

CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN MARRIAGE AND ITS PRELIMINARIES AMONG
THE ABAKWAMKHWANAZI

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Isaac Sibiya, declare that this dissertation represents my own work both in conception and execution. I also accept full responsibility for all the statements herein made.

Signed *I. Sibiya*
at Kwa-Dlangezwa.

on this day of 23 / 11 / 1981

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Kwa-Dlangezwa

I Sibiya

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim of research

The purpose of this research is to probe into and describe in detail the various changes which have occurred in the courtship and marriage practices of members of the Mkhwanazi tribe of the oNgoye district, in KwaZulu, ever since they came into contact with western culture towards the end of the nineteenth century. The point of departure in this study is the premise that as the entire cultural fabric of the tribe has been interacting with western culture for several decades, courtship and marriage have not been left unaffected.

From the beginning of the twentieth century up to now several scholars have described and analyzed aspects of Zulu courtship and marriage. There now exists a large body of literature on these aspects of Zulu life, but such literature does not cover everything that may possibly be known. The earliest scholars like Stuart (1903), Braatvedt (1927), Kohler (1933), Breytenbach (1936), Krige (1936), De Jager (1937), Sholto-Douglas (1940), Lugg (1945), Bryant (1949), Gluckman (1950) and others, laid an appreciable ethnographic foundation for the analysis of traditional Zulu courtship and marriage. Instructive as their works are, however, they lay emphasis on traditional usage and do not sufficiently reflect the changes which were already occurring in these aspects of Zulu life at that time. Furthermore, their works are too general and do not portray the variations which exist in the courtship and marriage practices of the more than two-hundred tribes which constitute the Zulu ethnic group. This has often left readers with the unfortunate impression that these institutions are the same in all details throughout the Zulu ethnic group.

It is only recent scholars like Mbatha (1960), Vilakazi (1962), Reader (1966) and others who have effectively drawn attention to tribal variations in certain aspects of courtship and marriage.

In stead of describing these as they relate to the entire Zulu ethnic group, they limited themselves to specific tribes, i e Mbatha and Vilakazi on the Nyuswa of Bothas Hill and Reader to the Makhanya of Southern Natal. These authors have also given detailed descriptions of the changes that have occurred in courtship and marriage in the tribes they chose for research. In these descriptions they also show how these institutions are functionally linked with the other aspects of tribal life.

Presently there is no literature on traditional and contemporary Mkhwanazi courtship and marriage. There is, therefore an urgent need for the investigation and documentation of these aspects of Mkhwanazi tribal life. This, the author sees as a challenge. Through this research the author hopes to provide useful ethnographic information which may contribute towards filling this literary void. Furthermore, such information as may be elicited during research may add to the understanding of the Zulu people. It is the author's intention, in this study, to identify and describe specific Mkhwanazi variations within the broader framework of Zulu courtship and marriage practices. By so doing he hopes to assist in the task of dispelling the erroneous impression created in the past that courtship and marriage practices are the same in all the tribes of the Zulu ethnic group.

As a preamble to the study of Mkhwanazi courtship and marriage, available literature on courtship and marriage in general shall be explored. The views and conclusions of various scholars on these themes shall be analyzed and compared, with a view to adopting one or more of them as a theoretical basis for this ethnographic study. This having been accomplished, existing patterns of Mkhwanazi courtship and the notions that underly them shall be probed. In this regard attention shall first be given to the investigation of how Mkhwanazi tribesmen choose their lovers and spouses. The various factors which influence choice and their significance in actual courtship shall be probed. With regard to courtship patterns, an effort shall be made to identify the basic traditional patterns which may have changed. Then the various trends and patterns which have developed as a

result of acculturative influences shall be investigated. The major problems which often arise in courtship, i e premarital defloration and pregnancy shall be scrutinized as they exist in Mkhwanazi tribal life.

When courtship and its problems has been explored, the various methods of opening and conducting marriage negotiations shall be investigated. Particular attention shall also be given to existing notions of ilobolo (bridewealth) and its significance in the forms of marriage known in the tribe. The effects of changed socio-economic circumstances, Christian dogmas and the provisions of the relevant sections of the Natal Code (Proclamation R195 of 1967), as amended, on traditional practices relating to ilobolo shall be scrutinized.

Then attention shall be diverted to the investigation of the changes that have occurred in practices relating to the transfer of the bride (from her natal home to the bridegroom's), the wedding festivities and the aggregation of the bride into the bridegroom's lineage.

1.2 Research methods

The research methods used in this study consist mainly of literature study and fieldwork.

1.2.1 Literature study

In order to gain some knowledge of the geographical characteristics of the Mkhwanazi tribal area, the author studied available maps and aerial photographs of the area. The Report of the Zululand Land Delimitation Commission (1904) was particularly useful in furnishing important geographical, demographic and historical data on the Mkhwanazi and neighbouring tribal areas.

Data on the history of the Mkhwanazi tribe is scattered in various published and unpublished documents, e g the works of Bryant (1929), Lugg (1949), Gibson (1911) and others. These published works were studied and the relevant historical data extracted, verified by cross reference and pieced together into an

almost coherent historical account. Information obtained from these published documents was supplemented with data which is contained in the unpublished documents of the local Magistrate's Office.

When the study of literature on the history of the tribe was completed, attention was diverted to the study of literature on traditional Zulu marriage. Literature on the traditional courtship and marriage practices of the abaNkwanazi, and the changes that have occurred in them, is lacking. It was surmised that traditional Mkhwanazi courtship and marriage practices could possibly not have differed significantly from the traditional Zulu practices as described by, inter alia, Krige (1936), Bryant (1949) and Reader (1966). The works of these scholars and those of De Jager (1937), Gluckman (1950), Vilakazi (1962), Mbatha (1960) and others were accordingly studied. These works were supplemented with articles which appear in various scholarly journals, like "Africa", the journal of the International African Institute, "African Studies", a Quarterly Journal devoted to the study of African Anthropology, Government and Languages, and other journals. Various papers read at conferences of South African Anthropologists were also studied, in order to know current views on Zulu marriage. For the purpose of gaining insight into the wide spectrum of views held on the essence of traditional Zulu marriage, attention was not limited to Anthropological literature. The works of jurists, like Seymour (1970), Lewin (1941 and 1944) and others were studied. The relevant sections of the Natal Code (Proclamation R 195 of 1967) and Act No 38 of 1927, as amended, were also studied.

It was also deemed necessary to study literature on culture change - culture change as it is experienced in Southern Africa and elsewhere. In this study particular attention was given to the various agencies and factors which have caused and influenced changes in the marriage practices of the different ethnic and tribal groups of Southern Africa. The works of Cronjé et al (1968), Schapera (1959), Mair (1969 a), Pauw (1963), Wilson and Mafeje (1963) and others, were particularly instructive on these. Our

premise in this respect was that there is a possibility that some of these factors and agencies may have operated to bring about the changes which are now observable in the marriage practices of the abaKhwazani.

Theoretical works on marriage in general were also studied with a view to establishing whether Mkhwanazi marriage does answer to the currently accepted theories on marriage.

1.2.2 Fieldwork

When literature study had been completed, a research programme was drawn up. Thereafter, a questionnaire was compiled. The questionnaire was structured in such a way as to allow informants reasonable freedom in furnishing information and expressing their views on the various aspects of the subject of research. The aim was to use the questionnaire as a guide during fieldwork rather than a restrictive formal document.

Fieldwork was started in June 1973 and it was done mostly during weekends owing to the author's commitment in other work at the University of Zululand. At first a number of visits were undertaken to various parts of the Mkhwanazi tribal area for the purpose of:

- a) acquainting ourselves with the tribal area, and
- b) establishing rapport with key tribal personalities and possible prospective informants.

When these initial overtures were complete, work on the research programme was started in August 1973. This being essentially a study of the changes which have occurred in marriage and its preliminaries, informants of various age groups and cultural backgrounds were interviewed. Elderly, traditionalist members of the tribe were interviewed in order to gain insight into the basic traditional courtship and marriage patterns which have changed. This information enabled the author to detect specific Mkhwanazi variations within the general marriage and courtship patterns described in the standard handbooks on the Zulu people.

Tribesmen whose lives deviate significantly from the traditional pattern were interviewed in order to determine the various degrees and rates of change.

In order to control the data obtained in these interviews, several homesteads and religious sects were visited in order to observe directly what happens in practice in marriage and courtship activities. To ascertain the authenticity of the data obtained in one interview, and to establish variations in points of view, several other individuals of approximately corresponding age and degree of acculturation were interviewed on the same subject.

All the interviews were conducted in isiZulu, the language spoken by the abaNkwanazi. An interpreter was unnecessary because the author's home language is isiZulu. This was particularly advantageous because certain subtle undercurrents of meaning in the statements of informants, which would have eluded a researcher using an interpreter, were not lost. Furthermore during the process of interpretation distortions of meaning, however minimal, do inevitably occur and remain undetected if the researcher is not sufficiently acquainted with the language of the people he is studying. Our acquaintance with the idiom of the language spoken by the abaNkwanazi reduced this shortcoming drastically.

Interviews were recorded on a tape recorder and later transcribed and analyzed. This saved time and made the interviews assume the character of "conversations." Such interviews, with their informal tenor, helped in sustaining the interest of informants in the subject being discussed. It was, however necessary to tactfully control the course of these "conversations" because - as we soon learned - they could easily range into irrelevancies. It was during the course of these informal interviews that we learned that patience, flexibility and tact, on the part of the researcher, open vistas of information which would otherwise remain closed. An effort to live up to this ideal prolonged the period of fieldwork, but the results obtained are not regretted.

Fieldwork continued throughout 1973, 1974 and the first half of 1975. The second half of 1975 was used for the analysis of the data already obtained in fieldwork. Fieldwork was resumed in 1976 and completed early in 1977.

1.3 Definition of concepts

The key concepts which shall be used throughout this dissertation shall be briefly defined.

1.3.1 Marriage

In this study the term "marriage" shall be used to denote what Kathleen Gough has called: "... a relationship between a woman and one or more persons, which provides that a child born to the woman under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, is accorded full birth status rights common to normal members of his society or social stratum" (1959: 32). This definition embraces all forms of conjugality irrespective of socio-cultural context; and it clearly specifies the order of relationships which shall be the subject of analysis in this study.

The term "civil marriage" shall be used to denote the conjugal union of Black persons as defined in section 35 of Act 38 of 1927, as amended. It is a variety of marriage which is celebrated before a marriage officer of the State, who may be either a magistrate or a minister of a statutorily recognized religion.

"Customary union" shall mean the conjugal union of a man and a woman in accordance with Zulu law and custom, wherein neither of the intending spouses is already a party to an existing "civil marriage".

1.3.2 Preliminaries of marriage

By "preliminaries of marriage", in this study, we mean all those activities which people engage in to pave the way to the actualization of marriage. These activities include the choice of prospective spouses, courtship, marriage negotiations, the

delivery of ilobolo and the delivery of the bride to the prospective bridegroom's homestead.

1.3.3 "Traditionalists"

The term "traditionalists" shall be used in reference to those persons, who inspite of the influence of Western culture, still manifest an inclination towards orthodox Zulu patterns of thought and behaviour, as described, inter alia, by Krige (1936 a); Bryant (1948); Vilakazi (1962) and Reader (1966).

1.3.4 "Non-traditionalists"

The term "non-traditionalists" shall be used to denote that category of persons whose outlook and mode of behaviour reflect a pronounced Western inclination.

1.3.5 "Code"

The term "code" shall be used throughout this dissertation to refer to proclamation R195 of 1967, as amended.

1.4 Area of research - geographical description

The Mkhwanazi tribal area lies in the north-eastern part of the Mtunzini District and straddles Reserves number 9 and 10 on the coastal plain in Zululand.

In the east the tribal territory borders on the Indian Ocean; and the western border runs along the eastern slopes of the Ngye hills from north to south. The northern boundary runs along the course of the Mhlatuze river and the western boundary of the Dube tribal area (see map 2). The southern boundary coincides with the Mlalazi river which flows from the west into the Indian Ocean in the east.

The whole tribal area is relatively low-lying - averaging about 100 meters above sea level. The land rises gently from the Indian Ocean, in the east, to the Ngye hills (\pm 300 meters above sea level) in the west. The eastern part of the tribal

area is an undulating coastal plain; while the western portion, bordering on the Ngoye hills, is rugged - consisting of steep cliffs and narrow, deep ravines. The tribal area is drained by the Mlalazi river in the south and the Mhlatuze river in the north, and is criss-crossed by a number of streams, the most important of which are: the Inkonjane, which flows north-eastwards into the Mhlatuze river, and the Ntuze, which flows into the Mlalazi river.

The Mkhwanazi tribal area is densely populated. According to the Tomlinson Commission Report the average population per square kilometer was 72 in 1955 (1955, Vol 4: 71). At present (1978) the average population density is about 100 people per square kilometer. There are two densely populated areas in the tribal area. These are: the Port Durnford area next to the railway station and saw mill, and the Dlangezwa area in the vicinity of the University of Zululand.

1.5 Socio-cultural conditions

Presently there is no part of the tribal area which has not been affected by the influence of Western culture. Tribesmen are at different levels of acculturation and this manifests itself in the various aspects of tribal life. Below, the various aspects of tribal life and the changes that have occurred in them shall be briefly outlined.

1.5.1 Political organization

The political organization of the Mkhwanazi tribe is very similar to that of the Nzuza tribe as described by De Clercq (1969). It is characterized by the hereditary institution of chieftainship and the presence of various socio-political and politico-administrative institutions.

Chieftainship is the highest political office within the tribe and it is vested in the most senior lineage of the Mkwanzazi clan, which claims descent from Phalane. This office is the symbol of tribal government and it is the office within which tribal unity

finds expression. It may be regarded as the very embodiment of the essence of the tribe. To traditionalist tribesmen the office of chieftainship is a bridge between the living members of the tribe and the world of the spirits of the deceased chiefs of the tribe. The office of chieftainship is respected and honoured, and such respect and honour is reflected in the laudatory titles assigned by tribesmen to the incumbent of the office.

The chief is regarded as the father of the tribe. His status of being the father of the tribe is construed as an extension of the position of the head of a household. He is traditionally expected to watch over the interests of his subjects and ensure their welfare. Presently chiefs are salaried and do not receive as much tribute as they used to receive from their subjects in the past. With their present lessened resources, they cannot live up to the traditional ideal of being fathers and providers of the needy in their tribes.

The chief also acts as the executive head of the tribe, and he represents his tribesmen in all external dealings. He has to keep himself informed of all events in the territory. New arrivals and those who wish to leave or settle in the tribal area have to obtain his consent, as he holds the land in trust for the Mkhwanazi tribe.

The chief has limited civil and criminal jurisdiction as provided for in Act No 38 of 1927. In the exercise of his judicial powers he is assisted by his councillors. His decisions are subject to appeal to the magistrate.

To facilitate government the Mkhwanazi tribal area has been divided into eleven politico-administrative units called izigodi, each under a headman (induna). The Mkhwanazi tribal area consists of two parts, separated from north to south by the Port Durnford State Forest (see map 2). The eastern part is divided into four izigodi. They are from south to north: Nyembe, Mahunu, Esikhawini and Ndaya. These four izigodi constitute almost a third of

the whole tribal area. The western part of the tribal area comprises seven izigodi. These are from south to north: Nhlangenyuke, Ntuzi, Sihuzu, Manzamnyama, Matholonjeni, Nkonjane and Mengezi. The headmen of these eleven izigodi constitute the chief's advisory council. To their number is often added the senior members of the chief's lineage. The majority of the izinduna and chief's agnates are traditionalists like the chief himself. Most of them either did not go to school or had elementary education.

The various izigodi consist of a number of socio-political units. The most important socio-political units are the lineage (umndeni/uzalo), which is the largest, and the household (umuzi), which is the smallest. These are essentially social units which have, inter alia, political functions. They are not artificially created as is the case with politico-administrative units, like izigodi. They are units inherent in the traditional social structure and are utilized as they are in the political fabric of the tribe. These socio-political units are headed by hereditary leaders. The powers of these leaders or heads are not delegated from the tribal central authority. Instead they derive from genealogical seniority and primogeniture within their respective socio-political units.

The Mkhwanazi tribe is affiliated to the Mehlwesizwe Regional Authority, which was established in 1961. This Regional Authority, consisting of six tribes, i.e. the Mkhwanazi, Dube, Cambini, Nzuza, Zulu and Mzimela, was established in terms of a Government Notice of 22 September, 1961. The Regional Authority is responsible to the KwaZulu Government.

1.5.2 Social organization

As a result of the intensified influence of Western culture on the Mkhwanazi tribe, the traditional social organization has undergone and is still undergoing change. Several variable social patterns are now discernible within the tribe.

These patterns co-exist in the various parts of the tribal area and continually exert mutual influence.

Among traditionalists polygynous and extended families, with their traditional characteristic features, as described, *inter alia*, by Krige (1936 a), Bryant (1949) and Reader (1966), still exist. The number of such families, however, is diminishing because of changing economic circumstances and other factors. A large number of traditionalists now marry monogamously and adopt neolocal residence after marriage. It is only a few wealthy traditionalists who are polygynously married. In stead of placing their wives in the same homestead, as in the past, they usually build separate homesteads for them at various parts of the tribal area, in order to minimize friction among them. The present tendency of adopting neolocal residence after marriage has had the effect of diminishing the traditional influence and authority of a father over his married sons and their families. His influence depends to a large measure on his personality and his relationship with his sons. (The decline of the traditional polygynous and extended families has weakened the traditional communal and co-operative spirit which was typical in the traditional setting. In spite of these changes in the family structure, lineage and clanship ties are still very important among traditionalists. These ties still have an influence in their matrimonial, judicial and religious affairs. However, the influence of such ties appears to be diminishing in the economic sphere.

Many traditionalists are migratory workers, and they spend most of the time in towns where they are employed. As a result of this, their wives enjoy a certain measure of independence and they often make important decisions in the family in the absence of their husbands. Some husbands often desert their wives for other women in urban areas. In such cases the wives virtually take over the control of their families and get very little help from their husbands' agnates.

Traditionalists still practise the levirate and sororate. But as economic circumstances are becoming more prohibitive, these traditional institutions are becoming less viable, and consequently their number is decreasing.

The striking and distinctive feature of the variable social patterns of non-traditionalists, is the growing spirit of individualism. All non-traditionalist families are monogamous, and neolocal residence is the norm. They do not practise the levirate and sororate. This is due to Christian influence and prohibitive economic circumstances. In non-traditionalist families, the wife enjoys a relatively higher status than is the case among traditionalists. This is even more accentuated where the husband is a migrant worker who spends most of the time near his place of employment. In such families discipline tends to be lax and children often lapse into delinquency. It is also in such families that premarital pregnancy often occurs. Among non-traditionalists kinship ties are used less as the basis of co-operation - common interest and other considerations now assuming more importance in this respect. Nevertheless kinship ties do still play an important role in the regulation of the choice of marriage partners and the regulation of other relationships.

Both traditionalists and non-traditionalists still give and receive ilobolo during their marriage negotiations. However, their courtship and marriage patterns differ as will be shown in subsequent chapters. Non-traditionalists tend to blend traditional practices with Western and quasi-Western usages, whereas traditionalists always try to conform to traditional practice. The results of such blending of practices are variable - some being closer to traditional usage and others far removed from it and closer to Western practice.

1.5.3 Economic system

The Mkhwanazi tribal area lies in the sugar cane belt of the coastal plain of Zululand. In spite of the high potential of the area

for profitable sugar cane farming, the yield per hectare is very poor. This may be ascribed to inadequate methods of cultivation, especially the insufficient use of manure and fertilizer. Up to recently farmers have been working on an individual basis. However, a Cane Growers' Association has now been formed to co-ordinate cane farming in the tribal area. The Department of Agriculture and Forestry of the KwaZulu Government is presently sending out agricultural experts to give guidance to the cane farmers. It is hoped that through these efforts the standard of farming will be improved and made more profitable. The most serious problem experienced by the farmers is the lack of equipment. There are only a few tractors in the tribal area and these are mostly owned by businessmen. These do not meet all the needs of the farmers i e ploughing, harrowing and transporting the harvested crop to the railway station at Port Durnford.

The most important crops raised for home consumption are tubers, like potatoes, sweet potatoes and amadumbe. Other vegetables grown are cabbages, carrots, beans and pumpkins. Some of these vegetables are sold at stalls erected along the national road. Many tribesmen also grow bananas, avocados, mangoes, pawpaws and pineapples for home consumption and hawking. Some households have small plantations of eucalyptus and pine trees. Such trees are mostly used as firewood and timber for building houses.

Animal husbandry in the Mkhwanazi tribal area is not as important as it is in the other tribal areas further inland. Most of the cattle and goats are owned by well-to-do families. Seventy percent of the households do not have cattle. However, almost all the households raise poultry on a small scale. Donkeys and horses are not common in the tribal area, and sheep do not thrive because of the hot and humid climate.

In the western part of the tribal area there are eleven trading stores, and in the eastern part there are six. With the exception of two which are owned by Whites, all the other trading

stores are owned by tribesmen. In addition to these there are two licenced beerhalls, one bottlestore, two butcheries and two restaurants.

A large percentage of tribesmen earn their living as unskilled labourers. It is only a small percentage (\pm 4%) who are doing professional work. Some tribesmen are employed at the University of Zululand, the Department of Works of the KwaZulu Government, the sugar and paper mills at Felixton and the State sawmill near the Port Durnford railway station. Others work as casual labourers on the sugar cane farms adjacent to the tribal area. Another fraction of the tribal working force is employed at Empangeni and Mtunzini. A few other tribesmen work in the Durban-Pinetown complex and return home during weekends.

1.5.4 Material cultural possessions

The traditional bee-hive shaped Zulu hut has almost completely disappeared from the Mkhwanazi tribal area. Most traditionalists now build rondavels with mud walls and thatch. Even these are gradually being replaced by rectangular mud huts. In any one residence (umuzi) there may be a few thatched rondavels and one or two rectangular mud huts with flat, corrugated iron roofs. Most of the huts in a homestead are used for sleeping. Usually one hut is set aside for culinary purposes and is known as ixhiba or ikhwishi. In addition to these huts, there are one or two grass baskets for storing grain. These are known as izilulu or izingolobane and are usually suspended on poles, and look like little huts. Because of the decline in the number of polygynous families, the number of households divided into the traditional indlunkulu and ikhohlwa sections are now very few. Homesteads with cattle kraals are now also very few because of the general decrease of cattle in the tribal area. The practice of arranging huts within the umuzi in the traditional circular formation is on the wane.

Household equipment and utensils in traditionalist homes are to a large extent of Western origin. Traditional articles which are

still commonly used are sleeping and sitting mats (amacansi), clay pots (izinkamba) for brewing and serving sorghum beer, and wooden trays for meat (izingqoko). For cooking, all traditionalists use three-legged steel pots. Clay pots have now been completely discarded for cooking purposes. For serving meals they now use Western iron and aluminium dishes. Some own wooden chairs and cupboards. Chairs are to a large extent reserved for use by adult men. Very few own stoves - the majority still using the traditional fire place which is situated in the centre of the hut.

The majority of non-traditionalists build rectangular houses with plastered brick walls and corrugated iron roofs. A few have already started using tiles and asbestos sheets for roofing. Such houses comprise bedrooms, a kitchen, a lounge and a dining room. The furniture with which these houses are equipped is Western. Almost all non-traditionalists have gas, paraffin or coal stoves. It is only a few who have acquired paraffin refrigerators. Radios are almost standard equipment in many non-traditionalist houses.

In spite of their adherence to traditional practices, almost all traditionalist men have discarded their traditional attire and adopted Western clothing. It is only on festive occasions that one still sees a few traditionalist men in their traditional garb, which consists of ibheshu (buttock cover) and isinene (a piece of hide for covering the pubic area). People who know how to make these articles of clothing are now very scarce, and they are mostly old men who fashion them for a fee on request. Very often traditional and Western clothing are worn simultaneously. A man may for instance wear an ibheshu and isinene and in addition to these wear a shirt, a heavy overcoat or jacket and a hat. Most traditionalists wear shoes and sandals.

Traditionalist married women still wear the traditional skin kilt (isidwaba) and inhloko/isicholo (chimney-like headgear). This traditional attire is usually supplemented with

Western drapery decorated with beads. One such cloth is suspended over the shoulders and another wound around the waist in the fashion of a skirt. Unmarried traditionalist girls cover their lower bodies with large towels or pieces of cloth. Some of them walk about bare-breasted whilst others wear cotton or woolen vests. A large number of traditionalist women now wear canvas shoes. They still make colourful beadwork which they wear on festive occasions or when they go about visiting.

Non-traditionalist men and women invariably wear Western clothing at all times. Clothing for men is bought ready made. Women also buy ready made dresses, but some of them sew these themselves.

1.5.5 Medical services

Mkhwanazi tribesmen utilize both traditional and Western leechcraft. There is still a large number of witchdoctors and diviners. The services of these are openly enlisted by traditionalists, whereas non-traditionalists, especially Christians, tend to consult them secretly.

There is one well-equipped clinic in the tribal area, and it is staffed by two nursing sisters. The clinic is visited by a doctor once a week. The nearest hospital is eighteen kilometers north of the tribal area, near Empangeni. In 1973 a Zulu physician opened a surgery in the tribal area, but closed down early in 1976. Presently tribesmen travel to private doctors at Empangeni and Esikhawini for medical treatment.

1.5.6 Educational facilities

There are presently six primary schools in the Mkhwanazi tribal area. These are Community Schools which are subsidized by the Department of Education and Culture of the KwaZulu Government. There is also one secondary school which provides tuition from form I to form III and one high school which provides facilities for forms II to V. The high school is directly controlled and financed by the Department of Education and Culture of the Kwa-

Zulu Government, whereas the secondary school is a subsidized Community School. As already stated earlier, the University of Zululand is situated in the tribal area. Most students registered at this university are from different parts of the country. To the best of our knowledge less than ten Mkhwanazi tribesmen have enrolled with this institution ever since its inception in 1960.

1.5.7 Religious patterns

From their base at Ongoye Mission Lutherans of the Norwegian Mission Society established several out-stations at different parts of the tribal area. In the 1920s the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church and Swedish Holiness Union Mission also started missionary work in the tribal area.

Presently there are several church organizations in the tribal area and these may be grouped into four categories, viz mission churches, Zionist churches, Sabbatarian-Baptist churches and Ethiopian churches. These four categories of churches are constituted as follows:

Mission churches

Evangelical Lutheran Church
Church of England
Roman Catholic Church
Methodist Church
Seven Day Adventist Church
Scandinavian Independent Baptist Union
Swedish Holiness Union Mission
United Congregational Church
Full Evengelical Church of God in Southern Africa

Zionist churches

This category comprises a large number of small organizations which call themselves amaZiyoni. Within this category may also be included Shembe's Nazareth Baptist Church.

Sabbatarian-Baptist Church

Church of God and Saints of Christ

Ethiopian Churches

African Gospel Church

Lamula's Bantu National Church of Christ.

Membership in these various church organizations could not be established.

There are many tribesmen who are not yet attached to any church organization and still adhere to traditional religious practices. There are others who are neither Christians nor traditionalists. These, however, constitute a negligible percentage of the tribal population.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

2.1 Introduction

A review of the history of the Mkhwanazi tribe is important because the changes that have occurred in marriage and its preliminaries in the tribe are inseparably interwoven with its socio-political history. We shall for convenience divide the history of the abakhwanazi into two phases. The first phase shall be devoted to the period prior to the arrival of the Whites and the second phase to the period after the arrival of the Whites.

2.2 The Pre-contact phase

The known history of the abakhwanazi is essentially an account of their origin and subsequent migrations, during which they split into smaller autonomous groups and fused or allied with larger or smaller groups. Their history, like that of other Zulu tribes, is intertwined with the histories of other tribes.

2.2.1 Earlier inhabitants of the Mkhwanazi tribal Area

According to Bryant the area now occupied by the Mkhwanazi tribe was inhabited by successive southward migrating aggregations of clans of the Tonga-Nguni families (1929:3-15). The most important of these were the Lala and Qwabe.

2.2.1.1 The Lala

The Lala belong to the Tonga-Nguni family and they comprise clans like the Wushe, Luthuli, Ngcobo, Cele and others. They seem to have been the earliest inhabitants of the present Mkhwanazi tribal area. According to Bryant the Lala originated in the north somewhere in the vicinity of Swaziland and Mozambique (1929: 7). At about the beginning of the seventeenth century they started migrating southward along the Natal coast. What set them on their southward movement is unknown, but it is likely that their migration was a response to pressure exerted on them by other groups in the north. A few decades prior to the rise of

Shaka to power (+ 1816) some Lala clans had already settled in the territory between the Mhlatuze river in the North and the Tugela river in the South (Ibid:16). It is in this area that the Mkhwanazi tribal territory lies. Bryant's views are corroborated by the oral traditions of some Lala clans now living in Southern Natal. The emaTulini, for instance, have it in their tradition that they formerly lived about the Mhlatuze river, which is today the Northern boundary of the Mkhwanazi tribal area. Similarly the Wushe say that according to tradition their original home was somewhere in Zululand. At about the middle of the seventeenth century they were attacked and driven southward by an enemy. During their flight, tradition maintains, they once hid in the Ngoye forest. The Ngoye forest lies partly in the present Mkhwanazi tribal area along the Eastern slopes of the Ngoye hills.

The Lala occupation of this area came to an end when they were attacked by the Qwabe who drove them southward beyond the Tugela river (Cf Krige, 1936a:5)

2.2.1.2 The Qwabe

After the expulsion of the Lala, the present Mkhwanazi tribal area fell under the influence of the Qwabe, whose domain extended from the Mhlatuze river in the North to the Tugela river in the South; and from the sea in the East to Nkandla in the West. (Bryant, 1929:185). It would appear that when the Qwabe took over control of the coastal area, formerly inhabited by the Lala, they left it relatively sparsely populated. The majority of them remained to the West of the Ngoye hills in the Mhlatuze valley.

The Qwabe were of the Ntungwa-Nguni stock and were among the earliest arrivals in Zululand (op cit:25). The influence of the Qwabe did not last long, because when Shaka rose to power in Zululand he attacked and subjugated them. They remained Zulu subjects in their former territory until Shaka's death. When Dingane acceded to the Zulu throne, Nqeto, the leader of the Qwabe at that time, instigated an insurrection against Dingane. He declared that the Qwabe would not recognize the authority of Dingane and would henceforth be independent in their territory. Dingane then dispatched his warriors against Nqeto and his followers and drove them South of the Tugela river (op cit: 199-200). This marked the end of Qwabe occupation of the land which later became the Mkhwanazi tribal area. Today some branches of the

original Qwabe group are found living as independent tribes in the districts of Mapumulo, Verulam, Pinetown and Port Shepstone. Individual lineages which trace their origin to the former Qwabe group are also found scattered in the Mkhwanazi tribal area and adjacent tribal territories e.g. Mzimela, Zulu, Nzuza, Dube, Zungu and Cambini (see map 2).

2.2.2 The origin and migrations of abakhwanazi

According to Bryant the abakhwanazi are a branch of the Mpukunyoni clan which migrated from Swaziland in the neighbourhood of 1770 (1929:112). This account concurs with the oral tradition of the members of the Mkhwanazi ruling lineage. The factors which set them on the move are not known, and their leader from Swaziland has been forgotten.

On the strength of the linguistic characteristic of ukuthefula (the substitution of l with y) they are classified with the Tonga-Nguni. This classification is not inappropriate, for the abakhwanazi do often refer to themselves as amaThonga.

When the Mpukunyoni clan reached the Ingwavuma river they encountered the Tabetes of the Ntungwa-Nguni family, whom they forced further upstream. They made home in the deserted area and lived peacefully until the Mngomezulu Sutus, led by Mafu, pounced upon them and drove them South. On their way South they split into two groups which ultimately became independent clans. The group led by Mnyenyeza settled between the Hluhluwe and Nyalazi rivers, West of the emaNcwangeni area. Here they established themselves as an independent clan and assumed a new clan name - Mngobokazi. Mnyenyeza was succeeded by his heir, Wokoza, who in turn was succeeded by his son, Nkomo.

The other section of the original Mpukunyoni clan crossed the Nyalazi river and entered the territory of the Mtetwa tribe under the leadership of Cungele, son of Mdolomba. Kayi, who ruled the Mtetwa tribe then, gave them asylum. Here they established themselves and flourished as a new clan abakwaMkhwanazi - under the protection of Kayi.

When Dingiswayo succeeded Kayi, Velana, son of Cungele, was the headman of

the Mkhwanazi clan. Owing to his popularity and skilful use of the iron axe (izembe), Dingiswayo favoured him with the position of headmanship (ubuduna) over his Oheni homestead. The Mkhwanazi clan participated in all the wars waged by Dingiswayo against the Ndwandwe tribe of Zwide. Velana, their headman ultimately lost his life in one of these battles. He was succeeded by his son Malanda who married Mpande's full sister, Ntikili. The latter gave him an heir, Somkele, who in turn fathered Mtubatuba. According to Bryant Somkele died on the 21.2.1907 (1929:112-113). This branch of the original Mpukunyoni clan is still living in the old Mtetwa homeland, namely, the Mtubatuba, Mbonambi and Hlabisa areas.

It seems that the ruling clan of the Mkhwanazi tribe of the Ongoye district is a segment of the Mkhwanazi clan which attached itself to the Mtetwa tribe during Kayi's reign. These two groups share the same clan name (isibongo) and the same praise names (izithakazelo) i.e. Ndonga and Shamase. They also trace their descent to a common ancestor, Mnyenyeza. Furthermore, both groups have a common tradition of origin, namely, that they migrated from Swaziland. They also share the linguistic characteristic of ukuthefula and therefore belong to the Tonga-Nguni family. These facts confirm beyond any doubt that these two groups are segments of the same original clan.

The factors which led to the formation of the Mkhwanazi tribe of the Ongoye district can be best understood in the light of the histories of the Zungu and Dube tribes. These are neighbours of the Mkhwanazi tribe. The Zungu tribe lives on the northern bank of the Mhlatuze river in Reserve 7B. The Dube tribe lives to the east of the Mkhwanazi tribal area, along the coast in Reserve 10, south of Richards Bay. The Dube tribe seems to have lived in its present territory from the days of the Lala occupation of the area between the Mhlatuze and Tugela rivers. The Zungu were later arrivals, having migrated southwards from the present Nongoma district (Bryant, 1929:175-176). Their occupation of their present territory dates to about the time of Shaka's and Dingane's reign (Op. cit: 107-108).

During the reign of Dingane the Dube tribe was ruled by Nzwakele, son of Khushwayo, of the Dube clan (Op. cit ;106).

Having lived in peace during Dingiswayo's and Shaka's reign, the Dube were all of a sudden attacked by Dingane who had their chieftain, Nzwakele, murdered. A large faction of the Dube tribe then fled with Nzwakele's heir, Habane, across the Tugela river and settled at uMvoti near Stanger. A few of the tribe, however, remained in their natal territory without a leader.

Having murdered the Dube chieftain, Dingane appointed Madlebe, son of Mgedeza of the Zungu clan, as viceroy in the land of the Dube. Then he commissioned Mahuhulo, also of the Zungu clan of Mahlabatini, to be an assistant and advisor to Madlebe. Madlebe remained in this position throughout Dingane's reign and died in 1860 during Mpande's rule. When he died, his heir, Lokotwayo, was still a minor and could not succeed to his office. This necessitated the appointment of a regent (Bryant, 1929:106-107).

At this time there lived in the territory of the Zungu a few families of the Mkhwanazi clan, which had emigrated from the land of the Mtetwa in the north. Others had already crossed the Mhlatuze river and settled in the Kwa-Dlangezwa area, east of the Ngoye hills, where Shaka's Dlangezwa military barracks were situated. A member of one of these migrant Mkhwanazi families, Phalane, the son of Mdinwa, was appointed by Madlebe as diplomatic agent. Among other things he conveyed messages to Madlebe's suzerain, Mpande, the Zulu king. During his tenure as diplomatic agent, Phalane won the favour of Cetshwayo, Mpande's successor. When Madlebe died, leaving a minor heir (Lokotwayo), Cetshwayo appointed Phalane as regent to take care of the affairs of the Zungu and Dube tribes (Op. cit.: 108). In addition to these two tribal areas, Phalane was also commissioned to administer the people living south of the Mhlatuze river at Kwa-Dlangezwa. At the time of his appointment as regent, Phalane was living near Empangeni to the north of Ngwelezane Township. According to informants Phalane belonged to the umKhulutshane regiment. Krige writes that: "According to the War Office Précis, this regiment was born round about 1831 and must therefore have been formed by umPande. They fought at Isandhlwana" (1936a: 405).

During the later years of Phalane's regency Habane, son of Nzwakele of the

Dube clan, decided to return from exile with his fugitive section of the Dube tribe. The return of Habane to his traditional Dube homeland heralded the end of Phalane's regency over the Dube tribe. Habane did not live long after his return from exile. When he died he was succeeded by his son, Ntungelezana, in about 1890. At about the same time Lokotwayo, son of Madlebe of the Zungu clan, came of age. This meant the end of Phalane's regency over the Zungu tribe. At this stage Phalane was given control of the area south of the Mhlatuze river where the Dlangezwa military barracks were situated during Shaka's reign (c.f Bryant, 1929:108). This marked the founding of the Mkhwanazi tribe, of the Ongoye district, as a separate, autonomous tribe.

After his appointment as chieftain of the Kwa-Dlangezwa people, Phalane forded the Mhlatuze river and established his headquarters at Kwa-Zondomunye near the present Kwa-Dlangezwa Post Office. Later he built two other homesteads: one called Kwa-Sukuhambe, near the present Khandisa primary school about one and a half km south of the University of Zululand; and the other, called eNhlendla, near the present Mzingwenya Railway Station, about seven km to the east of the University.

2.3 The advent of White influence

The beginning of continuous White influence in the Mkhwanazi tribal area was marked by the arrival of the Englishman, John, R. Dunn, towards the end of King Mpande's reign over the Zulu people. At this time the Mkhwanazi tribe was under Phalane.

According to Lugg, John Dunn was born at Sea View near Durban. He lost both his parents during his teens, and he then decided to take to hunting and transport riding. In 1853 he undertook his first hunting expedition to Zululand. In the following year he took up employment with the Office of the Border Agent for the Lower Tugela area.

Later, with the Border Agent's permission, Dunn paid a second visit to Zululand for the purpose of hunting elephants. On this expedition, he did not stay long in Zululand because of the political turmoil that prevailed as a result of the dispute over succession to kingship between Mpande's two sons, Mbuyazi and Cetshwayo. On his return from this

expedition, he met Mbuyazi who had come to solicit the assistance of the Natal Government in his dispute with Cetshwayo. The Natal Government refused to assist Mbuyazi. Then John Dunn, sympathising with Mbuyazi, asked the Border Agent for permission to cross the Tugela River into Zululand. On arrival in Zululand John Dunn joined Mbuyazi's 7,000 warriors against Cetshwayo's army of about 20,000 men. In this battle, which took place on the northern banks of the Lower Tugela River, at a place called eNdondakusuka, Mbuyazi was killed and his forces completely routed. John Dunn narrowly escaped death in this engagement.

After this battle, Dunn went on yet another expedition into Zululand. It was on this trip that he met king Mpande and his son, Cetshwayo, for the first time. Cetshwayo, who was now the effective ruler of Zululand, persuaded John Dunn to settle in Zululand and be his advisor. This was about the year 1860. He accordingly built his residence on the fringes of the Ngoye forest on the south-western border of the present Mkhwanazi tribal area. He named his residence Kwa-Qwayinduku. Whilst living here, John Dunn acted as Cetshwayo's advisor on all matters relating to the Zulu nation and the Natal Government. He also procured firearms for Cetshwayo with the permission of the Natal Government. During this period he tried as best as he could to defuse the hostilities that were then building up between Cetshwayo and the British. War, however, was inevitable. Realizing this, John Dunn retired into Natal with a large portion of the tribe which he had built up during his stay at the Ngoye forest.

When war erupted in 1879 John Dunn served under the British as Intelligence Officer. When Cetshwayo was defeated and taken prisoner, Zululand was divided into thirteen districts or dependencies, each under a chief appointed by the Natal Government. In recognition of his valuable services John Dunn was also appointed chief over one of these thirteen districts. His area included what is now the Eshowe and Mtunzini Districts and a portion of the Nkandla District. The Mkhwanazi tribal area

formed part of John Dunn's domain, at this time. Dunn appointed three White magistrates, viz E A Brunner, Martin Oftebro and Frank Galloway, to assist him. The functions of the magistrates, each in charge of a sub-division, were clearly defined. They were to try cases, to mark out the grazing land for each family, to keep count of all cattle in their sub-divisions and to collect tribute. The decisions of the magistrates were subject to Dunn's ratification. In spite of the difficult circumstances that prevailed between 1880 and 1883 (during Cetshwayo's bannishment) Dunn administered his territory reasonably well. When Cetshwayo was restored in 1883 Dunn's jurisdiction was confined to the Mtunzini District (Lugg, 1949: 131-134).

After the banishment of Cetshwayo, John Dunn had great influence over the Mkhwanazi tribe and other groups that fell under his jurisdiction in the Mtunzini District. He completely overshadowed their traditional leaders who had been appointed by the Zulu king. They, in fact, became his headmen (izinduna). The people of the District regarded him as their new king and they gave him cattle as tribute. He also levied from them a yearly hut tax of 50c (c f Ludlow, 1909: 33).

It is estimated that Dunn had about forty wives whom he married according to Zulu custom (Lugg, 1949: 133). According to our informants most of these women were offered to him by men who wanted to curry his favour. He kept his wives at different homesteads. The most important of these were: Qwayinduku on the eastern slopes of the Ngoye hills, Emoyeni and Mangethe south of the town of Mtunzini. Other homesteads of lesser importance were: Empoqeni, Mtunzini and Ndikileni. According to Lugg John Dunn encouraged missionaries to establish mission stations in his area. He for instance persuaded Roman Catholics to establish a mission station at Emoyeni, and also invited Anglicans to do missionary work in his area of jurisdiction (Op cit: 133). Most of John Dunn's wives were baptized and his children were brought up as Christians. They also had some measure of schooling at the Holy Cross Mission which was established by the Roman

Catholics at Emoyeni at the instigation of John Dunn (Op cit: 137). In 1881 Dunn allowed the Norwegian Missionary Society to establish a mission station at the foot of the Ngoye hills in the Mkhwanazi tribal area.

During Cetshwayo's reign and that of his predecessors - Mpande, Dingane and Shaka - no man could get married until the king had ordered his regiment (ibutho) to put on the head-ring (isicoco). Men below the age of forty were in most cases unmarried, as they were still serving in the army. When the king ordered a regiment to marry, all the marriageable girls that had accumulated since the previous order had been given, were formed into a regiment and ordered to khehla (make their hair into a chimney-like formation) and marry into the regiment of men. Very often the men were far older than the girls made available to them (c f Krige, 1936 a: 118-119 and Gibson, 1911: 222). This restriction was strongly resented by the people, and its breach led to the massacre of the women of the Ingcugce regiment by king Cetshwayo in 1876 (Faye, 1923: 36). It is this massacre, among other things, which prompted the British to declare war against Cetshwayo in 1878.

When John Dunn became the chief of the people of the District of Mtunzini, after the banishment of Cetshwayo, he did away with the traditional regimental system. He also declared that all adult men and women could henceforth marry persons of their choice as soon as they wished. This marked the beginning of a new era in the marriage patterns of the people of the Mtunzini district. Further changes were effected by missionaries who were already working in this district at that time.

John Dunn died in 1895 and was buried at Emoyeni. When he died he was substituted with a magistrate, who then controlled the Mtunzini District. Dunn's headmen i e the traditional leaders of the tribes of the Mtunzini district, retained their positions. They were subsequently appointed chiefs with limited jurisdiction over their respective tribes, subject to the con=

trol of the magistrate at Mtunzini. In the Mkhwanazi tribal area Ngogwana, Phalane's heir, became the chief; in the Zulu tribal area Sisimane also became chief; the Mzimela, Nzuza, NB Dube and Cambini tribes also had their traditional leaders, viz Zimema, Ngwenya, Ntungelezana and Lokotwayo respectively, appointed chiefs.

Ngogwane, Phalane's heir belonged to the Mbonambi regiment. According to Krige this regiment was formed in 1863, its members having been born in about 1843 (1936 a: 406). His principal homestead was called Ntshiwoni and it was situated about one kilometer to the north-east of his father's Zondomunye homestead. His other homesteads were: Phathela, near the junction of the road leading from the University of Zululand and the national road between Empangeni and Durban; Esikhotheni to the west of the national road, about half a kilometer from the Umhlatuze bridge; and Ekukhubekeni which was situated near the tennis courts for the staff inside the campus of the University.

