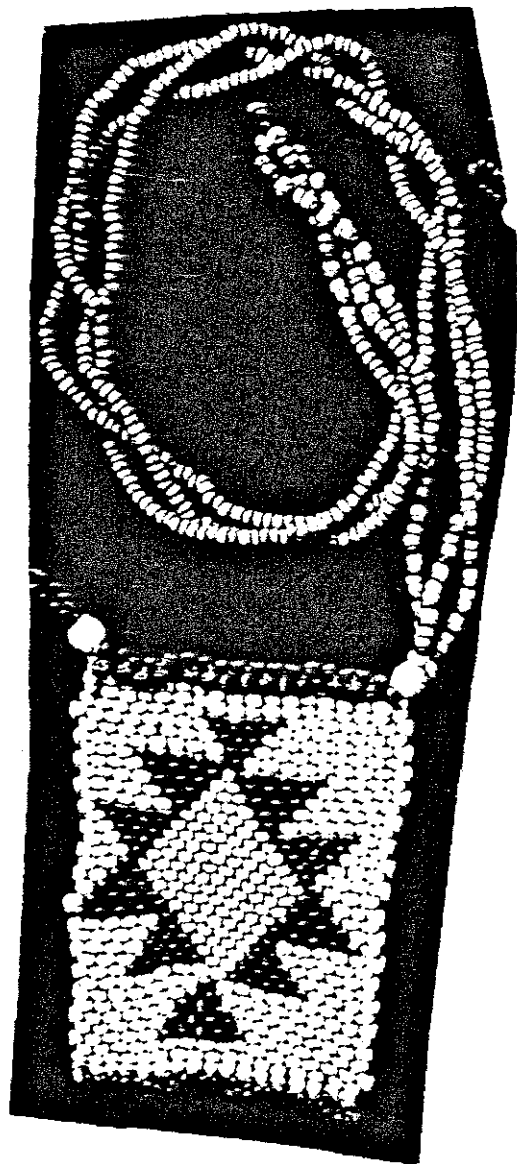
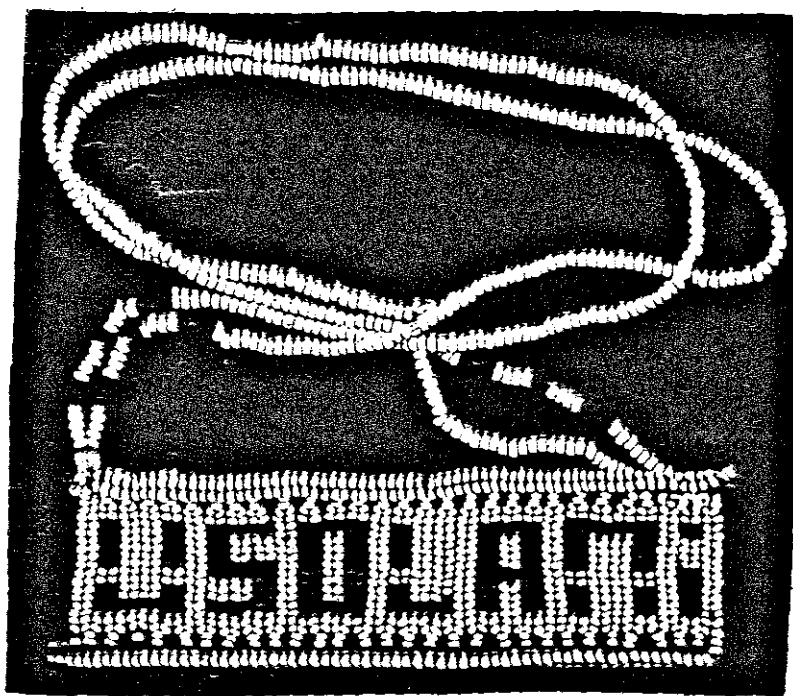




The girl wearing ornately beaded frontal apron and matching band of beadwork. The beadwork shows colourful designs. She is ready for a religious dance of the Nazareth Baptist Church. The photo was taken at the Nazareth Annual Gathering at Nhlangakazi, their Holy Mountain on 20 January 2001.