According to informants Ngogwana died in February, 1920 leaving his heir, Mbuyiseni to succeed him. Mbuyiseni did not establish his own homestead, but preferred to live at Phalane's Kwa-Zondomunye residence. He had six wives. The first was Zivalile Dube and she belonged to the indlunkulu section. She had four daughters and no son. Two of her daughters died young. The second wife (i e the first in the ikhohlwa section) was Khishiwe Mbonambi. She had two sons and one daughter, who died young. The eldest son was Mvelinqangi and the younger was Ngxovane. The third wife was Sitomotiya Dube and she was affiliated to the indlunkulu section. She had one child, a son, Makhayabanzi also known as Muntongenakudla. The fourth wife was Khomolo Mzimela. She mothered a son and a daughter, but the former died young. The fifth wife was Nhlekisa Xulu who was affiliated to the indlunkulu section. She had two daughters and a son, Ndabazewe. The sixth wife was Kwintshikile Cele. She gave a son, Nkosezayo, who died young. She never affiliated to any section and she left her husband after a few years of marriage.

In the absence of a son in the hut of the principal wife, Makhayabanzi (Muntongenakudla), son of the third wife (second wife in the indlunkulu section) was nominated heir to Mbuyiseni. Mbuyiseni died on the 30th August, 1928. At this time his heir, Makhayabanzi, was a minor. On the 15th October, 1928 Zibizendlela

Mkhwanazi was appointed regent and he acted in this capacity until he died on the 13th May, 1933. He was substituted by yet another regent, Nikiza Mkhwanazi, who assumed duty on the 28th September, 1933 and administered the tribe till the 30th October, 1948 when Makhayabanzi indicated that he considered himself ripe for the office.

Makhayabanzi was appointed chief in terms of the provisions of the Black Administration Act No 38 of 1927 with effect from the 1st November 1948. He was given civil and criminal jurisdiction.

It is alleged that on about the 14th April, 1951 he led a large impi and attacked a homestead in his own tribal area, where a wedding was about to take place. He and his followers were arrested, and on the 17th September, 1951 he was found guilty of public violence. He was sentenced to two years imprisonment with hard labour. As a result of his conviction his appointment as chief of the Mkhwanazi tribe was cancelled. This was effected in accordance with the terms contained in sub-section (7) of section 2 of the Black Administration Act No 38 of 1927 as amended. His office was given to his chief headman, Mbulaleni Mnguni, who acted in this capacity from the 14th April, 1951, to the 14th November, 1969. It was during Mbulaleni's term of office that the University College of Zululand (now a fully fledged University) was established on August 1, 1959. Ten years later, in 1969 the Dlangezwa High School was opened, about half a kilometer south of the University.

When Makhayabanzi was released from custody, he made several representations to the Government for his re-instatement. He finally succeeded in his endeavours and he was re-appointed chief on the 14th November, 1969. He married three wives. The

principal wife, Makhumalo, gave him an heir, Mkhontokayise, who is presently still at school. The other two wives are of the Gumede clan. The eldest of these is affiliated to the ikhohlwa section and the younger to the indlunkulu section. All three stay in the only homestead which Makhayabanzi established about half a kilometer south of the University. He named this residence Kwa-Zondomunye - after one of Ngogwane's homesteads. He died on the 17th September, 1977. Owing to the minority of his heir, Mkhontokayise, one of his half-brothers, Mzuzwana, was appointed regent towards the end of 1978.

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DIAGRAM I

THE SUCCESSIVE RULERS OF THE MKHWANAZI TRIBE OF MTUNZINI DISTRICT

CHIEF

REGENT

Phalane (Regent of Dube tribe and chief of
Mkhwanazi tribe 1860 - \pm 1894)

Ngogwane (\pm 1898 - 1920)

Mbuyiseni (1920 - 1928)

1929 - 1933

Zibizindlela
Mkhwanazi

1933 - 1948

Nikiza Mkhwa-
nazi

Makhayabanzi (1948 - 1951 when deposed)

1951 - 1969

Mbulaleni
Mnguni

Makhayabanzi (re-appointed 1969 and
ruled till 1977)

1978 up to now

Mzuzwana
Mkhwanazi

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL TRENDS IN THE STUDY OF MARRIAGE

3.1 Introduction

The beginning of the systematic study of marriage can be traced to the nineteenth century when anthropology, as a discipline, came into existence. The historical review shall, therefore, start with the theories of the pioneers of that period. Thereafter, the emergence and development of later theories, especially those which still feature prominently in current anthropological studies, shall be dealt with.

3.2 Contributions of the pioneers of the nineteenth century

Scholars of this period lived in an intellectual climate which was dominated by the notion of progress. The general trend among them was "... to discover the origins of everything - the origin of species, the origin of religion, the origin of law and so on (Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 37). In conformity with this general inclination, these scholars sought to explain variations in the institution of marriage in terms of the then popular theory of social evolution. Some of them postulated an original state of agamy when man lived in complete promiscuity. It is from this state of uncontrolled sexual mating, they said, that marriage later evolved in a series of uniform stages - reaching its pinnacle in the monogamous form. Other scholars of this time, however, were sceptical of the existence of primitive promiscuity.

Lienhardt points out that it is important to note that scholars of the nineteenth century were also nurtured in a strongly hierarchical society. In studying peoples of the world, they tended to view them as hierarchically arranged in a scheme of evolution. They took it for granted that peoples of Europe, at that time, had attained the highest standards of development in all institutions, including marriage. They regarded living preliterate peoples and their cultures as living examples of the stages of evolution which the peoples of Europe had already passed. It

thus became their theoretical preoccupation to "... arrange the peoples and institutions of the world in an evolutionary series, from a theoretical primordial man to the civilized human being of mid-nineteenth century Europe" (1966: 7-8).

In the following paragraphs the theories of some of the scholars of this period shall be briefly outlined.

3.2.1 J. J. Bachofen

In his "Das Mutterrecht" (1861) Bachofen advanced the theory that early man lived promiscuously. During this stage of "hetairism", as he called it, the strongest male was the ruler and monopolized all the women. For some reason the women of the horde were disenchanted with these loose unions and insisted on regular mating. Their insistence on regular mating resulted in the coming into existence of matriarchally organized groupings in which the rule of mother-right prevailed. This gaenococracy gave way to father-right.

The transition from matriarchy to patriarchy was marked by the emergence of the custom of couvade. This custom, Bachofen said, was instituted to establish a social relationship between a woman's children and her husband. (Penniman, 1935: 115-118; Lowie, 1937: 40-43; Hays, 1958: 105; McFee, 1976: 118-189).

3.2.2 Sir Henry Maine

In the same year in which Bachofen's "Das Mutterrecht" appeared (1861), another scholar, Henry Maine, published his "Ancient Law" in which he propounded a theory very similar to Bachofen's. Unlike Bachofen, however, he "...held that the patriarchal family is the original and universal form of social life and that the patria potestas, the absolute authority of the patriarch, on which it rests, had produced everywhere at a certain stage agnation, the tracing of descent through males exclusively" (Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 29). Maine rejected Mc Lennan's and Morgan's theory of primitive promiscuity and concurred with Darwin (Descent

of Man) that male jealousy would have been sufficient to inhibit the existence of a promiscuous horde (Penniman, 1935: 118-119). Maine drew evidence for his evolutionary scheme from the classics, especially Roman Law, the Old Testament and documents on the Indo-European peoples generally.

3.2.3 J. F. Mc Lennan

In 1865 Mc Lennan, in his "Primitive Marriage" also advanced the theory that early man lived promiscuously in totemic groups. The difficult conditions in which these groups lived, forced them to practise female infanticide. This in turn led to the shortage of women, and men had to raid neighbouring groups for mates. With the passage of time, these raids developed into the institution of marriage by capture. As there was a general scarcity of women, it was found expedient that several men should share each captured woman. In time this practice developed into the institution of polyandry. The habitual capture of women for wives ultimately developed into the custom of exogamy (Lowie, 1937: 43-49; Penniman, 1935: 119-120; Mc Fee, 1976: 189-190).

3.2.4 Sir John Lubbock

Sir John Lubbock published "The Origin of Civilization" in 1870. In this book he defined marriage as "an exclusive relation of one or more men with one or more women, based on custom, recognized and supported by public opinion, and where law exists, by law (Penniman, 1935: 121). Like his intellectual peers he traced modern, monogamous Western marriage from an original state of promiscuity. He postulated that prior to the coming into existence of monogamous marriage, there was "communal marriage". This system of mating, he said, provided that a group of men be regarded as communally married to a designated group of women. All the men of the group would have equal rights to the sexual and domestic services of all the individual women of the corresponding group. He cited classificatory kinship terminology, wife-lending and ritual defloration by elders of some groups as evidence of the existence of group marriage in the past. To him these practices were survivals which had outlived their time and

projected themselves into a new cultural era. When marriage by capture started, these "communal marriages" gave way to individual marriage. Lubbock, unlike other scholars of his day, regarded polyandry as a rare and exceptional form of marriage and did not include it in his scheme of evolution (Penniman, 1935: 121-123; Lienhardt, 1966: 11).

3.2.5 L.H.Morgan

One other scholar who devoted attention to the study of marriage was Morgan, who in 1871 published his classic "Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity in the Human Family". In this document he postulated no less than fifteen stages of the development of marriage and the family, beginning with promiscuity and ending with monogamous marriage, as it is known in Western culture (Penniman, 1935: 125; Lowie, 1937: 54-67; Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 30; Hays, 1958: 66-74; Lienhardt, 1966: 12-14; Mc Fee, 1976: 190=.

3.2.6 Sir Robertson Smith

In 1885 Sir Robertson Smith published his "Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia". In this book he made pronouncements reminiscent of those of Mc Lennan. He regarded the custom of levirate as a survival and evidence of a preceding state of society in which polyandry was practised (Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 31). He also devoted some attention to the custom of exogamy. He traced its origin to the general human abhorrence of sexual relations between housemates (Penniman, 1935: 127).

3.3 Commentary on the contributions of the abovementioned scholars

It is clear from the above that these scholars erroneously viewed the different forms of marriage, which were known to them at that time, as representing progressive evolutionary stages. They did not view them as local or ethnic variations of the same institution. They assumed that marriage, all over the world, developed unilinearly in simple, progressive stages. They apparently did not realize that the different forms of marriage were not stages,

but expressions of different responses to different socio-cultural circumstances. Penniman points out that "there is no valid reason for making matrilineal kinship generally prior to patrilineal. Both systems have grown side by side, and both exist for a variety of reasons, each of which must be considered on its merits before making an induction (1935: 120). The general folly of these scholars was that they deductively forced whatever ethnographic data they had into preconceived evolutionary schemes, instead of proceeding inductively from facts to theory. Their postulations were to a large extent based on scanty, often inaccurate and decontextualized data. Furthermore, their general lethargy to active fieldwork made it impossible for them to test the validity of their theories. Their preoccupation with the reconstruction of the evolutionary stages of marriage caused them to neglect many important structural and functional aspects of this institution.

In spite of these shortcomings, their work had certain merits. They deserve, for instance, credit for having established a tradition for the study of marriage. Their theories on marriage were indeed naive and fallacious, but they did stimulate thought and debate, which in turn led to the birth of sounder theories later. They also drew attention to the fact that forms of marriage do change. Though they failed to deal satisfactorily with this phenomenon themselves, they nevertheless laid the foundation for later, more scientific studies on change in marriage. Furthermore, these scholars formulated important terminology which is still used in current studies on marriage and kinship. McLennan, for instance, coined the words "exogamy" and "endogamy", which are still important operational tools in the study of marriage. Similarly, Morgan introduced the concepts of "classificatory" and "descriptive" kinship terminology.

3.4 Early reactions against evolutionism and attempts to refine it

Towards the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, some scholars started reacting to the

earlier theories on the evolution of marriage. These early reactions were varied in their orientation. Some were an attempt to refine and sustain the older evolutionary models, while others were an outright rejection of the evolutionary paradigm and an effort to posit sounder, alternative theories to explain variations in marriage. These early reactions heralded the beginning of more scientific thinking and methodology. The views of some of the scholars who participated in this exercise shall be briefly outlined below.

3.4.1 Sir E. B. Tylor

Dissatisfied with the quasi-historical methods of his predecessors and his contemporaries, Edward Tylor tried to use statistical methods in the study of marriage. In 1888 he published a paper: "On a Method of Investigating the Development of Institutions, Applied to the Laws of Marriage and Descent". He announced that his aim was to demonstrate "... how the development of institutions might be examined with the help of tabulation and classification" (Penniman, 1935: 131). Taking data from different parts of the world he arranged in tables the rules of marriage and descent, together with the 'adhesions' of each custom, "showing which peoples have the same custom, and what other customs accompany it or lie apart from it" (Ibid, 1935: 131).

Using statistical methods he tried to establish the extent to which parent-in-law avoidance is correlated with patterns of residence after marriage (Hays, 1958: 104; Penniman, 1935: 131). After careful statistical comparison, he concluded that 'there is a well-marked preponderance indicating that ceremonial avoidance by the husband of the wife's family is in some way connected with his living with them; and vice versa as to his wife and the husband's family' (Penniman, 1935: 131). He further inferred from the correlations that residence at the wife's place of birth by the husband preceded residence by the wife at the husband's natal home (Ibid, 1935: 131).

Tylor also probed into the custom of couvade. Whereas in his

earlier publications he explained the couvade in semi-animistic and semi-magical terms, in his paper of 1888 he tried to analyse it with the aid of his statistical method. He tried to establish whether this custom was not correlated with matriarchy. In 1861 Bachofen had, in his "Das Mutterrecht", explained the couvade as a custom which had developed during the stage when matriarchy was superceded by patriarchy. "Checking the known cases of couvade against the known matriarchal and patriarchal organizations, Tylor proved that it was correlated with the former system. He took these statistics to indicate that there was truth in Bachofen's conjecture. Couvade could therefore be related to ceremonial avoidance and all other customs that treated the father as a stranger gradually being accepted into his wife's family" (Hays, 1958: 105).

Tylor also tried to explain the custom of exogamy with the aid of statistical methods. He concluded that as exogamy is correlated with classificatory kinship systems, it would be best to explain it in terms of its political value of linking small, isolated and unprotected tribes by ties of marriage. This statement by Tylor tallied with Morgan's views concerning kinship bonds in the Iroquois federation (Ibid, 1958: 106).

Though Tylor was essentially an evolutionist, he nevertheless had the distinction of being more cautious than his predecessors and peers. He was careful not to go beyond the ethnographic evidence at hand and range into speculations. Commenting on his work Lowie wrote that 'Tylor's statistical method raises him above other important figures of the nineteenth century. There were some drawbacks - for example, the difficulty of allowing for the influence of one culture on another - but his method pointed towards a more exact approach than was to be employed for decades' (quoted by Hays, 1958: 106).

3.4.2 Edward Westermarck

In 1891 Edward Westermarck published "The History of Human

Marriage" in which he vigorously attacked the doctrine of primitive promiscuity as postulated by Bachofen, Mc Lennan, Morgan, Lubbock and others. His thinking was strongly influenced by Darwin's theory of natural selection. He accordingly approached the study of marriage from a biological point of view and advanced the theory that monogamous marriage is an inheritance from some primeval, ape-like progenitor. He asserted that there was no evidence proving the existence of primeval promiscuity and the complete absence of marriage. He cited Darwin's observation that prostitutes tend to be sterile, and in its light argued that continual promiscuity would have led to extinction. In terms of the Darwinian law of natural selection, he said, it would only be those who practised orderly and regular mating, i.e. marriage who would have a better chance of reproducing.

He described marriage as a more or less durable connection between male and female, lasting beyond the act of propagation till after the birth of offspring. To him marriage lasted because of biological necessity. The human young are born helpless and unspecialized, and therefore require a longer period of nurture.

Westermarck rejected the idea that patriarchy evolved from matriarchy or vice versa.

He also devoted attention to the institution of "marriage by purchase". He stated that this was not a transaction in which the bride was literally bought. It was rather a transaction in which a propitiatory offering was given to the bride's parents to please them and to prove to them that the bridegroom was economically reliable.

He also tried to explain the custom of exogamy and the incest prohibition. In respect of these he also resorted to his favourite explanation: natural selection. He asserted that statistical figures proved that inbred marriages were less fertile than those between unrelated pairs. Those who married

close relatives would gradually die out (Penniman, 1935: 126; Lowie, 1937: 95-100; Hays, 1958: 180-188; Fox 1967: 60).

Westermarck's views on marriage and related institutions were a significant challenge to the then popular theories of the unilinear evolutionists. Though he failed to purge himself of the evolutionary paradigm and could not posit an acceptable alternative theory, he nevertheless drew attention to the hitherto ignored biological aspects of marriage. Unlike many of his predecessors and contemporaries, who relied heavily on the inaccurate reports of untrained observers, Westermarck did some ethnographic fieldwork and some of his statements on marriage were based on first-hand information. He travelled in some parts of North Africa where he observed the marriage customs of the Arabs. His observations on these customs were published in 1914 in his "Marriage Customs in Morocco".

3.4.3 Ernest Crawley

In 1902 Ernest Crawley published "The Mystic Rose", in which he attacked the evolutionistic theories of his predecessors and contemporaries. In his opinion the theories of these scholars were based on an imperfect understanding of primitive thought and custom. He praised Westermarck's biological approach to the study of marriage and noted that it had certain merits. He expressed appreciation for Edward Tylor's application of statistical analysis to the study of marriage customs and also praised his method of explaining marriage customs in terms of their respective cultural contexts. He regretted, however, that these two scholars did not know anything about primitive mentality and could, therefore, not use it to explain marriage customs (Crawley, 1902: xi-xii; Hays, 1958: 189).

Crawley was determined, therefore, to place the study of marriage on a new and sounder foundation. In the preface of "The Mystic Rose" he announced that his aim was to explain marriage customs in the light of the facts of human psychology and physiology.

Crawley postulated that religious notions pervaded all departments of thought. Many people in the world, he observed, associate sexual organs with dangerous mystical powers and view them with awe. They believe that sexual activity unleashes these latent powers and causes those who indulge in it to suffer harm. It is, therefore, necessary for those who intend copulating to neutralize these powers by taking appropriate precautionary action. Hays writes: "The system of precautions was essentially a kind of cross-inoculation. Each of two separate individuals took actually or symbolically, something of the other individual into contact with his or her body. Thus they became one, no longer strange to each other, no longer able or willing to hurt each other... All through social life the technique of cross-inoculation to avoid the perils of the alien was employed. In modern marriage it has survived in the exchange of wedding rings" (1958: 192). All rituals performed at marriage are geared towards the nullification of the dangerous powers inherent in sex. In Crawley's opinion "... cases in which the bride had the hymen perforated and submitted to ritual intercourse with certain priests or elders were not a survival of group marriage, but a matter of neutralizing the sexual danger to the husband. Struggles of the bride's relatives against the bridegroom were not a survival of marriage by capture, but a symbolic struggle against the female sex; violence neutralized the taboo by breaking it forceably" (quoted by Hays, 1958: 192).

Crawley rejected the view that matriarchy preceded patriarchy, pointing out that there is no evidence to prove this theory. Mother-in-law avoidance, in Crawley's opinion arose because the mother-in-law was conceived of as a dangerously sexed woman in an equivocal relationship: she was the groom's mother, yet not his mother. He viewed the custom of couvade as a means of diverting the dangers of childbirth from mother and infant to the father. In respect of the custom of exogamy Crawley rejected Westermarck's theory that it was instituted to prevent the debilitation of the stock. In his opinion this custom had its roots in religious notions.

Crawley's attempt to explain marriage customs in terms of psychology instead of hypothetical history was a commendable digression. It was, as Hays rightly points out, "... a serious setback to believers in the priority of matriarchy and primitive promiscuity" (1958: 193). It should, however, be remembered that during Crawley's time, psychology as a discipline was still finding its feet. What Crawley relied on for the explanation of marriage customs were the inadequate postulations of associationist psychologists of the day. Experimental psychology only started developing in later decades. In spite of its shortcomings, Crawley's writings on marriage prepared the ground for later scientific research into the psychological aspects of this institution.

3.4.4 Robert Briffault

In 1927 another scholar, Robert Briffault, published "The Mothers" in which he attacked and tried to demolish Westermarck's theory on the originality of monogamy. He made an elaborate restatement of Morgan's theory of the evolution of marriage. Unlike Morgan, however, who used kinship terminology to prove that marriage evolved from promiscuity through polyandry, polygyny to monogamy, Briffault used economic considerations as the basis for his evolutionary scheme.

He agreed with Morgan that in primeval times man lived in a state of sexual promiscuity without any form of marriage. He asserted that the instability of marriage and frequent divorce among primitive peoples indicated that in primeval times there existed a sexual free-for-all. He was cynical of Westermarck's idea that man had inherited monogamy from some ape-like progenitor. He pointed out that apes are polygynous. The dominant male monopolizes all the females and keeps away all the younger and weaker suitors.

To him marriage was not founded on love or affection; and he did not believe that it was instituted for the regulation of sexual activity. In as far as he was concerned, marriage was an

economic arrangement.

According to Briffault, the original state of promiscuity was followed by a social state in which the rule of mother-right prevailed. This transition was the direct result of economic changes at that time. During the period of promiscuity both men and women were nomads without fixed property. However, in the next evolutionary phase, women developed sedentary habits and owned fixed property, while men remained roving hunters without fixed property and power. It is this change in economic patterns which brought into existence "matrilocal marriage", which according to Briffault, was the earliest form of marriage (Hays, 1958: 196).

After the period of matriarchy, Briffault says, there followed patriarchy. He postulated that this occurred as a result of the domestication of animals and the subsequent assumption of the status of property-holders by men. Plough agriculture, which involved the use of cattle, put agriculture into the hands of men. This marked the beginning of the patriarchal system. "Women lost their economic advantage and were relegated to an inferior position. In oriental countries women had one valuable commodity left: their sex. From this arose polygamy, and marriage took on a predominantly sexual aspect" (Hays, 1958: 196).

Briffault's fervent effort to refine and reassert the evolutionary model is regrettable. He did, however, reveal some of the glaring shortcomings of the paradigm, thereby contributing, though unintentionally, towards its demolition. His rejection of the hypothetical stage of sexual promiscuity and the imaginary institution of group marriage, for instance, had the effect of shaking the very foundations of the evolutionary edifice. He also wisely rejected Morgan's usage of kinship terminology to prove the precedence of matriarchy over patriarchy. The economic bias which pervades his scheme is unfortunate, but it had the positive effect of drawing attention to the necessity for the

study of the economic aspects of marriage, which had hitherto remained poorly probed.

3.5 The rise and development of sounder theories on marriage in the 20th century

The early decades of the twentieth century marked the beginning of a new era in the development of anthropology as a discipline. At this time several scholars turned their attention from the speculative theories of the classical evolutionists and focussed on the gathering of first-hand ethnographic data and the formulation of sounder alternative theories for explaining socio-cultural phenomena and their world-wide variations. This change of focus had important implications for the development of the study of marriage and related institutions. Attempts to reconstruct the course of development of marriage through the ages were abandoned. Scholars now sought to analyze various marriage systems as they worked in their respective socio-cultural contexts. This trend had continued up to the present day.

It is particularly British and British-trained social anthropologists and French sociologists who contributed significantly to the development of the study of marriage in this century. For this reason, our review shall be limited to them.

3.5.1 Developments during the first half of the century

3.5.1.1 The stimulus of the Durkheimian structural-functional school

Developments in the study of marriage in the twentieth century have their roots in the contribution made by Emile Durkheim to sociological studies.

The foundations of the Durkheimian school of thought were laid during the first two decades of the twentieth century, and its major contributors were, besides Emile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer, Mauss and Lucien Levy-Bruhl. These scholars emphasized the importance of rigorous method and empiricism in the building of a scientific base for the understanding of social institutions.

Durkheim insisted that social facts should be analyzed and interpreted in the light of other social facts and not in terms of individual psychology as had been done by some scholars of his day. In his opinion social facts like legal, political and economic institutions, customs, habits, morals and language constitute a more or less stable structure in each society. This structure persists unaltered, in its essentials from one generation to the next. It is not affected by the working of the individual minds of the society. The body of social facts which constitute the social structure are obligatory and all members of a society should abide by them. Persons who do not comply with these social facts suffer legal and moral disabilities or penalties (Penniman, 1935: 365).

This Durkheimian structural model threw into sharp relief the importance of studying the socio-cultural life of a group as a patterned totality; and the necessity of viewing each social institution as a constituent part of a wider body of interrelated institutions. This was a significant step forward, for it implied that henceforth each form of marriage would be studied within the context of its socio-cultural milieu, instead of as a decontextualized isolate, arbitrarily comparable to any apparently similar form elsewhere.

Durkheim also emphasized the importance of understanding the functions or social significance of the customs of preliterate peoples (Penniman, 1935: 365-366; Lowie, 1937: 192-212; Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 52-53).

Durkheim and many of his French contemporaries were essentially theorists whose main concern was to collate documentary ethnographic material and formulate universal laws for explaining socio-cultural phenomena. This preoccupation with the formulation of theoretical models continued into the early 1920's. It was only at this time that some French scholars started doing fieldwork in the Western Sudan. Even then their interest and efforts were initially directed at gaining insight into

African thought patterns and symbolism. However, as time went by, some of these scholars started doing fieldwork on marriage and kinship, and interpreted their findings in the light of the Durkheimian structural-functional model. These interpretations constituted a significant step forward in the study of marriage and provided new insights which could not be provided by classical evolutionism and historical diffusionism.

Durkheimian structural-functionalism soon spread to England where it had a profound influence on the development of social anthropology, particularly in the field of kinship and marriage (Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 53, Penniman, 1935: 363).

3.5.1.2 British social anthropology

In England the writings of Emile Durkheim had a strong influence on A.R.Radcliffe-Brown and Bronislaw Malinowski, the two scholars who laid the cornerstone of British social anthropology in the nineteen-twenties and thirties (Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 53; Goody, 1973: 187; Naroll, 1973: 10-11). It is these two scholars who promoted the refinement of fieldwork methods and developed the structural-functional theoretical models for analyzing socio-cultural facts. Instead of focussing on problems of evolution and diffusion, they directed their efforts at understanding the nature of socio-cultural processes and the complexities of social organization (Jarvie, 1964: 180; Goody, 1973: 191; Mc Fee, 1976: 191-192). The writings of these scholars and their followers completely revolutionized the study of marriage in the English-speaking academic world.

3.5.1.2.1 Bronislaw Malinowski

Malinowski's major contribution in the study of marriage lies in the wealth of ethnographic material which he published on Trobriand marriage, and in fostering the view that each form or aspect of marriage has to be studied as a functioning part of the socio-cultural context of which it is part. It is this latter notion of functionalism and its application to the analysis of ethnographic data which started a new intellectual trend in the

study of marriage.

Malinowski defined his theory of functionalism as follows:

"This type of theory aims at the explanation of anthropological facts at all levels of development by their function, by the part which they play within the integral system of culture, by the manner in which they are related to each other within the system, and by the manner in which this system is related to the physical surroundings. It aims at understanding culture, rather than at conjectural reconstructions of its evolution or its past historical events" (1929: xxxv).

In 1929 he published "The Sexual Life of savages", which was a landmark in the history of the study of kinship and marriage. It is in this book that he demonstrated the application of the functional method in the interpretation and analysis of ethnographic data on marriage and kinship. He used sex as a starting point to describe the whole gamut of Trobriand socio-cultural life. In the foreword to the third edition of this work he announced that his aim was to demonstrate that sex, as a biological drive, cannot be fully understood unless it is studied against the total background of Trobriand socio-cultural life (1929: xix). In this book he also showed that "love, sexual approaches, eroticism, combined with love magic and the mythology of love are but a part of customary courtship in the Trobriands. Courtship, again, is a phase, a preparatory phase of marriage and marriage one side of family life. The family itself ramifies into the clan, into the relations between matrilineal and patriarchal kindred, all these subjects intimately bound up with each other, dominates their economics, pervades their magic and mythology and enters into their religion and even their artistic productions" (1929: xix).

In 1929 Malinowski published an article on marriage in the fourteenth edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. In this article he made a general statement on human marriage without making his functional theory obtrusive. He defined marriage as "... the

act, ceremony or process by which the legal relationship of husband and wife is constituted; or as a physical, legal and moral union between man and woman in complete community of life for the establishment of the family" (1959 edition: 1950). In his opinion marriage is basically a contract for the production and maintenance of children, rather than a means of legalizing sexual intercourse. It defines the relations between the spouses and confers upon them the status of majority. Furthermore, it defines the status of the children in relation to their parents and other kin. Within the broader social context, marriage confers the status of legitimacy on the children. Marriage also imposes social, legal and economic obligations on the spouses.

In this article Malinowski rejected the idea of marriage by purchase. He insisted that the giving of marriage goods by the bridegroom constitutes a transaction which establishes ties of co-operation between the kinship group of the bride and his own. He also rejected the notions of primeval sexual promiscuity and group marriage, which were popularized by the classical evolutionists. He pointed out that there was no ethnographic evidence to prove the prior existence of these.

Malinowski's writings revitalized the dying interest of scholars in this theme. From the time of the appearance of the "Sexual Life of Savages", a spate of ethnographic works on kinship and marriage appeared. Examples are the works of Schapera, "Married Life in an African Tribe" (1936) Fortes, "The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi" (1949) Evans-Pritchard, "Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer" (1951) and many others. These scholars described the marriage customs of these peoples in relation to the totality of their respective socio-cultural contexts, as Malinowski did in respect of the Trobriand Islanders.

In spite of its several merits, Malinowski's functional theory had some shortcomings. It was, for instance, incapable for explaining why forms of marriage and systems of kinship vary among the peoples of the world. Its avowed anti-historicism made it

inadequate for explaining changes in marriage customs. It was designed for the synchronic study of isolated, small-scale socio-cultural groups, and when it was applied to the diachronic study of the marriage customs of non-isolated peoples whose cultures were changing, it yielded poor results. Furthermore, it later became clear that Malinowski's functional method leads to cumbersome tautology if strictly adhered to. It further had the disadvantage of driving scholars into institutionally-biased interpretations.

Malinowski's influence was very strong in the nineteen-twenties and early thirties among British social anthropologists and some American anthropologists. This is clearly notable in the ethnographic monographs of the time. From the mid-thirties, however, Malinowski's influence started declining. His brand of functionalism was superceded by Radcliffe-Brownian structural-functionalism (Lowie, 1937: 230-234; Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 74-75; Jarvie, 1964: 39-44; Goody, 1973: 187-191; Naroll, 1973: 10-13; Kuper, 1973: 92-95).

3.5.1.2.2 A.R. Radcliffe-Brown

Radcliffe-Brown considered social institutions as functioning within social structures made up of individuals connected by definite sets of social relations into integrated wholes, and the social life of societies as the functioning of their structures (Penniman, 1935: 366).

In the introduction to "African Systems of Kinship and Marriage" (1950), Radcliffe-Brown defined African marriage as a rearrangement of social structure in which existing social relations are changed and new ones created. Such relations are "... not only created between the husband and the wife, and between the husband and the wife's relatives on the one side and between the wife and the husband's relatives on the other, but also ... between the relatives of the husband and those of the wife" (1950: 43).

According to him African marriage involves some modification or partial rupture of the relations between the bride and her immediate kin. This rupture is least notable where the intending husband assumes residence at his future bride's home, where he performs bride-service. It is most pronounced where the bride traditionally assumes residence at her husband's village after the contraction of the marriage. Her departure from her natal home causes a breach of family solidarity - which is a structural change. Resistance to this breach of family solidarity is often given symbolic expression in simulated hostility between the two kinship groups involved in the marriage.

Furthermore, Radcliffe-Brown emphasized that African marriage should not be viewed as an event or a condition, but as a process which is marked by a series of stages. Each stage has its significance and it contributes towards the ultimate completion of the matrimonial relationship. He wrote: "The first step is usually a formal betrothal, though this may have been preceded by a period of courtship or, in some instances in some regions by elopement. The betrothal is the contract or agreement between the two families... A most important stage in the development of the marriage is the birth of the first child. It is through the children that the husband and wife are united and the two families are also united by having descendants in common" (1950: 49).

Radcliffe-Brown also pointed out that African marriage involves a series of transactions and formalities in which the kinship groups of the bride and the bridegroom participate. These transactions usually involve the exchange of goods or services for certain rights and privileges in respect of the person of the bride. He emphasized that it should be recognized "that whatever economic importance some of these transactions may have, it is chiefly their symbolic aspect that we chiefly have to consider" (1950: 48). The delivery of marriage goods by the bridegroom to the lineage of the intended bride, for instance, is not an act of purchasing the bride. It is rather a symbolic act of compensating the bride's relatives for the loss of their

daughter (Ibid, 1950: 50). Furthermore, through the act of receiving the marriage goods, the bride's lineage symbolically surrenders certain legal rights which it has over the bride. These include rights in personam and rights in rem over the bride (Ibid, 1950: 50). The delivery of marriage goods also symbolically establishes an alliance between the two kinship groups involved and establishes the legal position of the children born out of the marriage.

Radcliffe-Brown also probed into the rules governing the choice of spouses. In respect of these he wrote that in Africa "the general rule is that a man and woman who are kin, or at any rate closely related, may not marry" (1950: 54). However, he drew attention to the fact that in spite of this general prohibition, "there are many African societies in which it is thought very appropriate that a man should marry his cross-cousin, most usually the daughter of his mother's brother, more rarely the daughter of his father's sister. In such marriages the two families are already related before the union occurs. In marriage with the mother's brother's daughter a connection between the families or lineages that has been formed in one generation is repeated in the next (1950: 54-55). He also noted the occurrence of marriage between a man and his father's brother's daughter. In respect of all the above-mentioned preferred matrimonial unions, Radcliffe-Brown stressed that it should be noted that they create different kinds of social relations. The rules which prohibit and encourage the marriage of certain persons have as their social function "to preserve, maintain or continue an existing kinship structure as a system of institutional relation. Where a marriage between relatives would threaten to disrupt or throw into disorder the established system, it tends to be disapproved or forbidden, and the greater and more widespread the disturbance that would be caused by a marriage, the stronger tends to be the disapproval which it meets with. Inversely, preferential marriages are those which have for their effect to renew or reinforce the existing system" (1950: 62).

Radcliffe-Brown's explanation of African marriage in terms of the structural-functional theory provided new insights into many hitherto poorly understood customs. It especially drew attention to the legal aspects of marriage, emphasizing the legal rights and obligations which are rooted in social relations.

Significant as Radcliffe-Brown's theoretical model was for the advancement of the analysis of marriage customs, it was, nevertheless, marred by its synchronic perspective and overemphasis on structural harmony. It tended to present African marriage as an unchanging institution. This, it would appear, was largely due to Radcliffe-Brown's distaste for a historical perspective in the study of institutions. Furthermore, Radcliffe-Brown's theoretical model could not effectively explain obvious inconsistencies in matrimonial usage within any given socio-cultural group.

These shortcomings in Radcliffe-Brown's theoretical model, should not blind us to the revolutionizing effect his writings had on studies on marriage. In the 1930's and 40's several British scholars adopted his model and interpreted their ethnographic findings on African marriage and kinship in its light. This is clearly illustrated by the writings of the scholars who contributed to the classic volumes on African marriage, viz. "African Systems of Kinship and Marriage" (1950) and the "Survey of African Marriage and Family Life" (1953). Another work which derived its inspiration from the Radcliffe-Brownian structural model is Evans-Pritchard's "Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer" (1951). However, though this work was cast in the Radcliffe-Brownian mould, it had the distinction of having a diachronic dimension.

3.5.2 Developments during the second half of the century

After the publication of the symposium "African Systems of Kinship and Marriage" (1950), Evans-Pritchard's "Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer" (1951) and the "Survey of African Marriage and Family Life" (1953) edited by A. Phillips, the study of marriage was neglected for some years. Instead, scholars dis-

played interest in political and magico-religious systems. Towards the end of the fifties, however, "... the classical kinship topics like marriage rules, incest and exogamy, kinship terminology came into prominence again" (Kuper, 1973: 172). This revival of interest in the study of marriage and related institutions may be ascribed to Levi-Strauss's "alliance theory" and the controversy which it sparked.

This renewed interest in the study of marriage coincided with a growing dissatisfaction among younger anthropologists with Radcliffe-Brown's synchronic structural model. It was felt that it over-stressed structural harmony and could not adequately explain socio-cultural change and normal internal structural conflicts and inconsistencies in any given social system. Consequently some of the younger scholars sought alternative models which could throw more light on the dynamic aspects of social life. At Manchester University there arose the "transaction theory" which aimed at showing how individuals in a society try to maximize their gains within the constraints and opportunities of their social structures. A "conflict model" replaced the "equilibrium model" of classical structural-functionalism (Kuper, 1973: 206; Hammond-Tooke, 1979: 3). This change of emphasis in the British structural approach augured well for subsequent studies on marriage and kinship. From now onwards, there were better prospects of gaining insight into inconsistencies in the marriage codes and practices of various socio-cultural groups, particularly those which were undergoing change as a result of the influence of Western culture. Another important development which occurred at this time was a realization that conventional, global ethnographic descriptions of social systems and aspects of culture often led to superficiality. Furthermore, such descriptions tended to compound comparative analysis and the formulation of theoretical models. In response to this realization, some scholars started limiting themselves to specific problems or topics. In the field of marriage this trend towards focussing on problems is notable in Dumont's "Hierarchy and Marriage Alliance in South Indian Kinship" (1957),

Leach's "Aspects of Bridewealth and Marriage Stability among the Kachin and Lakher" (1957) and Gough's "The Nayars and the Definition of Marriage" (1959).

The advent of Levi-Straussian structuralism in the fifties had the effect of dividing students of marriage in anthropology into two camps, namely those who espouse what Schneider (1973) calls "alliance theory" and "descent theory". This dichotomy is, to a large measure, still valid today. Our review of developments in the study of marriage during the second half of the twentieth century shall, therefore, focus on the contributions of these two schools.

3.5.2.1 The "alliance theory"

Adherents of the alliance theory treat marriage as a device for linking potentially hostile groups for coöperation at various levels of social life. The most outstanding exponent and pioneer of this theory is Claude Lévi-Strauss, whose views on marriage broadly reflect those of other adherents of this theory. Other adherents of this theory are, among others, Leach, Needham, Dumont and Mary Douglas.

It would be ideal to discuss the contributions of all the adherents of the alliance theory, but we shall for the sake of brevity, limit ourselves to Lévi-Strauss.

3.5.2.1.1 Claude Lévi-Strauss

In his "Les Structures Elementaires de la Parente" (1949), which was translated into English and published in 1969 under the title "Elementary Structures of Kinship", Lévi-Strauss analyzed and compared the marriage rules and kinship systems of Australian Aborigines and some peoples of south-east Asia. His aim was to unravel the intricate unconscious logic behind kinship classifications and marriage rules by considering the relationship between their constituent units.

To Lévi-Strauss marriage is not just an institution for establishing a legal basis for the domestic family. It is rather an alliance which results from the contractual exchange of women by two groups, namely the group of the husband and that of the bride. What forces these two groups to exchange women is the rule of exogamy which has its roots in the incest taboo. According to him the exchange of women can take a large number of forms. But, it is possible to classify these forms into two major categories. These are: restricted and generalized forms or systems of exchange. In restricted systems of exchange, there is a direct exchange of women between groups. In generalized systems of exchange, however, the exchange of women takes place in a delayed fashion. One group gives away its daughter as a wife to another group on the understanding that at some time in the future one of her daughters will be returned as a daughter-in-law. In other forms of generalized exchange, however, a woman is given away in exchange for goods which are in turn used to obtain a wife elsewhere. He postulated that these two categories of exchange are associated with various forms of cousin marriage. In his opinion restricted exchange occurs mostly where patrilateral and matrilateral cross-cousin marriage co-exist. Generalized exchange, on the otherhand occurs mostly where rules only provide for one kind of cross-cousin marriage, particularly matrilateral cross-cousin marriage (Schneider, 1965: 26-34; Fox, 1967: 23; Harris, 1968: 500; Leach, 1968: 545; Kuper, 1973: 207-209).

To him the overall function of the exchange of women, irrespective of its form, is to maintain the structured relations among groups which exchanged wives. It promotes intergroup solidarity. In his opinion restricted exchange, particularly the direct reciprocal type, is incapable of holding together a large number of groups. On the other hand, generalized exchange can cement a large number of groups in an alliance founded on women exchange. To him restricted exchange is chronologically earlier than generalized exchange. Harris and Leach point out that the latter statement reveals a subdued evolutionistic inclination on the

part of Lévi-Strauss (Leach, 1968: 545; Harris, 1968: 500).

Lévi-Strauss asserted that spouses are not equal spouses in marriage. The women function as objects or commodities of exchange, while the men are the actors who effect the transaction. In the process of exchange the women lose their identity, but such loss or neutralization of identity does not make them immune to the prohibition on incest. He further stressed that the significance of exchange does not lie in the value of the goods exchanged, but in the integrative effect of the exchange as such.

Lévi-Strauss also suggested the use of mathematical techniques in the analysis of the rules of marriage and kinship systems. He, for instance, engaged the services of a mathematician to compute the number of marriage types for societies with Crow Omaha systems (Leach, 1971: xxxii).

It is conceded that Lévi-Strauss added a new dimension to the study of marriage by showing that marriage alliances function to preserve the structural continuity of social systems. This thesis stimulated interest and debate on the study of marriage. In spite of this, his theory has some shortcomings which have been pointed out by several scholars who have reviewed his "Les Structure Elementaires de la Parente" (1949). The first sustained evaluation of this work was done by Josselin de Jong in 1952, in his book entitled "Lévi-Strauss's Theory on Kinship and Marriage" which was republished in 1970. In this work he pointed out that Lévi-Strauss's equation of women with neutral commodities in the process of exchange is an oversimplification of facts. Furthermore, such a contention lacks supportive ethnographic evidence. He also noted that: "In stressing the irrelevancy of the intrinsic nature of exchanged goods he ignored an important category of exchange to which it is sure that his characterization does not apply, viz, the one which is based upon the distinction of "male" and "female" goods, conceived as representing the two lines of descent, the patrilineal

and matrilineal principles (1970: 57).

In 1955 Homans and Schneider launched a vigorous assault on Lévi-Strauss's theory. They rejected Lévi-Strauss's postulate that there is a positive correlation between the frequency of the occurrence of patrilateral and matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and the degree of social solidarity resulting from exchange cycles (Harris, 1968: 501). They criticized Lévi-Strauss's assertion that matrilateral cross-cousin marriage is more frequent than patrilateral cross-cousin marriage because the former makes for better social solidarity among groups than the latter. In their opinion Radcliffe-Brown's explanation of the disparity in the frequency of these two kinds of cross-cousin marriage is more convincing than Lévi-Strauss's. Radcliffe-Brown postulated that matrilateral cross-cousin marriage is more frequent in patriarchally organized societies because the relationship between a man and his mother's brother is indulgent and informal. This is why his daughter is preferred as a matrimonial partner. In these societies patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is infrequent because of the formal, restrained relationship between a man and his father's sister. Homans and Schneider went further and postulated that in matriarchally organized societies matrilateral cross-cousin marriage is infrequent because the mother's brother assumes the role of a stern, authoritarian guardian, while the father, father's sister and the father's sister's daughter "bask in the warmth of indulgent sentiments" (Ibid, 1968: 502). Both patrilateral and matrilateral cross-cousin marriage are correlated with patrilineal and matrilineal descent. It would appear that the latter proposition put forth by Homans and Schneider was not considered by Lévi-Strauss, who asserted that the structure of exchange does not depend upon descent (c f Lévi-Strauss, 1949: 599).

With regard to Lévi-Strauss's application of mathematical techniques to the analysis of marriage rules and kinship systems Needham noted that such analyses are too theoretical and too far

removed from actuality. Furthermore, statistical correlations are not sufficiently informative. In order to understand the marriage customs of any society it is necessary to make a total structural analysis of the recorded facts on that society. He drew the conclusion that "... permutation models are neither more convenient nor more precise than non-mathematical means of comprehension" (1971: xxxii). Harris also shares Needham's view and writes "because of the fact that the entities with which Levi-Strauss is concerned in the final analysis are mental structures..., there spreads over the entire corpus of his work a paralysis of reality" (1968: 497).

Kuper has also pointed out that another problem which is raised by the Levi-Straussian alliance theory is that the units which exchange women are not clearly defined. Furthermore there is no certainty whether the actors in the various marriage systems conceive of marriage in the manner in which he does (1973: 210).

3.5.2.2 The descent theory

Descent theory, like the Levi-Straussian alliance theory derives its inspiration from the postulations of Durkheim and Mauss. Unlike the alliance theory, however, descent theory takes an inside view of the structure of groups. Adherents of this theory regard marriage as a device by means of which groups ensure their growth and continued existence. They also view it as an instrument for the establishment of families within which heirs are legitimately born and the young are prepared for adult roles. The major exponents of this theory are Meyer Fortes, Jack Goody, Kathleen Gough and to a certain measure Raymond Firth (Kuper, 1973: 214; Schneider, 1965: 25).

It shall not be possible within the limited scope of this discourse to discuss the views of all these scholars on marriage. Attention shall, therefore, be limited to the writings of Meyer Fortes, whose views do to a large extent reflect the theoretical stance of the others.

3.5.2.2.1 Meyer Fortes

Meyer Fortes vigorously defended and refined the Radcliffe-Brownian theoretical model. He, like Radcliffe-Brown, operated in terms of the equilibrium model of the kinship system, which he perceived in jural terms as a system of rules, rights and duties pertaining to particular kinship roles.

His views on marriage were stated in the introduction to the symposium "Marriage in Tribal Societies" (1962), which he edited. In his opinion the fundamental problem in the comparative study of marriage is "... that of the regulation, conditions and criteria governing the choice of a spouse and the procedure of espousal entailed thereby. For everything connected with marriage is directed to this outcome" (Ibid: 2).

He defined marriage as "... the sanctioned movement from the filial status of son or daughter to the conjugal status of husband or wife" (Ibid: 8). This, he said, applies particularly to first marriages. Marriage is, furthermore, "... the bridge between the kinship side and the affinal side of the dichotomy that is of necessity built into the total genealogically defined domain of social relations which we find in every social system" (Ibid: 2). According to him marriage is basically a transaction between two parties, namely the kin-groups of the bride and the bridegroom. In this transaction these two parties stand in opposition, and each one of them aims at profiting rather than losing. In the conduct of the transaction they act in accordance with a body of rules which include jural and moral ordinances which emanate from the politico-jural domain of social structure and are enforceable by the recognized agencies of society. Included also are conventions and certain constraints, which partly limit and partly direct the strategies used in the transaction (Ibid: 3). In his opinion whenever the selection of spouses and the formalities of marriage are studied, the aim is to establish the kind of bargain that is struck, the identity of the parties involved and the nature of the rules which govern the transaction.

According to him the "Capital Value" in the transaction is the body of rights in the bride's sexual and reproductive capacities and the domestic services which accompany them. It is this "Capital Value" which is the subject of bargaining between the parties negotiating the marriage. The "Capital Value" is handed over to the bridegroom's kin-group in exchange for bridewealth. These "values" which are exchanged in the transaction tend towards a balance. The balance, however, is very often precarious because the parties do not usually meet their respective transactional obligations in full at the conclusion of the bargaining exercise. The bridegroom and his kinsmen deliver the bridewealth in instalments over a long period while the bride and her kinsmen also fulfil their obligations seriatim.

He says that valuables exchanged at marriage fall into two main categories. There are "Prime Prestations" and "Contingent Prestations". "Prime Prestations" are those valuables which are given in exchange for the bride's domestic, sexual and reproductive services. Their nature and amount is stipulated by the laws of the society to which the parties to the marriage belong. It is these which create the jurally binding link between the parties to the marriage transaction, and makes possible the movement of the bride and the bridegroom from filial to conjugal status.

"Contingent Prestations", on the other hand, are not of legal importance in as far as the transfer of the bride's fecundity and domestic services are concerned. Their nature and quantity is not fixed by law and is decided upon per mutual agreement by the parties involved in the transaction. They are given and reciprocated for the purpose of creating and preserving goodwill between the groups entering into an affinal relationship.

The Fortesian approach to the study of marriage has merit in that it focusses attention on and illuminates the juristic aspects of marriage. It also contributes towards our understanding of how marriage provides for the structural continuity of kinship

groups. However, its emphasis on the equilibrium of the structural components of these groups makes it ill-suited to the explanation of conflicts and inconsistencies, particularly in situations of culture change.

3.6 Theoretical perspective of this study

Mc Fee writes: "The perspective to take, the analytic tool to use, is the one that best answers the questions you choose to ask... Alliance theories deal with social structure: how parts of a system are shaped and perpetuated by links of reciprocal marriages, or how marriages are used to link potentially hostile groups into a more or less stable political structure. This is a view from inside a social system; it is little concerned with how people learn and play their roles or with how descent and affiliation are handled. These phenomena are taken as given; for it is the maintenance of the structural aspects of the system that is under consideration. For many purposes this perspective is useful" (1976: 206).

Descent theories, on the other hand, are rooted in questions of a completely different kind. The questions which are posed by descent theorists aim at establishing how marriages provide for the creation of institutions for the enculturation of the young and the transmission of offices and property rights from one generation to the next. Descent theories stress that marriage functions primarily to confer the status of legitimacy on children (Ibid: 206).

Kuper opines that Alliance theories on marriage have been successfully used in the interpretation of South-East Asian ethnographic data and, therefore, seem well suited for that area. However, descent theories were developed on the basis of African ethnographic material and are for that reason well-suited to the analysis of African marriage (1973: 215). In the light of this, we shall choose to be guided by the writings of the descent theorists in our analysis of Mkhwanazi marriage patterns.

In our opinion the analysis of contemporary changes in Mkhwanazi marriage practices demands a diachronic perspective. There is a need to relate what is currently observed to the past, not only to discover and evaluate those factors which have been instrumental in its emergence, but also to endeavour to estimate their further consequences.

CHAPTER 4

THE CHOICE OF A PARTNER

4.1 Factors which influence choice

Tribesmen do not mate at random or indiscriminately. They attach great significance to the mutual suitability of lovers and spouses. Such mutual suitability is decided upon on the basis of a number of considerations or factors. Some of them are the following:

4.1.1 Physical features

4.1.1.1 Introduction

The relative concepts of "beauty" (ubuhle) and "ugliness" (ububi), play an important role in the courtship activities of the abaKhwanazi. Around these concepts has developed a very rich descriptive nomenclature, which covers almost all conceivable types of bodily features and complexions. The descriptive vocabulary comprises words which give, on the one hand, an objective description of the bodily features of a person and, on the other, words and expressions, which over and above describing, also express the speaker's disposition and attitude towards the person being referred to. Some of these words and expressions derive from olden times and are generally used and understood by all tribesmen. In essence this descriptive vocabulary of old, describes by way of analogy and association the stature and complexion of people in terms of certain animate and inanimate objects observable inside and outside the tribal environment. However, other descriptive terms and expressions are periodically coined by individuals in the tribe or imported from outside the tribal area, more especially from urban areas, where some

of the tribesmen are employed. The application of these words of internal and foreign origin is often limited to certain areas in the tribal area and to certain age groups, more especially the youth.

The preferences of members of the tribe on the question of how bodily features influence the choice of a lover and a marital partner shall be outlined. The descriptive nomenclature of the tribe shall be explored briefly to illustrate the concepts of "beauty", "attractiveness" and "repugnance" as they obtain among members of the tribe.

4.1.1.2

Some salient features observed in selection

What constitutes beauty or contributes to the beauty of a woman and the handsomeness of a man is very difficult to ascertain, as tastes and concepts of beauty differ considerably among abakwanazi, but the following are some of the bodily features which are scrutinized in the choice of lovers and spouses:

4.1.1.2.1

Complexion

Tribesmen, irrespective of their degree of acculturation, consider complexion an important element of bodily appearance. They distinguish two primary shades of skin colour: the darkskinned and the light-skinned.

A woman with a bright, yellowish complexion, devoid of blemishes is admired by both traditionalists and non-traditionalists, provided her other bodily features are admirable. Various phrases are used to describe her. She is often described as: uphumalangasikothe, umhlophe odl'ilanga or amatulwa evuthwa. The first of these phrases describes her as resembling the sun at sunrise. The second suggests that she is brighter than the sun; and

the third likens her to the fruit of the wild medlar.

Young men with a light complexion are also admired, provided their other physical features are admirable.

A realization by young women that girls with light skins are desirable and attractive to young men, often prompts them to use various skin-lightening creams and lotions on their faces, and to swallow "blood-purifying" pills at regular intervals, in order to attain and maintain the much-desired smoothness and lightness of the facial skin. Attitudes towards the use of skin-lightening creams, however, vary. The majority of male and female traditionalists interviewed, find this practice repulsive, because they often associate the use of skin-lightening creams with the educated female elite, whose morals they constantly question. In spite of this general negative attitude among traditionalists, some of their young women do use these creams. Members of some Zionist separatist sects also disapprove of the use of these creams. They maintain that the use of such creams is a negation of God's desire to have races with a variety of skin colours.

The use of skin-lightening creams among young men is very uncommon. Those few non-traditionalist young men who use these creams are severely mocked by traditionalists and non-traditionalists of both sexes.

In spite of the general admiration of persons with light complexions, there is a general aversion for albinos.

Some tribesmen prefer persons with dark skins to persons who are light-skinned. Three shades of darkness were referred to by informants during interviews:

First there are those persons who have a sombre, dark complexion. Such people are described as literally "black" and are often compared to charcoal. Women with such a complexion are regarded as ugly, unless their other bodily features weigh heavily against their unadmired complexion. In the case of men such a complexion is viewed differently by individuals. A man with such a hue may be described by some as having a dignified complexion which befits a man. Others, however, may regard his complexion as repulsive.

Secondly there are people with a reasonably dark complexion, which differs from that described above in that it is manifestly lucid and brilliant. A girl with such a skin colour is often described as indoni yamanzi. Such a person was vividly described as follows by one adult traditionalist man:

"Such a person is not described as black, but is referred to as indoni yamanzi (the fruit of a water myrtle -*syzigium cordatum*). She is black, but her skin is sparkling and clear. Her blackness is inclined towards brownness. In fact she is not black, she just has a dark but glossy skin which gives one the impression that she uses some ointment, and yet it is her blood which sparkles under her skin." (Translated from the vernacular).

The phrase indoni yamanzi, does not only liken the woman's skin colour to the colour of the said fruit, but the woman is seen in the light of the fruit and all its admirable qualities. Young men and women who have such a complexion are admired, provided their other bodily features are admirable. It is also interesting to note

that the brilliance and smoothness of the skin is often associated with purity of the blood and attractiveness in a person. The phrase indoni yamanzi seems to be exclusively used in reference to women.

Thirdly there is a category of persons who can neither be described as light nor dark. Their complexion lies in between these extremes. Such people are described as abantu abangamunwe. This phrase compares their complexion to the colour of the flank of a finger (umunwe). This complexion does not seem attractive nor repulsive.

4.1.1.2.2 Facial features

4.1.1.2.2.1 Smoothness of the skin

Smoothness of the facial skin is admired and pimples (izinduna) and blemishes are regarded as contributing to a person's ugliness or spoiling his or her beauty. Pimples are regarded by both traditionalists and non-traditionalists as a symptom of the impurity of blood. To traditionalists such impurity of the blood is a manifestation of inborn or magically caused repulsiveness (isidina, isigcwagcwa or isichitho). Many members of Zionist separatist churches also share this view. Non-traditionalists rarely ascribe pimples to magical causes. In stead many of them regard pimples and sores as a manifestation of a transient disease which may be cured by medical doctors. Where the cause of the skin eruptions is assumed to be magical, the services of a herbalist or a Zionist prophet are solicited.

Herbalists and witchdoctors invariably prescribe "blood-cleansing" concoctions (izihlanzi) and other charms to remove the pimples and make the person admirable again. Zionist prophets, on the other hand, eschew the use of herbs, and use "holy water" and prayer to achieve the same goal.

4.1.1.2.2.2 Nose shape and size

A number of male and female informants interviewed on their preferences with regard to nose shape and size, indicated a very strong preference and admiration for straight, narrow noses. Broad, flat noses with wide nostrils were described as ugly. Such a feature in the face of a woman is regarded as unfortunate, whereas in the case of a man it may be ignored.

4.1.1.2.2.3 Browridges and eyes

Exceptionally large browridges and deepset eyes are regarded by many tribesmen as disfiguring a person's face. Large, prominent browridges are regarded as izinkelekethe (an escarpment or mountain range). At times a person with such browridges is called ukhophokanethi (a baboon). Deepset eyes are described as izihosha, izigobhe or izihophoqa (clefts or ravines). Other tribesmen refer to a person with deepset eyes and prominent browridges as inkolombela. Doke and Vilakazi describe the latter as: 1. Deep hole, abyss, 2. person with deepset eyes" (1958:578). If the features referred to here are over-shadowed by other admirable bodily features, they are ignored, and they do not seriously threaten a person's chances of being admired by members of the opposite sex.

Bright and shiny eyes of medium size are admired. Large protuberant eyeballs often provoke laughter and are often described as resembling those of an owl. Persistently red eyes are not admired and neither are squint eyes.

4.1.1.2.2.4 The teeth

Large, protruding teeth are disliked. Persons with such teeth are mockingly described as having axe-like teeth. Medium-sized teeth, which are white and always kept clean are regarded as beautiful. Yellowish and brownish teeth are said to be suggestive of lack of oral cleanliness.

Rotten and broken teeth are disliked. The absence of lower and upper front teeth is regarded as spoiling a person's appearance. The absence of the upper incisor next to the canine tooth, however, is regarded by some tribesmen as contributing to a person's beauty or handsomeness. Similarly, a natural gap between the front teeth is admired. Irregularly aligned teeth, and those which are far apart are seen as ugly.

4.1.1.2.2.5 The lips

Protruding, fleshy lips are regarded as ugly, and worse still if the lower lip is hanging. Cracked, unhealthy-looking lips are said to spoil a person's appearance. Naturally red lips are viewed with disfavour. Such lips are often associated with alcoholism in adults, except in cases where persons with such lips are known to be teetotallers.

The wearing of lipstick, especially red lipstick, is condemned by both traditionalists and non-traditionalists. It is detested not only because it makes the lips "ugly", but also because it is believed to be one of the favourite items of toiletry among women of weak character in urban areas. In spite of this general condemnatory attitude, there is a small number of non-traditionalist young women who wear red lipstick, apparently to spite the conservative element in the tribe, and to live up to their personal concept of the beauty of lips.

The impression gained during fieldwork is that dark, thin and relatively smooth lips are the most preferred by both traditionalists and non-traditionalists.

4.1.1.2.2.6 The ears

Medium-sized ears with well-shaped lobes are regarded by tribesmen as beautiful. On the other hand, large

prominent ears are regarded as ugly and are often compared to those of either an elephant or a rabbit. At times such ears are described as pumpkin leaves (amagwagwa). Extremely small ears are also seen as spoiling a person's appearance.

Traditional ear-piercing (ukuqhumbuza/ukuklekla) as described by Krige (1936:81-87), Msimang (1975:213-314), De Jager (1937:31-36) and others, is still practised by all traditionalists. The apertures made in the ears are not only an index of the stage of growth already attained by a person, but they are said to add beauty to a person's ears. Into these apertures are fitted decorated traditional ear-rings (iziqhaza), which are worn by both sexes. These traditional ear-rings are mostly worn on festive occasions, and are rarely seen in the daily apparel of the people.

Non-traditionalist women, with the exception of some members of certain separatist churches, also pierce their ears to facilitate the wearing of Western ear-rings, which are a very popular decorative item. The apertures made by non-traditionalist women are smaller than those made by traditionalists. Apertures made by traditionalists are regarded by non-traditionalists as clumsy and a disfigurement of the ears.

Non-traditionalist men, unlike their traditionalist brothers do not pierce their ears and neither do they wear ear-rings.

4.1.1.2.2.7 The forehead

It was observed that a medium-sized forehead which is relatively proportional to the size of the head is admired more than a large protuberant one.

4.1.1.2.2.8 The jaws and the cheeks

Tribesmen interviewed on these features stated that it is preferable that the jaws should be proportional to the size of the head and face. Large and long jaws, it was said, spoil a person's appearance.

With regard to the cheeks, spokesmen insisted that these should be well-rounded and firm. Dimples in women are said to enhance the beauty of the face. High out-jutting cheek bones are not admired.

4.1.1.2.2.9 The hair

Thick, soft, typically Negroid, pitch-black hair enjoys more admiration than hard, sparse blackish-brownish hair. This view applies to both traditionalists and non-traditionalists. Some non-traditionalists stated that persons with woolly hair, which is indicative of a mixed racial ancestry, have beautiful hair. Most traditionalists interviewed, however, indicated an aversion for such hair. Young persons who have grey hair are seen as having a rare hereditary feature, which however, does not necessarily add to or derogate from the beauty or handsomeness of a person.

Most traditionalists and non-traditionalists stated that it is preferable that a man should have short, well-groomed hair, and that women should have longer, neatly kept hair. It is noticeable, however, that the wearing of long hair by non-traditionalist young men is becoming very popular in the tribal area. This seems to be the result of external influences, most probably Afro-American influences which come via city dwellers, the press and other media of communication.

Both traditionalists and non-traditionalists admire hair

which has been plaited into beautiful patterns by women. Hair plaiting is very rare among men, but it is occasionally encountered among a small number of traditionalist young men.

Hair stretching with chemicals and hot iron combs is very common among non-traditionalist women. The majority of traditionalist men and women asked to express their views on this practice, showed a very strong negative attitude against it. Non-traditionalist men and women of the parental and grand-parental generations have different views. Some admire and encourage it, while others vehemently despise it. Non-traditionalist young men, with the exception of some persons attached to certain separatist churches, expressed the view that it adds to the beauty of a woman.

The wearing of Afro-wigs has become very common among non-traditionalist young women. Attitudes towards the wearing of these differ. All traditionalists with whom they were discussed expressed a negative attitude against the wearing of such headgear. This negative attitude is also shared by some conservative non-traditionalists. Those who condemn the wearing of wigs maintain that a wig does not only spoil a woman's appearance, it also suggests an unhealthy desire to resemble persons of other racial groups. A growing number of non-traditionalist young men and women, however, are of the opinion that an Afro-wig of the correct size and shape can make a woman beautiful. Other types of wigs do not seem to enjoy as much admiration.

Baldness in young men is generally not admired. Tribesmen maintain that a luxurious, well-groomed beard is beautiful. On the other hand a scanty beard is seen as awkward.

4.1.1.2.3 Stature

With regard to stature traditionalists and non-traditionalists hold similar views. Whatever differences exist are to a large extent personal.

It was observed that tallness, sturdiness, uprightness of posture and a well-developed musculature are admired in men. These features are regarded as elements of handsomeness and are also indicative of virility. On the other hand a tall man with flabby muscles and a stooping posture is not admired. He is described as umdondoshiya oyindengenge. The word umdondoshiya is used to describe all tall persons (c.f Doke and Vilakazi, 1958:167). But the qualificative suffixed to it, viz. oyindengenge, portrays weakness, clumsiness and lack of sturdiness.

Tallness in women enjoys various degrees of admiration. Some persons indicated a preference for reasonably tall women, while others showed indifference to tallness as such. In fact to them tallness seems to be of significance only when it is a prominent complimentary feature to other admirable bodily features. Just as in the case of men, a tall woman with flabby muscles and a stooping posture is not admired. On the other hand, a tall, muscular, powerfully built woman is regarded as clumsy. She is seen as lacking the essential tenderness of body which makes a woman attractive.

Shortness (ubufishane) does not seem to be of particular aesthetic or erotic significance. It would appear to be significant only as a complimentary characteristic to other bodily features. It may contribute to someone's "ugliness", "beauty" or "handsomeness".

4.1.1.2.4 Body size

Extreme obesity in both young men and women is not admired. It is associated with sluggishness, which is detested by both traditionalists and non-traditionalists. Reasonable stoutness,

especially in women is appreciated.

Emaciated persons do not seem to enjoy as much admiration as those who are not. Such individuals are often described as twigs (izinti) or ghosts (izipoki). Men with such a build are described by many women as lacking attractiveness and virility. Thin girls do not seem to capture much male attention, unless their other bodily features are seen as beautiful.

4.1.1.2.5 The breast

Interviews and observation revealed that men are particularly interested in the size of women's breasts. This applies to both traditionalists and non-traditionalists. Reasonably large, trim and upright breasts in young women are admired. Traditionalists are very particular about the posture and shape of these organs. Those interviewed expressed the view that the upright posture of breasts is accurate evidence of a woman's youthfulness and moral rectitude. Flabby, hanging breasts in young women are regarded as suggestive of sexual licence. Non-traditionalist men also expressed appreciation for medium-sized, upright breasts. However, it was observed that many young men of this category of tribesmen are not very particular about the uprightness of these organs. Furthermore, they rarely try to read a young woman's rectitude from the posture of her breasts.

Small breasts are regarded by many tribesmen as lacking beauty and voluptuousness.

A man with a wide, prominent breast is admired.

4.1.1.2.6 The abdomen

Traditionalists and non-traditionalists admire a woman with a slim waist and a non-protuberant abdomen. Such a woman is described as resembling a wasp (umuvi). A slim waist, it is said, accentuates the prominence of the hips and buttocks,

thus making them more captivating.

A man with a slim waist is not admired. A man it is said, should have a waist proportional to the size of his trunk and lower limbs. A large belly is said to be ugly when it occurs in a man with a thin body, but admirable when it occurs in a stout man. Stoutness and a large belly in men are often associated with opulence and dignity.

4.1.1.2.7 The hips and buttocks

Traditionalist and non-traditionalist men maintain that large, shapely and prominent buttocks are beautiful and enticing. However, they emphatically stated that it is not all large buttocks which enhance the desirability of a young woman. They consider massive, protuberant, firm buttocks in young women as voluptuous. One traditionalist man commented as follows on the beauty of buttocks: "If a woman's buttocks are admired, it means that they are long, prominent and firm. They are fully developed. They are not flaccid and hanging. They are erect and they protrude like horns. Some buttocks of this type face upwards and others downwards. Such buttocks are beautiful and enticing. When she walks they tremble rhythmically with admirable firmness. They do not move up and down clumsily. Such large buttocks are even lovelier if they are pitted - the dimples resembling grains of corn! That is what people look for in woman's buttocks." (Translated from the vernacular).

On the other hand, large, flabby buttocks are regarded as ugly and unprovocative. Buttocks of a reasonable size are also admired in women, but they do not seem as captivating as the long and firm. Small flattish buttocks in women are viewed as disagreeable and unenticing. A woman with such buttocks is variously referred to as isishwapha, intshedesi or intsheshelezi. These words mean: small buttocks. At

times such people are described as having no buttocks at all. Although such buttocks do not preclude a woman from enjoying male attention, it would appear that they tend to make her less sexually appealing.

Men with large buttocks are regarded as having a feminine feature and are often ridiculed. The derogatory terms used in respect of women with small buttocks are also applied to men with this feature. Small buttocks in men do not seem to be a serious limiting factor in courtship.

4.1.1.2.8 The thighs and legs

Both traditionalists and non-traditionalists were noticed to have a very keen interest in the shape, size, complexion and degree of smoothness of young women's thighs. Thighs and buttocks, it would appear, are to many tribesmen the seat of sexual appeal. Large, shapely, smooth and bright thighs, it was said, are beautiful, magnetic and sexually stimulating. However, it was pointed out that thighs may be large and shapely, but be still unattractive because of their lack of smoothness and clarity of complexion.

Tribesmen interviewed stated that tiny thighs do not activate a man's imagination, as is the case with the large, shapely and smooth.

The lower legs are also carefully scrutinized by prospective suitors. Beautiful lower legs, it was said, are those which have well-rounded, prominent, firm calves and taper gradually towards the ankles. Whereas such legs catch the fancy of both traditionalists and non-traditionalists, it was noted that the former prefer that they be distinctly large. The lower legs, it was stated, are not of any erotic significance, but they enhance a woman's beauty. Men are also expected to answer to the above description of beautiful legs. In their case, however, the calves should be manifestly muscular

and tough.

Thin lower legs are not admired and are described as imicondo. Doke and Vilakazi describe imicondo as "thin, scraggy, calfless legs" (1958:124). Such legs are at times described as twigs (izinti). If the legs are not extremely thin, they do not prejudice a prospective suitor or girlfriend. In men thin legs are associated with weakness and lack of virility, more especially if the trunk is also small. Persons with large trunks and small legs are seen as abnormally proportioned. Such a physique may make one admirable or detestable in courtship, all depending on one's other personality traits. Large pipe-like legs with firm or flabby muscles are regarded as ugly and are variously described as amabhodlela (bottles) or imibhobho (pipes).

Moderately knock-kneed legs are admired by some persons, more especially if they occur in a person considered handsome or beautiful in terms of other bodily features. The beauty of knock-kneed legs is determined by the presence of other admirable physical features. If such legs occur in a person who is considered ugly, they are said to worsen his or her ugliness. It has to be pointed out that extremely knock-kneed legs are regarded as clumsy irrespective of the appearance of the person's other physical features.

Bow-shaped legs (amagwegwe) also enjoy different degrees of admiration. There is no stigma attached to slightly bow-shaped legs. But extremely bent legs are seen as a disfigurement.

4.1.1.2.9 The feet

Large, flat feet are a source of ridicule and they are regarded as clumsy. Divergent toes which are far apart are also described as ugly. Cracked heels (amansense) are disliked. To be regarded as beautiful, feet should be proportional in size to the person's body.

4.1.1.2.10 Body hair

Body hairiness is admired in men because it is regarded as a manifestation of masculinity. Women with luxuriant body hair were described as somehow masculine. A woman, it was emphatically stated, must have a smooth body. Glabrous men were mockingly described as abnormal, and referred to as izinduna zabafazi (headmen of women), a term strongly resented by those marked by this feature.

From the above it is very clear that in the selection of lovers and spouses young men and women critically view the physical appearance of the desired person. Having a beautiful or handsome lover is a source of pride to the youth of the tribe. Girls that are considered pretty, according to prevailing standards of beauty, are very often the subject of lively discussion among young men, and competition for their affection is very keen. Winning the affection of such a girl enhances the prestige of a young man among his peers. Similarly, being wooed or being a girlfriend to a young man generally considered handsome enhances a girl's self esteem.

It was observed that some young men tend to avoid wooing or publicly associating with women who are considered ugly, for fear of being ridiculed. Such women are known as amagwivi. This term is also applied to ugly men.

Traditionalist and non-traditionalist concepts of beauty do to a large extent coincide. But it is very rare for non-traditionalists to woo traditionalist women who are considered beautiful. A man of this group would rather choose a less attractive woman of the non-traditionalist group. Similarly traditionalist men and women choose lovers and spouses within their own ranks.

In spite of this keen interest in the physical appearance of prospective lovers, there is a general consensus, among both

traditionalists and non-traditionalists, that in the selection of a spouse, physical beauty should not be given the highest priority. All tribesmen point out that physical beauty very often cloisters bad character. To put it in their idiom: "Ikhiwane elihle ligcwala izimpethu" (A fine fig is often infested with maggots). Vilakazi (1962:59-60) and Mbatha (1960:211-212) made the same observation among the Nyuswa of Bothas Hill.

It would therefore appear that as far as courtship for pleasure is concerned, the stress falls mainly on physical appearance. But when it comes to the selection of a marital partner, there is a tendency to shift the emphasis to character and other qualities regarded as more important. These shall be outlined later.

There is a general feeling among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists that a man should not have a lover or a spouse who is older than himself. It is known, however, that there are some young men who have girlfriends who are a year or three older than themselves. This, however, is not very common. With regard to wives it is asserted that women's bodies mature and wither quickly. One should marry a woman whose physical appearance can still match his even after the birth of several children. Bodily youthfulness is associated with attractiveness, whereas old age is often associated with ugliness. For this reason almost ninety-nine percent of the men in the tribe are married to women who are three or more years younger than themselves. Men married to women of their own age or older are very few and are exceptions.

4.1.2

Character

In selecting a lover, especially a prospective marital partner, traditionalists and non-traditionalists place particular emphasis on good character. They state emphatically that what ensures the success of marriage (umshado) and well-being of a family (umuzi), is the good character of both spouses.

Parents, therefore, always try to ensure that their children choose as prospective spouses morally upright persons from reputable families. It was repeatedly stated by informants that the character of a prospective bride or bridegroom can be deduced from the moral rectitude of his/her parents. If they are known for lack of morality, according to traditional Zulu or Christian standards, it is assumed that they will transmit these to their children. Children are strongly discouraged from choosing their spouses from such families.

To ensure a desirable choice of marital partners, traditionalist and non-traditionalist parents try to encourage their children to marry persons born and bred in the tribal area, because their family and personal background will be known. They always try to establish who their daughters' lovers are and who their sons are courting. If a son's or daughter's choice is deemed inappropriate, pressure is exerted upon him or her to dissuade him or her from establishing or perpetuating the undesirable relationship with the person in question. However, if the choice is regarded with favour, parents, relatives and friends try not to miss any opportunity to encourage the young man or woman with favourable remarks.

Traditionalists tend to show preference for tribal endogamy. They try to inculcate in their children an attitude of suspicion towards strangers from remote areas. As a result of this, many traditionalist young men and woman obtain their lovers and spouses either in the tribal area or from adjacent tribal areas (e.g. Dube, Zungu, Mzimela, Nzuza and Zulu tribal areas)(see map 2). A small number of traditionalists do obtain lovers and spouses from remote tribal areas. In spite of many traditionalist young men working in Durban and other remote industrial centres they rarely obtain their spouses there.

They travel home during the week-ends to court the local girls, they wish to marry. If they show no interest in the local

girls, it is not uncommon for their parents and relatives to court the girls on their behalf, to ensure that they marry girls whose character is known.

Local endogamy ¹⁾ among the non-traditionalists is sometimes impossible because young men and women prefer spouses of equal educational standard, who are still very few in the tribe. Many of them therefore marry outside the tribal area. Non-traditionalist young men and women have a relatively strong feeling of independence in matters of courtship and they initiate and conduct their love affairs secretly. This makes it difficult for their parents to interfere with their choice of lovers.

With regard to a prospective bride, humility (ukuthoba) and respect (inhlonipho) are said to be the most essential qualities expected. These qualities, it is said, manifest themselves in the manner of addressing and treating people in everyday life, and also in the manner in which she conducts herself in public. Ideally a prospective bride should have a warm amicable personality and show regard for the needs and feelings of others. Her respect for others should find expression in self-control, tact and few words in speech. Should she have cause to be angry, she should not be moody or express her feelings in an undignified manner.

Neatness and love for work make a woman a desirable spouse and daughter-in-law. She must be industrious and generally active in the performance of all domestic feminine duties. Among traditionalists she is expected to fetch water, collect

1) By 'local endogamy' is meant the tendency of marrying persons living within roughly twenty-five km of the tribal area.

wood, help in the hoeing of the lands and keep her parents' homestead tidy. Non-traditionalists whose economic circumstances also enforce the performance of these traditional activities, have the same views regarding a prospective bride. In those families where coal is used instead of wood, or where tractors are used for tilling the lands, a girl enjoys exemption from these traditionally feminine duties. But she is expected to help in the performance of all other womanly chores.

Slovenliness (ubunuku) and laziness (ubuvila) are uncompromisingly condemned, and any woman who is known to be suffering from these defects is considered unsuitable as a wife.

Honesty and steadfastness are also considered important qualities in a woman; and this applies to both traditionalists and non-traditionalists. A woman who has changed lovers many times and who has had many lovers simultaneously, is regarded as having a weak character. She is described as "isifebe", "umondindwa", or "isihobho" (all these words mean: a wanton woman), and is considered unsuitable for marriage. Tribesmen assert that if looseness of character marks a woman's life before marriage, she will continue her habits even after marriage. Such women are good as lovers but should be avoided for matrimonial purposes.

A prospective bride, it is said, must show independence of thought, but also show readiness to accept advice and admonition. She must be firm and resolute without being stubborn. Further, the ideal bride is expected to be kind and generous. Tribesmen, irrespective of their degree of acculturation, condemn stinginess and selfishness.

A boisterous, talkative girl is also considered unsuitable for marriage. It is said that such a woman often causes quarrels and by her behaviour disgraces all those associated with her. A woman, it was emphatically stated, must avoid gossiping

(ukuhleba) and discoursing on things told in confidence. A woman who cannot keep secrets is regarded as dangerous, because she can after marriage, divulge even the most intimate secrets of her husband's family.

With regard to the consumption of alcohol, traditionalists do not frown upon moderate consumption of traditional sorghum beer by women. Such beer is regarded as both a beverage (isiphuzo) and food (ukudla), and is served to all irrespective of age or sex. However, just as the abuse of food (ukuminza) is disapproved of, so is the abuse of sorghum beer. Young women in particular, should never get drunk as this casts a bad reflection upon their character. In this regard women past child-bearing age are exempted. Beer, unlike sorghum beer, is not regarded as food; but is regarded as an intoxicant. Its consumption by women is discouraged by traditionalists.

Non-traditionalists have different attitudes towards the drinking of liquor by women. Staunch Christians openly condemn liquor drinking by women. Other non-traditionalist informants maintain that they have nothing against moderate liquor consumption by women. Indeed some of them do entertain their girlfriends and wives to liquor.

The most popular argument raised against drinking by women is that liquor is the primary factor responsible for the decadence of feminine virtue. The consumption of liquor by women is invariably associated with sexual licence and irresponsibility. It is asserted that a woman who is drunk cannot effectively manage domestic duties as a wife and cannot educate her children and prepare them for responsible adulthood. Such women are always open to seduction and could commit adultery in their drunken state. As adultery by a wife is a serious offence, tribesmen take all precautionary measures to avoid adultery-ridden marriages.

Tribesmen point out that when their daughters leave the tribal area to work in urban areas, they become exposed to undesirable influences. It is stated that some girls of good character leave the tribal area not drinking at all, but when they come back they arrive having adopted unbecoming modes of behaviour and drinking. Most traditionalists and non-traditionalists, therefore, in spite of economic pressure, refuse to allow their daughters to work and stay in urban areas, because of lack of supervision and control in these areas. A girl's bad behaviour in these areas soon reaches the ears of interested young men in the tribal area and her chances of marriage are lessened. Several young men with a traditionalist outlook, have on occasion jilted their girlfriends going to work in urban areas, for fear of their possible corruption. Some parents with a low educational standard and a very strong traditionalist background are of the opinion that there exists a causal relationship between academic advancement and drunkenness. To justify their claim they quote some educated women and students in the tribal area. Thus in order to avoid losing ilobolo and keeping spinster daughters, some of these parents prevent their daughters from staying long at school.

Smoking by women is condemned by the majority of tribesmen with whom it was discussed. Women who smoke are regarded as moral freaks and a disgrace. Smoking by a woman is invariably associated with bad influences from urban areas. A woman who smokes, therefore, stands a comparatively slim chance of being married among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists.

Tradition prescribes that young men and women should spend most of the time apart. This is still common practice today. A young woman constantly seen in the company of men is soon suspected of moral unsturdiness and uncontrolled sexuality. Girls who have this habit soon become the subject of gossip

among adults in the neighbourhood. The public becomes prejudiced against them and their chances of marriage are lessened. One non-traditionalist young woman said: "Is there any decent girl who is always seen in the company of men? Always hugged by them! When does she cook? When does she collect wood? When does she perform her other domestic duties? Worst of all, this person squats like a man! Now, what type of person is this? Further, she paints her lips (with red lipstick)! You see my son, this girl is corrupt and she will never find a decent husband". (Direct translation).

The attitude expressed above reflects the general tribal consensus on the association of young men and women. In spite of this attitude, young men and women are often seen walking in pairs in public. Parents resent this and ascribe it to the bad example set by some young persons from urban areas, who often visit the tribal area.

A prospective bride is expected to dress modestly according to prevailing traditionalist and Christian standards of modesty. A girl who dresses in a bawdy manner is considered unsuitable for marriage. The wearing of short dresses which show the thighs, and the wearing of tight-fitting jeans which show the bodily configuration are regarded as disgusting and out of keeping with accepted standards of modesty. Trousers are regarded as proper to men only. Some tribesmen, especially traditionalists and conservative non-traditionalists, are of the opinion that the wearing of jeans by girls is a form of morbid exhibitionism. In most cases, therefore, when prospective brides visit the homes of their lovers, they avoid wearing clothes, which may be detested by their prospective parents-in-law.

A prospective bridegroom, just like a prospective bride, is expected to answer to certain behavioural requirements. He is expected by both traditionalists and non-traditionalists

to be an industrious man. When at home, he should help in the performance of all work done by men. He must attend to the cattle, if they have any, plough the lands, cut logs and twigs for the erection and repair of huts and cattle kraal. Girls desirous of marriage refuse to accept work-shy men as lovers for fear of possible neglect after marriage.

Men who are drunkards are regarded as unsuitable for marriage. Girls interviewed were unanimous that drunkenness is very often coupled with irresponsibility. They pointed out that such men do not support their families and they spend most of the time away from home drinking and flirting with other young women. Further, such men often assault their wives and make married life unpleasant. Most traditionalist and non-traditionalist women interviewed insisted on moderate drinking by men. Some traditionalist women stated that a man should preferably not be a teetotaler. A teetotaler, they pointed out, is often unsociable. A man, they say, should drink a little so as to be known and visited by other men.

Smoking, unlike in the case of women, does not affect a man's chances of marriage. This, however, is not applicable to persons, who because of Church influence, regard smoking as a sin. The smoking of dagga is condemned by both traditionalists and non-traditionalists; and whoever is addicted to it is regarded as unsuitable for marriage.

Popularity or flirting with girls among traditionalists does not cause a man to lose face. In fact, it would appear that popularity with women does enhance a young man's desirability as a spouse, in the sense that identification with such a man through marriage is to the girl a source of pride. She regards her marriage to such a popular young man as a victory over other co-girlfriends. Young men who are unpopular with girls, among non-traditionalists are unlikely to be the choicest

lovers. They are referred to with derogatory terms and are often the victims of ridicule. Accepting such a young man is a disgrace to a girl. Some Christian girls, however, indicated an aversion for cassanovas. They regard them as crooks who may even after marriage continue flirting with other women. This attitude reflects the new trend towards a desire for monogamy among Christian tribesmen. A young man who is notorious for impregnating and abandoning girls is feared by the girls.

Young men with criminal records are considered unfit to be given daughters in marriage. Being a parent-in-law or a relative-in-law of a criminal is seen as a disgrace.

Cowardice is a disgrace among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists. A young man who because of cowardice is unable to afford his girlfriend physical protection, is regarded as an unsuitable lover and prospective husband.

Cleanliness, kindheartedness, and honesty are the other qualities expected from a young man chosen as a lover and a prospective spouse.

4.1.3 Ethnic differences

Traditionalists interviewed expressed a strong conviction that there should be ethnic endogamy. They insist that in order to protect the cultural identity of the Zulu people, and the tribe as such, lovers and spouses should be obtained among tribes of the Zulu ethnic group. The ideal is that lovers and spouses should share the same cultural background and their respective kinship groups should at least have some knowledge of each other's moral and socio-cultural background.

Ethnic endogamy is promoted by ethnocentrism. Members of other ethnic groups are regarded with a degree of suspicion and contempt. They are variously referred to as izizwana

(insignificant ethnic groups), or izilwanyana (little beasts). Obtaining or trying to obtain a lover or a spouse from a non-Zulu group is seen as tantamount to self-degradation and the degradation of one's kinship group. It is regarded as a threat to the cultural inheritance of amaZulu; and also as a threat to the establishment of desirable affinal ties on a mutually understood cultural basis. Most traditionalists interviewed expressed the view that meaningful affinal relations can only be established with Zulu persons and not with foreigners.

Extra-ethnic love relations are discouraged in various ways. Some of the most common ways of discouragement are derision and ostracism. As courtship and marriage are essentially group activities which involve relatives and friends, especially among traditionalists, one's choice of a lover and a spouse must be approved by them. Should one start showing interest in non-Zulu persons, his or her relatives and friends ridicule him or her. It is made very clear to the person concerned that if he or she continues encouraging the "illicit" relationship to flourish, he or she shall be assaulted. If the relationship persists in spite of objections the person concerned is assaulted. At times, however, physical force is not used. The person is ostracised and told that members of his lineage shall not co-operate with him until he or she discontinues the undesirable relationship.

Besides adopting these measures, the father or guardian of the person concerned may use his authority and order his son or daughter to discontinue the relationship. As the authority of a father is sanctioned by tribal law and the ancestors one dare not defy such an order. In traditional tribal law if a man defies his father he forfeits the right to claim assistance from his father in the payment of lobolo. In this regard

Vilakazi writes: "If, however, a young man insisted on marrying a woman against the wishes of his family, he would have to be prepared for the consequences of ostracism and non-co-operation from his kinsmen and disrupted family relationships. He would have to be economically independent not only to pay his lobolo, but also to set up his own umuzi. He would also be prepared to incur the displeasure of the ancestral spirits and to deprive himself and his immediate family of all social securities which kinship bonds and kinship reciprocity ensure. The average tribal youth is not in a position to defy both his kinsmen and religious conventions." (1962:60).

With the establishment of sugar-cane farms and eucalyptus plantations in the vicinity of the tribal area, and the founding of sugar and paper mills at Empangeni and Felixton (which are very near the tribal area), and the establishment of the University of Zululand in the tribal area, employment opportunities were created. A number of Thonga men started migrating into the Empangeni and Mtunzini districts. A few Sotho men from the Transvaal also arrived and settled at a compound near the University. The arrival of these men, it is said, was strongly resented. When some of them started roaming about in the tribal area to court women, under the pretext of seeking sorghum beer, they were attacked and assaulted. It was believed that if they were allowed to infiltrate the tribal area, they would ultimately swamp the whole tribal area and produce undesirable ethnic half-breeds.

With the passage of time Magistrate's Courts started taking serious disciplinary action against those who terrorized the foreigners. It thus became impossible to freely assault these men without fear of being fined or imprisoned. Thus physical resistance to extra-ethnic love relations, hitherto very effective in ensuring ethnic endogamy, was considerably weakened.

Furthermore, as contact with Western religious, economic and educational institutions became more intense in the tribal area, the traditional communal spirit, which facilitated resistance against extra-ethnic love relations, started giving way to a trend towards individualism. Accordingly communal tribal censure in the form of derision started losing effect. Whatever remains of it is not sufficiently effective in some sections of the tribe.

Today a large number of tribesmen are Christians and they uphold the idea of the brotherhood and equality of all people. This idea has had the effect of weakening the force of Zulu ethnocentrism among tribesmen. Consequently ethnic exogamy tends to occur more frequently among those who profess Christianity. Traditionalists still show resentment against ethnically mixed love relations, and they resist them very strongly.

A large number of tribesmen are wage earners. This has developed in some a sense of independence from parental and lineage control and assistance. With a few exceptions, all non-traditionalist men interviewed stated that they paid ilobolo on their own without parental assistance. Traditionalist wage earners do get assistance from their parents and relatives in the payment of ilobolo, provided they always submitted their wages to their parents for safe-keeping. The development of this sense of independence among young men has had the effect of weakening the influence that parents can exert in as far as the choice of lovers and spouses is concerned. Threats of withholding assistance and co-operation from those who want to marry non-Zulu persons are becoming less effective.

Presently there is a small number of Thonga, Sotho and Shangana men, who are scattered among the Mkhwanazi tribesmen. Some of them have locally born lovers and spouses. With a few exceptions,

the majority of them have adopted Zulu as a home language, and they are adjusting themselves to the way of life of the abakhwanazi.

Ethnic endogamy, it would appear, is still a cherished ideal, but there is a steady movement away from it.

4.1.4

Kinship

The Mkhwanazi tribe consists of persons who belong to several patrilineal clans. These clans are not localized corporate groups. Fellow clansmen are found interspersed among members of other clans. It is not uncommon for them not to know each other, except in the context of a lineage. Members of the same clan i.e. those who have the same clan name (isibongo) and the same term of salutation (isithakazelo), regard themselves as descendants of the same ancestor, and therefore as blood relatives. Sexual relations among themselves are strictly forbidden. Christianity and school education have not changed this traditional outlook towards clan exogamy.

Before courting a woman a man should first establish her clan membership, so as to avoid unknowingly infringing the rule of clan exogamy. Courting or marrying a person, who in terms of clan membership is a relative, is not only regarded as incestuous, but also as impudent. It is indicative of disrespect for established social norms. To the traditionalists such behavior is a sign of disrespect for the lineage and clan ancestors. It also amounts to the repudiation of socially recognized kinship ties and attendant privileges and obligations. Intra-clan sexual connection incurs ancestral wrath, invites ill-luck and ostracism by society.