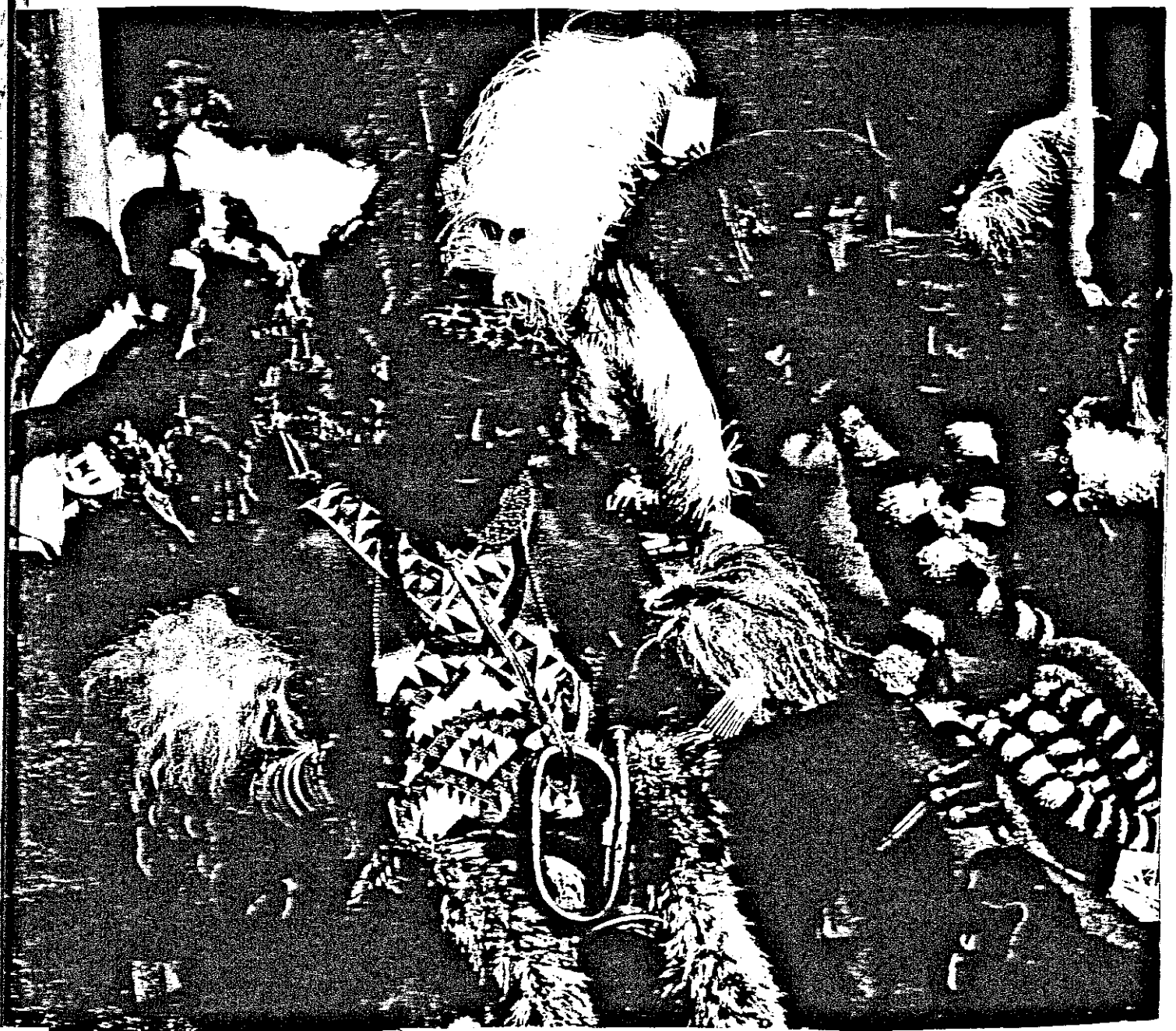


The Zulu girls attending the Reed Dance Ceremony (*Umkhosi Womhlanga*) at Enyokeni Royal Palace at Nongoma. His Majesty King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu addressing the crowd, entertaining them to revive their cultural traditions. They are seen wearing beaded artcrafts, girdles, headbands and necklaces. (Morris, J. 1994. *Speaking with beads*, pages 91-92)

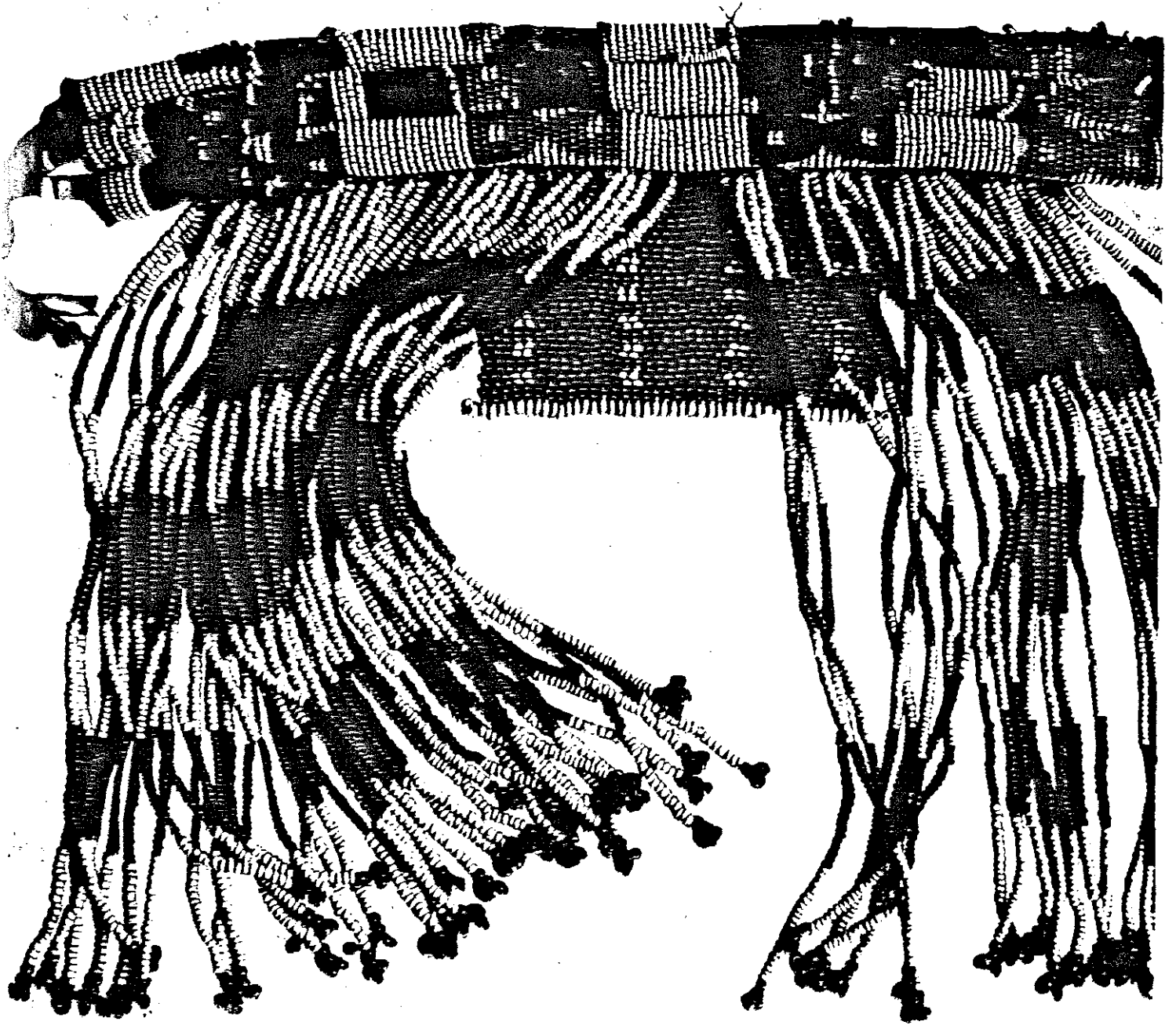


The plain traditional necklace and a necklace with a coded message *"USOLANI"* which can be translated as *"WHAT DO YOU DOUBT ABOUT ME"*. Beads served as a means of communication. (Morris, J. 1994. *Speaking with beads*, page 58).