One Christian, elderly tribesman commented as follows on clan endogamy:" The marriage of relatives (clansmen) results in the birth of imbeciles and cripples. Children who are born mentally deficient are a punishment to those who break the rule which forbids relatives to copulate. Relatives should respect each other and avoid each other sexually. Should they fall foul of this rule they will produce imbeciles. Sexual intercourse brings a curse upon them."(translated from the vernacular).

Jackson made the same observation among the Xolo of Port Shepstone and wrote:" Contravention of the exogamy rule is regarded as a serious offence. It is believed that a child born from such a contravention will be abnormal and will not survive for long. Such a union will also invite the serious displeasure of the ancestor spirits. Tribesmen often complain that their young people in the cities copulate without determining each other`s clan names beforehand and they speak of the grave risks involved." (1976:19).

Informants state that, in spite of the prohibition on intra-clan copulation, there are some non-traditionalist young men who defy this rule and court women of their own clans, on the grounds that the relationship claimed to exist between clansmen is putative. However, such defiance is very uncommon. Intra-clan sexual connection does not occur between clansmen of the same patrilineage. It occurs mostly where the clansmen are strangers to one another. In such cases the young man deliberately conceals his clan name from the woman and starts wooing her. These love liaisons are merely for sexual pleasure and they last for as long as they remain strictly personal and secret, and for as long as the woman remains ignorant of the young man's clan name. However, as soon as the woman gets to know the man's real clan name, or as soon as the relationship starts

involving the respective lineages of the persons concerned, e.g. when pregnancy occurs, it is likely to founder.

When a girl discovers that she unknowingly fell pregnant by a fellow clansman she either tries to procure an abortion, or to pin genitorship on someone else. When a couple insists on marrying in spite of the prohibitive relationship and parental disapproval, their respective lineages may relent and slaughter a beast to ceremonially erase the clan relationship. Such a concession, however, is not granted to persons of the same patrilineage. It is only granted if the relationship between the clansmen is very distant and tenuous (see diagram). The young man's lineage represented by his father or guardian provides the cow for the ceremony. All present, with the exception of the couple on whose behalf the ceremony is performed, consume the ceremonial victim. The lovers are sprinkled with gall and the ancestors of the two lineages are asked to turn a blind eye to this heinous act of the children. They are implored not to unleash misfortunes and disease upon the two lineages.

This ceremony is known as "ukugeza ubuhlobo" (to wash away kinship) among the abakhwazisi. Vilakazi states that this ceremony is also performed among the Nyuswa and is called "ukubulala igula." (1962:22).

It would appear that the gall used to sprinkle the couple symbolically erases the ties of clanship and their attendant obligations and privileges between the lovers and their respective lineages. Traditionalist informants state that it is only fellow clansmen who entertain each other to

sour milk (amasi) from the same gourd. It is taboo for persons who are not bound by ties of clanship to share milk from the same herd. When the ceremony of "ukugeza ubuhlobo" is performed, members of the lineages involved are told by the officiant that they are henceforth not to drink sour milk from the same gourd. This means that their respective members shall cease to regard each other as blood relatives and shall not be obliged to avoid each other sexually. Among the abakhwanazi it is said, none of the lineages assumes a new clan name.

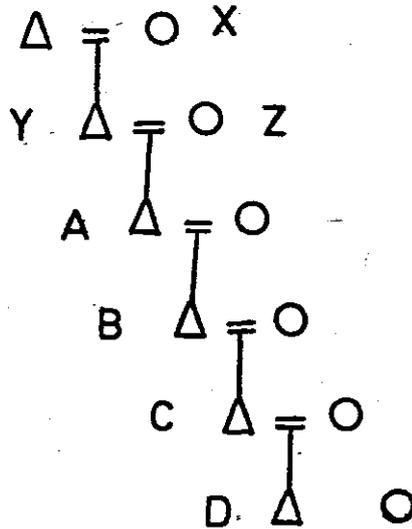
Christain tribesmen do not perform this ceremony. If they discover that a daughter has been impregnated by a fellow clansman they try to procure an abortion to avert disgrace. Further, the sharing of sour milk by non-clansmen is not taboo among Christians. They do recognize the traditional rules relating to the sharing of milk by fellow clansmen. But in their daily lives they seem to attach no significance to it.

The performance of the "ukugeza ubuhlobo" ceremony seems to be grounded on the principle that affinal relations cannot be superimposed on kinship relations. The latter must first be ceremonially erased to be subsequently substituted by the former. La Fontaine as quoted by Fortes (1962:2) made the same observation among the Gisu: "... people cannot be both kinsmen and affines in the same context of social relations. Hence if spouses are kin in their premarital status relations their kinship must be extinguished for them to be able to marry. This is done among the Gisu, and thereupon affinity takes place."

Notwithstanding the fact that one is not a member of one's mother's clan one cannot copulate with or marry a member

of one's mother's clan. Members of the mother's clan are regarded as blood relatives. All male and female persons who belong to the mother's clan and generation are classified as "maternal uncles" and "mother's" respectively. All male and female persons of one's generation, who belong to the mother's clan are abazala (cross-cousins) and are sexually taboo. All members of the mother's clan are natal co-owners of the mother's womb. One essentially traditionalist old man expressed this as follows: "I am a child of the womb of the Dube clan, and I have the blood of the Dube clan in my veins. Therefore I cannot marry a woman of that clan. They are all my mothers." (translated from the vernacular).

It was pointed out, however, that the content of the blood of the mother's clan in a person diminishes gradually in subsequent generations as shown in the diagram below:



The blood of X's clan is regarded as very strongly concentrated in Y. However, by the time D is born, it shall be assumed that he has a very low blood content of X's clan. At this stage,

it is said, the relationship between D and the descendants of X's male collaterals is too remote to prevent D from marrying a member of X's clan. In fact some tribesmen expressed the view that D's marriage to any of the descendants of X's male collaterals would revive the dying affinal relationship between D's lineage or clan and that of X.

Although the father's sister's children belong to a different clan, one is not allowed to have sexual relations with them. Tribesmen maintain that patrilateral cross-cousins have one's clan blood in them, obtained through their mother. After five generations, however, the descendants of such cross-cousins can marry without serious opposition from their parents.

One is not allowed to court women of lineages and clans from which one's polygynously married father obtained his other wives.

A father's second and subsequent wives are one's "mothers". The latter's sisters are one's father's potential sororal wives and therefore one's potential "mothers". The latter's children i.e. one's matrilateral parallel-cousins are one's "siblings" and are therefore sexually taboo. Although non-traditionalists do not practice polygyny, they nevertheless abide by this rule, which prohibits a person from marrying a women of lineages of one's mother or "mothers".

As soon as these relations become distant and tenuous, they lose their prohibitive force.

One is also not expected to have sexual connection with the siblings of one's mother's brother's wife or wives. Such connection is not incestuous, but is considered indecent. The children of the siblings of one's mother's brother's wife are not taboo and sexual connection with them is not frowned upon.

Having sexual relations with or marrying the divorced spouses of paternal and maternal kinsmen is not allowed, though there are no prohibitive kinship ties. The major reason for this prohibition is that the relationship referred to would cause ill-feeling and enmity. One is also not expected to have a love relationship with a paternal or maternal relative's former lover, for the same reason.

A person is not allowed to have sexual intercourse with the illegitimate issue of any of his parents. A father's illegitimate child is regarded as a sibling even if he or she bears a step-father's clan name. Further, one is not allowed to have sexual intercourse with one's step-brothers and step-sisters. Parents are also not allowed to have sexual connection with their step-children, and their own children. People are also not allowed to have sexual relations with their siblings' children, even if the children bear clan names different from their own.

Brothers are allowed to marry women of the same clan or lineage, although this is very uncommon. Similarly sisters do marry into similar clans and lineages. Such marriages are favoured because they strengthen the affinal relationship between the lineages concerned. However, these marriages are very uncommon.

It is considered indecent to marry from the same clan or lineage as one's paternal uncle, because a father's brother's wife's sisters are one's potential sociological mothers.

4.1.5 Educational and occupational status

Educational and occupational status have a profound influence on the selection of lovers and marital partners. Members of the tribe tend to classify themselves into two categories. On the one hand there are those who attended school and went beyond standard six, and on the other hand those who either did not attend school or could not pass standard five or six. The former are referred to as "izifundiswa" and the others "abangafundile" or "amaqaba".

The latter group comprises persons who are essentially traditionalist in outlook and pattern of life. Their mode of life has not yet been significantly altered by Western culture. Kinship ties still play a prominent role in their social organisation, religious activities, economic and political organization. In short, their way of life differs very slightly from that of the Zulu of the past as described, inter alia, by Krige (The Social System of the Zulus, 1936) and Bryant (The Zulu People, 1949).

The former group comprises persons who have mastered the skills of reading and writing, and who have also achieved a certain degree of proficiency in English. In this broad category of the "learned" one finds teachers, nurses, clerks, some business men, policemen, electricians, builders, leaders of non-Zionist Christian Church denominations and others. These occupations demand a relatively long period of effective exposure to specialized systems of Western concepts in Western educational institutions. }

This category of tribesmen are the most acculturated, among the indigenes of the tribal area. They manifest variable Western-oriented patterns of thought and behaviour. They are generally speaking a high income group in the tribe.

Their dwelling houses are modelled along Western lines of architecture. They have Western pieces of furniture and their house-keeping methods are essentially Western-oriented. Their dietary habits and tastes in as far as garments and comfort are concerned, are Western- inclined. Zulu and English newspaper readership is steadily increasing among them, and they have a keen interest in national and international matters. Their ideas on etiquette are a fascinating blend of traditional Zulu and Western concepts of refinement. These constituent ethical concepts operate simultaneously in the daily lives of these people, but the stress laid on either of the two sets of concepts varies from individual to individual and from one situation to the next. In their social life kinship ties are still very important, but their cohesive force, in certain aspects of their lives, is gradually waning. Co-operation on a kinship basis in socio-economic, religious and political matters is decreasing. All persons of this category profess Christianity and are active or inactive members of some of the many non-Zionist Christian church denominations in the tribal area.

These acculturative tendencies tend to create a cultural chasm between the two categories of tribesmen referred to above. From the point of view of the traditionalist tribesmen, the "learned" (izifundiswa) constitute an exclusive socio-cultural class of their own. Underlining this view is the fact that there is, among the group of "learned" tribesmen, a subtle ingroup feeling which is accompanied by a slight, but a detectable superiority complex towards the other group. The "learned" tribesmen tend to regard themselves as the "civilized" (abaphucukile) and the "unlearned" traditionalist section of the tribe as "uncivilized" (amaqaba). On the other hand, persons of the literate class are regarded by the traditionalists as deculturated and culturally warped; and they are often sarcastically referred to as ositshuz'mi

(the excuse-me-people) or ositshuzana (the diminutive and derogatory form of the "excuse-me-people). At times they are called self-styled Whites i.e. abelungummyama (White Negroids).

Among traditionalists there is also a strong ingroup mentality and a strong feeling of cultural self-righteousness. They regard themselves as faithful adherents and custodians of traditional Zulu culture. In matters of morality they regard themselves as better than the literate class. They assert that the "learned" (izifundiswa) have no respect (inhlonipho); they are conceited, deceitful and inclined to abuse liquor. The "learned" return the compliment by saying that the "unlearned" are wild, boisterous in manner, uninformed, crude and slovenly in their culinary and house-keeping methods. They are conspicuous by the dissonance of the colours of their attire, and the general quality of their garb.

Because of these attitudes of mutual exclusion between these two groups of tribesmen, the potential for intimate association and courting among their members is very low. These groups, therefore, tend to be endogamous. Members of the literate class tend to court and marry among themselves; and this applies equally well to the traditionalists. Members of both groups expressed the view that courtship and marriage between their respective members would create many practical problems which would jeopardize harmony between the spouses or lovers, because they live in different cultural worlds which have been unequally influenced by Western culture.

Both literate and illiterate males of the tribe emphatically assert that it is unwise for a man to have a lover or a wife who has higher educational qualifications than himself.

Traditionalist young men seem to fear wooing "learned" girls. Those interviewed complained that these girls are conceited and look down upon them. Others asserted that "learned" girls have poor characters and are deceitful. For this reason they never woo them. Among the "learned" tribesmen there is a feeling that a man should have a lover or a wife who is at least two or three educational standards below himself. Educational status, it is said, may give a woman a feeling of superiority and independence. This is diametrically opposed to the traditional concept of a woman's position in relation to a man in the tribal community. A man, it is said, would find it difficult to exercise his authority upon a wife who is better educated than himself.

Women interviewed on this subject surprisingly supported the male view that a man should not marry a woman who is educationally better qualified than himself. In practice, however, it appears that this ideal is not always achieved. There are many young men in the tribe who have lovers with educational standards equal to their own; and in some cases even better qualified than themselves. The gap in educational qualifications is, however, rarely very wide. During interviews none of the "learned" young men acknowledged having an "unlearned" girlfriend. Observation revealed, however, that there are a few of these - young men who have girlfriends with low educational achievements.

There is a feeling among the literate tribesmen that persons qualified for certain professions should marry among themselves. It is said, for example, that a teacher should not marry a domestic servant (ukhishini - kitchen girl), even if in terms of academic achievement she belongs to the "learned" group. The ideal is that a teacher should marry a lady teacher, a nurse or a woman doing any other "respectable" white-collar job. Informants further asserted that a

lady teacher or a nurse and a labourer husband would make the most incongruous pair, even if the labourer qualifies for membership in the "learned" class.

Some tribesmen have discriminatory attitudes towards persons practising certain professions. They have, for instance, an attitude of distrust towards nurses. They believe that the nursing profession has a potential of destroying a woman's feeling of sympathy and respect for life. Some even went further to express fear that a nurse can use drugs pilfered from hospital to poison her husband. Cases are known where certain men, with a traditionalist background, threatened to withdraw all assistance to their sons who wanted to marry nurses. In certain circles male teachers are regarded as immoral and heavily given to intoxicants, and are therefore considered unsuitable spouses. In conclusion it may be stated that educational qualifications and occupational status appear to divide tribesmen into mutually exclusive endogamous categories, but these categories are not always clearly distinguishable.

incongruous pair

4.1.6 Socio-economic status

Economic status, just like educational and occupational status, plays an important role in the selection of lovers and spouses.

Traditionalists and non-traditionalists distinguish three socio-economic classes, viz. izicebi/izigwili/ izikhumkane (the wealthy), izichaka/ izihlupheki/izilambi (the poor) and those who are in-between these two extremes. The latter category is not referred to by any specific name.

In the classification of persons into these socio-economic classes both traditional Zulu and Western indices of wealth are used. Traditionalists, because of their essentially agricultural and pastoral way of life, tend to stress the traditional agrarian indices rather than the Western in placing persons in the tribal socio-economic hierarchy. Non-traditionalists, on the other hand, do acknowledge traditional symbols of wealth, but in classifying people they tend to focus attention on typically Western indicators of wealth, because their economic way of life is Western-inclined.

Among traditionalists visible manifestations of wealth or economic well-being are the possession of a large herd of cattle, large numbers of poultry, goats, sheep and pigs, large sugar cane and maize fields, vegetable gardens, a large homestead with several huts and a number of wives. Having a flourishing Western style retail business, a motor car and a tractor are also construed to be indicative of economic well-being. The possession of large amounts of money is also seen as a symbol of opulence; but unlike the items mentioned above, money does not avail itself to direct and immediate public perception.

Non-traditionalists also attach some value to traditional symbols of wealth in assigning persons places in the socio-cultural stratification. But because their lives have been strongly influenced by Western culture, they have a different concept of wealth. For instance, to them a large, European style house with Western furniture would be considered more indicative of wealth than a large traditional Zulu homestead with many huts. A flourishing business, a growing bank account, and a motor car are also regarded as indices of economic well-being. Those who possess the above in striking numbers are referred to as izicebi or izigwili. They enjoy the highest socio-economic status and are respected. They constitute an exclusive class of their own in the tribe, and they tend to be class endogamous.

The next class, which includes persons who are neither rich nor poor enjoy a slightly lower socio-economic status. The respect they command in the tribe depends on their economic progress and their eminence in other spheres of tribal life.

Those who are obviously struggling to make ends meet are called izichaka or izilambi (people who starve) and they do not enjoy as much respect and prestige as the other two classes.

Wealthy parents, among traditionalists and non-traditionalists wish their children to marry from and into equally well-to-do families. Some members of this class expressed the view that it would be unwise, for instance to give one's daughter in marriage to poor people (izilambi), because she would find it difficult to adjust to their standard of living and would be in danger of starving (ukubulawa yindlala). Because of this attitude, rich parents do try at times to match their daughters with sons of rich people. Differences

in levels of acculturation between rich traditionalists and rich non-traditionalists make it difficult for them to intermarry. Instead of allowing their children to marry rich traditionalists, rich non-traditionalists would rather give their children in marriage to non-traditionalist persons of "middle-class" families whose wealth appears promising.

A number of informants in the traditionalist and non-traditionalist "middle-classes" expressed a strong desire to marry girls of the wealthy class so as to enjoy whatever economic advantage may be brought by such marriage. In this way they could uplift themselves to the higher class. Others, however, expressed fear for girls from rich families, and pointed out that daughters of wealthy people are often spoiled and are fastidious and would be very difficult to please with meagre economic resources. Some girls of the "middle-class" and poor class aspire to have husbands of the wealthy class for purposes of economic security and comfort. Others, however, showed preference for persons of their own economic class. Judging from responses of female informants, it would appear that it is only a few individuals among girls who do not give a measure of priority to socio-economic status in matters of marriage. The same applies to some men.

Intermarriage between the poor and the rich is rare, but it does occur; and marriage between persons of the "middle-class" and the rich is very common. Marriage between the poor and those of the "middle-class" is also not uncommon. Generally speaking it would appear that the tendency among tribesmen is to marry persons of their own socio-economic status and who have attained the same level of acculturation. Deviations are, however not uncommon.

Writing on the Nyuswa, Vilakazi made observations very

similar to our own among the abakhwanazi:" It is considered a good thing to marry a girl from a well-to-do family or with social position. This is often expressed as 'marrying the child of people who do not starve'. It is always given an explanation that if a woman comes from a poor family, she will have developed the habit of 'counting grains' (like pinching pennies) and will not know how to dispense hospitality." (1962:60).

CHAPTER 5

COURTSHIP

5.1 Introduction

Courtship is an important aspect of tribal life, because it is the cradle of marriage and resultant affinal and kinship ties, which play an important role in the regulation of tribal life. All young men are expected to court and marry so that, as tribesmen put it, their mothers may have daughters-in-law (omakoti) to assist them in domestic duties. However, the primary objective of courtship and marriage is the reproduction of children for the perpetuation of the patrilineage. Girls also have a duty to accept lovers and marry so that their fathers may receive ilobolo (bridewealth) in exchange for their reproductive capacity. To a parent the participation of a child in courtship activities is conclusive evidence to the public that he or she produced a normal human being. Further, it gives a parent hope that he or she will one day achieve the much desired and honourable status of a grandparent and founder of a lineage. It is therefore not uncommon to hear parents subtly encourage their adult sons and daughters to obtain lovers and spouses.

Failure to win the admiration and friendship of members of the opposite sex, or lack of interest in them, is a disgrace and it causes much anxiety, especially on the part of the parents. It is construed to suggest affliction by natural or magically caused sexual abnormality or repulsiveness. In such cases fervent attempts are made to purge the afflicted person of his abnormality by the use of cleansing medicines and love potions. It is every young man's desire to be acclaimed an isoka. Dekker en Ries

define an isoka as "'n haan onder die nooiens" (1958:421). Bryant says that this word means "any youngman of whatever age; a bachelor; the 'young man' or sweetheart of a particular girl; young man who is a 'sweetheart' or general favourite among the girls" (1905:595). Colenso says the term refers to an "unmarried man; handsome young man, sweetheart, accepted lover; a young man liked by the girls" (2905:554). Doke and Vilakazi say that originally this word meant a young man who had passed through the circumcision school and one old enough to commence courting. They also say that it also refers to a "young man popular among girls" (1958:763).

Popularity of a girl among men very often raises eyebrows and it may earn her the odious reputation of being wanton (isifebe).

It should be pointed out that as a result of the varied effects of Christian teachings and Western educational and social institutions on the tribal population, there now exist a wide range of attitudes towards courtship. Traditionalists and some Christian tribesmen view courtship with complaisance, and they regard it as a remunerative and constructive sport for the youth. To them dalliance within the confines of the tribal code of morality is not a disgrace. On the other hand, there are certain categories of Christians and learned persons who view courtship, in its traditional and new forms, as an avenue to corruption and sexual licence. They regard it as something to be ashamed of and thoroughly concealed or suppressed.

Traditional patterns of courtship co-exist with new forms which are variable blends of traditional and Western modes of courtship. Traditionalists initiate and conduct their love relations with unabashed 'openness', and in relative

accordance with accepted traditional standards of decorum. On the other hand, some Christian tribesmen who have had some years of formal school education, have a tendency of conducting their love relations either with extreme secrecy or openness which exceeds traditional bounds. The Christian condemnatory attitude towards premarital sexual activity seems to be partly responsible for this proclivity to secrecy. Some Christians expressed the view that secrecy in love relations is an expression of modesty. Traditionalists, on the other hand, view such secrecy with genuine suspicion and they regard it as a typically urban strategy for facilitating deceit and trickery in love relationships. Further, they point out that, such secrecy makes the supervision and control of the sexual life of the youth impossible. The unusual openness with which some youths conduct their love relations seems to be a manifestation of rebellion against both the traditional and Christian codes of conduct. This sort of conduct is becoming a serious subject of concern among the tribesmen.

5.2 Ukuqomisa (Wooing)

Colenso defines the word ukuqomisa as meaning to "make to choose, put the question to a girl as a young man" (1905:504). Doke and Vilakazi say that it means to woo or court (1958:710). Bryant explains it as meaning to court or to woo a girl (1905:541). These definitions of the word are similar to the tribal definition.

5.2.1. Wooing among Traditionalists:

Among traditionalists as soon as a boy reaches puberty he is expected to start going about wooing girls. The traditionalist view is that at puberty a young man's blood starts prompting him to look for female company. Such a

desire is regarded as quite normal and as a sign of sexual health. They therefore advocate that it should be properly channelled for satisfaction within the tribally approved limits of courtship.

As courting among traditionalists is regarded as a skill which requires glibness, tact and patience, it is considered appropriate that before a youth starts courting on his own, he should place himself under the tutelage of his elder brothers and or elder friends in order to learn by observation how to broach the subject of love to girls and also the various techniques of persuading and convincing them to accept him as a lover. On occasion his brothers or elder friends send him to dispatch messages to the girls they woo, so as to enable him to overcome his initial coyness towards girls. They also teach him the techniques of lovemaking. In addition to this they also show him various herbs which he may use to cleanse himself in order to make himself lovable to girls. They also equip him with knowledge of herbs to use in order to make his rivals repugnant to the girls he courts.

On occasions when he accompanies his elder siblings or friends on their courting expeditions, a traditionalist youth is shown girls and asked to point out the one he fancies. This he does secretly without drawing the attention of the intended girl, and her comrades.

The act of choosing a girl to woo is known as ukuxibula. The girl thus chosen is henceforth referred to as his ixila. On this occasion of choosing a girl to court, the young man does not show any special interest in her. He greets her, introduces himself to her, finds out to which clan and lineage she belongs, and engages in general conversation with her and her friends. If the young man's choice is

deemed poor, he is immediately discouraged from courting her, and asked to make another choice or else a girl may be suggested to him. As courtship among traditionalists is essentially a communal activity, it is expected that his choice should be in accord with the general feeling of his siblings and friends. Refusal to heed the objections of friends and relatives may lead to a withdrawal of support and assistance in his courtship activities.

After the choice of the girl has been made, her daily movements are closely watched so as to determine the best time and place for meeting her for actual wooing. The greater part of the period between ukuxibula and courting is devoted to scrutinizing the girl's character and physique. Public opinion towards her is also measured to avoid association with a girl held in low esteem. Should her character be found wanting, or public opinion hold that she is ugly, the young man may be discouraged from making advances at her.

Having probed into the moral rectitude of the girl he wants, and ascertained that public opinion is favourable towards her, a traditionalist young man, will then, in collaboration with his colleagues decide on the day and place to accost her. The ideal is to surprise her alone whilst she is collecting wood in the bush, drawing water at a fountain or at any place where there is a good prospect of talking to her in privacy.

A suitor is expected to avoid courting a girl in front of her relatives. Courting a girl at home or at any of her relative's homes is prohibited, and it is regarded as disrespectful. The rule is that whoever infringes this rule should be beaten up.

Among traditionalists there are various ways of broaching the subject of love to a girl. However, all these seem to be variations of one orthodox method which involves greeting the girl, asking her clan name, and her mother's clan name (if the courting couple do not know each other), finding out the clan name of her lover (if she has any at the time), and ultimately introducing the subject of his desire to establish a love relationship with her.. The purpose of asking the clan name of the girl, that of her mother, and that of her lover, is to avoid unknowingly infringing incest taboos and causing friction between clansmen.

There are certain routine expressions which are normally used to communicate a desire to have a love relationship with a girl. These include, inter alia, saying the following to a girl:

"Ngiyakuthanda nkosazana". (I love you lady).

"Ngifuna uzongiphembela umlilo kwethu nkosazana"

(I want you to make fire at my father's homestead lady).

Usually the girl's reaction to these initial overtures is either hostile or conveniently cold. Tradition holds that it is only a girl of weak character who will during the first few encounters with a suitor show interest in him. A suitor, it is said, should demonstrate his sincerity by patience and endurance. With the passage of time, however, the attitude of indifference may either gradually change to indulgent coyness or remain unchanged, all depending on whether the girl is interested in the young man or not.

After declaring his love to the girl a young man persistently waylays her and pesters her with solicitations. On each occasion he tries various strategies to trick her into silence

of consent. If she is difficult and unmanageable, he consults his more experienced siblings and friends for advice. They analyze her words and behaviour as reported to them, and suggest new strategies. These failing, recourse is made to a witchdoctor.

Medicinemen (izinyanga) invariably ascribe the girl's hardness of heart to the boy's repulsiveness which may be magically caused by rival co-suitors or be natural repugnance acquired at birth. Such a condition of repulsiveness is known as isigcwagcwa, isinyama or isidina. When 'thrown' at him (ukuphonswa), he picks it up by walking over a magically treated object buried in a foot path by a jealous rival. When it has been acquired in this way, it is known as ilumbo or umbhulelo. Otherwise it is sent by a magical spell i.e. by calling the name of the person intended for repugnance in a horn or claypot filled with evil medicines, and simultaneously wishing him evil, and repulsiveness.

Isinyama or isidina manifests itself in a variety of ways. First, it may manifest its presence in a person through a wide range of offensive odours, which are only perceptible to the girl. Such magically caused odours differ according to the type of herbs and animal fats used in the concoction. There are three notorious odours which were mentioned by informants: First, a rival suitor may cause his enemy to smell like a sweating horse. Such a smell is known as umsanka. Secondly, a jealous co-suitor may decide on causing his adversary to smell like a he-goat (impongo). This odour is known as iququ lembuzi (c.f Vilakazi, 1962:48). At times, informants say, one is made to smell like faeces.

These smells, it is asserted, cannot be got rid of by washing or applying perfumes, because they are generated by magical

concoctions embedded in the blood through magical transfusion; and they come out through the skin pores.

Besides these smells, which exude through the skin, there are other offensive smells which are only discharged through the mouth. The perceptibility of these oral odours may be limited to the girl or be unlimited.

Isinyama may also manifest itself through abnormally large, septic skin eruptions (izinduna) on the face. The worst form of isinyama is that which shows itself in the form of lice - the type of lice one sees on pigs (izintwala zengulube) - on all hairy parts of the body. Shaving and washing with disinfectants is said to be ineffective in the eradication of this vermin. A boring personality, is also said to be a sign of affliction by isinyama. An individual with such a personality is believed to be enshrined in an invisible cloud of depressive, dull darkness.

Having diagnosed the young man's trouble, the medicine man normally prescribes cleansing medicines called izihlanzi, and they comprise emetics and purgatives. A steam bath (iphungula) may also be administered to remove isinyama. After the expulsion of isinyama, the client is given medicines to make him popular and attractive. These are either smeared all over the body or only smeared on certain portions of it. For instance some ointments are rubbed into the eyebrows to give the client a dignified countenance, which will cause the girl he courts to talk to him with respect. Other herbs are put under the tongue e.g. umlom'ommandi (literally: pleasant mouth). This herb is said to have the effect of making his mouth 'nice', so that when he speaks, the words he utters should be pleasant to the girl.

If the young man still fails to elicit a favourable response from the girl he woos, he may resort to love magic. There are various methods of applying love magic to a person. The young man may, for instance, vociferate the girl's name in a horn or clay pot filled with magical mixtures to cause her to dream of him incessantly and ultimately run to him hysterically. If he chooses not to use this method, he may pat the girl with hands smeared with love medicines. However, the latter methods of winning love are rarely resorted to, because employing such medicines or magic is regarded as witchcraft, and it is punishable by tribal law.

5.2.1.1. The role of relatives and friends in wooing

A young man's brothers, sisters, paternal and maternal cousins, sisters-in-law and friends may, at his request or on their own initiative, woo a girl on his behalf. This happens mostly if the young man is shy and afraid of approaching women, and yet is considered old enough to marry. At times a girl is courted for him if he works and stays away from home, and comes home once or twice a year. The girl courted for him may be known or unknown to him. He is normally informed by letter that a girl is sought for him. He is encouraged to come home to see the girl and talk to her in order to lend credibility to their solicitations. The primary aim in such instances is to ensure that the young man does not remain a bachelor and disgrace his family. Another aim of doing this is to ensure that he gets married to a girl whose character is known. Some informants said that this is done to discourage a young man from marrying an urban girl who may persuade him not to come back home.

Parents may also in their own way try to court a prospective

spouse for their son. They often try to establish friendship with the parents of the girl they fancy by periodically sending them gifts of beer, agricultural produce and meat when a beast has been slaughtered. At times they may invite them to a drinking spree. When friendship is mature, they tactfully broach the subject of their wish to let their son marry their friends' daughter. If both parties agree, they encourage the children to fall in love. Opportunities are created for them to meet and court. To indicate their wish to the girl, the boy's parents may start jocularly referring to her as their daughter-in-law (umakoti). In a similar manner the girl's parents may also start referring to the young man as their son-in-law (umkhwenyana). The aim in doing this, is to create the 'correct' frame of mind in the children. However, no attempt is made to coerce them to be lovers. If they are not interested in one another, they are left alone to seek spouses of their own choice.

Informants also stated that a girl's brothers may without the knowledge and request of their sister choose a prospective lover or husband for her. Normally they first approach the young man and make friends with him. Thereafter they subtly entice him to woo their sister by challenging remarks, and by inviting him home frequently. Whilst enticing him, they also try to kindle in their sister an interest in the young man they wish to be their brother-in-law. If their sister is courted by a man they despise, they do anything possible to besmirch him to her. Whenever they see him waylaying her, they either threaten him with assault or assault him straight away.

5.2.1.2

The girl's behaviour in courtship

As already stated, among traditionalists a girl is not

allowed to take the initiative and woo the young man she fancies. It would be a disgraceful action which would disgrace her age mates and all the people in her ward (isigodi). If discovered, she would be publicly scorned, ostracized and threatened with assault.

In spite of this prohibition on wooing by females, provision is made for them to give subtle indications of their feelings towards the men they want. If a girl is interested in a young man, she is allowed to court him by suggestive behaviour. She may for instance try to capture his attention whenever there is an opportunity of doing so, by being noticeably friendly towards him, or by feigning hatred for him. She may also try to indicate her interest in him to his sisters or close female relatives by constantly asking them about him, and periodically sending him greetings through them. If the young man does not realize the girl's importunities, his friends, sisters and other female relatives may draw his attention to the fact, and encourage him to woo her. At times, instead of drawing his attention to the girl, they start wooing her on his behalf straight away.

5.2.1.3

Exchange of gifts during wooing

Giving a girl presents whilst wooing her (ukugwaza) is not allowed. It is regarded as a disgraceful and ridiculous attempt to buy her love. It is also seen as a serious assault on a girl's character. In spite of this condemnatory attitude towards ukugwaza, several accounts were given of certain traditionalist young men who are known to have surreptitiously given or tried to give presents to the girls they were courting. These were given either in the form of money or cash items like mirrors, handkerchiefs, cold drinks, sweets, etc. Some girls accept these gifts, but they always do so secretly. Such gifts, it is

said, do at times soften up a girl and make her develop interest in a young man. Others, however, merely accept the gifts to exploit the young man's 'generosity' without yielding to his fond entreaties.

Some girls never accept any gift from a suitor. Instead they inform their friends about the young man's insulting behaviour, and decide on disciplinary action against him. Very often the girls confront the young man and embarrass him publicly.

Giving a girl gifts after she has accepted one as a lover is not a disgrace.

5.2.1.4

The final stage in wooing

After courting a girl for a number of weeks or months, she may gradually soften up and become coy towards her suitor. As soon as a young man realizes this, he tries to seize as many personal possessions of the girl as possible. These usually comprise things like handkerchiefs, bead necklaces, hair pins etc. Some young men also stated that they also try to confiscate the girl's bloomers. The purpose of seizing these articles is to use them as evidence to the senior girls of her age group (amaqhikiza), that the girl has fallen in love with him, but has not yet said so verbally. If the girl is indeed in love with him, she will not report the seizure to her senior girlfriends (amaqhikiza), or her parents. However, if she does not want the man, she immediately reports it to the amaqhikiza who will then go out to demand the articles back. In one tribal court hearing a young man was fined R10 for having seized the straw hat of the girl he was wooing.

As seizing a girl's possessions during the act of courting

involves the risk of prosecution, a suitor has to be very discreet and must not misjudge a girl's disposition towards his solicitations. If the girl keeps silent and does not report the man on all occasions of confiscation, then the young man will know that the girl is willing to accept him as a lover (ukumqoma). He will on realizing this, inform the amaqhikiza and request them to give the girl permission to accept him as a lover. Having ascertained that the girl is interested in the young man, the amaqhikiza then order her to make a bead necklace (ucu) for him in preparation for the formal acceptance of the young man by the girl as a lover. The act of making the necklace is known as ukulungisa impahla.

5.2.2

Wooing among non-traditionalists

Generally speaking, the courting patterns outlined above in respect of traditionalists are to a certain extent applicable to the non-traditionalists. There are only differences in the finer details of the activity.

Like traditionalists non-traditionalist young men waylay girls on their way to draw water, collect fire wood, on their way from school, to the stores etc.

Glibness, a sense of humour and persistence are also prime prerequisites for success in courting among non-traditionalists. Unlike traditionalists, non-traditionalists do not place themselves under the tutelage of their elder brothers or friends in order to learn the art of courting. What was observed is that as soon as a non-traditionalist youth reaches puberty, and becomes increasingly aware of his sexuality, and develops interest in girls, he starts courting on his own. He makes suggestive passes at girls and starts writing love letters which are secretly dispatched.

Traditional ukuxibula (choosing a girl to court) is almost non-existent among non-traditionalists. In many instances young men start courting a girl at first encounter. Further, non-traditionalist young men rarely consult their friends on a girl's character before wooing her.

The rule of avoiding being seen courting by adults of one's parental and grand-parental generations is still an ideal among many non-traditionalists. However, the tendency among some of the youths is to avoid their own parents and the parents and close relatives of the girls they court. Regular church attendants also try to avoid being seen courting by their pastors. The communal authority of adults who are non-relatives is now constantly challenged and often defied by some non-traditionalist young men. It is not uncommon to see young men of this category openly accost and court girls in full view of adults of their parental generation. This is strongly resented by all elders of the community and they invariably ascribe it to the devastating influence of Western civilization.

The time spent on courting a girl among non-traditionalists tends to be shorter than is the case among traditionalists.

Traditional courting expressions and verbal traps are still used by some persons. However, the frequency of their application in courting depends on the level of acculturation of the courting couple. Those who have acquired some knowledge of English often spice their courting oratory with English words. At times words coined and mostly used in urban townships are also used. Whilst all traditionalists court by word of mouth, some non-traditionalist men court by letter. Such letters are written either in English or the vernacular (Zulu) - all depending on the courting couple's level of school learning or preference. At times both languages are used simultaneously

in the same letter.

Traditional rudeness and the conventional attitude of indifference or hostility towards suitors still persists with varying degrees of intensity, and is generally speaking giving way to politeness. The degree of rudeness shown by the girl being courted depends on her personality and the extent to which Western forms of etiquette have been inculcated into her. The traditional use of insults to repel the advances of a suitor is resented by many non-traditionalists. It is said to be characteristic of the uncivilized (amaqaba), and it is also seen as a manifestation of bad character.

Assistance by relatives and friends in courtship is very rare among non-traditionalists. Some adult informants expressed the view that such assistance by parents would be tantamount to encouraging immorality.

The confiscation of personal possessions of a girl by a suitor, as observed among traditionalists, seems to be gradually disappearing among non-traditionalists. Some informants expressed the view that it is an outdated and 'barbaric' act which ought to have no place in contemporary non-traditionalist courtship. Others were of the opinion that it adds flavour to dalliance and expedites acceptance as a lover.

That giving presents to a girl whilst wooing her is a disgrace, was emphatically stressed by non-traditionalists. They regard it as bribery. However, judging from the reports given by informants, it would appear that there is a growing number of young men who give presents of money and cash items to the girls they woo. Similarly there appears to be a growing tendency among non-traditionalist women to accept gifts from suitors.

Among non-traditionalists, as is the case among traditionalists,

a young man may woo as many girls as he likes simultaneously, provided he does it prudently. He is expected to avoid courting women who are friends or relatives, as this may cause ill-feeling.

Christian non-traditionalists publicly despise the use of love magic and the consultation of witchdoctors in matters of courtship. In practice, however, one finds that there are those who genuinely disbelieve in the existence of magic (black or white) and the efficacy of love medicines. Persons of this category do not ascribe their misfortunes in courtship to black magic and neither do they enlist the aid of witchdoctors for the solution of their courtship problems. On the other hand, there are other non-traditionalists who acknowledge the effectiveness of black magic and the powers of witchdoctors. Young men of this category, do in times of stress in courtship consult witchdoctors. Certain Christian tribesmen, especially those who are members of separatist church movements, believe in the effectiveness of black magic, but do not consult witchdoctors. To remove isinyama (repulsiveness) and to ensure success in courtship, they consult those persons who are believed to be able to pray to God more effectively. These persons are known as abathandazeli.

Whereas the majority of adulttraditionalists court primarily for the acquisition of girls to marry, a growing number of non-traditionalists tend to woo for sexual purposes. Marriage as an objective, is at the beginning of courtship a secondary consideration. It only becomes important later, when the love relationship is mature and the young man feels that his girlfriend can make a good wife. An awareness of this tendency of overemphasizing the sensual aspect of courtship has prompted elders of certain Christian religious sects to discourage courting in its conventional form. They condemn all forms of unsupervised premarital association between boys and girls. They advocate that when a young man is mature and ready for

marriage, he should inform the Church elders of his intention of choosing a spouse. The elders of the congregation may if they deem it fit, grant him permission to talk to the girl, or talk to the girl themselves on his behalf. If the girl is agreeable, arrangements for a public engagement in Church are made. Such an engagement is known as ukwethembisa (to promise). Other Church denominations do not prohibit courtship as such. However, they insist on modesty and abstinence from premarital sex indulgence. These congregational attitudes towards courtship tend to promote secrecy and individualism. Such secrecy makes the traditional control of courtship very difficult, if not impossible.

5.3 Ukuqoma (Accepting a lover)

5.3.1 The concept "ukuqoma"

Doke and Vilakazi define the term ukuqoma as meaning to "choose a lover (as does a girl)" (1958:710). Bryant says that this concept means to "... choose, select, as a girl does a sweet-heart, not as the young man does the girl ..." (1905:540).

With regard to this concept there are two trends of thought among Anthropologists. There are, on the one hand, those who regard ukuqoma as similar to an engagement in the Western sense of the word, and those who do not regard it as such. Krige and Bryant are among those who uphold the first view and they write respectively as follows' "On qoma'ing, a girl is considered to have taken the first step towards matrimony, for no girl may qoma more than once, and so in accepting a lover she knows that she intends marrying him ... She now wears a red cloth hanging from her shoulders in stead of the white one worn before. It is thus obvious to all that she is an engaged girl, though her father does not officially 'know' of her engagement" (1936:123 - 124). Bryant writes: "And so it came to pass one day that, to his infinite delight, a

small white string of beads (ucu) was brought to him... That, he knew, was the letter (incwadi) of acceptance, her formal announcement that she has 'chosen' (ukuqoma) him to be her husband" (1949:535).

Several Anthropologists have reacted to this view on the basis of later research findings. Among these are Vilakazi (1962), Reader (1966), Breytenbach (1971) and de Clercq (1975). Vilakazi writes: "It is important to emphasize to qoma is 'to accept' a lover', and to be qonywa'd is to 'be accepted as a lover'... It is the formal acceptance of a lover by a girl, but it has nothing whatsoever to do with the problem of marriage which would immediately involve the lineages of the two parties involved. Nor does qoma bind the girl to the boy, or vice versa. She is free to take another lover when she feels that she no longer loves the man, and no moral opprobrium attaches to her for such action. It is the unofficial and loose character of qoma which was responsible for the controversy over the qoma fee to which we referred above. Very few Zulu girls at present marry their first lovers. The expectation which is often backed by practice, is that she will reject the young man and take another lover before she gets married. The formality and publicity given to the occasion have a social significance which has nothing to do with betrothal or marriage "(1962:50).

De Clercq says: "By the abakwaMzimela, is ons gevolgtrekking ten opsigte van die qoma tot op hierdie stadium, grootliks in ooreenstemming met die bevindinge van Reader, naamlik dat die qoma op 'n informele liefdesverhouding neerkom en dat daar geen sprake is van 'n informele "verlowing" nie... Die qoma kan met al die gebruike wat daarmee gepaard gaan nie aan die vereistes vir 'n kontrak getoets word nie. Daar is wel wilsooreenstemming maar die "kontrakterende"

partye is minderjarig. Daar is geen regsgevolge by die ontbinding van die verhouding ter sprake nie, terwyl die prestasie en teenprestasies suiwer op emosionele gronde nagekom word en die vermoë daartoe nie in die reg afgedwing kan word nie." (1975:187).

Breytenbach declares: "Die qoma fase is 'n private en informele liefdesverhouding tussen 'n vryer en sy nooi" (1971:161).

Our findings among the abaKhwanazi concur with the findings of the latter three authors in their respective areas of research. Ukuqoma is not regarded as an engagement by both traditionalists and non-traditionalists. It is an unofficial formal acceptance of a lover by a girl. It expressly excludes the parents of the lovers. It is not legally binding upon the lovers. Its establishment and dissolution does not necessitate legal sanction. The lovers are not encumbered with any obligations of legal consequence towards each other. As de Clercq rightly points out, the parties to the qoma relationship are minors and can therefore not enter into any legally recognized contract (1975:187). A qoma relationship becomes of legal significance only when the respective lineages of the parties to the qoma relationship become officially involved. This happens when marriage negotiations are opened.

Ukuqoma is not as Krige suggests, an expression of an intention to marry a young man (1936a: 123-124). Among the abaKhwanazi it seems rather to be an expression of a willingness to consider, at a later time, the possibility of being a marital partner to a lover. It is not necessarily an expression of an immediate desire or an intention to marry him. This is clearly shown by the fact that a lover still has to request his girlfriend to

marry him after some time of courtship. She may concede to the request or reject it without necessarily rejecting him as a lover. In this respect we exclude those who practise ukugaxa (which is a church version of ukuqoma), because in their case the girl chooses the young man overtly for matrimonial purposes.

By the act of ukuqoma a girl does not only declare reciprocal affection for a young man, she also tacitly expresses a willingness to indulge in premarital sexual activity with him. Among traditionalists such sexual activity is culturally sanctioned and it is ideally construed to involve ukusoma (see later). With the decline of traditional vaginal inspection (ukuhlola) and the practice of ukusoma, there are some traditionalists who believe that ukuqoma is a tacit expression of willingness to indulge in actual sexual intercourse with a man. Among the majority of non-traditionalists it is invariably thought to imply willingness to indulge in love play and sexual congress. Here we exclude non-traditionalist tribesmen, who because of religious convictions condemn and avoid premarital sexual activity.

Through ukuqoma a girl grants her lover permission to make sexual advances at her, but she reserves the right to yield or not to yield to him. The privilege to make sexual advances can only be enjoyed as long as the qoma relationship subsists. Prior to the qoma relationship and after its dissolution, such sexual advances are considered improper and insulting. Such behaviour on the part of a man would suggest that he considers the woman an isifebe. A girl has the right to lay a charge of insult (ukwethuka), through her father or guardian, against a man, who not being her lover, makes sexual advances at her. However, if there is evidence that she accepted the man as a lover, and that

the goma relationship still exists, she cannot argue convincingly at a tribal court that his behaviour was indeed insulting.

5.3.2. Ukuqoma among traditionalists

5.3.2.1. The acceptance of a man as a lover

Among traditionalists the sexual life of girls is closely watched, and strictly controlled. Girls are graded according to age. Those who have reached puberty and are already enjoying male attention, but are considered still too young to accept lovers, are called amatshitshi or amajongosi. These constitute an age group of their own. Next in seniority is the age group which consists of girls who have attained puberty and have already accepted lovers. These are known as amaqhikiza. As the older and more senior girls, they have a moral responsibility to the public to protect and maintain the moral rectitude of the amatshitshi. They have to exercise authority and strict surveillance over amatshitshi in matters of love and sex. It is their duty to teach their younger, inexperienced sisters how to conduct themselves in male company. Without the permission of amaqhikiza, the amatshitshi are not allowed to utter a word in response to the importunities of suitors. It is the prerogative of amaqhikiza to permit amatshitshi to accept men as lovers (ukuqoma). Traditionalist girls who have been granted permission to talk to suitors are, after some months of male attention, given permission to choose lovers. After such permission has been granted, a girl who has fallen in love is required to indicate her preference to the amaqhikiza and to request them to convey the good news to the young man on her behalf. Tribal custom does not permit a girl to confess her love to her suitor directly. If she wishes to indicate to her suitor that she is inclined

to accept him, she is permitted to say: "You may leave me alone now," or "Go and see the amaqhikiza."

The girl's choice may be in accord with the wishes of the amaqhikiza, or be completely against their expectations. Whatever the case may be, the amaqhikiza are compelled by custom to convey the message as it is to the person to whom it is due. The amaqhikiza are not expected to coerce a girl to choose someone she does not love. However, they do at times try to influence a girl's choice.

Having indicated her choice, the girl is told by the amaqhikiza to make a long necklace of beads (ucu/impahla) to be given to the young man. Schoeman describes ucu as "a long string of white beads from 2 to 3 meters in length. It is worn around the neck, around which it is wound in layers until only one section of its entire length hangs loosely below the junction of the throat and the chest." (African Studies Vol. 27 No. 3, 1968). When this article has been completed, it is handed to the amaqhikiza, who then prepare themselves for an early morning visit to the young man's homestead. They equip themselves with switches, and very early in the morning, when it is still dark, they depart for the young man's homestead. They do not wear any special attire for this visit. On arrival there, they go straight to the young man's hut- ilawu labafana, where they announce their presence by knocking at the door. Having established the identity of his nocturnal visitors, the young man ushers them in. On entering the hut, the girls produce the long, white necklace (ucu) and throw it at him saying: "Nqaka nangu ubani!" (There you are! Clasp so and so!)- naming the girl who has accepted him. The girls then attack him with the switches, but he is not expected to retaliate with violence. He is expected to take the assault stoically and kindly. After beating him to their satisfaction,

they disappear into the dawn. Why the delivery of such pleasant news has to be coupled with the infliction of pain could not be explained by informants.

After the departure of the girls, the young man gets to the indlunkulu hut (the principal hut in the homestead) to report the news of his acceptance to his paternal grandmother or any other senior female in the homestead, other than the mother. She starts ululating joyfully and reciting the praises of the young man's father and the young man himself. In a short time the whole homestead is enveloped in a din of ululation and sharp shrills of joy. Before long the neighbouring homestead join in the merriment. When the excitement has subsided, a piece of white cloth (iduku) is hoisted on a long pole which is either planted in the ground or in the thatch of one of the huts, where it will be conspicuous. This is a sign to the public that a young man of the homestead has been accepted as a lover (uqonyiwe). Whereas the young man publicizes his acceptance as a lover, the girl does not. Her act of accepting a lover is kept away from the ears of adults for some days. Her mother and other female relatives of her parental generation get the news through the amaghikiza or neighbours.

After the delivery of the necklace of beads (ucu) and the hoisting of the white flag, there follows a period of lull, during which preparations for the umbongo (thanksgiving) celebration are made.

5.3.2.2. The umbongo

5.3.2.2.1. Preparations

On the part of the young man the preparations consist mainly

in the accumulation of cash for the purchase of items of toiletry for the newly acquired girlfriend, for use on soma visits (see later). These include a large towel, an enamel washing basin, soap, vaseline, a mirror, etc. In addition to these items of ablution, the young man buys his sweetheart items of clothing, which will henceforth distinguish her from the amatshitshi. These include red pieces of drapery worn over the shoulders in the fashion of a shawl, or wound around the waist like a skirt. He also buys her a head-scarf (iduku/umshuqulo) to wear as a sign of respect to the relatives, and also as a token that she has accepted a lover. Informants could not explain why red drapery is preferred to all other colours.

On the part of the girl the preparation consists in the making or buying of sitting and sleeping mats -izicephu and amacansi respectively.

When the young man has acquired all the things necessary for the umbongo celebration, he notifies his girlfriend's iqhikiza, and never the girl herself, as all communication between him and her at this stage, has to be effected through the amaqhikiza. He has to wait until the amaqhikiza give him permission to meet and talk to the girl. An evening and venue suitable to both the young man's and the girl's parties are decided upon. On this day of arranging the date of the celebration, the young man hands over to the amaqhikiza the red drapery bought for his girlfriend.

When all has been arranged, the girl assisted by the amaqhikiza, and at times by her mother or other female relative, starts brewing beer (utshwala) secretly, either in the bush or at one of the amaqhikiza's home. While the beer is fermenting, the lovers invite their close friends

to the umbongo celebration. Adults of the lovers' parental generation are excluded altogether, as this is traditionally a young people's affair.

Precautions are taken to ensure that the girl's adult brothers and relatives, especially the father of the girl, remain conveniently ignorant of the girl's action of accepting a lover, and the arrangements made for the celebration. The reason for withholding such information then is that their reaction to the news would be hostile. As the legal guardians of the reproductive capacity of the girl, they resent any of her youthful amorous liaisons which might lead to her defloration and premarital impregnation. Furthermore the girl's brothers and father are expected to feign ignorance, even if the news of the girl's acceptance of a lover has reached them somehow. It is only the girl's mother, or paternal grandmother, who as the girl's confidante, knows and openly acknowledges that she has accepted a lover.

A day before the celebration the liquor (utshwala) and the articles accumulated by the girl for doling out as presents to her lover and his companions are smuggled out of the homestead and hidden in the bush or in a neighbour's hut.

5.3.2.2.2. The celebration

On the day of the umbongo the girl and her friends sneak out of their homes, in the late afternoon, to the place chosen for the occasion. On their way they collect the liquor (utshwala) hidden in the thickets and congregate in one of the bushes where they dress up in their best finery. The girl on behalf of whom the celebration is held, discards her youthful attire (amabhayi obutshitshi), and puts on the red clothing exclusively worn by amaqhikiza.

When satisfied with themselves, they proceed to the chosen venue with the girl hidden in the centre of the group. On arrival there, they seat down and sandwich the girl in their midst and cover her up with a cloth. After some time the young man, his adult unmarried sisters, and friends arrive chanting and uttering war cries (izaga). They arrange themselves in single file and then proceed individually to thank (ukubonga) the girl for having accepted the young man.

By accepting the young man as a lover, a girl enhances his status. She proves his masculinity to the tribe as a whole. For doing this, she has to be thanked. Among tribesmen one of the most disgraceful scandals is failing to win the favour of women. Those who fail to persuade women to accept them as lovers are ridiculed and scorned, and are referred to by a number of derogatory terms: isishimane, isigwadi, uvukuvale, isishumanqa, umagwaz'ingubo etc. So by accepting him as a lover she saves him from the ever threatening opprobrium of ubushimane (being an outright failure in courtship). "She makes him a human being", tribesmen say. On the other hand, by giving amorous attention to a girl, a young man enhances her social status, and saves her from the odium of being referred to as umgodo onganukwanja (a piece of human excreta which does not even invite the sniff of a dog).

When all the young men and the young man's sisters have thanked the girl and her amaqhikiza, they sit down. The mats and other presents brought by the girl's party are distributed among the members of the boy's party. The boy in turn gives his girlfriend and the amaqhikiza the presents he has brought along. In addition to these he gives the amaqhikiza an acceptance fee (R5), known as imali yokuqoma, and an ukusoma fee (R1)- a fee to coax

the amaqhikiza to allow him to have intracultural sexual relations with his girlfriend. After the exchange of gifts the young man asks the amaqhikiza to allow him to take his girlfriend home for ukusoma, after the completion of the celebration. Permission is invariably given after the payment of the ukusoma fee. After this the young man, in his finery, i.e. ibheshu (skin kilt), or trousers decorated with beads, decorated stick and shield, white necklace and other ornaments, starts dancing and prancing about vigorously, reciting his praises (izibongo). His friends join him after a while. This is followed by beer drinking. The young man who has been accepted is presented with a special beer pot of his own by his girlfriend. It is now late in the evening, and when the liquor is finished and the jokes get scanty, the celebration ends and the attendants depart for the accepted young man's home. The young men lead the way and the girls bring up the rear. To ensure that their brother's girlfriend does not escape home, the young man's sisters keep a vigilant eye on her on the way.

5.3.2.2.3. Bringing down the white flag

The young men enter the homestead singing and they are welcomed by the adult females of the homestead with ululations and loud shrills of joy. In the midst of the excitement, the young men pull down the white flag, which was hoisted on the morning of the delivery of the white necklace (ucu). They dance around the cattle kraal snatching the flag from one another and uttering war cries. Then some of them, accompanied by the accepted young man, enter the indlunkulu hut and pin the flag in the thatch of the umsamo (remote part of the hut opposite the door), to dedicate the young man's success in courtship to the ancestral spirits of the household. It is believed that

during their visit to the homestead, the family ancestors rest at the umsamo of the indlunkulu hut.

While all this is happening the young man's girlfriend and companions wait outside the homestead. As soon as the white flag has been pinned in the indlunkulu, the girls are invited in and led to the ilawu labafana (private hut for young men), where the young men are now congregated and entertained to ale (utshwala). Drinking, dancing and joking continue until ten or eleven o'clock at night, when the attendants depart and the young man and his girlfriend are left alone in the hut.

5.3.2.2.4. Ukusoma (intracultural sexual intercourse)

When all is quiet and the couple is alone, the young man calls one of his sisters to clean the hut. Thereafter she brings water for her brother's girlfriend to wash. Informants say that she is not allowed to accept water for washing on her first visit to her lover's home. She therefore refuses to use the water, and the young man uses it himself. When his toilet is over, he calls one of his younger sisters to remove the ablution water. Then the young man locks the door to ensure that his lover does not escape. Thereafter, he unfolds a sleeping mat on the floor and spreads blankets on it. If he has a bed he prepares it. Having prepared the bedding, he undresses, tucks himself under the blankets and invites his girlfriend to join him. She first declines the offer, but after long pleading, she relents. She gets under the blankets fully clad, with a number of towels wound around her waist and fastened into very tight and complicated knots. These knots are reinforced with safety pins (iziqhano). Underneath the mass of towels and other drapery, may be a tight-fitting panty also fastened with safety pins. The object of all

this is to make it extremely difficult for the young man to undress her. In addition to the items of clothing mentioned above, she also wears an umutsha i.e. a band of beads about 7cm wide with a number of loose strings at both ends. These loose strings are used for securing the umutsha around the waist. The knots made on fastening it are made very tight and complicated to make its removal very difficult. An umutsha is worn by a girl from the time that she accepts a lover. A man is not allowed to have sexual intercourse with a woman before undoing the umutsha. Any attempt to have sexual intercourse with her while she has it on, would be regarded as insulting and unorthodox. All the young man's attempts to remove it are resisted with physical force, and most of the night is spent in ferocious bouts of wrestling. Such resistance by the girl is prescribed by tribal custom, and any girl who does not put up strong resistance, is regarded as morally weak and extremely fond of carnal pleasure. She only yields to him to undress her when she feels satisfied that she has sufficiently demonstrated her moral rectitude. Even after yielding to him for undressing, she still resists yielding to him for ukusoma. She presses her thighs together, stiffens her muscles and pulls herself together into a prenatal position, to prevent her lover from effecting sexual intercourse. To make her relax her muscles, her lover either exerts extreme physical force on her to straighten her body (ukumthwishila), or resorts to stimulating her sexual desire. When she has softened up petting ensues and it culminates in ukusoma.

Informants say that ukusoma is the traditionally accepted mode of releasing sexual tension without defloration and premarital impregnation. Krige describes ukusoma as follows: "Ukusoma calls for considerable self-control on the part of the girl. She has to lie on her left side, legs crossed

and pressed together so tightly that the penis gets no further than the clitoris. The semen must be caught in the left hand and then carefully wiped over the thigh and leg till dry. Ukusoma results in firm buttocks and thighs (from keeping them taut during sex play) and it is said, also firm breasts. Such features are taken as a sign of virginity. "(Africa Vol. 38 No 2, 1968:).

It is the duty of amaqhikiza to teach girls who have accepted lovers ukusoma. The girl is strongly admonished not to allow her lover to penetrate her vagina. They express it as follows: "Ungazeneki izinkomo zikababa !" (Do not expose our father's cattle'. In this context "cattle" refer to the vagina. Premarital defloration and pregnancy are regarded as disgraceful and are punishable at tribal law. Krige writes as follows: "Girls were, and sometimes still are, frequently examined by their age mates or by the group of mothers. It is said that the hymen (incomfe) is intact then, when taut or flexed it becomes thin enough to let the light through. A shining 'eye' appears in the centre which is extolled in a song, 'It glitters, glitters, little child'. (A plant, ibhuma by name, is used to wash with to make the 'eye' shine better). The word for virgin is intombi. To emphasize her verginity a girl may be termed intombi saka (an ideophone for 'full', the hymen being said to fill the vagina) or intombi egcwele, both terms of high honour." (Ibid).

The young man on the other hand is instructed by his older companions to respect the virginity of his girlfriend. Traditionally a man acquired the right of penetrating a woman's vagina through the delivery of ilobolo to the girl's father or guardian and an umeke goat to the bride's female relatives. It is therefore obvious that as the ukuqoma relationship does not involve the delivery of the

above, it ideally precludes sexual intercourse.

Intimate questioning of four informants revealed that ukusoma is still an ideal among traditionalists, but very few still limit themselves to it. The supervisory institution of amaqhikiza, though still existent, has become very ineffective in the control of the sexual activities of young women. Ukuhlola (vaginal inspection) has become very difficult because many girls refuse to submit themselves to it. With the decline of ukuhlola, the frequency of sexual intercourse before marriage, among traditionalists, has risen tremendously. Traditionalists interviewed, stated that there are very few girls who refuse their lovers sexual intercourse on the night of the umbongo, and on subsequent visits. Whereas in the past premarital defloration resulted in the reduction of the ilobolo payable for a girl, nowadays it rarely does so. Therefore any refusal by a girl to have sexual intercourse with a lover may be ascribed to fear of premarital pregnancy rather than the discovery of loss of virginity. Mbatha, writing on the Nyuswa says: "Another reason advanced for this situation is that Nyuswa men who work, meet town girls and have full sexual intercourse with them. They tend to demand the same satisfaction from their Nyuswa lovers, and the girls, in order to keep their men, yield to their demands." (1960:217).

5.3.3. Ukuqoma among non-traditionalists

Among non-traditionalists the grading of girls into amatshitshi and amaqhikiza has ceased. It is regarded by Christians as a pagan practice; and the "learned" see it as one of the distinctive practices of the "Uncivilized" (amaqaba). In matters of love and sex, therefore, girls are practically left to their own devices. The control and supervision exercised by amaqhikiza among traditionalists

has been taken over by parents, more especially mothers, the church and the schools. But in the performance of this function, they are not very efficient. Whereas amatshitshi and amaqhikiza are of the same generation, and communication among them is continuous and intimate, the same cannot be said of the parents, church elders, and school teachers, who are a generation older. Cheetham, Cheetam and Sibisi write: "A Zulu traditional mother, and even more so the Zulu Christian mother, in her adherence to traditional concepts finds herself in a conflictual situation in her inability to discuss matters pertaining to sex with her daughter..."(Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 1974,8).

In our area of research it was established that members of the parental generation (i.e. those in the age group 45-50 years) are prevented from communicating with their children on sexual matters by the traditional custom which decrees that parents should always maintain a conveniently wide social distance between themselves and children in order to command respect and exercise discipline effectively. In addition to this, sex is one of the proscribed subjects for discussion among the learned and the Christianized; and it is inconceivable that a responsible and decent parent can participate in discussions on sex with children. At the same time, now that the supervisory institution of amaqhikiza has been banished among non-traditionalists, parents are expected to guide their children in matters of sexual behaviour. These conflicting expectations have a serious debilitating effect on parental supervision of the sexual behaviour of children. Whereas amaqhikiza discuss sex freely with their younger sisters, parents tend to discuss it with a noticeable sense of discomfort, and their condemnatory attitude to premarital sex relations discourages meaningful discussion.

Unlike among traditionalists where a girl accepts a lover with the permission of amaqhikiza, non-traditionalists accept lovers of their own volition at any time they feel like doing so. Non-traditionalist girls do not expect or wait to be granted permission to accept lovers. The nominal substitutes of amaqhikiza (i.e. parents, church elders and school teachers) cannot grant such permission, because it would amount to encouraging sexual immorality. Theirs is to stand on guard and ensure that their children do not commit the sin of experiencing premarital sexual intercourse. As a result of this, young non-traditionalists conduct their love relationships secretly, and they are therefore uncontrolled and unsupervised.

The publicity which characterises the acceptance of a lover among traditionalists is not found among non-traditionalists. Furthermore, the acceptance of a lover is not followed by any thanksgiving party, as is the case among traditionalists.

Whereas among traditionalists ukuqoma marks the end of prolonged application for acceptance by a young man, among non-traditionalists ukuqoma may occur at any time. It may be after a few minutes, hours, days or weeks of wooing.

Acceptance as such (ukuqoma) is effected in a variety of ways. It may be by word of mouth, in which case the girl uses no intermediary, but tells the man straight away that she loves him and accepts him as a lover. If the declaration of reciprocal love takes place in the privacy of a bush or house, it is very often followed by passionate kissing and intense love play, which may in turn culminate in full sexual intercourse. In some cases, however, the lovers part without incident to meet later at a prearranged time and venue.

Many non-traditionalist girls interviewed expressed a negative attitude towards allowing coitus on the day of accepting a lover. They maintain that it is prudent and decent to allow a few days or weeks to pass before yielding to a new lover's sexual importunities. Allowing sexual intercourse on the day of acceptance is said to be indicative of lack of feminine pride and a strong moral fibre. Non-traditionalist girls interviewed admitted having full sexual intercourse with their lovers. None of them admitted indulging in ukusoma. Some say it is old fashioned and unnecessary because there are contraceptives to use. Others say that they submit to their lovers' sexual demands because of fear of being regarded as foolish by their lovers. Perry as quoted by Cheetham, Cheetham and Sibisi quote one girl as having said: "Nowadays, if you are a girl and you don't want to go the whole way the boy will say you are behind times and he will leave you for those girls who do not waste time with this 'soma' business," (Ibid). Some girls, informants say, refuse to indulge in either ukusoma or full sexual intercourse because of religious convictions.

Besides accepting a lover directly by word of mouth, letters are also used by non-traditionalist girls. Among some girls with a slightly modified traditionalist background, there is a practice of giving a letter of acceptance to close girlfriends (who are not amaqhikiza) with a request to deliver it to the chosen young man. Such a letter is very often accompanied by a white handkerchief. The white handkerchief seems to be a substitute of the traditional ucu. The letter and the handkerchief are not thrown at the recipient, as is the case among traditionalists. These are politely handed to him. Furthermore, he is not lashed. The accepted young man does not report his acceptance to his paternal grandmother,

and neither does he hoist a white flag to publicize the event.

Other girls do not effect acceptance in the manner described above. In stead, the girl concerned delivers the letter of acceptance to the young man herself, without using an intermediary. In its delivery the highest possible degree of secrecy is maintained. In other instances the letter is posted to ensure secrecy.

Informants say that at times acceptance of a lover is neither effected by letter nor by word of mouth, but rather by action. The initial kiss a girl allows is regarded as an act of accepting the young man and a declaration of reciprocal love for him (ukumqoma).

As indicated earlier in the discussion on ukuqomisa (wooing) there are certain separatist churches which discourage courtship in its traditional and new forms. These church denominations exercise strict control and supervision on the sexual behaviour of their young adherents. All communication between boys and girls within the congregation must be sanctioned and supervised by specially appointed church elders known as abakhokheli. These are adult married females of good moral standing whose function is to ensure good morals among the youth of the congregation. Young men of the congregation are not allowed to court girls on their own, as is the case among traditionalists and other non-traditionalists. Young men of these denominations are encouraged to limit themselves to girls of their own congregations.

When a young man wants to get married, and is deemed fit for it in terms of age and character, he informs the umkhokheli of his intention and gives her an indication of the girl he has in mind. If the umkhokheli considers the match appropriate, she acts as an intermediary and approaches the girl and talks

to her on behalf of the young man. If the girl is agreeable to the young man's proposal, the umkhokheli reports back to the young man. From the moment the girl accepts the young man's proposal through the umkhokheli, the couple are regarded as sharing an intention to enter into a church sanctioned and controlled premarital love relationship. They are not yet regarded as lovers at this stage.

After this informal acceptance, arrangements are made for a formal and public acceptance. During the course of the church service, the umkhokheli announces the couple's intention of becoming lovers. The girl is then called upon to come forward and place a white handkerchief or scarf on the young man's shoulders. This act of placing a handkerchief or a scarf on the young man's shoulders is called ukugaxa (to hug) or ukumisa iduku (to hoist a flag) and it constitutes the formal acceptance of the young man as a lover with an intention to marry.

The ukugaxa is similar to ukuqoma among traditionalists. The white handkerchief or scarf symbolizes purity and good intentions in the new relationship entered into by the couple, and has more or less the same function as the traditional white bead necklace (ucu).

The abakhokheli seem to be substitutes of the traditional amaqhikiza in that they act as advisors to girls and they act as intermediaries in matters of courtship within the church congregation. Whereas the amaqhikiza only occasionally assisted their favourite young men in wooing girls, it is the duty of abakhokheli to woo girls on behalf of the young men of the congregation.

The young man and his girlfriend are not allowed to communicate without the knowledge and permission of umkhokheli. Furthermore, they are not allowed to indulge in any sexual activity, be it ukusoma or sexual intercourse. These activities are regarded as immoral and sinful. Any communication which may lead to mutual sexual stimulation is discouraged. If the young man makes any sexual advances at the girl, she is expected to report him to the umkhokheli, and he is strongly admonished not to defile the girl. Should there be evidence that the couple indulged in sexual intercourse, they are both suspended from participating actively in the religious activities of the congregation. They are forced to sit at the back of the congregation, and they are reprimanded and preached at.

As already indicated above, traditionalist girls start wearing distinctive red garments as soon as they have accepted lovers. This practice of wearing distinctive attire after accepting a lover, is also noticeable among some non-traditionalist girls. The most common practice among these girls is to wear a head scarf (iduku/umshuqulo) - a piece of rectangular cloth worn by women around the head.

The wearing of this serves two purposes: First, it is a token that the girl has accepted a lover; and secondly it is a sign of respect (inhlonipho) to her lover's relatives.

Unbinding and informal as the qoma relationship is, it is nevertheless expected that she should start behaving in the fashion of a daughter-in-law. This is explained by the Zulu saying: "Ihlonipha nalapha ingayi ukwendela khona" (a girl should respect even those who may not become relatives-in-law). As the qoma relationship involves a tacit and

subtle anticipation of marriage, and at times culminates in it, a girl should ensure that she wins the favour of her lover's relatives in advance by being noticeably respectful towards them. Such respect, should in terms of tradition manifest itself in her attire and behaviour.

Some non-traditionalist girls do not limit themselves to the wearing of a head scarf for distinguishing themselves from those who have not yet accepted lovers. They also plait their hair into a specific pattern which is known to denote that they have accepted lovers. Other non-traditionalist girls, however, do not wear distinctive attire after accepting lovers, and neither do they specifically plait their hair to indicate that they have lovers. To them wearing distinctive attire and adopting special modes of behaviour towards a lover's relatives would be acts of self-betrayal. It would be a direct negation of the principle of secrecy upheld by some non-traditionalists in matters of courtship. These girls only start wearing tokens of respect and behaving in the manner of daughters-in-law towards their lovers' relatives, when their lovers have already opened marriage negotiations with their parents. During the subsistence of ordinary love liaisons, which carry no promise of marriage, they just behave normally.

The use of physical force during love play is frowned upon by non-traditionalists. It is regarded as characteristic of the uncivilized, and its use causes ill-feeling between lovers.

Whereas young men are permitted to have as many girlfriends as they like simultaneously, girls are expected to limit themselves to one lover (isoka) at a time. This attitude

is upheld by both traditionalists and non-traditionalists. According to informants the majority of traditionalist girls still limit themselves to one lover at a time, and they rarely change lovers as often as non-traditionalist girls. This may be ascribed to the strict supervision exercised by the amaqhikiza. The publicity which characterizes traditionalist courtship may be another factor responsible for this. Non-traditionalist girls, it is said, have in their ranks a growing number of individuals who have more than one lover. The clandestine nature of non-traditionalist courtship facilitates this. Where a girl has more than one lover, she tries to ensure that they are geographically far apart, and that they should never meet or know each other as co-lovers. In some instances a girl takes lovers of the same locality. In such cases one of the lovers often assumes the status of a secret paramour.

5.4 Sexual misbehaviour

There are two principal forms of sexual misbehaviour lovers make themselves guilty of. These are defloration and premarital impregnation.

5.4.1 Defloration

It has already been indicated that traditionalists permit intracultural intercourse between lovers for the release of sexual tension. Premarital vaginal penetration is illegal in terms of tribal law. It is only the slaughter of an umeke goat (a goat for defloration) preceded by the delivery of ilobolo which secures a man the right of penetrating a woman's vagina. Virginity is highly valued and a virgin is extolled as intombi impela (a real maiden) or intombi egcwele

(a 'full' maiden). She enjoys membership of her appropriate age-group and all the security and privileges which it affords. As soon as her hymen is ravaged, she loses her maidenhood (ubuntombi), and assumes the status of wifhood (ubufazi).

Loss of virginity is a serious disgrace and is regarded as indicative of hypersexuality (impene) and a weak character. Allowing oneself to be deflowered is a sin against the family ancestors, and it causes them to unleash all sorts of pernicious influences upon one and one's family. From the time of defloration a girl is believed to be enshrined in an invisible cloud of contagious ill-luck (ukhondolo olubi or umkhokha), which is capable of causing virgin girls who associate with her, to develop an abnormally strong proclivity to allow their lovers full sexual intercourse. Premarital defloration does not only incur ancestral wrath, but it also brings dishonour upon her parents. In olden times and even today among very conservative traditionalists, a deflowered girl is ostracized, assaulted and chaffed at by her age-mates. She is denounced by her age-group and forced into the ranks of married women, where she finds herself unwelcome because she does not meet the requirements for membership in the class of married women. Such rejection seems to have a tremendous punitive effect on the delinquent girl, and it also appears to be an effective deterrent to potential culprits.

By deflowering the girl, a young man insults and infuriates the age-group to which the girl belongs. He tarnishes their maidenhood, and for this heinous insult the girls seek revenge and ritual purification. The traditional practice of marching on the seducer's home in the nude (by the girls), to seize a goat with which to cleanse themselves of ukhondolo (contagious ill-luck) is becoming uncommon. In most cases, the girls in their normal daily attire march on the seducer's father's or guardian's homestead and furiously report their

friend's defloration and demand ritual purification. Tribal law provides that the fee for such ritual purification shall be either a goat or money (presently R1,00). The goat or money is given to the girls by the seducer's father or guardian through one of the senior women of the homestead. Having received their payment, the girls proceed to the nearest stream to perform their ritual toilet. If they received a goat, they strangle it, remove its chyme (umswane) and smear themselves with it, in order to remove the ill-luck which envelopes their persons. Thereafter, they splash themselves clean with water. If instead of a goat they received money, they still proceed to the nearest stream where they fill up a washing basin with water, dip the money in it and start washing themselves. After washing themselves, they leave the goat or money to be picked up by oldwomen (izalukazi) who are believed to be immune from the pernicious effects of the ill-luck transposed onto the money or goat.

Virginity enables a woman to fetch the full amount of ilobolo (number prescribed, see later) for her father and an ingquthu beast for her mother when she marries for the first time. The ingquthu beast is also known as umqholiso or inkomo kanina wentombazana. Breytenbach describes the ingquthu beast as "... die sogenaamde maagdelikheidsbees en impliseer dus dat dit as (gedeeltelike) skadevergoeding by ontmaagding gelewer moet word," (1971:127). Seymour defines it as follows: "Ingquthu is a beast due to the mother of a girl as an acknowledgement of her care of her daughter during maidenhood, whenever a girl has lost her virginity by seduction, or is about to lose it by marriage, ingquthu is payable to her mother by the seducer or his kraalhead, or by the bridegroom or his guardian, as the case may be ... the guardian of the girl's mother is entitled to claim ingquthu by legal action ..." (1960:228-229).

As loss of virginity absolves a woman's bridegroom from giving an ingquthu beast to her mother, it is the duty of the seduced girl's father or guardian to demand this beast from the seducer on behalf of the girl's mother. If the girl's mother is deceased, the beast is payable to her house. The onus of paying the ingquthu beast lies with the seducer's father or guardian if the seducer is still a minor. If the seducer is married, and therefore a major, he pays this beast himself. In addition to the ingquthu beast the seducer, his father or guardian, has to give the seduced girl's father or guardian an umgezo beast for the ritual cleansing of his defiled and disgraced homestead.

It has already been stated that the traditional practice of vaginal inspection (ukuhlola), which made possible the discovery of premaritally deflowered girls has practically become obsolete. It is only a few conservative traditionalists who still coerce their daughters to undergo the examination. In most cases, therefore, a girl's loss of virginity remains unknown to her parents; and they assume that she is a virgin until the contrary is proved. When such a girl marries, her bridegroom is required to pay the traditional ingquthu beast as if she is a virgin. Most young men willingly pay this beast in order not to disgrace their prospective brides.

When a girl falls pregnant for the first time before marriage, her lover who is responsible for her pregnancy is also held responsible for her defloration, irrespective of whether he found her already deflowered. Similarly, where a man catches a young man in the act of coitus with his unmarried, childless daughter, he assumes that he is also responsible for her defloration. He accordingly demands an ingquthu and an umgezo beast from him, or his guardian.

Elderly traditionalist informants say that about twenty years ago, if a bridegroom discovered that his bride was not a virgin on the wedding night, he had the right to demand an imvimba beast from her father or guardian. The imvimba beast is described as a beast given by a bride's father or guardian to his son-in-law for the purpose of symbolically restoring his daughter's premaritally ravaged virginity. In such cases, however, it was very important for the bride to admit that she was deflowered by someone else and not by her bridegroom. If the identity of the bride's seducer could not be established, her father or guardian had to take the imvimba beast from his own herd and give it to his son-in-law. In order to avoid losing a beast in this way, a man always demanded the imvimba beast from his daughter's seducer, in addition to the umgezo and ingquthu beasts.

Nowadays it is very uncommon for fathers to demand an imvimba beast from their daughters' seducers. This may be ascribed to the fact that today bridegrooms are not as fastidious as in the past about the virginity of their brides.

Among Christian non-traditionalists defloration is one of the major sins against God. Therefore whoever deflowers or allows herself to be deflowered commits a punishable sin against God. Earlier we indicated that traditionalists also regard premarital defloration as a sin against lineage ancestors. Punishment meted out by ancestors is strongly feared by them, because it is believed to be immediate and its reality can be experienced during this life. Fear for such immediate, temporal ancestral retribution does, inter alia, deter many traditionalist girls from allowing themselves to be deflowered. On the other hand Christian young men and

women have been taught that ancestors do not exist, and therefore there is no reason for them to fear ancestral wrath and punishment. To them punishment for sexual sins, as is the case with all other sins, comes from God. But such punishment only comes after death. Such remote celestial punishment does not instil sufficient fear among Christian youth, and it is obviously not so strong a deterrent as the traditional fear for ancestral punishment.

Similarly ancestral rewards for virtue, among traditionalists are not remote from temporal life as is the case among Christians, but are believed to be immediate and concrete. The desire for such rewards which promote earthly well-being, is a strong incentive for the maintenance of virtue among traditionalist girls. On the other hand, virtue among Christians brings vaguely defined and remote rewards. To many Christian young men and women such heavenly rewards have a tinge of irrelevance to known temporal life. The desire for such heavenly rewards does not, comparatively speaking, strongly encourage the maintenance of virtue. It is therefore not surprising that in spite of vehement Christian condemnation of premarital loss of virginity and fornication, many Christian lovers indulge in premarital sexual intercourse. It should be remembered, however, that there are some young men and women whose religious fervour is such that they have an almost hysterical fear for sexual sin. It is in this group that one still finds a number of virgin young men and women.

Besides supernatural sanctions, loss of virtue is also punished with social and legal sanctions.

The use of social sanctions for punishment of loss of virtue is facilitated by the traditional spirit of communal responsi=

bility, which one still finds in varying degrees among traditionalists. To traditionalists all persons living in the tribal area belong to the chief, who is inter alia, the custodian of all cherished traditional ethical values and beliefs of the tribe. The youth are regarded as valuable additional possessions of the tribe, in whom the moral well-being of the tribe should manifest itself. It is the moral responsibility of all adult tribesmen, especially those of the parental generation, to collaborate in the communal enculturation of the youth according to the dictates of tribal law and custom.

The ultimate traditionalist goal is to communally produce men and women whose personalities approximate the traditionalist ideal. Failure to assist in the communal upbringing of the youth is traditionally blameworthy. Unwillingness or failure to punish any young man or woman who misbehaves is tantamount to a refusal to ensure the moral well-being of the tribe. It is this communal spirit which mobilizes communal disapprobation for loss of virtue among traditionalist tribesmen.

In the case of non-traditionalists, the spirit of communal responsibility in social life is overshadowed by a tendency towards individualism. Children are regarded as belonging to their respective parents; and their enculturation is accordingly the responsibility of their parents. Whereas traditionalists have a more or less standardized system of values which they use as a frame of reference in the communal enculturation of youth, non-traditionalists have a variable system of values owing to their differential levels of acculturation. The process of enculturation among non-traditionalists, therefore, tends to lack uniformity; and it is for this reason that it cannot be communal in the

sense of that of the traditionalists. It is for this reason and others that among non-traditionalists the punishment of a deflowered girl and her seducer is left to their own parents.

Non-traditionalist girls rarely report their defloration to their parents, because more often than not, they are deflowered with their own consent. Where a woman incidentally discovers that her daughter has lost her virginity, she reprimands her, but tries as best as she can to keep the girl's defloration a secret, in order to protect her reputation in the Christian community. In many cases the girl's father is never told about her condition, unless it is followed and proved by pregnancy.

In some sections of the tribe the old traditional communal spirit has been substituted with Church congregational communalism. In terms of this new communalism, members of a Church congregation have a communal responsibility to collectively punish, inter alia, all forms of premarital sexual misdemeanour, including defloration. Writing on the Nyuswa, Vilakazi says: "The church ... outlaws premarital sexual intercourse ... among Christians. Not only does the Church outlaw these practices; it has positive punitive sanctions against infractions of the code. Christian girls who take part in goma ceremonies of the non-Christians come under severe discipline in the Church and in the Christian community. The girls who are guilty of ukuhlobonga, that is premarital sex intercourse, are severely dealt with by having their names publicly "called" in church, and by having them undergo Christian instruction again," (1962:102).

Among non-traditionalists defloration does not seem to disgrace a girl's age-mates, as it does among traditionalists.

This may be ascribed to the fact that age groups and their spirit of communal responsibility have become defunct among non-traditionalists. In fact a girl's peers do not regard defloration, as such, as a disgrace at all; but as an essential experience which each normal girl must have in order to enjoy wholesome and meaningful premarital sexual life. Young women who have not yet experienced sexual intercourse are looked upon with amused astonishment by their age-mates. Their emotional well-being is questioned. Women informants stated that because of this attitude, it is not uncommon for virgins to feel ashamed of their virginity and to make spurious claims of having had sexual intercourse, just to ensure that they do not seem odd among their friends. A strong desire not to be a black sheep often prompts such girls to yield their virginity in conformity with the contemporary trend of thought. Young men who are unwilling or who fear to deflower their girlfriends are regarded as foolish, and it is not uncommon for them to be jilted in favour of more vigorous lovers.

Non-traditionalist girls do not believe that the defloration of a friend brings contagious ill-luck (ukhondolo) upon them. They regard the traditionalist belief in ukhondolo as primitive and ridiculously superstitious. It follows from the above that unlike their traditionalist friends, non-traditionalist girls do not take punitive action against a man who deflowers their friend.

It is among some adherents of Zionist separatist movements that one still finds a persistent belief in ukhondolo. Premarital defloration and fornication are believed to stir God to unleash terrible supernatural influences (imikhokha) upon members of the separatist congregation, and in forcing

her to sit at the back of the congregation, the motive seems to be to prevent her from infecting the 'faithful' believers with her contagion of sins and ill-luck.

In the punishment of premarital defloration non-traditionalists also take recourse to legal sanctions. They have two avenues open to them. They may take such cases to either a tribal chief's court or resort to a magistrate's court. Generally speaking, however, many non-traditionalists tend to despise the traditional judicial system and its institutions. Due to this emergent attitude, many non-traditionalists rarely bring cases of defloration to the chief or headman (induna) for adjudication. Normally they try to settle the matter out of court with the seducer, his father or guardian. Such an arrangement also helps to keep the girl's defloration a secret. It is mostly in cases where the seducer refuses to pay compensation that recourse is taken to either a magistrate's or chief's court.

Many Christian tribesmen tend to avoid overtly demanding the traditional ingquthu and umgezo beasts for the seduction of their daughters, as these are associated with paganism. The word ingquthu is a traditional Zulu euphemism for the female sex organ, (c.f. Reader, 1966p189, Doke and Vilakazi, 1948:563 and de Clercq, 1975:226). Among many Christian tribesmen this word has lost its euphemistic tenor and has in essence become a mere synonym of the direct term of reference, i.e. igolo. Its utterance causes almost as much embarrassment as the utterance of the direct term. Some Christian tribesmen even feign ignorance of the existence of such a compensatory beast. Others use the word umqholiso instead of ingquthu when referring to this beast. In order to avoid embarrassment many Christian tribesmen prudently demand amademeshe

(damages) in respect of their daughters' defloration without the slightest reference to the traditional terms. It is then understood that the word amademeshe in the given context, is an all embracing term for both beasts paid in respect of seduction, namely the ingquthu and umgezo beasts. The traditional function of the latter beast, as has already been indicated, is the ritual purification of the homestead of the deflowered girl's father or guardian. The overt demand of an umgezo beast for defloration by a Christian man would have a subtle undertone suggesting that he believes in the reality of ritual pollution, as understood by traditionalists.

Where compensation in respect of defloration is demanded in monetary terms, the amount demanded varies, owing to the fact that each individual tends to claim an amount commensurate with his self esteem and personal status. This applies to both traditionalists and non-traditionalists. Whereas section 172 of Proclamation R195 of 1967 stipulates that: "In the absence of any specific penalty for any offence under this Code, the court convicting any person of such offence may impose upon him a fine not exceeding one hundred rand or in default of payment imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months", claims of up to R200 for defloration only have been heard at the tribal court. However, the chief always reduces the claim to an amount varying between R40 and R50.

Whereas it is not uncommon to hear claims for damages in respect of defloration among traditionalists, it is very rare to hear such cases among Christian tribesmen.

5.4.2 Premarital pregnancy

5.4.2.1 Conception of premarital pregnancy

Traditionalists and some semi-literate non-traditionalist tribesmen regard pregnancy as the direct result of the fusion of fertile semen (isidoda) with female blood in the womb (isizalo) during sexual intercourse. They say that semen contains seed (imbewu) which germinates and develops in the womb. They assert that a woman does not have seed, but merely provides the milieu in which the seed of the male can develop. Tribesmen who have been to school and do not have a traditionalist outlook tend to explain pregnancy in formal biological terms.

Both traditionalists and non-traditionalists regard pregnancy after marriage as a blessing and childlessness as a calamity. Premarital impregnation on the other hand is regarded as a very serious offence. It is viewed as both a secular and religious offence, and it is viewed as more outrageous than defloration.

To traditionalists it is not only a breach of tribal law and custom, but also an atrocious sin against the lineage ancestors of the expectant girl. Christian tribesmen on the other hand see it as an infringement of the Christian code of morality and as a violent assault on the dignity of the girl's parents and their household (umuzi). It is construed to suggest lack of proper education and discipline in the girl's family. Among traditionalists where there is still a strong collective sense of responsibility, premarital pregnancy is regarded as not only tarnishing a girl's image, but also that of her age mates in the ward (isigodi) where she lives, her relatives and neighbours. Among non-traditionalists kinship and neighbourliness seem to generate a feeble sense of collective responsibility. Consequently it is mostly the immediate kin of the premaritally impregnated

girl who feel seriously disgraced and offended. Outside the family and lineage context, the disgrace is shared in variable degrees by family friends and members of the congregation to which the girl belongs.

Premarital pregnancy is variously construed by pregnant non-traditionalist girls. Some regard it as an unfortunate disgrace and inconvenience, more especially when it interferes with employment or schooling. Others, however, do not show much concern about its implications.

During interviews it also became apparent that some non-traditionalist girls view premarital pregnancy as an instrument for forcing lovers into marriage. This attitude seems prevalent among girls who are very eager to get married and fear that their lovers may leave them for other women. They therefore "deliberately" fall pregnant in order to force their lovers to marry them. Fear of public criticism and loss of money in damages does prompt some men to marry these women. Others, however, do not allow themselves to be tricked into marriage in this manner. In stead they deny genitorship or acknowledge it, pay the damages demanded and proceed to marry the women they intended marrying.

Some non-traditionalist young men concede that premarital impregnation is immoral, but have a strong conviction that it is necessary to test a woman's fertility before marrying her. They maintain that paying ilobolo for a woman who is incapable of producing children is a waste. This attitude was also noted by Longmore in one of the townships in Johannesburg: "If in courtship the boy has sexual intercourse with the girl and she does not become pregnant, he prolongs the engagement until such time that she does. If she fails to

conceive in due course he may break off the engagement" (1959:47). In spite of the above attitude it was clear that these young men would prefer marrying girls they impregnated themselves, and not those proved fertile by other men.

At times premarital pregnancy is seen by lovers as a useful means of forcing parents or guardians to consent to a proposed marriage.

Parents very often view the premarital pregnancy of their daughter as a financial liability, more especially if their daughter is uncertain of the genitor or the alleged seducer denies responsibility and refuses to support the child.

The premarital pregnancy of a daughter results in the diminution of her ilobolo when she marries. This, however, does not seem to be a major cause of concern among parents, because ilobolo is not regarded as a price or a form of income.

Whereas traditionalists conceive of premarital pregnancy as causing contagious ritual impurity, many non-traditionalists do not. However, there are some non-traditionalists, especially those who are members of Zionist separatist churches, who see premarital pregnancy as a condition of physical and spiritual defilement. Such defilement is not conceptualized in traditionalist terms, but is rather construed as contamination with the devil's passions.

In all cases of premarital pregnancy the pervading attitude is that the genitor or his guardian (if he is unmarried) is the offending party. This applies to both traditionalists and non-traditionalists. In Mkhwanazi tribal law a woman is regarded as a perpetual minor, and therefore she cannot sue for damages if she is premaritally impregnated. She is

always represented by her guardian. Further, premarital impregnation is not construed as essentially an assault on a woman's person, but rather as an infringement of her guardian's rights in respect of her fecundity. The rationale is that the genitor has without securing the necessary permission, through the delivery of ilobolo and umeke goat or its monetary equivalent, interfered with the woman's fecundity, which is premaritally protected and controlled by her father or guardian. He has besmirched the woman with a bad stigma and deprived her parents and kin of the honour of marrying off a daughter without an illegitimate child.

It is with this attitude that traditionalists and non-traditionalists take punitive action against a seducer or his guardian.