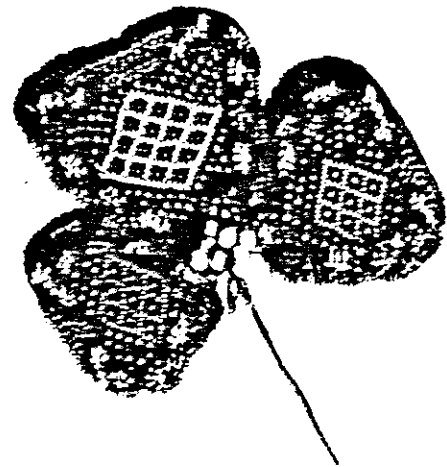
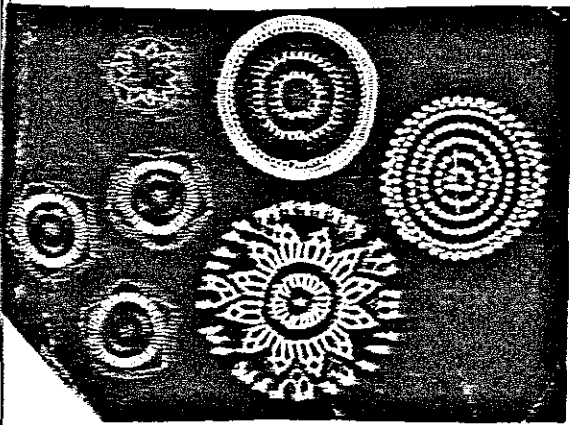
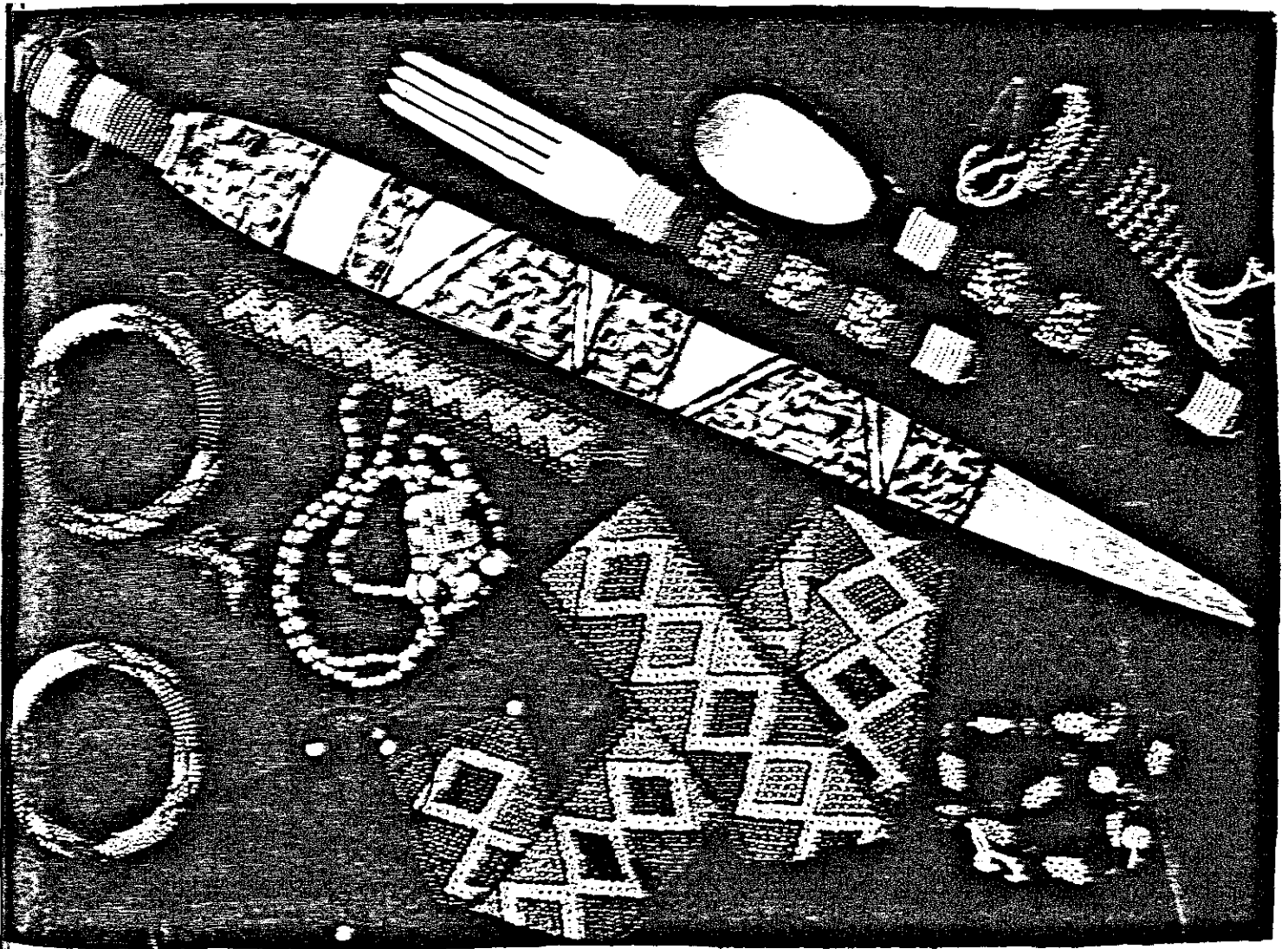




The Zulu men in their traditional attire (*imvumulo yesintu*). They are wearing feathered headbands (*imiqhele*), beaded necklaces (*imigexo*), decorative armbands and anklets (*izigqizo*). (Morris, J. 1994. *Speaking with beads*.)



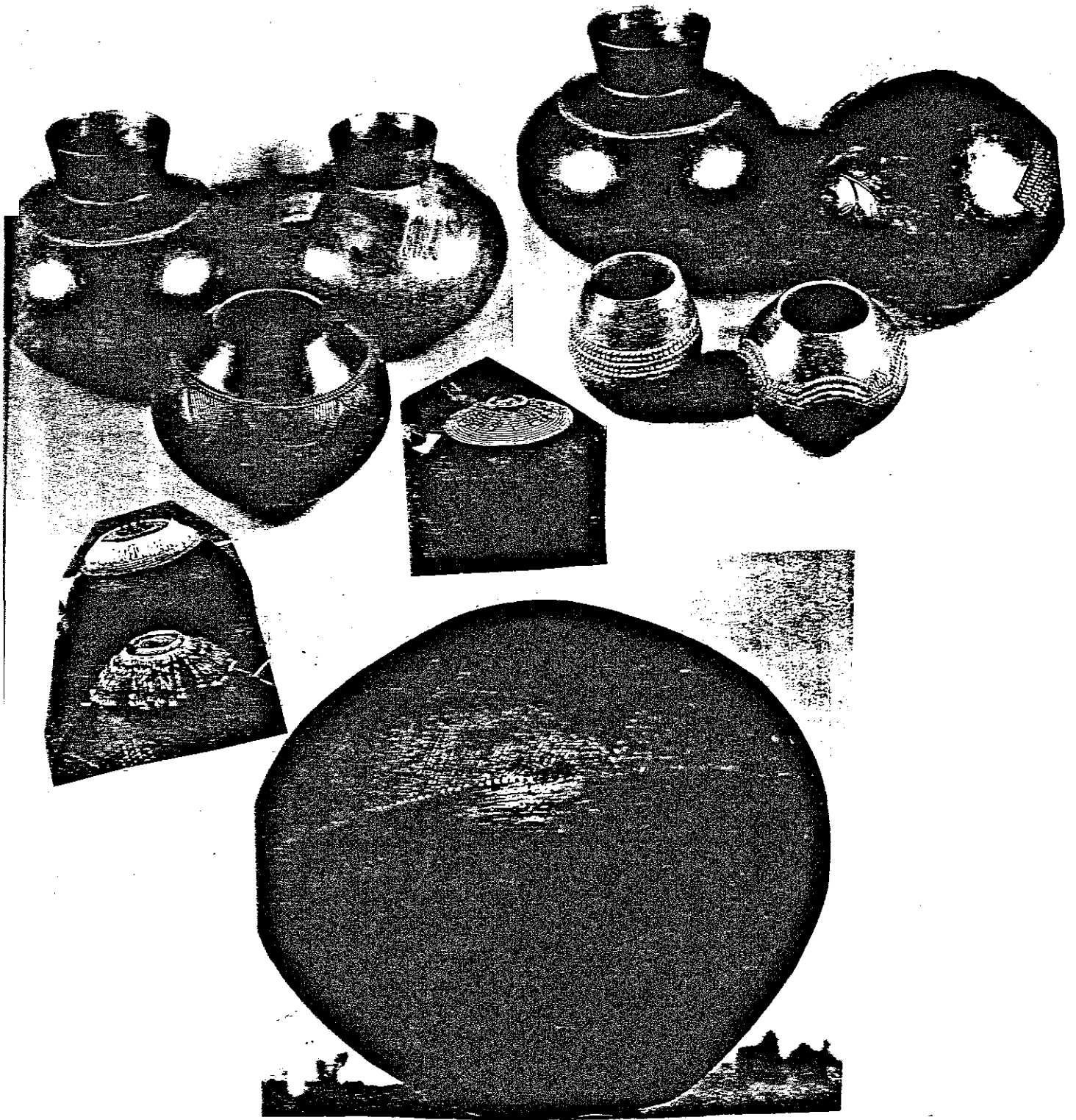
The girl's girdle (*isigege*) showing detail of intricate design with some variety in personal colour choices and style. Photo taken at the Nazareth Annual Gathering at Nhlankakazi , their Holy Mountain on 20 January 2001.