5.4.2.2

Contraception

In order to avoid the distasteful consequences of premarital pregnancy, some non-traditionalist girls use oral and vaginal contraceptives. Mechanical means of contraception on the other hand do not seem to have gained popularity among them. Other non-traditionalist girls do not use contraceptives for religious reasons, and for fear of becoming permanently infertile. Traditionalist women interviewed unanimously condemned the use of contraceptives and asserted that they are used by women of weak character. They also expressed fear that contraceptives may cause permanent infertility.

The use of phallic sheaths is known to many non-traditionalist men, but it seems that the number who use them is very small. Some maintain that such sheaths impair sexual enjoyment, and others say that they get torn during the sexual act and are therefore useless for contraception. It was also pointed out

that some girls refuse to allow coitus if a lover suggests using a condom, for fear that it may get torn and be trapped in the vagina.

Traditionalist men interviewed on the use of condoms said that they do not use them. However, they stated that some of their friends who work and stay in town use them not for contraception, but rather for prophylactic purposes.

Some lovers practise coitus interruptus to avoid premarital pregnancy. Those interviewed pointed out that its success cannot be guaranteed.

5.4.2.3

Abortion

Informants stated that fear of parental and public censure very often prompts some girls, who have conceived premaritally, to commit abortion. This they do secretly with or without the approval and connivance of their lovers. At times the mother of a pregnant girl connives at an abortion with her daughter. If abortion is contemplated, the girl's father is conveniently kept ignorant of his daughter's condition.

To induce abortion, informants said, a girl takes heavy doses of a variety of chemicals. These include among others traditional and Western purgatives, writing ink, blue soap, washing blue and permanganate of potash. It was also stated that irritant concoctions are also inserted into the reproductive tract to expedite the process. A detailed account of how the foetus is actually expelled could not be obtained owing to the reticence of female informants on this subject. It was confidentially stated that there are certain women inside and outside the tribal area who specialize in this

operation, and that they sell their services for a fee.

It was pointed out that fear of permanent infertility and death deter many girls from committing abortion. It would also seem that love for children also plays a role in deterring some premaritally impregnated girls from aborting.

All tribesmen irrespective of degree of acculturation, publicly condemn abortion. Its seriousness, however, is variously construed. Those who regard a foetus as an accomplished human being regard it as identical to murder. However, those who regard a foetus as a mere potential human being, do not interpret abortion in this way. They see it as a special kind of scandalous and abominable action, which calls for severe punishment.

It is difficult to assess how common abortion is in the tribal area as people are very secretive about it.

5.4.2.4 What a girl does on noticing her premarital pregnancy

The normal procedure among traditionalists and non-traditionalists is that as soon as a girl notices that she has missed two or three consecutive menses, she informs her lover of her condition. If she has more than one lover, as is sometimes the case among some non-traditionalist girls, she approaches the one she considers most likely to be responsible for her pregnancy, or if she is uncertain, the one she loves best and considers most likely to acknowledge responsibility, and propose marriage.

After informing her lover, a traditionalist girl proceeds to inform one of the senior girls (iqhikiza) in the neighbourhood. The latter in turn reports her pregnancy to the

girl's mother, and reveals the identity of the alleged seducer. It is then for the girl's mother to report the matter to the girl's father or guardian.

A non-traditionalist girl, on the other hand, is expected to report her premarital pregnancy to her mother through one of her maternal or paternal aunts. It is then the mother's duty to report her premarital pregnancy to her father or guardian.

The ideal among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists is that a premaritally impregnated girl should report her pregnancy to her parents before it starts showing. It is a scandal, tribesmen say, to try to conceal pregnancy because as time goes on it inexorably reveals itself.

In spite of this ideal, what a non-traditionalist girl does after reporting her pregnancy to her lover depends on his reaction.

Non-traditionalist men react in various ways to reports of premarital pregnancy by their girlfriends. Some get scared, vehemently deny responsibility for the reported pregnancy, threaten the woman with assault or embarrassment and start dissociating with her. This seems to happen more often among young men who shun responsibility and facing censure. Married men also deny responsibility for premarital impregnation for fear of disgrace and possible disruption of their families. Other men deny genitorship if they suspect or know that their pregnant girlfriends also slept with other men. Some men, however, do not react in the manner outlined above. In stead they secretly take their girlfriends to doctors for medical examination. If the doctors affirm pregnancy, they either promise to open marriage negotiations immediately

before pregnancy is noticed, or promise to pay damages. In some cases, informants say, a genitor suggests abortion to his pregnant girlfriend in order to escape all responsibilities attendant upon such premarital pregnancy.

Among non-traditionalists, if an alleged seducer denies responsibility, his girlfriend may conceal her pregnancy from her parents, and secretly try to procure an abortion before her condition is noticed. Other premaritally impregnated girls report to their parents straight away irrespective of their lovers's reaction. At times if a genitor acknowledges responsibility to his girlfriend, and promises to open marriage negotiations before her condition is noticed, she conceals her pregnancy from her parents with the hope that by the time it is noticed, she will either be married or about to get married. In this way she protects her lover and herself from parental rebuke and public censure.

5.4.2.5 The reaction of age-mates

Traditionalist girls have a strong, but gradually weakening, sense of collective responsibility. They regard the premarital pregnancy of one of them as an assault on their dignity and virtue (ubuntombi). They also view it as an act which herds them into a condition of ritual impurity. They therefore react *communally* against the pregnant girl and her seducer. They subject the girl to various forms of indignity to express their disapprobation. The reaction against the alleged seducer takes the form of an organized protest.

On an appointed evening the expectant girl in the company of her age-mates march on the alleged seducer's home. On arrival, it is said, they shed their clothing just outside

the entrance to the homestead (umuzi), and then belligerently enter the alleged seducer's hut (ilawu), where they squat and sulk, boldly revealing their pudenda and bellies. Traditionally women are not allowed to squat. They are required to sit in such a manner that the inside of their thighs remains concealed. On this occasion, however, they defy all rules of modesty and squat in order to register their indignation. Their nudity also symbolizes the denudation of their virtue and honour by the seducer. Informants say that nowadays it is very rare for traditionalist girls to accost an alleged seducer in the nude.

On being asked what the purpose of their visit is, they state, through an iqhikiza, that they have come to demand "the restoration of their torn virginity belt (umutsha) from the alleged seducer." This means that they have come to demand compensation for the indignity they have communally suffered through the premarital impregnation of their friend.

One of the senior women of the homestead then conveys the girls' complaint to the alleged seducer's father or guardian. He in turn calls in the alleged seducer to question him on the allegation. If he acknowledges responsibility for the pregnancy, his guardian gives the girls either a goat or one Rand through the woman who reported the complaint to him. This fee serves two purposes: firstly it is for the ritual purification of the girls and secondly it serves as a token of acknowledging responsibility for the pregnancy. If the alleged culprit denies responsibility for the pregnancy, his guardian does not give the girls anything. Having received the goat or money, the girls proceed to the nearest stream to purge themselves of ritual impurity in the manner already described in section 4.4.1 above.

During these proceedings the seducer keeps conveniently out of reach of the girls lest he be severely mauled by them.

The attitude of the tribal court is that the money or goat given to the girls does not form part of the damages payable to the pregnant girl's father or guardian. The fee is merely given for the mollification of the girls and their ritual purification. It is a moral obligation on the part of the seducer or his guardian to see to it that it is paid. The Code does not make overt provision for the payment of this fee in respect of seduction.

Unlike traditionalist girls, non-traditionalist girls do not view the premarital pregnancy of their friend as tarnishing their virtue. They regard it as a personal stigma attached to the girl concerned.

Unlike traditionalist girls, non-traditionalist girls do not accost their friend's seducer to demand a fee for their ritual purification.

5.4.2.6

Parental reaction

Both traditionalist and non-traditionalist parents invariably react with dismay and fury to the premarital impregnation of their daughters. It is not unusual for a premaritally impregnated girl to be severely rebuked and assaulted and or driven away from home. Such expulsion, however, is rarely permanent. It seems to be a momentary expression of extreme disappointment and complete rejection of the girl's behaviour. Pauw made a similar observation in East London among the Xhosa: "When a girl's pregnancy does cause tension between her and her parents, it is usually temporary" (1973:120).

At home a premaritally impregnated girl is forced to spend most of the time indoors, and she is denied many of the privileges she enjoyed before. She becomes the subject of animated gossip among adults of the neighbourhood. Girls who have not yet conceived premaritally are discouraged by their parents from associating with her lest they be badly influenced. The pregnant girl is made to feel very guilty and unworthy, that she very often contemplates suicide or disappears from the tribal area.

Fear of disgrace does prompt some non-traditionalist parents to send their daughters to distant relatives or friends, where they stay until they have given birth. Neighbours and friends are kept ignorant of the girl's pregnancy, and her absence from home is explained with any convenient lie. After delivery, the girl nurses the child for a while and then either leaves it with the relative or friend or comes back home with it.

Other non-traditionalist parents bravely face the scourge of public criticism and keep their daughters at home.

Traditionalist parents never send their daughters away to conceal their pregnancy. They regard it with contempt and as outright cowardice.

As the institution of amaqhikiza has become obsolete among non-traditionalists, it is now the responsibility of mothers to advise their daughters on sexual matters, and to see to it that they do not fall pregnant before marriage. Therefore, whenever a girl falls pregnant before marriage, it is her mother who shoulders the blame. She is accused of failing to supervise and discipline her daughter. Fear of public criticism, and a husband's or guardian's wrath may prompt

a woman to procure an abortion immediately.

Having heard of his daughter's premarital impregnation, a man does not immediately take action against the alleged seducer or his guardian. He indignantly waits for the seducer or his guardian to send a delegation to settle the matter with him. This applies to both traditionalists and non-traditionalists. Normally a girl's father or guardian waits for two or three months for the seducer's people to approach him. If they do not come during this time, he takes the matter to the chief's court through his local headman (induna).

If an alleged seducer has acknowledged responsibility for the pregnancy to the girl's relatives or age-mates, the onus lies with his father or guardian to take the initiative to settle the matter out of court with the girl's father or guardian. The seducer's father or guardian never approaches the girl's father or guardian himself. He sends two or three of his trusted friends or adult male agnates to the girl's guardian to acknowledge responsibility for the pregnancy, and promise to pay damages or pay part of the damages. If the seducer is willing to marry the girl, they also state their intention to open marriage negotiations. These delegates rarely enjoy a friendly reception. However, as theirs is to heal inflamed feelings and to mend damaged relations, they remain calm and plead for the settlement of the matter out of court.

If an alleged seducer denies responsibility for a girl's pregnancy, his guardian does not take action. He waits for the pregnant girl's father or guardian to take the matter to court where he contests it.

5.4.2.7 Congregational reaction

When a Christian girl falls pregnant before marriage, her parents are usually expected to inform the pastor and elders of the church congregation to which they belong.

The girl is summoned to appear before the church elders who rebuke her very strongly for her shameful and sinful behaviour. She is made to feel very guilty and unworthy to participate in the communal activities of the congregation. As punishment she is denied the privilege of mixing with the members of the congregation. During religious ceremonies she is forced to sit at the back of the congregation and listen remorsefully as she is prayed for and preached at. She is forced to learn the catechism afresh. During our research we never came across a single instance where a girl refused to accept punishment imposed upon her by her congregation. After about a year she is ceremonially restored to the congregation, and strongly admonished not to sin again. It is only after this period of penance that her premaritally born child may be baptized.

If the girl's seducer is also a member of the congregation to which she belongs, he suffers the same punishment. In many cases, however, young men escape punishment by staying away from church. If the seducer decides not to abscond from church, he is often persuaded to marry the girl to afford the child a legitimate status. Where a seducer belongs to a church congregation other than the one to which the pregnant girl belongs, it is very difficult to impose punishment upon him.

5.4.2.8 Legal action against a seducer

5.4.2.8.1 Parties to the litigation

In Mkhwanazi tribal law a woman is not considered competent to sue for damages in respect of her premarital impregnation, as she is regarded as a minor. This concurs with the provisions of section 27(2) of the Code which stipulates that: "Subject to the provisions of section 28 a Black female is deemed a perpetual minor in law and has no independent powers save as to her own person and as specially provided in this Code."

Further, in Mkhwanazi tribal law a woman's premarital impregnation is not a violation of her person, but an infringement of her lineage's property rights in respect of her reproductive capacity. Therefore in all cases of premarital impregnation brought before the tribal court, it is the pregnant woman's father or guardian, representing his lineage, who is the plaintiff.

Section 27(1) of the Code provides that: "A Black male becomes a major in law on marriage or upon entering into a customary union, or on attaining the age of twenty-one years ..." Mkhwanazi tribal law concurs with the provisions of this section only in as far as that a man attains majority upon marriage or entering into a customary union. However, in tribal law the attainment of the age of twenty-one years does not make a man a major. An unmarried man, irrespective of his age, is deemed a minor and can therefore not be sued for damages in his own name. In a law suit for seduction, involving an unmarried man, therefore, it is always his guardian, acting on behalf of his lineage, who is sued for damages.

It would appear that in tribal law a seduced woman and her unmarried seducer are not seen as the plaintiff and defendant,

respectively.

5.4.2.8.2 Proof of liability

Among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists an alleged genitor's admission of responsibility for a woman's premarital pregnancy, makes him or his guardian liable for the payment of damages. His admission of responsibility for the illegitimate pregnancy is seen as sufficient proof of his guilt.

However, if an alleged seducer denies genitorship, it is the duty of the pregnant girl to submit sufficient evidence to the chief's court that (a) she is or was involved in a love relationship with the alleged genitor, and (b) she had sexual intercourse with the alleged genitor at the time when conception could have occurred.

Ascertaining the existence of a love relationship between a premaritally impregnated girl and her alleged seducer is deemed necessary because the majority of premarital pregnancies occur within the context of love relationships. Premarital impregnation outside the context of a love relationship does occur but is still very rare.

For traditionalist girls it is relatively easy to prove that they are or were involved in love relationships with alleged seducers. The reason for this is that they establish and conduct their love relationships openly within the communal context of their age groups. A pregnant girl's age-mates can always submit reliable evidence that she and her seducer were or are indeed lovers.

Non-traditionalist girls, however, tend to conduct their love relationships individually, and very often secretly, as has already been pointed out. This makes it relatively very difficult for them to prove convincingly that they are or were involved in love relationships with alleged seducers. They have fewer friends who can give sufficient corroborative evidence of the existence of the alleged relationship.

With regard to (b) above, it may be pointed out that as a rule traditionalist girls are not allowed to meet their lovers, for whatever purpose, without the permission of their amaqhikiza. From the accounts given by informants it would seem that very few traditionalist girls ignore this injunction. The sanctioning of meetings between lovers by amaqhikiza makes it possible for them to give a more or less accurate account of the occasions when a pregnant girl met her lover. Although this does not in itself prove the occurrence of sexual intercourse, and the liability of the alleged genitor, it does, however, assist the tribal court in linking up the relative time of conception and the time of the meeting of the lovers. If there is a positive correlation between the occasion of the meeting of the lovers and the time of conception, the tribal court assumes the occurrence of sexual intercourse, and accordingly imposes a fine on the seducer or his guardian.

Non-traditionalist girls, on the other hand, do not enjoy the benefit of the evidence that may be submitted by amaqhikiza, because they do not have them. They meet their lovers secretly without informing their friends. Further, some non-traditionalist girls keep more than one lover at a time. These factors make it difficult for the tribal court to

uphold, without reservations, a pregnant girl's claim of an alleged seducer's liability for her pregnancy.

If a girl's evidence is unsatisfactory, or is deemed insufficient to quash an alleged seducer's denial of liability, the chief's court suspends the case until the birth of the child. After its birth, it is brought to the chief's court where it is publicly scrutinized by old men and women to establish whether there is any resemblance between it and the alleged genitor. Should there be no resemblance, the claim against the alleged seducer or his guardian is rejected. If there is any resemblance, however, the girl's claim is upheld and the genitor is accordingly instructed to pay damages and the cost of litigation.

Should the pregnant girl die or abort while the birth of her child is awaited, the tribal court, it is said, finds it very difficult to proceed with the case against the alleged genitor. Section 137(3) of the Code stipulates that: "Any claim for damages in respect of the seduction or illicit intercourse with a girl or woman is extinguished by the death of such a girl or woman unless her death is due to child-birth consequent upon such seduction or illicit intercourse."

In terms of traditional Mkhwanazi tribal law, however, the death of a premaritally impregnated girl or woman, irrespective of the cause of her death, does not absolve her seducer or his guardian from paying damages. Tribesmen maintain that premarital impregnation is not a violation of the girl's or woman's person, but an offence against her father or guardian and her whole lineage. Her death, therefore, does not

impair her father's or guardian's claim for damages in respect of her illicit impregnation.

Tribesmen say that if an alleged seducer acknowledges genitorship, pays damages and later proves that he is not the genitor, he is entitled to retrieve his cattle or money through the chief's court. Further he has a right to sue the girl's father or guardian for damages in respect of his wrongful accusation and defamation. Informants, however, cannot remember any tribal court case where an alleged seducer used this right.

5.4.2.8.3 Penalty for premarital impregnation

5.4.2.8.3.1 Penalty in first pregnancies

Traditional Mkhwanazi tribal law stipulates that upon a woman's first premarital impregnation, her seducer or his guardian shall pay the following beasts:

- 1) the ingquthu beast to the woman's mother or house if she is deceased, provided that it has not been paid for previous defloration;
- 2) the umgezo or ingezamageke beast to the woman's father or guardian for the ritual purification of his homestead desecrated by the premarital impregnation of his daughter, and
- 3) the invimba beast to the woman's father or guardian for the symbolic restoration of his daughter's virginity. In essence this beast compensates him for the reduction of the woman's ilobolo value.

It was also stated that the chief has a traditional right to

demand one head of cattle from the premaritally impregnated woman's father or guardian as a fine for the defilement of his tribal area. The woman's father or guardian is entitled to recover such a beast from the seducer or his guardian.

The Code and the Black Administration Act of 1927, as amended, do not provide for the payment of the umgezo or ingezamagceke beast, as provided for in traditional tribal law.

Presently the tribal court enforces the payment of two beasts for the first premarital pregnancy of a woman. It would appear that this is an attempt to conform to the provisions of section 137(1) of the Code cited above. Owing to the uncertainty of the virginity of many women nowadays the tribal court seems reluctant to enforce the payment of the ingquthu beast in first premarital pregnancies. In stead, one of the two beasts payable as damages goes to the tribal chief as a fine for the desecration of his tribal area; and the other to the premaritally impregnated woman's father or guardian. Informants could not provide a clear explanation as to whether the latter beast is the umgezo or imvimba. The impression registered is that it presently serves the traditional purpose of both beasts. It is called inhlawulo, which literally means a fine. In most cases it is slaughtered and consumed by all present except unmarried girls.

Owing to the scarcity of cattle in the tribal area there is a growing tendency to pay all fines, including that of premarital impregnation, in cash. Section 86 of the Code stipulates that: "... for purposes of any dispute the value of each head of lobolo cattle shall be regarded as ten rand." This has been widely interpreted to mean that ten rand shall

be the equivalent of one head of cattle for both ilobolo and non-ilobolo purposes.

Tribesmen pointed out that it is unrealistic to regard ten rand as an equivalent of one head of cattle, as the current market value of cattle ranges between R100 and R200 a head. In suing genitors or their guardians for damages, therefore, the guardians of premaritally impregnated women invariably ignore the provisions of section 86 of the Code referred to above. In stead they insist on the payment of two live cattle provided for in current tribal law, or any amount they believe would be sufficient to purchase two head of cattle. This amount varies but it rarely exceeds R200.

If the premaritally impregnated girl or woman is still at school, her guardian also demands that her seducer or his guardian should pay back all the money already spent on her education that year. The amount payable as compensation for time and money lost varies with the impregnated woman's standard of education. It varies between R20 and R50 for women at higher primary and secondary school. It is slightly higher for women at high school.

Although traditional tribal law makes no provision for lying-in expences, some non-traditionalist tribesmen do claim compensation for all expences incurred as a result of their daughters' premarital pregnancies.

5.4.2.8.3.2 Penalty in second and subsequent pregnancies

Traditional Mkhwanazi tribal law lays down that upon a woman's second and subsequent pregnancies, her seducer or his guardi

should provide one head of cattle, or its monetary equivalent, to be given to the chief as a fine for the defilement of his tribal area.

Section 137(1) of the Code, on the other hand, only provides for the payment of one head of cattle, in respect of a woman's second and subsequent premarital pregnancies.

Owing to this limitation set in this section of the Code, the tribal court now only enforces the payment of one head of cattle to the pregnant woman's father or guardian. Normally the chief also demands a beast from the woman's father or guardian for the cleansing of his tribal area.

Writing on the payment of the traditional imvimba and umgezo beasts in second and subsequent pregnancies among the Usuthu-Zulu, Breytenbach says: By n ongehude en nie-verloofde meisie se tweede en verdere swangerskappe, mag by die Usuthu vermoedelik nóg die inkomo yohlanga, nóg die umgezo geëis word. Sommige segsmanne het egter beweer dat die umgezo (net soos die imvimba) vir elke swangerskap geëis mag word. Dié standpunt was onder die segsmanne in die minderheid. Die probleem was of die umgezo met deflorasie of bevrugting geassosieer moes word of nie. Die meerderheidstandpunt het naamlik daarop gewys dat die lewering van die umgezo die verwydering van die ukhondolo, die smet op die familie van die dogter ten doel het. Die skande is hier steeds deflorasie en nie bevrugting nie. Daarom kon die inkomo yohlanga en die umgezo een keer geëis word. Die minderheidstandpunt het die umgezo aan die bevrugting (ukumetisa) van n ongehude dogter gekoppel. Dit kan nie aanvaar word nie want dit was baie duidelik dat die umgezo by blote deflorasie ook geëis kan

word. Dit is moontlik dat segsmanne hier met die umgezo en die imvimba verward geraak het," (1971:134).

Breytenbach's conclusion that it is only premarital defloration that is a disgrace, and not premarital pregnancy is not corroborated by our findings among the abakhwanazi. Among the latter both premarital defloration and premarital pregnancy are traditionally viewed as disgraceful. They both cause ritual defilement (ukhondolo olubi or imishophi) in the girl's home. Such defilement can only be expiated by the payment and slaughter of an umgezo beast. Therefore each time a woman falls pregnant before marriage an umgezo beast must be paid by her seducer, in order that her father's or guardian's homestead may be cleansed. The ingquthu beast is paid only once because a woman is deflowered once. Presently, among the abakhwanazi, the imvimba is demanded from the seducer if he has not yet made any promise to marry his expectant girlfriend or has not yet opened marriage negotiations and paid part of the ilobolo.

5.4.2.8.3.3 Penalty where pregnancy occurs during the period of betrothal

Where premarital pregnancy occurs during the subsistence of a betrothal (that is, after the delivery of part of the ilobolo) the prospective bridegroom or his guardian is presently not sued for damages. In stead arrangements for the marriage are speeded up so that the pregnancy should only become noticeable after marriage. In terms of traditional Mkhwanazi law, however, the prospective bridegroom is liable to pay the umgezo beast as a fine for having caused his fiancee to fall pregnant at her father's or guardian's homestead, thereby causing its ritual defilement.

Section 137(1) of the Code provides that: "... should the seducer marry the woman, payments other than the ngquthu beast shall be regarded as part of the lobolo." This provision is strongly resented by traditionalist tribesmen. They state that the inclusion of the umgezo beast (which is not recognized by the Code) in the ilobolo is contrary to the purpose for which it is paid, viz. ritual purification of the girl's home and lineage. It is regarded as a filthy beast which should under no circumstances be driven into a man's homestead, because it can contaminate all the girls of his homestead with a predisposition for premarital pregnancy. In the past it was taken forceably from the seducer's homestead, by the seduced girl's brothers and slaughtered in the veld. On this occasion all rules of skinning and meat apportionment were flagrantly defied, and the meat was devoured with purported indignity (ukunikiza). All present, with the exception of unmarried girls, partook of the meat.

The inclusion of the invimba beast in the ilobolo does not cause any resentment among tribesmen.

Many tribesmen expressed the view that the provisions of section 137(1) of the Code cited above, virtually absolve seducers, who marry their pregnant girlfriends from punishment.

CHAPTER 6

MARRIAGE NEGOTIATIONS

6.1 Introduction

Contemporary marriage negotiations among traditionalists and non-traditionalists follow the same general pattern, which has its roots in traditional usage. But variations within this pattern are discernible and these shall be outlined in the text below. Traditionalist and non-traditionalist marriage negotiations go through the same phases and these are:

- 1) the phase of marriage proposal, 2) the phase during which marriage negotiations are initiated and conducted, 3) the phase of the delivery of ilobolo, and 4) the phase of the delivery of the bride to the bridegroom's lineage.

6.2 Marriage proposal

Among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists marriage negotiations are invariably preceded by a marriage proposal. Marriage proposals are of two kinds, namely those in which a man takes the initiative and those in which a young woman takes the initiative.

6.2.1 Marriage proposals initiated by men

Marriage proposals of this order are the most common among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists.

As soon as a traditionalist or non-traditionalist young man considers himself old enough to marry, has sufficient money or cattle for ilobolo or has been assured of ilobolo sponsorship by his father, and has a girlfriend he considers good enough

to take to wife, he proposes marriage to her. Usually she pretends not to have expected the proposal and rejects it with feeble excuses. It is imprudent and contrary to persisting traditional custom, informants say, for a woman to accept a marriage proposal immediately. She should feign reluctance for some time to maintain her dignity and to test her lover's resolve. Traditionalist women often protest that they are still too young to marry. Non-traditionalist women have a wider variety of excuses to offer to their lovers. Some claim, like their traditionalist counterparts, that they are still too young to get married, and would, consider the proposal seriously after a year or two. Some add that the love relationship has not yet subsisted long enough to allow them to know their lovers well, and they would not like to plunge themselves into marriage with men they do not quite understand. Others say that they still want to study further in order to qualify for prestigious and better paying jobs, and would not like to be encumbered with matrimonial responsibilities yet. Others decline the proposal, at the time, on the grounds that they have not yet sufficiently worked for their parents, and would still like to reimburse them in kind and in cash, for having spent money on their upbringing and school education.

Informants said that a girl should, however, be careful not to keep on feigning reluctance to marry, lest her lover decide to leave her altogether. Therefore, the posturing is only sustained for a short period.

6.2.2

Marriage proposals initiated by women

At times it is not a young man who takes the initiative in the proposal of marriage, but the young woman.

Informants say that in the past there were two traditionally

approved ways in which a young woman could propose marriage. These were ukuma alternatively known as ukubaleka and ukugana.

6.2.2.1 Ukuma/Ukubaléka

If a young woman felt that her lover was taking too long to propose marriage, and did not respond positively when coaxed to propose, she resorted to ukuma or ukubaleka. At times a woman resorted to ukuma in order to avoid being given away in marriage, by her father, to a man she did not love. Ukuma was the most overt manner in which a young woman could propose marriage to her lover. This practise is described, inter alia, by Krige (1936:125), de Jager (1937:51-56), Bryant (1948:537), Vilikazi (1962:65-66), Breytenbach (1971:164-166) and de Clercq (1975:242-245).

Ukuma has become very rare in the tribal area. However, it still occurs sporadically among traditionalists. Among non-traditionalists it does not occur, because they regard it as disgraceful for a woman to propose marriage to a man. They associate it with paganism and traditionalist "simplicity". Presently, if a non-traditionalist young woman considers that a proposal for marriage by her lover is long overdue, she tactfully indicates to her lover her wish to get married. During conversation she constantly talks about marriage and refers, with noticeable envy, to persons of her age who are either married or about to get married. This does often prompt a young man to propose marriage to her, for fear of losing her to a rival suitor. When he proposes she first feigns reluctance, but relents after a short period of easy persuasion. However, it does happen that as soon as a young woman starts nagging her lover for marriage, he starts recoiling and drifting away from her. A young woman, it is said, should therefore be very circumspect in trying to talk

her lover into proposing marriage.

At times young women force their lovers to propose marriage by "deliberately" falling pregnant. As soon as they have conceived they persistently ask their lovers "to take action which will save them from parental rebuke and disgrace." If a young man is certain that he is indeed responsible for her pregnancy, and is sufficiently in love with her, he proposes that they should marry before the pregnancy becomes noticeable. such "deliberate" premarital pregnancies, however, do not always prompt young men to propose marriage. As soon as they are informed of the occurrence of premarital pregnancy, some young men start making themselves very scarce to their girlfriends and ultimately break off the relationship.

6.2.2.2. Ukugana

The word ukugana means to marry or choose a husband,. It is used exclusively in respect of females (c.f. Bryant,1905:169 and Doke and Vilakazi, 1958:230).

Informants related that in the past a man, in need of cattle, could instruct his daughter to go to offer herself in marriage to a man of his choice - usually a man with many cattle. At times, however, a man could instruct his daughter to go and offer herself in marriage to a man of his choice, not for material gain, but for the purpose of establishing affinal relations which could bring along socio-political benefits for him. Such was the case, for instance, where a man ordered his daughter to go and offer her hand in marriage to a chief or a headman of a large ward. Informants also added that in the past a daughter who fell pregnant by her lover premaritally, was separated from him and instructed to go and offer herself in marriage to an old man favoured by her father. This was intended to be punishment for her and a deterrent to other

young women.

Such instructions, informants say, were rarely defied, as children were still very obedient to their fathers then. After the issue of the instruction, the young woman would follow the ukuma procedure described by the authors cited above in section 6.2.2.1. The act of instructing a daughter to go and propose marriage to a man of one's choice is known as ukuganisela. The word ukuganisela is a derivative form of ukugana and it means to give a woman in marriage to a man (c.f. Doke and Vilakazi, 1958:231). Ukuganisela differed from ukuma in that in its case a young woman was instructed to go and propose to a man of her father's choice, whereas in the case of ukuma she proposed to a man of her own choice.

Today ukuganisela in its traditional form does not exist in the tribal area. Its disappearance appears to have been quickened by the provisions of section 59 (1) (c) of the Code, which stipulates that one of the essentials of the customary union is " a declaration in public by the intended wife to the official witness at the celebration of the union that the union is with her own free will and consent." Another factor which seems responsible for the disappearance of ukuganisela is the growing sense of independence among the youth in matters relating to the choice of marital partners.

Presently what almost approximates ukuganisela occurs when a young woman falls pregnant before marriage. Her father may be so thoroughly annoyed and embarrassed by this and order her to go to her lover as " he cannot go on maintaining another man's 'wife' ". By so doing he hopes to force his daughter's lover to open marriage negotiations, and save him from disgrace and from the problem of being saddled with an illegitimate child. This action by the young woman's father does at times

Precipitate the initiation of marriage negotiations. The young man's parents may prevail upon him to marry the woman, more especially if he admits responsibility for the pregnancy, and they are satisfied with her character.

6.3 The initiation and conduct of marriage negotiations

6.3.1. Preparations for opening marriage negotiations

The next step taken by a young man after reaching agreement with his girlfriend to marry, is to inform his father or guardian of his intention to get married. In terms of traditional custom, he does not do this himself, but requests one of his paternal or maternal uncles to do this on his behalf. However, cases are not unknown where young men requested their mothers or elder brothers to inform their fathers of their matrimonial intentions.

Having learnt of his son's wish to get married, he calls him in to discuss the matter with him. He asks him to which clan and lineage his intended wife belongs, and also asks him whether she is worthy to be a daughter-in-law of the lineage. He also asks him whether he has any money or cattle to pay as ilobolo for his intended bride. Informants say that in the past it was not necessary for a father to ask his son the latter question as it was his obligation to pay the whole ilobolo for his son's first wife. Nowadays, however, fathers tend to evade this traditional responsibility, and insist that their sons should raise the ilobolo for their brides themselves. There are, nevertheless, fathers who still contribute the whole or a significant portion of the ilobolo for their sons' brides. They do this either unconditionally or on condition that their sons have given them and still give them part of their earnings.

If he is satisfied that his son chose a worthy woman, and is also content that he has saved sufficiently for ilobolo, he then promises to inform the rest of the lineage members of the matter. Messages are then dispatched to all the young man's paternal uncles and aunts and other senior members of the lineage.

On a specified day, convenient to all or most of them, the invited lineage members meet to discuss the young man's intention to marry. It is important that all or most of the senior members of the lineage should be present, because marriage is construed to involve all members of one's lineage. This applies to both traditionalists and non-traditionalists.

At this meeting the character of the young woman intended for marriage is critically discussed. Her parents' reputation and social standing are discussed. The lineage reserves the right to veto the young man's choice if they are not satisfied with the girl's character or her parents' reputation. On this occasion members of the young man's lineage decide on the person to be chosen as umkhongi (one who initiates and conducts marriage negotiations on behalf of a man and his lineage). Informants say that the umkhongi should not be member of the lineage of the young man intending marriage. Normally a trusted friend of the young man's father, or the young man's maternal uncle is chosen. The umkhongi, it is said, should be a mature married man who can command respect among the intended bride's people, and should also be intelligent and glib. He should also be knowledgeable on traditional and contemporary practices relating to marriage negotiations in the tribe. Commenting on the choice of the umkhongi among the Nyuswa Vilakazi writes: "One must always remember that these marriage negotiations are in the nature of an assault on the solidarity of the girl's lineage and that, therefore, much heat and bad feeling will be generated which the umkhongi must sustain; and he must cushion all the blows aimed

at the boy's group by the girl's patrikin' (1962: 62-63). The umkhongi's position in relation to the intending bride=groom's lineage should therefore be "... such that any insults to him could not be construed as an insult to the whole of the boy's umndeni, or should not be a source of embarrassment to the girl's people who will be drawn into affinal relationship with those of the boy" (Ibid 1964: 62-63).

One or two persons are also appointed to assist the umkhongi. Their role is essentially that of witnesses - the duty of negotiating being left entirely to the umkhongi.

At this lineage meeting it is the intending bridegroom's father or guardian who presides. The lineage discusses the number of cattle or money to be delivered as ilobolo. Those of the lineage who wish to contribute towards the ilobolo of the intended bride also state the amount of money or number of cattle they intend donating. If there is a need to borrow money or cattle to be delivered as ilobolo, it is also discussed on this occasion.

Finally they decide the day on which the umkhongi and his assistants will approach the girl's father to open marriage negotiations. Such a visit is usually scheduled for a weekend when most men are not at work. Where the intended bride's mother works far, the visit is timed such that it coincides with his annual leave.

After this meeting the young man intending marriage informs his girlfriend the date on which the umkhongi will come to initiate marriage negotiations. The young woman then whispers the news to her mother and elder sisters, if she has any. Her mother in turn informs her father of the impending visit. If he is away from home a letter is sent to him or a

message is sent to him through someone. Informants say that in the past it was not customary to notify the girl's father formally that an umkhongi would be coming to initiate marriage negotiations. Even today many traditionalists do not announce their intended visit and its purpose. A growing number of non-traditionalists, however, consider it decent to make an appointment with the intended bride's father or guardian, and they accordingly arrange to meet him on a date suitable to him.

6.3.2

The initiation of negotiations

On the day decided upon by the young man's lineage, the umkhongi and his assistants depart for the intended bride's home to be there at mid-morning.

Among traditionalists, on arrival at the bride's home, the umkhongi stops at the main entrance (isango) to the homestead and salutes the intended bride's father aloud - calling out his clan name (isibongo) and praise name (isithakazelo). To the salutation he adds: "We have been sent by so and so of such a clan and lineage to come and ask you, of such and such a clan, for the establishment of a pleasant relationship. We bring along a heifer (describing it by its colour and other features) to you." To this beast, known as inkomo yokumemeza, he adds the other beasts which are ready for delivery as ilobolo. He also describes them by colour and other features. Then he concludes by saying "Siyaphela lapho" (We end there). The beasts named and described by the umkhongi are not actually brought along on the day of the opening of marriage negotiations. They are brought later when the ilobolo is delivered.

Having casually established the identity of the people saluting him, and knowing the purpose of their visit, the intended

bride's father deliberately ignores them for a long time. When it pleases him he sends one of the young men of his homestead to go and ask the men outside the homestead (i.e. abakhongi) what they have come for. The purpose of their visit having been outlined briefly to the young man, they wait while the message is relayed to the intended bride's father. The letter may at this time give instructions that the abakhongi be chased away "as they are disturbing the peace of his homestead." In most cases, however, he orders that they be invited into the indlunkulu hut, where they wait for him, while he confers with senior members of his lineage in another hut. At this meeting the intended bride's lineage decide on the person who is to be their spokesman in the negotiations. Usually one of the intended bride's paternal uncles is chosen. The young woman's father never acts in this capacity. They also decide on how they are going to react to the umkhongi's initial overtures. Having made their decisions they go to the indlunkulu hut to meet the umkhongi and his assistants. After a long period of heavy silence, the spokesman of the intended bride's lineage greets the umkhongi and his men. After the customary exchange of greetings and light talk, the spokesman of the intended bride's lineage asks the umkhongi what his errand is. The umkhongi repeats almost word for word everything he said when saluting at the main entrance (isango) to the homestead. As soon as the umkhongi has spoken there follows silence, and the facial expression and attitude of the members of the intended bride's lineage suddenly change.

Krige noted that there is considerable antagonism between the two groups in the early stages of the marriage negotiations (1936:122). We also observed this in the marriage negotiations of traditionalist Mkhwanazi tribesmen. Members of the intended bride's lineage adopt a manifestly arrogant and

antagonistic attitude towards the umkhongi and his companions, at the beginning of the negotiations. Most of their utterances are marked by an intentional disregard for the feelings of their guests.

In the case of non-traditionalists a wide range of attitudes is observable among members of the intended bride's lineage. Some show antagonism and arrogance, which almost approximates that of traditionalists, while others tend to be more amicable. It would appear that those who have been significantly imbued with Western norms relating to the treatment of well-meaning guests consciously try to treat the umkhongi and his men courteously. They do this in order not to earn themselves the unenviable reputation of being "uncivilized". However, those who have not been similarly influenced by Western standards of etiquette tend to manifest a leaning towards traditional antagonism. Further, it would appear that some persons adopt the traditional hostile attitude as a deliberate effort to appear dignified and uninterested. However, it cannot be doubted that the impending loss of a beloved daughter, her domestic services and her financial contribution to her parents' family also play a role in shaping the attitude of the prospective bride's father and his agnates towards the umkhongi and his companions. It was also observed that where the intended bride is already pregnant by the prospective bridegroom there is a tendency, on the part of the young woman's lineage to be more hostile in attitude towards the umkhongi and his men.

Among non-traditionalists the umkhongi and his assistants do not, on arrival at the intended bride's home, stop at the main entrance to the homestead and wait to be invited in while repetitively saluting the intended bride's father and describing, by colour and other features,

the cattle intended for delivery as ilobolo. Instead they walk into the homestead and announce their arrival by knocking at the door and simultaneously saluting the intended bride's father in the traditional way without, however, shouting aloud the intention of their visit. Their arrival is not deliberately ignored for a long time as is the case among traditionalists. As soon as their arrival has been noticed, they are cordially greeted and invited into the sitting room where they are offered chairs by one of the members of the intended bride's lineage. The intended bride's father or guardian deliberately avoids inviting the umkhongi and his men into the house himself. In some instances as soon as he notices the arrival of these guests, he leaves the sitting-room, where his senior agnates are seated, and walks into the bedroom where he stays until one of the members of his family comes to inform him of their presence. Having been informed, he continues doing whatever he is doing and only emerges from the bedroom after a while. On entering the sitting-room he takes a seat and looks at his guests in dignified silence for a few seconds, and then greets them. After yet a few seconds of silence, he asks them where they come from and to which clan or clans they belong. After this customary exchange of greetings the umkhongi and his companions are drawn into light conversation on current matters of general interest, and entertained to either tea or cold drink.

When the umkhongi feels that the atmosphere is ripe for the introduction of the matter for which he has come, he composes himself and formally announces the purpose of his visit. All non-traditionalists invariably use traditional expressions. The most

common are: "Nina basekuthini, sithunywe ngusobani wasekuthini ukuthi asizomokhela umlilo." (you of such and such a clan, we have been sent by so and so of such a clan and lineage to ask you to give him a burning ember for kindling a fire at his home) or "Nina basekuthini, sithunywe ngusobani ukuthi asizomcelela isihlobo esihle" (You of such and such a clan, we have been sent by so and so to ask you to allow him to establish a pleasant relationship with you). It is at this time that a change in attitude is noticeable on the part of the intended bride's father and his agnates.

As is the case among traditionalists the intended bride's father or guardian does not speak to the umkhongi directly. His lineage appoints a spokesman through whom they communicate with the umkhongi. Such a spokesman is usually one of the intended bride's paternal uncles. He does not have a specific name which defines his role or position.

Among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists, before any discussion on the proposed marriage can start, the young woman whose hand is sought in marriage is called before the lineage and asked: " Do you know these people?" If she denies knowing the umkhongi and his companions, the negotiations are stopped and the umkhongi and his men are sent away and told that nothing can be said on the proposed marriage if the woman they have come for does not know them. Such a denial of the umkhongi and his assistants is traditionally understood to mean that the young woman sought does not wish to marry into the lineage the umkhongi has come to represent. However, if she acknowledges

knowing them, it is understood that she is willing to marry into the lineage in question. After assuring her lineage that she is willing to marry into the lineage represented by the umkhongi, she is sent away and the negotiations proceed in her absence.

It is customary among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists that before the intended bride's lineage reacts to the marriage proposal, the umkhongi should give the intended bride's father certain gifts. In the past, informants say, these gifts were standardized, and everyone marrying off a daughter invariably asked for the same gifts. Presently the nature and number of gifts demanded depend upon the whims of the agnates of the woman sought for marriage. Some of these are traditional gifts, while others are of recent import.

Among the majority of traditionalists and a few non-traditionalists, as soon as the intended bride has been interviewed and sent out, her father announces, through his lineage spokesman, that he is climbing up a tree, and wishes to be brought down, as he cannot speak on lineage matters from the top of the tree. In response to this the umkhongi gives him four Rand through the lineage spokesman. This gift having been presented to him, he announces that his lips are sealed and cannot speak on the proposed marriage. The umkhongi then gives him another gift known as imvulamlomo (mouth opener). Its function is to temper his taciturnity and to coax him to speak. Without this present he and his agnates refuse to react to the marriage proposal. The imvulamlomo varies from lineage to lineage, and it ranges from four to ten Rand. Presently it is

always given in the form of money, whereas in the past it always took the form of a goat. In terms of contemporary tribal law the invulamlomo is not recoverable in the event of the breakdown of the marriage negotiations. It is not part of the ilobolo payable for the intended bride. This also applies to the gift given for bringing the intended bride's father down from the tree. These gifts belong to that category of valuables known as izibizo which are given to specified members of the intended bride's lineage.

The invulamlomo having been given to the intended bride's father, a reaction to the proposed marriage follows. The umkhongi and his men are very often asked to come on another day as the matter still has to be discussed by the intended bride's lineage.

On their second visit the umkhongi and his companions are asked for gifts known as izibizo. Most of these gifts are for compensating the intended bride's parents for their efforts in bringing up the young woman, now sought as a wife. Among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists these gifts take the form of clothing, implements, food and money. A non-traditionalist father may for instance ask the umkhongi to clothe him from head to toe. This involves buying him a hat, shirt and tie, a suit, socks and shoes. To this list an umbrella and an overcoat may be added. The head to toe attire is demanded as compensation for the trouble the intended bride's father took to dress up smartly whenever he went out to court the intended bride's mother. The overcoat and umbrella compensate him for the discomfort he suffered when he went out

courting on hot and cold days. Traditionalist fathers invariably demand that they be given an overcoat, preferably the heavy type worn by soldiers (ijazi lesisotsha) and a spear (umkhonto) or an axe (imbazo). Traditionalist informants stated that it is the duty of the intending son-in-law to replace the old overcoat which his prospective father-in-law habitually put on when he went out at night to court the intended bride's mother. For all the effort and time he put into wooing and ultimately marrying the young woman's mother he deserves compensation. Without his relentless efforts the intended bride would not have been born. It is also the duty of the intending son-in-law to compensate his prospective father-in-law with a new spear or an axe for having physically protected the intended bride from infancy up to the time of the marriage proposal. Some traditionalist fathers (all depending on their fancy) also ask for horse riding equipment, like a saddle, a pair of breeches, bridles and a sjambok. As the tribesmen are not horse-riders, the horse-riding equipment is always substituted with money. The value of the individual items is specified by the intended bride's father. The value of such items is usually fixed far below current retail prices.