The above pictures show beadwork in fashion and art. It shows a wide range of curio beadworks sold in roadside markets, wooden spoons and forks, specimen of ceremonial spear, muti horn and bottles, modern beaded coasters and pins. (Morris, J. 1994. Speaking with beads, pages 76-77.)

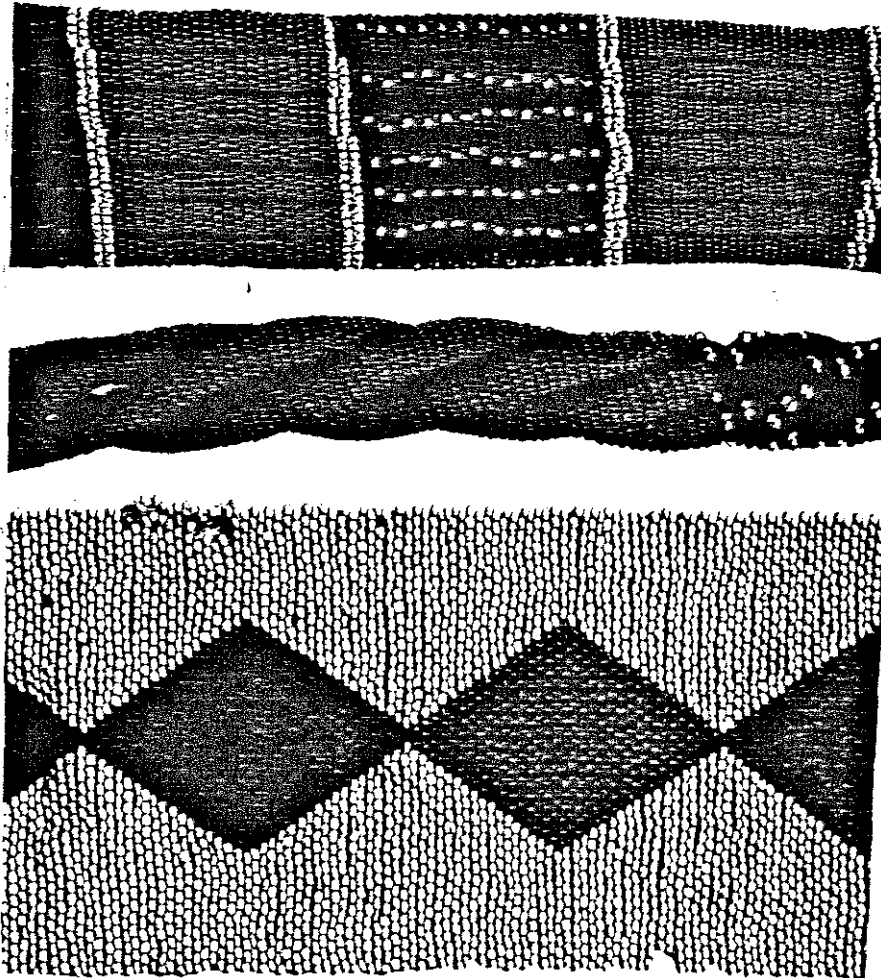


Beads in fashion and art, as it can be seen here, the beaded cap and a waistcoat. (Morris, J. 1994. *Speaking with beads*, page 30.)



The clay pots in their different shapes and sizes. The urn-shaped is for storing liquids. The medium-sized ones are used for maas or beer (*izinkamba zamasi noma utshwala*). Below is the big clay pot for storing liquids and grain products. The photo was taken on 17 December 2001, Ensingweni Roadside Market Stalls, Mthunzini – Gingindlovu.





The different types of hip belts showing different widths and designs. Young women wear the hip belts either for general adornment in special ceremonies and festivals or as traditional dance attire. (Morris, J. 1994. *Speaking with beads*, page 12).



Beads in religious dances of the Shembe Nazareth Church. The girls are seen adorned in colourful girdles, necklaces, headbands and armbands. The men and boys dance together in their colourful skins, feathers and beaded anklets. (Morris, J. 1994. Speaking with beads, page 63).



Zulu traditions and tribal life of Southern Africa as they are depicted in School Cultural Activities. The ladies in white T-shirts and headpieces are the teachers at Nsiwa Primary School, the young girls are the learners at Manzamnyama Primary School under Mthunzini District. The photos were taken on the Heritage Day, on 24 September 2001.