Another gift which is commonly asked for by both traditionalists and non-traditionalists is the isipho sokucela (a gift for asking the young woman's hand in marriage). In the past this gift was one head of cattle. Presently money is used as a substitute. The monetary value of this gift varies from lineage to lineage, but it rarely exceeds ten Rand. This gift, together with those already mentioned above, serves to soften the feelings of the intended bride's relatives and

to kindle in them an amicable disposition towards the lineage proposing marriage. Its delivery is not legally enforceable.

Among non-traditionalists a prospective bride's mother invariably asks for a travelling rug (itshali) to replace the one she used for wrapping and carrying the intended bride during infancy. In addition to this item a variety of other gifts are asked for. These usually take the form of utensils, clothing, and food. In the majority of cases these gifts are as a rule not substituted with money. One informant provided the following record of gifts which he gave to his non-traditionalist mother-in-law:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Price (1974)</u>
1. Travelling rug	R8.00
2. Dress	R15.00
3. Umbrella	R 3.00
4. 20 litres paraffin	R 2.50
5. Paraffin pressure stove	R 4.50
6. 10 boxes matches	R 0.10
7. 1 dozen candles	R 0.60
8. 5 tins condensed milk	R 1.25
9. 1 large packet tea	R 0.80
10. soap	R 2.00
11. 1 large bag sugar	R 2.50
12. 1 large enamel coated dish	R 1.50

Among traditionalists the mothers of the intended brides rarely draw up such a long list of gifts. They usually ask for traditional gifts like ubikibiki, ugubuzela, and ugingqwayo. To these traditional gifts a few other gifts like candles, matches, paraffin, salt, soap and a travelling rug may be added. Ubikibiki is

given for compensating the intended bride's mother for having shed waters when she gave birth to the intended bride. The ugubuzela gift is given to compensate the intended bride's mother for having had to cover up her head with blankets at night when lightning flashed while she was nursing her daughter. The ulingqwayo (literally 'the thing that is rolled about') is a small, gourd-like, snuff container which, during conversation, is passed from one person to the next. Tribesmen say that the sharing of snuff is traditionally understood to symbolize the establishment or strengthening of existing friendship. In this context the snuff container asked for symbolizes the establishment of amicable affinal relations between the two lineages negotiating marriage.

Though in most lineages it is the intended bride's father and mother who receive izibizo, in some lineages the eldest male sibling of the intended bride is also told by his father to demand whatever he wishes to have from the umkhongi.

Section 95 (1) of the code stipulates that: "No claim to payments known as imvulamomo, ubikibiki, inhlawulo, umnyobo, ingqaqamazinyo, isikhwehlela and the like in respect of any proposed customary union shall be recognized and where such payments have been made the Magistrate/Commissioner may direct that they be included as part of the lobolo or that they be refunded to the party or parties who made them." Many tribesmen do not know of this provision of the code. Those who know about it deliberately ignore it and assert that it is contrary to traditional usage, and as such has no compelling influence upon them. They maintain that a man has an inalienable right to demand whatever he wants for his daughter.

Vilakazi remarks as follows on the demand of izibizo:
"It is true, of course, that the izibizo are not recognized by South African European law, and are regarded by Europeans as extortions. But one is concerned in anthropological research, with what people do and regard as part of their cultural traditions and not with what outsiders in the shape of foreign governments think... These gifts, as has been pointed out again and again, are of much importance in the marriage negotiations, each gift taking the negotiations a step further than they were before... They are not economically motivated, nor do they arise from any "objective diversification of needs"... To speak of izibizo as "illegal demands" is to overlook the important point that many of these so-called demands are really reciprocated by the girl's people, not only by the endless imibondo gifts, but they have to give a goat for a goat, a mat for a mat, and a shilling for a shilling when the prospective bride visits the boy's people," (1962:63-64).

Vilakazi's remarks based on observations among the Nyuswa apply equally well to the traditionalist and non-traditionalist members of the Mkhwanazi tribe.

On their third visit to the intended bride's home, the umkhongi and his assistants bring along the izibizo asked for during their second visit. These are received by the spokesman of the intended bride's lineage on behalf of the intended bride's father and mother. It is only after the distribution of these gifts that the ilobolo for the intended bride is discussed.

6.3.3 Ilobolo

6.3.3.1 The concept "ilobolo"

The word ilobolo is a noun derived from the verb lobola. The noun ilobolo is often written without its prefix i-. This is grammatically incorrect. Jeffreys also points out that: "The correct Nguni noun is ilobolo, and not lobolo," (1951:145).

Traditionalist and non-traditionalist tribesmen conceive of ilobolo as a traditional, peremptory gift which a man intending to marry, or his guardian, must give to the father or guardian of his intended bride. Without its delivery or a promise to deliver it, marriage with the intended bride is inconceivable and in principle not permissible.

Section 1(1) of the Code as amended, defines ilobolo as "cattle or other property which in consideration of an intended customary union the intended husband, his parent or guardian or other person agrees to deliver to the parent or guardian of the intended wife." However, contrary to the tribal view ilobolo is not, according to the Code, a necessary prerequisite for the contraction of either a customary union or a civil marriage. Its delivery and receipt are not breaches of the law.

The term "dowry" has and is still used by some as a synonym of the traditional term ilobolo. The Pocket Oxford Dictionary defines "dowry" as "property brought by a woman to her husband at marriage" (1953:244). Similarly Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines "dowry" as "the money, goods, or estate that a woman brings to her husband in marriage," (1961:681). Winick defines "dowry" as "the valuables or gifts that the bride's father or group pays to the bride or bridegroom," (1964:174). Seymour also uses the term "dowry" in a manner which suggests that he considers it synonymous with the traditional term ilobolo, as for

instance when he writes: "Dowry is therefore the rock on which the customary union is founded," (1970:143); or when he writes: "The payment of dowry by the bridegroom's father or by the bridegroom, as the case may be, to the bride's guardian is the major essential of the union," (1970:103).

In the light of the tribal concept of ilobolo, as outlined above, and its definition as furnished in the Code, it is obviously incorrect to view ilobolo and "dowry" as synonyms. Dowry is property given by the bride to her bridegroom at marriage, whereas ilobolo is property given to the intended bride's father or guardian by the intending bridegroom or his guardian.

The terms "bride-price", "child-price", "bride-wealth" and others have been suggested as suitable equivalents or synonyms of the vernacular term ilobolo. These translations of the term are inadequate, because they only depict isolated functions of ilobolo, without bringing out clearly the broader traditional meaning inherent in the vernacular term.

The Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain in 'Notes and Queries' says the following on the use of the term "bride-price" as a translation of ilobolo: "The payment of a bride-price is often erroneously believed to imply that the woman is purchased from her parents and becomes the property of her husband. This is not strictly true in any known instance. The term has, however, become too common to be discarded, but it would be preferable if the investigator always employed the native term in describing or referring to payments or gifts made by the groom or his group to the father or group of the bride," (1929:102). Jeffreys on the other hand vigorously asserts that the only adequate translation of

the term ilobolo is "child-price" because "... lobolo ... purchases the right to the woman's children. It did not buy the woman " (1951:146). Jeffrey's view that "child-price" is the only correct translation of the term ilobolo is not acceptable. The term ilobolo as understood and used by the abakhwanazi embraces all these suggested translations and more. Its meaning is the sum total of its various and ever-changing functions, which shall be discussed below. We suggest therefore that the word ilobolo should be retained in its aboriginal form in Anthropological literature, and should not be shorn of its meaning by translations.

6.3.3.2 The nature of ilobolo

It is not easy to state with precision, on a long term retrospective basis, what is actually traditional in as far as the nature of ilobolo is concerned.

Informants stated that in the remote past, long before the arrival of their ancestors in their present area of residence, grinding stones, iron hoes and beads were used as ilobolo. As time went on and cattle became numerous, people ceased using grinding stones, hoes and beads for ilobolo, and progressively used cattle. This tallies with what Bryant says: "In former times when cattle were only possessed in small quantities or by the few, it is said that the lobola consisted sometimes merely of a much valued piece of iron, of hoes, neck rings, later beads and finally one or two head of cattle " (1905:360). Pelsler writing on the Swazi of Nelspruit states that picks were used by these people for ilobolo before cattle became traditional valuables for this purpose (1968:115).

It would therefore appear that many articles in the past were used as ilobolo before cattle became the traditional valuables for ilobolo. The nature of ilobolo, it seems, has

to a large extent followed the direction of changes in the articles used as symbols and indices of wealth.

Presently cattle and money are used simultaneously as ilobolo, by the abakhwanazi. Traditionalists always insist on receiving cattle as ilobolo. However, as cattle are progressively becoming scarce in the tribal area, the ilobolo cattle are very often supplemented with money. Though non-traditionalists also talk of ilobolo in terms of cattle during marriage negotiations, the cattle are very often substituted with money.

Informants emphatically stated that livestock other than cattle is not used as ilobolo, as is the case for instance among the Pedi (see Mönnig, 1967:132-133).

6.3.3.3

The amount of ilobolo

Informants say that according to tradition there was no fixed number of cattle payable as ilobolo in the past. An intending husband could give his intended bride's father any number of cattle he could afford giving him. It could be two, three or five head of cattle. At that time ilobolo was a gift to the intended bride's father. Furthermore, the delivery of ilobolo was spread over many years because a son-in-law was regarded as "isigodo sokuqhuzula" (a log from which to chip pieces of firewood) from whom assistance could be sought in times of need.

As the number of cattle increased in the land, people started exacting excessive and variable numbers of cattle for their daughters. Ilobolo now started losing its traditional character as a gift, and assumed the nature of a price. At this time the British Government, instigated by uSomtsewu (Sir Theophilus Shepstone) intervened and fixed the number of ilobolo cattle at ten head for daughters of commoners, fifteen

head for the daughters of headmen (izinduna) and an unlimited number for the daughters of chiefs (abanumzane). This account given by our informants is corroborated by the writings of many authors, including Bryant and Lewin. Bryant for instance writes as follows on the amount of lobolo among the Zulu people: "Women in Zululand of 40 or 50 years of age were purchased for seldom more than five head of cattle. The demands by the parents of the increased lobolo was the direct result of the increase of the cattle in the land, owing to the comparative peace that prevailed subsequent to the advent of the Whiteman in those parts. Parents, however, became in the time so arbitrary in their demands that the British Government, acting under the advice of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, was at length compelled to fix the number of a girl's lobola cattle by the statute viz. at 10 head a piece." (1905:360). Writing forty years later Lewin echoed the views of Bryant:" It is I think an accepted fact that originally there was no fixed lobolo amongst the Bantu tribes. With the Zulu the custom was that a bridegroom would pay a few head at the time of the marriage, and would supplement the number after marriage should his father-in-law be in difficulties, but the total number of animals paid rarely exceeded five or six head, in many cases it was less " (1944:132).

The number of ilobolo cattle fixed by the British Government, for the childless daughters of the three classes of tribesmen referred to above, has been accepted for a number of generations, and it has become traditional. Commenting on the fixing of the number of ilobolo cattle Westermann says: "The result has been that the amount which was meant to be the maximum, has in the eyes of the Natives become the average or rather the minimum under which no wife can be had, and to which the bridegroom must add voluntary gifts." (1934:129). It is our opinion that the fixing of the

number of ilobolo cattle did indeed curb the unbridled escalation of the number of cattle demanded as ilobolo at the time. But it unfortunately contributed to the corrosion of the traditional concept of ilobolo as a gift, and encouraged the crystalization of the then developing, and even now existing tendency of treating ilobolo as a price. Today tribesmen, both traditionalists and non-traditionalists, strenuously and vigorously assert that ilobolo is not a price for an intended bride, but an outright gift to her father, or guardian. It is conceded that in its traditional pre-Shepstonean socio-cultural setting, where it was unfixed, it was indeed a gift. But fixed as it is now by statute and tribal law, it almost approximates a price. We are not suggesting that ilobolo is now a price, because on closer scrutiny it becomes clear that it does lack some of the features of a price. We are merely indicating a developing trend in one of the intentional aspects of ilobolo.

Today the Code, as amended, still upholds the number of ilobolo cattle stipulated by the British Government. Section 87 (1) stipulates that: The lobolo for a girl or woman who is a ward is determined according to the rank or position of her father or guardian and is determined by agreement, but shall not be in excess of the scale prescribed in the following table:-

<u>For a woman who is the daughter of</u>	<u>Maximum number of cattle as lobolo</u>
(a) a chief.....	no limit
(b) the son, brother or uncle of a chief.....	15 head
(c) a chief's deputy, headman or official witness.....	15 head
(d) any other Black.....	10 head

The number of ilobolo cattle stipulated in section 87 (1) relate to women without illegitimate issue and women who are not widows or divorcees. Section 87 (2) provides that: In any case of doubt the lobolo must not exceed ten head of cattle or their equivalent." Section 87 (3) further stipulates that: "The lobolo in respect of a divorced woman or widow upon entering into a customary union shall in case of dispute be determined by the Commissioner/Magistrate but shall not exceed five head of cattle or their equivalent in the case of a divorced woman if by reason of the misdeeds of her former husband no cattle were returned upon divorce." Section 88 lays down that: "Any person receiving lobolo in excess of the scale prescribed in section 87 shall be guilty of an offence.

In their discussion of the amount of ilobolo for an intended bride, traditionalists and non-traditionalists adhere to the numbers laid down by the Code. We do not have any evidence suggesting or proving the contravention of section 88 of the Code. Working among the abakwaMzimela, who are neighbours of the abakhwanazi (see map 2), de Clercq noted that: "Nieteenstaande hierdie strafbepaling, het dit uit die register van gebruiklike verbindings en uit inligting wat van segsmanne verkry is, geblyk dat hierdie voorskrifte tog oortree word na wedersydse instemming deur die huweliksluitende partye. Gevalle is bekend waar tot dertien beeste vir die huwelik van die dogter van 'n gewone stamlid gevra en gelewer is."(1975:257).

As already indicated above, money is now used either to supplement or substitute live cattle. Section 86 of the Code lays down that "... the value of each head of lobolo cattle shall be regarded as ten rand." This provision of the Code is well-known to both traditionalists and non-traditionalists, but they ignore it because, as they say, there is no place today where one can find one head of cattle

with the market value laid down by the Code. Informants say that about ten years ago there was a general tribal consensus that twenty rand was a reasonable minimum equivalent of one head of cattle for purposes of ilobolo. Today, however, a large number of people in the tribe feel that even this amount is inadequate.

It is on the monetary equivalent of individual heads of ilobolo cattle that the argument, between the umkhongi and the intended bride's lineage, centres when the amount of ilobolo is discussed. The umkhongi often points out that cattle are not of the same size, and that it would therefore be unfair to assign a uniform value to all the ilobolo cattle. In response to this the intended bride's lineage usually divides the ilobolo herd into two or three groups. To one group they may assign the value of R40 a head, to the second R30 per head and R25 per head to the rest. The values assigned to the different groups of ilobolo cattle differ from lineage to lineage and are arbitrarily decided upon, and it is the responsibility of the umkhongi to plead for the adjustment of the values. Calculated in this way the amount of ilobolo very often exceeds R400.

There are some non-traditionalists who instead of calculating the amount of ilobolo in terms of the intended bride's father's rank or status, calculate it in terms of the educational standard of the intended bride. The higher the standard of education of the intended bride, the larger the amount of ilobolo. It is asserted that an educated woman with a profession is more of an asset to her husband financially, because if employed she earns more money than an uneducated one, or one without a profession. It is likely that as more and more women qualify for certain professions, the average amount of ilobolo will rise.

The physical health or beauty of an intended bride does not affect the amount of ilobolo deliverable for her. It is however, affected by the number of illegitimate children she has had prior to marriage. For the first illegitimate child two head of cattle are deducted from the number prescribed by law. For all subsequent premaritally born children, one head of cattle is deductible per child. Where a man wishes to take along the illegitimate issue of his bride (which is rarely permitted unless he is their genitor), he is expected to give his intended father-in-law one head of cattle for each child, in addition to the reduced ilobolo he delivered. These cattle are known as isondlo, and they compensate the intended bride's father for having supported the children. Where the man is the genitor of his bride's premaritally born children, and has contributed regularly to the support of these children, he may be absolved from delivering the isondlo cattle. Writing on the people of Atteridgeville Coertze noted that among these people the ilobolo for a woman tends to drop by about R40 if she has had an illegitimate child. He further noted that where a man marries a woman with illegitimate children, and decides to take them along as well, the bride's parents may demand more ilobolo in order to compensate them for bringing up the children. (1969:107).

There is no legally prescribed minimum amount of ilobolo that should be delivered before marriage is permitted. It all depends on the discretion of the intended bride's lineage. In most of the cases on record, however, marriage took place after the delivery of at least four head of cattle, or their mutually agreed equivalent. The outstanding amount was delivered later.

Informants say that in the past a man was not allowed to deliver seven head of ilobolo cattle. The reason for this

is that tribesmen count the number seven on their index finger, which is often used for pointing at deficiencies in people or accusing them of misbehaviour. It is said that giving seven head of cattle for an intended bride amounts to accusing her of lack of virtue, which is a serious affront. Today people still object to receiving seven head of cattle or their monetary equivalent. If there are seven head of cattle or their agreed upon monetary equivalent, available for delivery as ilobolo, the seventh beast is usually designated the ingquthu beast for the intended bride's mother, so as to avoid embarrassing the intended bride.

6.3.3.4 Sponsorship in ilobolo

Informants relate that in the past it was the communal responsibility of the lineage (umndeni) to deliver ilobolo for the intended brides of all its unmarried male members. It is said that traditionally a man married a woman not for himself, but for his lineage. This attitude is still existent among traditionalists. It manifests itself clearly in the fact that although the whole ilobolo or a substantial part of it is raised by the man intending to marry, it is not delivered to the intended bride's lineage as his personal property, but as the communal property of his lineage. Among non-traditionalists the idea that a man marries a woman for his lineage is gradually being phased out and substituted by the individualistic notion that a man marries a woman for himself. In spite of this change of attitude, it is still common practice among non-traditionalists to deliver ilobolo in the name of the lineage of the man intending marriage. This, however, we are inclined to believe, is a hollow caricature of the traditional communal lineage spirit.

Within the lineage the person specifically charged to deliver

ilobolo for a young man's intended first bride is his father or his legally recognized substitute, i.e. his heir or his brother next in seniority where the heir is still a minor. In terms of traditional Mkhwanazi law all unmarried men, irrespective of their age, were regarded and treated as minors. They did not own cattle and could not enter into legally binding agreements. That is one reason why their fathers had to deliver ilobolo for their first brides. This attitude is still prevalent among traditionalists, and is clearly shown by the fact that cattle purchased by an unmarried son are not regarded as his property, but the property of his father. Stafford writes as follows on this: "Originally everything belonged to the kraal head, and so the inmates were entirely dependent on him to provide their lobolo. The circumstances under which the Natives lived prior to the advent of Europeans practically precluded the inmates from earning property. Changed circumstances enabled the inmates to become practically the bread winners of the family," (1935:90). Among the abakhwanazi the fact that an unmarried son is a bread winner does not in principle make him the owner of what he earns. His earnings remain his father's property.

When a man marries he ceases to be treated as a minor among traditionalists. He can henceforth own cattle subject to the control of his lineage. For his second and subsequent wives, therefore, a traditionalist man uses his own cattle without falling back on paternal sponsorship.

Whereas in principle it is a man's father who is responsible for the delivery of his first bride's ilobolo, there is a growing tendency among traditionalist fathers and guardians to assist only those sons who work and send their wages home regularly, either for safe-keeping or for the purchase of

cattle. As a result of this, it has now become common practice among traditionalist young men to go and work in order to earn money to submit to their fathers for ilobolo.

Among non-traditionalists the traditional principle that a man should deliver ilobolo for his son's first bride is not honoured. The responsibility of raising ilobolo for an intended bride, therefore, invariably falls upon the man intending marriage. His father or guardian may assist him if he so wishes, but he does not do so in compliance with the traditional custom mentioned above.

Informants say that in the past a man usually paired his legitimate male and female children for purposes of ilobolo. The ilobolo cattle obtained at the marriage of a daughter was used to acquire a wife for her brother with whom she was paired. Such pairing was usually limited to the sons and daughters of the same house (indlu). Section 1(1) of the Code as amended, defines a "house" as "... the family or property, rights and status, which commence with, attach to and arise out of the customary union of any Bantu woman, or the marriage of any Bantu woman." In houses which lacked female issue or in houses where there were unequal numbers of male and female children, the head of the family either used cattle attached to the indlunkulu house or cattle attached to any other house endowed with more daughters than sons, to acquire first wives for his unpaired sons. Informants say that in terms of traditional tribal law this did not lead to inter-house debt, because all cattle attached to the different houses in an umuzi (household/kraal) belonged to the head of the family and he could use them as he pleased, subject to the control of his lineage. Presently, however, section 92(1) of the Code, as amended, stipulates that: "Assistance rendered by a kraal head from kraal property to any son in

obtaining a wife by contributing the whole or portion of the lobolo is a gift and creates no liability to the indlunkulu unless it be clearly stipulated to the contrary at the time of the celebration of the union." Section 92(2) further stipulates that: "Where house property is used for the purpose indicated in subsection (1) an obligation rests upon the house established by the union to make a refund." Presently disputes arising from inter-house cattle loans for ilobolo are common among polygynously married traditionalists.

The pairing of sons and daughters of the same house for purposes of ilobolo is still common among traditionalists, who insist on receiving cattle as ilobolo rather than money. Among non-traditionalists the pairing of sons and daughters is nonexistent. This is because most non-traditionalists receive money as ilobolo, and the money thus received is usually dissipated before it can be used to acquire a wife for one of the sons in the family.

To marry his second and subsequent wives a traditionalist man uses cattle attached to his first wife's house, which is at present invariably the indlunkulu house. Section 1(1) of the Code defines the indlunkulu as: "the 'great house' - the chief house in a kraal; from it the other houses take their position and with its affiliated houses it forms the indlunkulu section of the kraal." Cattle which originate from the indlunkulu house for the acquisition of a new wife are usually not refundable by the house of the new wife. This is in accord with the provisions of section 92(3) of the Code wherein it is stipulated that: "Where kraal property is used for lobolo by a kraal head for the purpose of establishing a house in his kraal, no liability rests upon the house so established for the return of such property unless it be clearly stipulated to the contrary at the time of the cele=

bration of the union." Where a man uses cattle of a house other than the indlunkulu house for the acquisition of an additional wife, he thereby places the new wife's house under an obligation to reimburse the donor house. Such a debt is usually settled with the ilobolo cattle obtained at the marriage of the eldest daughter of the debtor house.

There is a unique development taking place with respect to sponsorship in ilobolo. Informants relate that there are some wage earning young women who secretly give their lovers part of their wages so as to help them deliver ilobolo for them quickly. This practice is still very rare and it is confined to isolated instances among non-traditionalist women, who because of advancing age and fear of being left out in the marriage market resort to unorthodox methods to quicken their marriage. This practice is strongly resented by both traditionalists and non-traditionalists, and they describe it as a disgraceful perversion of the institution of ilobolo.

6.3.3.5

Who is entitled to receive ilobolo?

In terms of traditional and contemporary Mkhwanazi tribal law, it is the exclusive and inalienable right of the intended bride's pater or legally recognized guardian to receive ilobolo. It was stressed by informants, however, that it is not genitorship which confers upon a man the right to receive ilobolo for a woman. The right to receive ilobolo for female children is acquired through the delivery of ilobolo for their mother. Once acquired in this way the right is inalienable, but it is transferable under certain circumstances as will be shown below. The pater of an intended bride does not relinquish his right to receive her ilobolo through failure to support her. The person who supported her up to the time of marriage can only claim isondlo for her (usually one head of cattle or

its monetary equivalent), but not her ilobolo.

In principle the intended bride's father or guardian receives the ilobolo on behalf of his patrilineage. Empirically, however, it would appear that he receives it for himself. The ilobolo cattle or money received is invariably attached to the natal house of the intended bride for use. But the right of ownership in such property remains vested in the father or guardian of the bride. Gluckman found that among the Zulu while the head of the family is still alive the cattle of all his daughters are his and he can deal with them as he wishes. (1950:195).

As already pointed out above, the right to receive ilobolo is transferable. According to informants it can be transferred either to a creditor or an heir. Lewin writes as follows on the transferability of this right: "The property rights in a girl i.e. the right to receive the lobolo to be paid for her at some future date can be transferred by her father to another person as security for debt. But in that event the man paying lobolo must still pay it to the father, not to the third person, because, for one thing, the cattle paid as lobolo may be more than the debt which gave rise to the transfer of the right." (1944:130). Gluckman elaborates on the transfer of the right to receive ilobolo and writes: that if a man uses the cattle of one of the houses in his umuzi for the acquisition of a new wife, such a new wife becomes subordinate to the wife of the house from which her ilobolo cattle came. The subordinate status of the new wife is reflected upon her children. Thus the eldest son of the senior wife in question can claim the ilobolo cattle of the subordinate wife's eldest daughter. The heir of the indlunkulu house can claim the cattle given for the daughters of the constituent houses of the umuzi. The heirs of the

different houses in the umuzi have rights within their natal houses similar to those of the main heir in the indlunkulu house. (1950:195). Finally Gluckman states that: "Subject to these rights of senior sons, cattle of a woman go first to her father and own brothers, failing one in her house, to the main heir in the polygynous family." (Ibid:195).

During fieldwork deviations from these principles outlined by Gluckman could not be found among traditionalists. However, it was established that among non-traditionalists the right to receive a daughter's or sister's ilobolo is never transferred to the lender of the ilobolo cattle or money. Furthermore, as non-traditionalists do not marry polygynously, the rules outlined by Gluckman in respect of rights to ilobolo in polygynous families do not apply to them.

Marquard and Standing say that in the past ilobolo cattle were not all kept by the bride's father. Other male relatives could claim one or more beasts from the ilobolo herd. (1939:49). Informants related that in as far as they can remember ilobolo cattle have never been distributed among members of a bride's lineage. Even today this does not happen.

According to tribesmen the right to receive ilobolo for a divorced woman is vested in her father or his legally recognized substitute. Where a widow declines to take one of her deceased husband's brothers as an ukungena consort, and opts to marry a man of a different lineage, ilobolo for her is received by her late husband's heir. Normally such ilobolo cattle are on receipt attached to the widowed woman's house by whosoever receives them. This tallies with what section 89 of the Code provides:" When a widow enters

into a customary union the lobolo in respect of the union is payable to the house to which she belonged in the house of her deceased husband."

Some scholars have reported that in urban areas it is not uncommon for deserted or widowed women to receive ilobolo for their daughters. In the Mkhwanazi tribal area there are many deserted women, but to the best of our knowledge they do not receive ilobolo for their daughters. In most cases when a deserted woman's daughter marries, one of her paternal uncles is asked to receive her ilobolo on behalf of his negligent brother. The ilobolo thus received is often used for the benefit of the house of the deserted woman.

6.3.3.6

The delivery and receipt of ilobolo

The actual delivery of ilobolo among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists is preceded by a formal notice to the intended bride's father so as to enable him to summon members of his lineage to witness the delivery. It is essential to have as many witnesses as possible so as to avoid inconsistencies in claims should disputes arise in the future.

Among traditionalists sorghum beer is brewed in large quantities, and at times spiritous liquor is bought, in preparation for the entertainment of the umkhongi and his men on the occasion of the delivery of the ilobolo. A goat and some fowls are also slaughtered for this purpose. On the intending bridegroom's side preparations for the delivery of ilobolo are not as elaborate. The intending bridegroom's father or guardian convenes a meeting of the lineage to inform them of the intended delivery of the ilobolo. The

lineage ancestors are also informed that part of the lineage herd is to be taken away to acquire a daughter-in-law for the lineage. In the cases observed no beast was slaughtered for the ancestors on this occasion. However, libations of sorghum beer were made for them to win their goodwill, and to bless the undertaking.

On the day agreed upon for the delivery of the ilobolo, the umkhongi and his men drive away the ilobolo herd to the intended bride's home. Usually they time their departure such that they arrive at noon at the intended bride's place. On arrival they stop at the isango (main entrance to the homestead) and announce their presence by greeting the intended bride's father or guardian aloud - using his isibongo (clan name) and isithakazelo (praise name). They announce that they have brought the "child's" (intended bride's) cattle and describe them all by colour, shape of the horns, gender and other physical qualities. They repeat almost word for word everything they said on the day of opening marriage negotiations. The intended bride's lineage ignores them for some time and only invites them to drive the cattle into the kraal when they feel that they have sufficiently demonstrated their unwillingness to part with their daughter. When the umkhongi and his men drive the cattle into the kraal, the intended bride's lineage try to impede their entrance. The female relatives of the intended bride often gear themselves to level the harshest criticism at the quality of the cattle. The umkhongi and his men react to these belittling comments with smart repartees. When all the cattle have been driven into the kraal, the umkhongi and his companions are invited into the indlunkulu house, where they are entertained to liquor throughout the afternoon and the evening.

Among non-traditionalists the lineage ancestors are not informed

of the contemplated delivery of ilobolo, and they are not asked to bless the undertaking. In stead a Christian prayer may be said for the umkhongi and his men prior to their departure to the intended bride's home. On arrival at the home of the intended bride the umkhongi and his companions do not remain outside the homestead shouting the intention of their visit, in the fashion of traditionalists. As soon as their arrival has been noticed they are invited into one of the rooms or houses. Their reception is not marked by an obtrusive antagonistic attitude. Furthermore as ilobolo among non-traditionalists is mostly given in the form of money, its poetic description is not possible. Again it is not possible for the prospective bride's relatives to give vent to their feelings of deprivation and their arrogance by frowning at the quality of bank notes. The supercession of cattle by money as ilobolo has caused the disappearance of many traditional and spectacular features of the ceremonies surrounding the delivery and receipt of ilobolo.

Seymour writes as follows on the ownership of ilobolo after its delivery to the lineage of the prospective bride:
"... earnest cattle vest in the payer until the union has been consummated, whereupon they vest in the guardian of the bride and form part of the dowry; this applies to all payments made to the latter before consummation, whether delivery has been physical, or by 'description' or 'word of mouth'," (1970:152).

Informants say that traditionally rights of ownership in ilobolo cattle were transferred to the father or guardian of the intended bride on the day of its delivery, and not on the day of the celebration of the marriage. The idea that ilobolo cattle are sisa cattle (as stipulated in section 85(1) of the Code), until the formal transfer of the bride on

the wedding day, is foreign to traditional tribal custom and law. It was observed that today, for all practical purposes, tribesmen, irrespective of their level of acculturation, speak of and treat ilobolo cattle already received as part of their property. This also applies to ilobolo given in the form of money. They do not wait for the wedding feast and the transfer of the bride before using money received as ilobolo. They put it to use straight away. It is only in instances where the contemplated marriage does not materialize, or where one of the cattle dies prior to the wedding feast that tribesmen evoke the provisions of the Code.

6.3.3.7 The function of ilobolo

6.3.3.7.1 Ilobolo as a validating factor in marriage

Traditionally, marriage and ilobolo are inseparable among the Zulu people. Marquard and Standing say that no marriage was valid without ilobolo -- promised or delivered. And they point out that even if lovers eloped, ilobolo had to be given later, or else the union would be regarded as illegal and invalid. Ilobolo was a fee in cattle which legalized the marriage, linked the spouses with the underlying tradition of the tribe and provided a guarantee for both parties (1939:49). Krige expresses herself as follows on this: "... lobola has many aspects, but its importance lies in the fact that it is marriage and to the Southern Bantu marriage without lobola is inconceivable (1937:113). Holleman, on the other hand, argues that it is very wrong to base the validity of the marriage of Bantu-speaking peoples upon the transfer of cattle as it is illogical to base the completion of the "lobolo marriage" upon the transfer of the woman. He says that both events are merely steps towards the ultimate completion of the contract and the affirmation of a legal

validity which was accepted from the time the parties concluded the affinitation agreement (1961:33).

Today a distinction is drawn between customary unions and Common Law marriages. In both these types of marriage ilobolo is delivered to the intended bride's parents. With regard to the delivery of ilobolo in respect of these two types of marriage Holleman says: "... in no statute is the incidence of lobolo considered inconsistent with a civil Christian marriage, and its common appearance side by side with these marriage transactions is therefore permitted. Since it does not, however, form part of these marriage contracts its Bantu Law sanctions fall away; default of lobolo is no ground for divorce; nor its counterpart, failure of the wife to bear issue; nor legally, does lobolo determine the status of the children" (1961:44). He states further that in cases of divorce the Magistrates' courts do take cognizance of ilobolo as a separate entity in that they may order the refund of the whole or part of the ilobolo given where a woman has borne insufficient issue or no issue to her husband (Ibid:44).

Lewin writes that "... a man married according to Common Law cannot, while his marriage continues, become party to a customary union under Native Law. If he purports to enter such a union it has no legal validity. Moreover, where he pays cattle in contemplation of such a union, he cannot recover them" (1944:129).

Traditionalist Mkhwanazi tribesmen regard the delivery of ilobolo or a promise to deliver it as an obligatory prerequisite to be met, without which no marriage can be valid. This view is shared by many non-traditionalist tribesmen. But this outlook, which has its basis in traditional Mkhwanazi

culture, changes in degrees among the various non-traditionalists and reaches its peak among those who view ilobolo not as a validating factor in marriage, but as a mere customary requirement, which could be dispensed with if the contemporary tribal socio-cultural atmosphere permitted. Among these people the receipt of ilobolo for a daughter seems to serve a psychological function. It gives them an assurance that in spite of their acculturation they are still part of the tribal community and its surviving traditional cultural heritage.

6.3.3.7.2 Ilobolo as compensation

Several Anthropologists have pointed out that one of the primary functions of ilobolo is to compensate the lineage of the intended bride. De Clercq, for instance writes that: "Die tweede funksie van lobolo is om as kompensasie aan die familie van die meisie te dien vir die feit dat hulle die dienste van hulle dogter sal moet ontbeer. Hierdie dienste tesame met haar reprodktiewe vermoë word hulle ontnem en moet gevolglik langs hierdie weg voor gekompenseer word, ten einde die balans in die verhoudinge tussen die verwantegroepe te herstel," (1975:248). He cites Krige who says: "The loss of a member disturbs the equilibrium between the two groups, and this has to be set right by the giving in return of something else of great value in the lives of the people. Lobola is thus the means whereby the loss to the girl's people is in some measure compensated for," (Ibid:248).

Among the abakhwanazi there are presently ambivalent views as regards the compensatory function of ilobolo. On the one hand there are those who vigorously assert that ilobolo is not compensation. Ilobolo, they say, can never compensate a girl's parents for her loss, because her value to them cannot be calculated in materialistic terms. Moreover, in terms of

tradition all girls are born and brought up to leave their parents and marry into some other lineage one day. This is not only an expectation, but a burning ambition on the part of all parents with daughters. The marriage of a daughter is, therefore, not a loss in the conventional sense of being bereaved, but a happy, though painful fulfilment of an ambition. It follows logically, therefore, that there is no need on the part of a girl's parents to be compensated for the realization of a wish they have always had for their daughter. Ilobolo does not, therefore, fulfil a compensatory function. It is a traditional medium used from times immemorial to establish and cement an institutionalized relationship for mutual dependence and assistance.

On the other hand there are tribesmen who genuinely believe that ilobolo compensates the bride's parents. Pelsler, writing on the Swazi of Nelspruit, suggests that the concept of remuneration or compensation was unknown to the Bantu-speaking peoples of Southern Africa, prior to their contact with Whites, (1968:124). This is quite possible, but we lack conclusive evidence of this among the abaKhwazisi, and we shall accordingly not deny the knowledge of these concepts to them. We would rather suggest that it is likely that these concepts were known to the tribesmen in the past, but were not very obtrusive in their daily lives. Having this in mind we suggest further, that the notion that ilobolo is compensation is a recent product of rationalization by tribesmen in contemporary socio-economic circumstances, rather than an intrinsically traditional notion. This tendency might have crept into the thinking of tribesmen when money progressively became the principal commodity for meeting the old and new demands of tribal life. The sense of loss and gain which was not strongly pronounced in traditional tribal life assumed new dimensions in the new socio-economic

circumstances where money is indispensable in the rearing of children. In these circumstances some parents tend to view ilobolo as a means whereby a prospective husband to their daughter compensates them for their financial loss in bringing her up. The more money they spend on her, the higher the "compensation" (ilobolo) demanded.

6.3.3.7.3 Ilobolo as a Medium for acquiring rights of paternity to a woman's children

Gluckman says that cattle make a man the pater of his wife's children, whether he is or not their biological father. Once a man has delivered ilobolo cattle for a woman, he becomes the pater of all her children, even if she deserts him or he dies. A man secures his illegitimate children either by giving cattle for them separately or by securing all an unmarried woman's children by subsequent marriage; otherwise the woman's premaritally born children belong to her agnatic lineage (1950:184). Gluckman's observation has been confirmed by several other Anthropologists, including Jeffreys who says: "A man by merely making a woman pregnant does not hereby become entitled to the child either in our society or in Negro society. The child becomes his when he pays to transfer its status as a member of its mother's group to that of his own" (1951:167).

Traditionalist Mkhwanazi tribesmen say that in terms of traditional and contemporary tribal law a man becomes a pater to his biological child when he has given or promised to give ilobolo for the mother of such a child. It is the delivery and acceptance of ilobolo which confers upon a man and his lineage the right to use a woman's reproductive capacity, and to claim paternity over her subsequent issue. Unless ilobolo has been given or promised for a woman, all

children born to her premaritally belong to her lineage and her father or guardian is their father at law. If a genitor wishes to be pater to a child whose mother he does not wish to marry, he has to give her father or guardian six head of cattle or their mutually agreed upon equivalent. Similarly if a man wishes to be a pater to a child born to his wife premaritally, through someone else, he has to give his wife's father or guardian six head of cattle or their monetary equivalent. Such cattle are described as ilobolo for the child and are separate from the ilobolo for its mother. If a man impregnates a woman before delivering ilobolo for her, and immediately before or after the birth of the child delivers ilobolo and marries her, he is very often allowed paternity over the child without having to pay additional ilobolo for it.

The views outlined above in respect of traditionalists are also shared by some non-traditionalists. There are other non-traditionalists, however, who say that a man becomes the legal father of a woman's children when he has given ilobolo for their mother and has married her. The mere delivery of ilobolo for a woman, not followed by marriage, does not entitle a man to paternity over her children. The control of a woman's reproductive capacity and the title to paternity over her children are transferred to the bridegroom and his lineage on the wedding day, and not on the day of the delivery and receipt of ilobolo. A child born to a non-traditionalist woman, after the delivery of ilobolo, but prior to her marriage, is often given its genitor's clan name (the clan name of the giver of ilobolo), not because ilobolo has been delivered, but because marriage is anticipated.

The delivery of ilobolo does not only give a genitor rights

of paternity over his wife's progeny, it also entitles such offspring to succeed and inherit property and privileges from him. In principle, therefore, a premaritally born child, who is the ward of his mother's father or guardian, cannot inherit from his genitor, but from his guardian.

According to traditional custom a deceased person must be buried by his own lineage at law, at his lineage's place of residence. Furthermore it is the exclusive responsibility of his lineage to perform all the traditional mortuary rites for him. Accordingly one would expect a deceased, premaritally born child to be buried by its mother's lineage, and all its mortuary rites to be performed by its legal guardian. Guardians of such children shirk this responsibility and foist it on the genitors and their lineages. The genitor, though denied paternity and its attendant privileges, is often compelled, at the death of a premaritally born child, to bear all the expenses of the funeral and to perform, together with his lineage, all the necessary mortuary rites. It is also often insisted that the deceased child should be buried where its genitor's people are buried, and not at its mother's home, unless the contrary has been mutually agreed upon by the lineages involved.

Gluckman says that in the past the Zulu people started delivering ilobolo for a bride only when she had mothered a child. Traditionally a woman who died before bearing children was considered as not having fulfilled the purpose for which the ilobolo cattle were given, even though she had worked and given sexual services. Her family was expected to provide a younger sister as an ancillary wife, or else return the ilobolo cattle, (1950:184). Kuper also reports that among the Swazi people of Swaziland, it was customary for the wife's parents to return the ilobolo or provide a substitute if she

was barren. For the substitute ilobolo was not given, (1963:23). From the statements of these two authors and others it would seem that the production of children was considered the essential fulfilment of the woman's part in the marriage.

Presently among the abaNkwanazi barrenness is not regarded as an unassailable ground for divorcing a woman, or demanding the return of the ilobolo. Even among traditionalists the practice of providing substitutes and ancillary wives, in instances of barrenness, is on the wane. It would appear that though ilobolo entitles a man and his lineage to children born to a woman, it does not, as in the past, impose a duty of procreation on the woman. If a woman is barren, her ilobolo is not returnable, and neither are her parents obliged at tribal law to provide a substitute for her. They may, however, out of their own volition provide him with another woman to bear children on behalf of his barren wife.

6.3.3.7.4 Ilobolo as a stabilizing agent in marriage

The most popular argument raised by both traditionalist and non-traditionalist tribesmen in favour of the delivery of ilobolo for a wife is that it stabilizes marriage.

Several students of African marriage have pointed out that in the past marriage was the concern of two lineages, and that because of this it endured beyond the death of the spouses. The death of a spouse did not dissolve a marriage. The deceased spouse was substituted with one of his or her agnates in a sororal or leviratic union. Furthermore cattle received as ilobolo at the marriage of a daughter were used in turn to obtain a wife for her brother with whom she was paired. If a daughter divorced her husband, and the ilobolo was adjudged returnable, it would be incumbent upon her father or guardian

and her brother to return the cattle. Obviously her marriage would affect her brother's marriage. A realization of this discouraged a wife from deserting her husband out of mere caprice.

To traditionalist Mkhwanazi tribesmen marriage is still a matter between two lineages. The observations outlined above, do still to a large measure apply to their marriages. But this cannot be said of non-traditionalist marriages, because there is a growing tendency among non-traditionalists to view and treat marriage as a relationship of two persons, which is not inclusive of their respective lineages.

Krige writes as follows on ilobolo as a stabilizing agent in marriage: "Under tribal conditions, lobola is said to provide the binding form in marriage. If this is correct, how then is it that lobola in urban areas does not fulfil this function at all? The answer lies in this: that it is not lobola as an economic consideration and the mere fact that cattle have been handed over that keeps the couple together and makes the marriage stable. It is lobola as a symbol of the bond between the two families that fulfils this function. Lobola alone, without the whole tribal setting and ceremonial in which the new relationship is created, cannot keep the couple together. Moreover, the bond between the two families which is created by marriage is a far firmer and more lasting bond than one between individuals. In urban areas lobola has lost its old significance, taking on an economic aspect, and as such cannot be a guarantee of the marriage," (1936:20). On this very theme Holleman writes as follows' "The very fact that this symbol (ilobolo) has lost its traditional substance, which enabled it to constitute an enduring guarantee of marital productivity and stability, renders it unsuitable for the dynamics of its original function. For, in a cash-needy society, a cash lobolo is usually dissipated

before it can be used in turn by the bride's family for the same, family-productive purpose. It has therefore lost its character as a dynamic continuity," (1961:17).

Krige's and Holleman's observations, though made among urban dwellers, also apply to non-traditionalist marriages among the abakSwanazi.

Traditionalist and non-traditionalist tribesmen often say that the delivery of ilobolo by a man for his wife generates in him a feeling of appreciation for her. Ilobolo guarantees reasonably good behaviour on the part of a husband, because he knows that if the marriage is dissolved because of his misconduct, he will lose all the ilobolo given for his wife. In terms of this trend of thinking it would mean that the more ilobolo a man gives for his wife, the more fearful he will be of abusing her; and consequently the more stable the marriage. Theoretically this should be so. But in practice there is no positive relation between the amount of ilobolo given for a woman and marriage stability.

In the past women were not economically independent and they could not refund their husbands' ilobolo on their own in the event of a divorce caused by their own caprice. Moreover, women could not own cattle, and therefore it was always the responsibility of their premarital guardians i.e. the receivers of their ilobolo, to make such refunds. This is still the case with the majority of traditionalist women.

Non-traditionalist women, however, are gradually achieving economic independence, and cattle are steadily losing their role as major economic items. Money, which a woman can possess has become the major economic commodity in the lives of all. Some non-traditionalist women are employed and can

save sufficient money to refund their husbands' ilobolo, if the need arises, without leaning on their kin for assistance. This notion has a potential of promoting a sense of independence among non-traditionalist women. This sense of independence, we submit, may cause a woman, all depending on her personality, to develop fickleness and arrogance which may have a corrosive effect on the stability of marriage.

6.3.4

Ingguthu beast

In addition to the izibizo and ilobolo a prospective bridegroom has to present his bride's mother with a gift known as inkomo yengquthu or "ingquthu".

Section 1(1) of the Code defines an ingquthu beast as "... a beast which is payable by the husband or seducer, as the case may be to a woman, or the house to which she belongs upon the entrance into a customary union or the seduction of her daughter." Seymour (1970:326), Krige (1936:131-132), Breytenbach (1971:127), de Clercq (1975:226) and others have defined the ingquthu beast in a manner similar to that in section 1(1) of the Code.

Our findings among the abaNkwanazi indicate clearly that they conceive of the ingquthu beast or its monetary equivalent as a fee deliverable to the mother of a premaritally deflowered girl by her seducer or his guardian; or by the bridegroom to the mother of his prospective bride. A woman in terms of traditional and contemporary tribal law is limited to the receipt of only one ingquthu beast or its monetary equivalent for her daughter, irrespective of the number of seductions or consecutive marriages such a daughter becomes involved in. Such an ingquthu beast or fee becomes the personal property of the mother of the girl seduced or prospective

bride, subject to the control of her guardian. A woman can under no circumstances be divested of the right to receive this present. Where she is deceased, divorced or in separation with her husband, it is common practice among tribesmen to attach it to the house to which she belonged.

Furthermore the ingquthu beast is not regarded as part of the ilobolo, though it is usually delivered with the first ilobolo instalment. This beast or fee is not retrievable by a husband upon divorce, even if the divorce was precipitated by his wife's misconduct.

Where cattle are delivered as ilobolo, the umkhongi usually identifies the beast (usually a cow) that shall be the "ingquthu". Where money is used as ilobolo, the monetary equivalent of the beast is decided upon by the intended bride's lineage (acting on behalf of the bride's mother). This fee is not standardized; it varies from lineage to lineage, but it rarely exceeds twenty Rand.

The ingquthu beast (inkomo yengquthu) is known by a number of other names in the Mkhwanazi tribal area, i.e. inkomo kanina wentombazana, inkomo yohlanga or "uhlanga", inkomo yesifociya or "isifociya" and inkomo yokuqholisa or "umqholiso". The alternative compound names of the ingquthu, beast, not enclosed in quotation marks, are essentially descriptives in the possessive form, and they indicate the person to whom the beast or fee is due and also suggest its function. Furthermore, these descriptive compound names have their synoptic metaphorical alternatives, which we have presented in quotation marks above. These metaphorical names have distinct meanings of their own outside the context of seduction and marriage. But in the context of these, they are used as and understood

to be metaphorical alternatives of the compound names.

The word ingquthu, as already indicated elsewhere, is a traditional Zulu euphemism for the female sex organ i.e. igolo or inhlunu (c.f. Reader, 1966:189, Doke and Vilikazi, 1948:563, and de Clercq, 1975:226). The compound name inkomo yengquthu literally means "a head of cattle for the female pudenda". This name does not, however, on its own indicate clearly whether this beast or fee is given for the sex organ of the girl or that of her mother. This has given rise to academic debate, which even now is still raging. Some scholars maintain that it is a thanks giving gift to the mother of the bride for having born and nurtured her. Others say that it is given to the bride's mother to thank her specifically and exclusively for her efforts in maintaining her daughter's virtue.

The compound name inkomo kanina wentombazana, literally meaning: "a head of cattle for the mother of the girl", and also used in reference to the ingquthu beast, clearly singles out the girl's or bride's mother as the recipient of this beast or fee. But it does not specify the purpose for which she is given the beast. The purpose or function of this beast or fee is, however, clearly reflected in the other alternative name, namely inkomo yesifociya. The latter literally means: "a head of cattle for the pregnancy belt". Isifociya is a leather or grass belt, about seven to eight centimeters wide, often decorated with beads, which is worn by traditionalist pregnant women to support their bellies. This belt is also used to whip children if the need arises. It is therefore clear that the ingquthu beast or inkomo yesifociya is given to the mother of the girl or bride for having conceived, born and educated her daughter to be the appreciable person she is, to either her seducer or her

prospective bridegroom.

The ingquthu beast is also known as inkomo yohlanga or "uhlanga". The word uhlanga has multiple meanings: a corn stalk, a race or ethnic group, and an incision made in the human skin for rubbing in traditional medications. In the form umhlanga the word means a reed. However, in the context of seduction and marriage, the term "uhlanga" is understood to mean inkomo yohlanga. These names refer to the same conceptual reality and are not mutually exclusive. The usage of the synoptic metaphorical name does not mean ignorance of the descriptive compound name on the part of the speaker. It is just a matter of preference.

Before the advent of Western culture in the Mkhwanazi tribal area, reeds were used for the administration of enema. It is with uhlanga as a reed that we shall concern ourselves in this context. The compound name inkomo yohlanga literally means: "a head of cattle for the reed used for the administration of enema". It is clear from this that the ingquthu beast or inkomo yohlanga or "uhlanga" is a token of gratitude to the mother of the seduced girl or prospective bride for having administered therapeutic leechcraft to her daughter during childhood.

The question now arises whether it would be folly to associate the ingquthu beast with the virginity of a seduced girl or that of a prospective bride. Krige writes that: "According to Whitfield an ingquthu is payable to the mother in respect of the hymen of the girl," (1936b:158). This author opines that the ingquthu beast is given to a woman for looking after her daughter and for her (daughter's) virginity (1936:131-132). Seymour acknowledges that the ingquthu beast is a thanks giving gift to a girl's mother for her care of her daughter. But

he also associates it with the girl's or bride's virginity and writes that this beast is given "... whenever a girl has lost her virginity by seduction, or is about to lose it by marriage ..." (1970:326). De Clercq on the other hand suggests that the ingquthu beast should not be associated with a girl's virginity. He says: "Waar daar in die verlede soveel klem gelê is op die maagdelikheid van die meisie sou 'n mens, indien hierdie betekenis aan die inkomo yengquthu geheg was, verwag het dat dit deel van die vorderingsreg van die vader by verleiding van 'n ongehuide meisie moes uitmaak wat nog te sê by die bevrugting van so 'n meisie. Tog vind ons by die abakwaMzimela dat dit nie die geval is nie" (1975:227). He insists that the ingquthu beast should be regarded as "... vergoeding vir die moeder van die meisie vir die ongerief en pyn wat sy moes deur maak om die kind in die wêreld te bring. Daar is dus geen dankbetuiging teenoor die moeder dat sy die maagdelikheid van die meisie beskerm het nie; 'n plig wat in elk geval grootliks deur die amaqhikiza uit haar hande geneem is," (Ibid).

In the light of the evidence we have on the abakhwanazi, we concur with the last scholar, and others who uphold his view that the ingquthu beast should be associated with the pudenda of a girl's or bride's mother, and should be regarded as a gift to her for having mothered the girl. However, we are hesitant to categorically deny any association between the ingquthu beast and a girl's or bride's virginity. It is universally accepted that a given cultural element or trait often has multiple related, and at times unrelated functions. In its functioning such a cultural trait or element is not always strictly confined by clearly defined functional parameters. In the light of this we opine that it would be folly to try pinpointing a singular and independent function of the ingquthu beast, to the exclusion of other possible

functions it may have. The maintenance of a girl's virginity is one of the myriad of duties entrusted to a mother. Custom allows her to enlist the aid of amaghikiza in the protection of her daughter's virginity. That this duty is mostly performed by the amaghikiza does not mean that it is therefore not her duty. It is her daughter's virginity, above all, which gives testimony that she did make an effort to mould her into a young woman (intombi) approximating the tribal ideal. For this she has to be thanked by the first man who ravages her daughter's virginity, be it a seducer or a bridegroom.

A father's duty is to protect the reproductive capacity of his daughter, and not her virginity, this being the mother's responsibility. For his daughter's reproductive capacity he receives ilobolo. Furthermore it is a father's responsibility to protect his household's ritual purity. If his household is defiled by the premarital impregnation of his daughter he has a right at tribal law to insist on receiving an ungezo beast to purify it. The girl's mother, being the protector of her virginity has a right at law to demand the ingquthu beast with her husband's assistance.

CHAPTER 7

THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE DELIVERY OF ILOBOLO AND THE TRANSFER OF
THE BRIDE TO THE BRIDEGROOM'S HOME

7.1

Introduction

The period between the delivery of ilobolo and the transfer of the bride is marked by a number of activities, which take the marriage negotiations further and strengthen the affinal relationship being created. These activities, as may be expected, are not the same among traditionalists and non-traditionalists. We shall therefore discuss these separately as they relate to these categories of tribesmen.

7.2

This period and its attendant activities among traditionalist

7.2.1

The slaughter of the imvuma or indlakudla goat

One day after the delivery of ilobolo the girl's father or guardian formally invites his daughter's lover home. The purpose of arranging this visit is to thank the prospective bridegroom and his lineage publicly for having delivered ilobolo; and to confer upon him publicly the status of umkhwenyana (son-in-law). For this purpose a goat called imvuma or indlakudla yomkhwenyana (a goat for acceptance and lifting food taboos) is slaughtered for him. The slaughter of this goat is a purely secular matter. At no stage are the ancestors of the bride invoked. All present, without exception, eat the meat of this goat.

Prior to the delivery of ilobolo and the slaughter of the

imvuma goat, the girl's father and his male agnates do not recognize the girl's lover as a son-in-law. He has to avoid all intimate contact with them, and especially avoid eating sour milk from their herds. Up to the time of the delivery of ilobolo the girl's father and male agnates regard him as a serious threat to the girl's capacity to fetch the full amount of ilobolo at marriage. They also see him as a potential cause of the ritual defilement of their homestead through premarital impregnation of the girl. They, therefore, conveniently maintain an unfriendly and threatening attitude towards him.

However, after the delivery of ilobolo and the slaughter of the imvuma goat, the girl's father and male agnates adopt an amicable attitude towards him. On the day of the slaughter of the imvuma goat they formally allow him to partake of all food at the girl's home. They also tell him that he should henceforth regard himself as a 'son' of the lineage. This, however, does not mean that he is afforded filial rights and privileges similar to those of his intended bride's brothers. The word 'son', in this context is analogous to the term 'son-in-law'. His assignment with this status enables him to participate, as a son-in-law, in some of the secular communal activities of the intended bride's lineage. The extent to which he can participate in these activities is defined by traditional tribal custom. He may, for instance, assist them in ploughing, the cutting of logs, the erection of huts etc; but he cannot participate in the propitiation of their lineage ancestors.

Because of this change of attitude towards him, his visits to his girlfriend now cease to be surreptitious. Similarly his girlfriend's nocturnal absence from home is ignored by

her father and brothers.

The young man's recognition as umkhwenyana, through the slaughter of the invuma goat does not, however, give him the right to have sexual intercourse with his girlfriend. He is accorded this right publicly on the wedding day by the girl's father or guardian, when he declares in the presence of all that he wishes his daughter to go to bed with her husband and get up with child the following day.

7.2.2 Gift exchange

It is customary among traditionalists that as from the time a woman accepts a man as a lover, she periodically sends gifts of sorghum beer and agricultural produce to his home. These gifts are known as imibondo. They are an index of the woman's affection for her lover, and they also serve to promote friendly relations between her family and that of her lover. The number of these imibondo gifts is not fixed. Each of these gifts is reciprocated with a similar gift by the female relatives of the woman's lover. This exchange of gifts continues right into the period of betrothal and early stages of marriage.

Of all these imibondo gifts given by a woman to her lover and his relatives, the largest and most important is the one called inzibamasondo. It is a token of gratitude to her prospective bridegroom and his lineage for having delivered ilobolo for her. Furthermore it tempers the sense of loss on the part of the man's lineage and symbolically erases the hoofprints of the ilobolo herd received.

Informants say that in the past the party delivering an umbondo gift consisted of married and unmarried women only. Presently,

however, unmarried young men also accompany the women. These gifts are now usually delivered on Saturday afternoon when most people are not at work. Their delivery is always a festive occasion marked by dancing and the consumption of large quantities of sorghum beer and meat. The meat is as a rule provided by the family which receives the umbondo.

All depending on circumstances, the party delivering the umbondo returns home on the same day or on the following day.

Beside the imibondo gifts, the lovers themselves exchange a number of gifts such as items of clothing, money and toiletry.

7.2.3

Ukukhehla

After the slaughter of the invuma goat for the prospective bridegroom, the most important event that follows is the ukukhehla ceremony. It is invariably performed at the prospective bride's home at the instigation of the prospective bridegroom's lineage, through the umkhongi. However, the prospective bride's father or guardian may of his own volition perform this ceremony for his daughter. In the past, informants say, it was the exclusive prerogative of the king to authorize the performance of this ceremony (c.f. Krige, 1936a: 118-119).

This is a very important ceremony without which no woman may be transferred to her fiance's home. Its purpose is to ceremonially elevate the woman for whom ilobolo has been given to the status of inkehli i.e. the wearer of inhloko or isicholo (the traditional, distinctive, chimney-like headgear for married women). The wearing of the isicholo/inhloko sets the woman apart from other unmarried women and puts her on the fringes of the ranks of married women. From the time of the

performance of the ukukhehla ceremony, the woman is regarded and referred to as the "wife" of the lineage which delivered ilobolo for her. All men who heretofore still paid her amorous attention are expected to stop wooing her as she is already a "wife".

The ukukhehla ceremony is a festive occasion at which both the prospective bride's lineage and that of her fiance participate. The beast slaughtered on this occasion is donated by the prospective bridegroom's father or guardian; and it is usually part of the first portion of ilobolo delivered. Where it has not been given as part of ilobolo, or where money has been used as ilobolo, it is customary that the prospective bridegroom's father or guardian should send a goat later and specify that it is given for ukukhehla. In addition to the ukukhehla beast, the prospective bridegroom's lineage also donates fat, ochre, twine and an awl for plaiting the prospective bride's hair into the chimney-like formation. For the plaiting of the hair the services of an expert are always engaged. The fee payable for these services ranges from 50c to R1,00.

During the ukukhehla ceremony the lineage ancestors of the prospective bride are informed by her father or guardian that she is elevated to the status of inkehli, and that she is about to leave home. Failure to inform them would anger them and cause them to unleash misfortunes upon the bride prior to and during marriage.

After the performance of the ukukhehla ceremony, the prospective bride is virtually ready to be transferred to her future husband's home. From this time the umkhongi pays successive visits to the prospective bride's father or guardian to solicit him and his lineage to agree to the transfer of the

woman and stipulate the date of the wedding. These requests for the transfer of the bride are repeatedly turned down with a number of excuses - it of course being difficult to part with a beloved daughter. The bride's father or guardian may for instance protest that he does not as yet have all the necessities with which to provide his daughter when she leaves home. Where the ilobolo has not been delivered in full, he may say that he will not agree to the delivery of the bride until the outstanding portion of ilobolo has been delivered. After a number of visits, however, he relents and tells the umkhongi to "go and soak the grain". This means that the umkhongi should go and tell the bridegroom's people to start brewing sorghum beer and make ready for the wedding.

Agreement having been reached on the transfer of the bride, the umkhongi returns home to make all the necessary arrangements for the receipt of the bride a few days later.

7.2.4

Ukucimela

When the day for the wedding has been agreed upon, the prospective bride goes out visiting her matrilineal and patrilineal relatives, one after the other, for the purpose of formally informing them of her impending departure from home. These visits are known as ukucimela. It is important that she should spend a night at each of the homes of her paternal uncles and aunts and also her maternal aunts and uncles. The reason for this is that the heads of these families should inform the ancestors of her impending departure from home and ask them to be with her at her husband's home. By sleeping at these homesteads she makes it possible for the ancestors to lick her at night and shower her with luck.

All depending on circumstances, each of the above relatives

slaughters a goat for the woman as a kind of send-off. The gall bladders of these goats are inflated and tied on her head as evidence that she was entertained and dedicated to the ancestors. She is also presented with a variety of gifts and given advice as to how to behave at her new home. She is especially warned that any misbehaviour on her part will not only disgrace her, but will also cast a bad reflection upon her parents and other relatives. When she has visited all her relatives, she returns home to finalize preparations for the wedding.

As the wedding day draws near, she goes into seclusion. While in seclusion she is visited by relatives, friends and neighbours who bring her presents and also offer her advice on how to live harmoniously with her husband and his relatives.

7.2.5

The slaughter of imbuzi yokubika

About a week prior to the departure of the bride, it is customary among traditionalists that her father or guardian should slaughter a goat. The slaughter of this goat and its attendant activities constitute an important ritual ceremony at which only members of the prospective bride's lineage participate. As a rule it is the father or guardian of the prospective bride who, as a genealogical senior within the household, officiates at this ceremony. The purpose of holding this ceremony is to formally thank the lineage ancestors of the bride for having made it possible for her to grow and ultimately fetch ilobolo; and to inform them of her impending departure from home. During the proceedings she is ceremonially sprinkled with the gall of the goat on her feet and arms. The gall bladder is then inflated and tied with a string around her right arm. All present partake of the meat of this goat.

The slaughter of this goat and the rituals associated with it do not confer a new status upon the bride. The ceremony does, however, constitute a further step in the preparations for marriage in the sense that it puts the prospective bride in a state of ritual readiness for transfer to the bridegroom's home, and the ultimate assumption of the full status of a wife.

7.2.6

The slaughter of the ukuncamisa/ukucola beast

A day before the transfer of the bride her father or guardian arranges a farewell feast for her. For this purpose he slaughters a beast known as inkomo yokuncama (a beast consumed prior to the commencement of a journey; vide Bryant, 1905:404) or inkomo yokucola (a beast with which to make the bride "fine" as per tradition). According to tribal tradition the slaughter of this beast is not of any ritual significance. The ancestors of the bride are traditionally not invoked on this occasion and neither are they offered any portion of the beast slaughtered. The farewell banquet (umncamo) is therefore essentially a social occasion through which the bride's father or guardian publicly announces the impending departure of the bride. However, owing to the scarcity of livestock in the tribal area there is now a progressive tendency to dispense with the slaughter of the goat discussed above in section 7.2.5. The ukuncama beast is then slaughtered to fulfil its own traditional function and that of the goat referred to above. The result of this is that the hitherto purely social character of the farewell banquet is assuming a ritual dimension.

The majority of the people who attend the farewell feast are the bride's paternal and maternal relatives, neighbours and friends. The bridegroom's relatives are not obliged to be

present and neither are they debarred from attending. In most cases, however, the umkhongi is present at the banquet. It would appear, however, that his presence is coincidental rather than deliberate, because he does not come to the bride's home specifically for the banquet. It incidentally happens that it is held while he is at the bride's home to "fetch" the umthimba (bridal party).

A large part of the meat of the ukuncamisa beast is used to entertain guests present at the banquet. Another portion called insonyama (right flank) is sent to the father or guardian of the bridegroom. What remains of the meat is provision (umkhusu/umphako) for the bride, which she takes along when she leaves for the bridegroom's home the following day. It is necessary to provide the bride with food on her departure from home because custom does not permit her to partake of any food provided at her bridegroom's home on the wedding day until all food taboos have been lifted from her. Where the goat discussed in section 7.2.5 has not been slaughtered, it is customary to offer part of the meat of the ukuncamisa beast to the bride's lineage ancestors. The meat is usually put at the umsamo to be licked by the ancestors at night.

Festive as it is, the umncamo farewell party is a very sorrowful occasion for the bride and her agnates. They now realize that what they have been preparing for and joyfully looking forward to (i.e. the wedding) really means permanent parting and the beginning of a new and uncertain phase in the life of the bride.

7.2.7

Preparations for the wedding at the bridegroom's home

From the time of the delivery and acceptance of ilobolo, the

bridegroom's father or guardian initiates and co-ordinates preparations for the wedding feast, the receipt of the bride and her incorporation into the bridegroom's lineage. In these preparations he is assisted by members of his patrilineage. It is important that he should enlist the co-operation and assistance of as many agnates as possible, for it is upon their goodwill and active participation that the success of the wedding depends.

Informants say that in the past the responsibility of financing the wedding feast rested upon the bridegroom's lineage (umndeni), especially his father or guardian. Presently, however, the extent to which the bridegroom's father or guardian participates in the accumulation of the necessities for the wedding varies from lineage to lineage. In many instances it is the bridegroom who now shoulders a large proportion of the costs of the wedding - his guardian and other agnates only making supplementary contributions. For this reason it is now imperative that a man should find employment as soon as he contemplates marriage. He should submit a large proportion of his wages to his father or guardian regularly over a number of months. His father or guardian uses such money not only to meet the izibizo and ilobolo demands, but also to finance the wedding feast.

Enough money having been saved, the actual preparations for the wedding start. The bridegroom's personal hut, into which the bride shall be received, is built or renovated. Slaughter animals for the wedding feast are also bought if the bridegroom or his guardian does not possess any.

As soon as the umkhongi has arranged the wedding date with the bride's father or guardian, relatives, neighbours and

friends of the bridegroom's lineage (umnderi) are informed and invited to attend. The tribal chief is also informed of the contemplated wedding and requested to provide an official witness (iphoyisa) in front of whom the bride shall declare publicly that she marries the bridegroom out of her own will. This is done to comply with the requirements of section 61(1) of the Code. Lewin notes that the position of the official witness is similar to that of a marriage officer in a marriage celebrated under Common Law (Bantu Studies, Vol XV, No 1, 1941:18). Seymour also points out that the presence of the official witness at the celebration of a customary union is vital, for it is upon it that the validity of the union hinges (1970:114).

Young men and women in the neighbourhood are requested to assemble daily, in the afternoon, at the bridegroom's home to learn and practise new songs and dances for the wedding. The services of a talented dancer and singer (igagu) are engaged to train the young men and women. The aim of the troupe is to attain such a standard of excellence in song and dance as to completely eclipse the bridal party (umthimba) at the dancing arena (isigcawu) on the wedding day. It is important for the bridegroom to participate in these rehearsals, because on the wedding day he shall be the principal dancer. If he works far and only comes home at weekends, he participates in these rehearsals only then.

In order to provide enough food for the multitudes on the wedding day large pots, bowls and wooden trays for serving meat are borrowed from neighbours. It is customary among the abakhwanazi that those invited should assist in the provision of beer and food by bringing along whatever they can to augment what the bridegroom's lineage has provided for the feast. As soon as the bridegroom's lineage has

received the message from the bride's father or guardian that they may "soak the grain", they inform their neighbours so that they may also start brewing. All the stages of brewing are so synchronized that all neighbours should have their contributions of beer ready at the same time.

When all preparations for the wedding have been completed, the bridegroom's lineage sends the umkhongi to fetch the bridal party. He leaves for the bridegroom's home a day or two prior to the wedding.

7.3

This period among non-traditionalists

Some of the activities outlined above in respect of traditionalists have to a very large measure been discarded by non-traditionalists. Others, however, have been retained and are still performed, though in modified form.

The extent to which these traditional activities are performed or omitted depends upon the degree to which the senior and influential members of the lineage concerned have adopted Western and quasi-Western patterns of behaviour, and also internalized their underlying system of values.

There are many non-traditionalists who profess Christianity, but still attach great significance to the observance of traditional usage in certain aspects of marriage. They accordingly perform some of the traditional activities described above in respect of traditionalists. In doing so, however, they deliberately change their form and content, such that they comply, in varying degrees, with the demands of both traditional custom and the code of ethics embodied in the current non-traditionalist cultural amalgam. Such change of

form and content is effected by the elimination of certain traditional details and the addition of elements of foreign extraction in the activity in question. What is usually omitted from the body of traditional usage is very often that which is considered unimportant for the secular and ritual well-being of the marriage contemplated. Whatever is added to the traditional activity is very often purported to give it a distinctive tint of non-traditionalism. Though the form and content of these activities are modified, their traditional functions remain essentially unaltered. This attempt to live up to the demands of both tradition and Christianity does inevitably lead to ideological inconsistencies and apparently contradictory patterns of behaviour. But such inconsistencies and contradictions as may be apparent to the ethnographer are not interpreted as such by the tribesmen concerned. They see them as constituting a sensible, though not necessarily rational, system of thought and behaviour.

Among many non-traditionalists the imvuma goat, referred to in section 7.2.1, is still slaughtered for the prospective bridegroom to thank him for having delivered ilobolo, and to confer upon him the status of umkhwenyana (son-in-law). This act of entertaining the prospective bridegroom has the effect of promoting freer communication between him and his fiance's agnates. The slaughter of this goat, however, has lost its traditional function of lifting food taboos from the prospective bridegroom, as non-traditionalist men are not subjected to any food taboos at their prospective brides' natal homes.

The traditional ukukhehla ceremony, as described in section 7.2.3 above, has become completely obsolete among non-traditionalists. Accordingly no portion of the ilobolo

delivered to the bride's lineage is designated for ukukhehla. The traditional institutionalized exchange of imibondo gifts has also disappeared among non-traditionalists. Ukucimela visits, as discussed above in section 7.2.4 are still undertaken by some non-traditionalist prospective brides. On such visits the young woman is given presents and a goat may be slaughtered for her. The head of the family she visits may then dedicate her to the care and protection of God or the lineage ancestors - the choice depending on his dominant spiritual persuasion at the time. At times she may be dedicated to both God and the lineage ancestors. In such an instance the head of the household may start with a Christian prayer and thereafter invoke the lineage ancestors to take care of the young woman at her new home. The invocation of the lineage ancestors here takes the form of a supplementary afterthought to the preceding Christian prayer. The acts of invoking God and the lineage ancestors are not regarded as mutually exclusive by the people concerned. They see them as mutually accommodative and supplementary. Each of these acts of invocation fulfils a specific need in the given context, and together they satisfy a body of interrelated needs.

Some non-traditionalists still slaughter goats, like traditionalists, to report to their lineage ancestors the receipt of ilobolo, and the impending marriage of their daughters. Others, however, have now discarded this practice.

It is now becoming common practice among some non-traditionalists that as soon as the izibizo and ilobolo have been delivered, an engagement party, called ukwethembisa (literally: to promise), is held at the prospective bride's home or at the church where the prospective bride and members of her natal family worship. The prospective bride and bridegroom

declare, in the presence of their respective relatives and friends, their intention to marry. The prospective bridegroom then gives his fiance an engagement ring as a token of earnest. Hereafter the intending spouses are prayed for and lectured to on the significance of the step they have taken. The significance of an engagement is variously construed by non-traditionalists. Some conceive of it as an act of publicizing the intended marriage. Others, however, see it as an act through which the intending spouses pledge, before God and the community, to refrain from further amorous association with other persons. Very few conceive of it as a legal contract the breach of which could lead to serious legal consequences. Indeed we have on record several broken engagements, but none of the parties involved instituted legal action against the other for breach of promise.

The period of betrothal varies from one couple to the next. Its length depends largely on the ability of the prospective bridegroom and his guardian to raise enough money to sponsor the wedding feast. It also depends on the prospective bride's father's ability to provide her with umabo gifts and some furniture for her new home. The umabo gifts are those which the bride distributes among the senior members of the bridegroom's lineage on the wedding day. They consist of blankets, pillows, linen and clothing. The ideal among many non-traditionalists is that the period of betrothal should not exceed six months. But there are engagements which subsist for a period of up to two years.

When the date of the wedding has been agreed upon, preparations for the wedding start in earnest at both the bride's and bridegroom's homes. Such preparations are initiated and co-ordinated by the guardians of the prospective spouses.

At the bride's home the preparations consist primarily in the accumulation of money to sponsor the ukuncamisa feast and to purchase all the customary goods which a bride should take along to her new home, on the wedding day. The traditional goods which a bride carried to her bridegroom's home have been largely substituted with Western commodities. Thus in stead of carrying to her bridegroom's home a large collection of grass mats, clay pots, grass beer-sieves and other traditional utensils, she takes along a bedroom suite and a kist containing linen, blankets, clothes and other things. She may also take along kitchen furniture, cutlery and crockery. Failure to bring along at least some of the things, mentioned above, would earn her the opprobrium of having come to the bridegroom's home empty-handed. These are separate and are not part of the umabo gifts. They are a contribution to the contents of the new household she is going to start with her husband. The responsibility of buying these falls mainly upon the bride's father or guardian. He uses his own resources and part of the ilobolo he received to buy all these goods. In these efforts he may be assisted by his agnates and the bride herself if she is employed.

The bride requests three or four of her best friends to be her brides'maids on the wedding day. As a rule these are unmarried young women. She together with other members of her family organizes young men and women of the neighbourhood to gather at her home daily to practise songs for the wedding, under the leadership of an igosa (conductor), who is invariably a male.

The bride's father or guardian also organizes cars to carry the bride, her marriage goods and attendants to the bridegroom's home.

At the bridegroom's home the bridegroom and his guardian prepare the house into which the bride and her attendants shall be received. They also buy one or two head of cattle for slaughter on the wedding day, that is if they do not possess any livestock. In addition to these, they buy groceries, drinks and ingredients for brewing sorghum beer. The bridegroom's mother and other female relatives organize women to assist in baking, cooking and serving food on the wedding day. Such women are usually those who, through training at school or long domestic service at the homes of Whites, know how to prepare Western dishes and how to serve guests at table. Pots, crockery, cutlery, tables and chairs are borrowed from friends and neighbours to meet the demands of the occasion. Young men and women are organized to learn and rehearse wedding songs. The bridegroom and his guardian also organize cars for use on the wedding day.

In as far as clothing for the wedding is concerned, the bridegroom provides the bride with the trousseau. The bride if employed, or her guardian if she is unemployed, provides the bride's maids with their uniform. It is also the bride or her guardian who buys white gloves for the bridegroom and his bestman. The bridegroom, as a rule, provides himself with the suit or suits for the wedding. His bestman and other attendants, who pair up with the bride's maids, provide themselves with their own suits to match the bridegroom's. The bridegroom also buys the wedding ring for the bride. This he does in her presence to facilitate fitting at the jeweller's store.

Whilst the preparations are in progress, the guardians of the prospective spouses invite their respective relatives,

friends and neighbours. This is done by word of mouth, letter or specially printed invitation cards. The wedding is usually scheduled for a Saturday so as to make it possible for those who are at work during the week to attend. At times Saturday is set aside for the ukuncamisa banquet at the bride's home; and Sunday is then the day for the wedding at the bridegroom's home.

A day before the wedding, it is customary among many non-traditionalists to hold the traditional ukuncamisa banquet at the bride's home. Though it is essentially a traditional function, it is often shorn of many of its traditional features and tinted with untraditional elements of Western and quasi-Western extraction. It has to a large measure assumed the character of a Western party at which hospitality is dispensed and prayers for the bride said. The pastor of the congregation to which the bride's family belongs is always present to lead in prayer. As is also the case among traditionalists, a head of cattle is slaughtered to provide the guests with meat. Apart from providing the guests with fresh meat, informants say, it is essential that the blood of a beast be spilled on such an auspicious occasion. The smell of such blood invites the lineage ancestors of the bride to bless her.

The purpose of the ukuncamisa banquet is three-fold. First it is a traditional send-off for the bride, and secondly it provides an occasion on which friends and relatives may present the bride with gifts and wish her well. For those who may not be able to attend the wedding at the bridegroom's home the following day, it provides an opportunity of seeing the bride in her wedding finery. At the ukuncamisa banquet the umkhongi or his representative is always present. His

express purpose, however, is not to attend the banquet, but to "fetch" the bridal party as per tradition.

CHAPTER 8

THE TRANSFER OF THE BRIDE AND THE WEDDING

8.1 Introduction

The transfer of the bride to the bridegroom's home and subsequent wedding ceremonies mark the culmination of the prolonged process of marriage. It is at this phase of the process of marriage that the bride and the bridegroom become legally committed to one another as spouses. There are certain points of difference between traditionalists and non-traditionalists in as far as the transfer of the bride and the wedding celebration are concerned. We shall accordingly discuss them separately.

8.2 The transfer of the bride and the wedding among traditionalists

8.2.1 The departure of the bride and the bridal party

After the ukuncamisa feast, the bride retires to the indlunkulu hut where she spends the night. It is essential for her to spend the night, preceding the wedding, in this hut because it is in it that the lineage ancestors habitually pay their nocturnal visits. While she is asleep here they lick her and bless her.

Very early in the morning on the following day she is taken out of the indlunkulu hut by her father or guardian and led by the hand to the cattle kraal. According to traditional tribal custom it is only men who can enter the cattle kraal. Adult women, other than those who have reached menopause, are not allowed to enter the cattle kraal because, they are regarded as ritually impure and dangerous to livestock. However, on this day the bride is, in spite of this prohibition, deliberately taken into the cattle kraal as a special honour for having fetched ilobolo; and for the purpose of being dedicated to the lineage ancestors, who are believed to dwell in the cattle fold.

On entering the cattle kraal the bride's father or guardian walks with her slowly and solemnly along the right flank of the enclosure. When they reach the upper end of the kraal, opposite its entrance, they stop. He then starts reciting the praises of his lineage ancestors, one after the other, starting with the oldest he can remember. Having recited their praises, he then informs them collectively that their child (the bride) is now leaving home to marry. He tells them the lineage into which she is going to marry and states the number of ilobolo cattle he has received in respect of her impending marriage. He asks them to guard and protect her from all adversities, and to bless her with children. Having finished his invocation he tells them that: "I am now taking out the child (bride)." As he utters these words, he starts walking slowly with his daughter, down the left flank of the cattle kraal, and out to the bridal party (umthimba) waiting outside the cattle fold and singing the sacred ihubo (lineage hymn). As she joins the bridal party, she is admonished not to look back home on her way lest her marriage ends in divorce. She is also told not to drink any water on the way other than that with which she is provided when she leaves home.

The bride leaves with a contingent of young men and women, who sandwich her protectively among them as they travel to the bridegroom's home. The elderly members of the bridal party follow later in the day with the bride's marriage goods. Informants say that traditionally a man is not allowed to attend his eldest daughter's wedding. He has to delegate the duty of handing her over to her bridegroom's lineage to one of his full or half-brothers. He is, however permitted to attend the weddings of his subsequent daughters and deliver them to their respective bridegrooms' lineages himself. This prohibition also applies to the mothers of brides who are eldest daughters. We could not establish the underlying reason for this prohibition. All we were told by informants is that it is traditional custom. It would appear, however, that this taboo is gradually losing its

psychological grip on some traditionalists, because there are some men who were observed attending their eldest daughters' weddings.

8.2.2 The arrival of the bridal party at the bridegroom's home

On arrival at the bridegroom's home, the bridal party, led by the umkhongi enters the homestead singing and dancing. Such singing and dancing is known as ukugqumushela, and it consists largely in the utterance, in song, of mischievous and lightly denigrating words, which put in question the bridegroom's manhood. The bridegroom is for instance referred to and portrayed as a failure in courtship - a man of such poor ability in courtship that his impending marriage to the bride is a matter of luck rather than the result of personal skill in wooing.

The bridal party is welcomed by ululating married women of the bridegroom's party, who strut about waving grass brooms. The old men of the bridegroom's party prance about in jubilation, uttering war cries and vigorously charging imaginary foes. The bridal party moves up the right flank of the homestead and down the left flank towards the gate where they entered. When they have moved out of the homestead, they go to settle under a nearby tree where they remain with the bride until the commencement of the wedding in the aftertoon. Whilst they are there the bridegroom's father or guardian sends them a goat, through the umkhongi, to slaughter and consume. This is known as imbuzi yasesihlahleni (a goat offered for slaughter and consumption in the bush). This goat is given to the bridal party in the name of the bridegroom's father. The bride does not partake of the meat of this goat, as all food from the bridegroom's home is taboo to her at this stage. The bridal party is also offered large quantities of sorghum beer, also in the name of the bridegroom's father.

The bridal party remains stationed outside the bridegroom's homestead the whole day. Late in the evening they are invited to enter the homestead; and are then offered huts to sleep in. Very often, however, the younger members of the bride's and bridegroom's parties spend most of the night dancing and regaling themselves to meat and ale. The bride and the bridegroom spend the night in separate huts with their respective senior relatives. Early in the morning the bridal party leaves the homestead to settle under a nearby tree again. They remain here with the bride until the commencement of the wedding dances in the afternoon. Whilst they are here, they are entertained to meat and sorghum beer and are supplied with all they need through the umkhongi who keeps on liaising between them and the elders of the bridegroom's lineage.

8.2.3 The wedding dances and the transfer of the bride

Soon after midday the bridegroom's father or guardian requests the tribal chief's representative at the wedding to call the umthimba (bridal party) to the isigcawu (an open area outside the homestead prepared specially for the wedding dances). Usually the bridal party does not respond promptly to the invitation. They promise to come soon, but proceed doing whatever they are doing without haste - some attending to their garb and others dressing up the bride in her wedding finery. It very often becomes necessary for the bridegroom's father or guardian to issue three or four invitations to them before they come to the isigcawu.

The bride's attire consists of an isidwaba (a skin kilt for married women) embroidered with beads, a wide skin belt (ixhama) for the waist also ornamented with beads, and bangles of beads for the legs and the arms. In addition to the elaborate beadwork she wears an imvakazi. Schoeman describes the imvakazi as: "a relatively narrow band of white beads approximately 3 to 4 cms wide and threaded as to resemble a lace-work pattern". (African Studies, Vol 27, No 2, 1968: 76). It is worn horizontally

around the forehead such that the lace-work is suspended over the face without, however, obscuring vision. The bride wears it as a token of respect for the bridegroom and the senior male members of his lineage. In her right hand she carries a short spear called isingindi, and in her left hand a small decorative shield called ingcwayi.

To announce the coming of the bridal party to the isigcawu group of young men and young women are dispatched to the bridegroom's homestead. They surge into the homestead singing and dancing, and move up the right flank of the homestead (i.e., the indlunkulu section) until they reach the upper end of the homestead, opposite the indlunkulu hut which faces the main entrance to the homestead. Here they dance for a while and then move on. They carry on along the left flank of the homestead (i.e., ikhohlwa section) and then out to where the rest of the bridal party is stationed. Shortly after the return of these young men and women, the married women of the bridal party in turn move into the homestead. They enter the isango (gate) strutting, ululating and dancing in stately fashion to announce the coming of the umthimba. They follow upon the footsteps of the young men and women, and then move out to join the umthimba, which is now ready to go to the isigcawu.

As a rule the umthimba is led to the isigcawu by the man appointed by the bride's lineage to deputize for her father or guardian. If the bride's father or guardian is present, however, he leads the umthimba himself. Usually the leader of the umthimba is accompanied and assisted by one of the senior men of the bride's lineage.

On their way to the isigcawu members of the umthimba walk slowly, with measured step and sing the sacred lineage hymn (ihubo). The bride is as a rule always concealed protectively in the midst of the bridal throng. We could not establish why she is so protectively guarded on her way to the dancing arena. On arrival at the isigcawu the umthimba takes its position opposite

the ikhetho, and then they stop singing the ihubo.

The wedding dances are performed in two phases. The first is given to the umthimba and the last to the ikhetho. The spectators arrange themselves in a circle on the edges of the isiqca-wu leaving the centre open for the dancers. The dancers arrange themselves as follows: The senior married men (amadoda) take the foreground; then immediately behind them follow the unmarried young men (izinsizwa). Behind the izinsizwa are the married women. The bride is sandwiched by the amaqhikiza (unmarried young women who have already accepted lovers) and amatshitshi (girls who have not yet accepted lovers) who bring up the rear. The drummers usually take their positions a few paces behind the girls surrounding the bride.

The beginning of the dance by the umthimba is announced by the beating of hide drums (izigubhu). The men, with raised shields (amahawu), surge forward slowly and after a few paces stamp their feet on the ground simultaneously. Then they retreat slowly with synchronized steps and after a few paces stamp their feet again. Their forward and backward movement follows the rhythmic beat of the drums and the resounding din of the friction drum called ingungu. The ingungu, alternatively known as ingulule, is fashioned by cutting away the seat and the top of a twenty litre can. A wet goat skin is then drawn tightly over one of the hollow ends of the can and secured with thongs. A small hole is then perforated in the centre of the skin covering the one end of the cylinder. In this hole a reed is thrust such that it projects through to the hollow side of the can. Describing how the friction drum is played Krige writes: "... the drummer passes her hands alternately down the stick as in milking a cow, which produces a deep, rumbling undertone to the singing" (Africa, Vol 38, No 2, 1968: 177). As the men dance forward and backwards, the married women of the umthimba add flavour to the performance by ululating and strutting about in front of the dancers. Some of the amatshitshi, animated by the spirit of the occasion, frisk about - unabashedly kicking their

legs high - and blow whistles animatedly.

After a while of dancing the chief's representative (iphoyisa) moves to the centre of the isigcawu and orders the umthimba to halt. It is now the time for the bride to step forward and declare before all the people present that it is out of her free will that she marries the bridegroom. She emerges from the midst of the umthimba wielding an isingqindi (short spear) in her right hand and the ingcwayi (small decorative shield) in her left hand. As she moves forward dancing, she intones her inkondlo. The inkondlo is a ditty composed by the bride herself for this occasion. It is a song through which she expresses her feelings about leaving her lineage and assuming the status of a bride. (c f Msimang, 1975: 206). As she leads in the singing of the inkondlo, the amaqhikiza accompanying her provide the chorus.

On reaching the chief's representative at the centre of the isigcawu, the bride and her retinue stop singing and dancing. The chief's representative then asks her: "Do you love this man?" She keeps quiet, and he repeats the question aloud. Even now she still keeps silent. He then turns away from her in apparent indignation, thereby indicating clearly that if the bride does not respond to his question for the third time, he shall call off the wedding. Having moved some paces away from the bride, he turns around and faces her. He then asks her for the third and last time: "Do you love this man?" After some moments of silence and suspense the bride points at the bridegroom with the isingqindi, and thereupon one of the amaqhikiza strikes the chief's representative with a grass mat (icansi). These actions of the bride and the iqhikiza are understood to constitute an affirmative answer to the official witness' question. The crowd then breaks the silence with a deafening cry of "Hule---!" (hurrah!) The bridegroom, now overwhelmed by joy, leaps forward, with stick and shield brandished, as if charging a foe. He smites his shield with his stick repeatedly and with relentless vigour like an irate warrior intent upon annihilating his adversary. As he prances about in this fashion, the young men of the

ikhetho recite his personal praises (izibongo) to spur him on. In a short time the whole throng at the isigcawu is engulfed by emotion and all and sundry join in the dancing. After a while of dancing, the ikhetho retires en masse to the bridegroom's homestead to put on their best finery for the second phase of the wedding dances, called ukukhetha. The umthimba with a few senior members of the bridegroom's lineage remain at the isigcawu. The departure of the ikhetho to dress marks the end of the first phase of the wedding dances.

Where the bride refuses altogether to respond to the official witness' question, the people present run away from her and scatter in all directions. Her refusal to answer to the question posed by the chief's representative is interpreted as a repudiation of the bridegroom and a refusal to marry him. Such unusual behaviour by the bride, it is said, discharges contagious ill-luck (ukhondolo olubi) upon those present. It is therefore advisable for them to run away lest they be contaminated with a predisposition for celibacy.

The bride's public declaration before the chief's representative, that she marries the bridegroom out of her own volition is the most important event of the first phase of the wedding dances. It is a fulfilment of the requirements of section 62 of the Code which stipulates that: "The official witness shall at an early stage of the ceremony publicly ask the woman whether it is of her free will and consent that she is about to enter into a customary union with the intended husband. Should the woman decline to announce her consent, declare her dissent, or otherwise appear to be unwilling to proceed with the intended union, the official witness shall forthwith prohibit any further proceedings in connection with the ceremony and shall, if necessary, take the woman under his protection and shall forthwith report the matter to the Magistrate". It also answers to the requirements of section 59(1)(c) of the Code which stipulated that the bride should declare publicly that she marries the intended bridegroom out of "...her own free

will and consent".

Presently there are two trends of thought among traditionalists with regard to the significance of the bride's public declaration. Some tribesmen regard it as the very act which seals and legalizes the matrimonial union celebrated. This view tallies with and seems to stem from the provisions of the Code and the attitude of the White judiciary. This is clearly illustrated in Lewin's comment: "...the public declaration required by the Code is an essential feature that cannot be dispensed with. In a case (*Mdhlalose v Kaba*, 1937, N A C (N and T) 43) where the bridegroom and the official witness were absent, but feasting and dancing were carried on and the bride was annointed with the contents of the gall bladder and "all the essentials of a Native marriage appear to have been observed except that there was no public declaration by the bride in the presence of the official witness", the Court held that the union was void ab initio." (*Bantu Studies*, Vol XV, No 1, 1941: 18). Other traditionalist tribesmen, however, regard the bride's public declaration as an untraditional formality which merely assures those present that she is not being coerced into the union by her guardian. To them the declaration as such does not commit the bride legally as a wife to the bridegroom. They stress that in terms of traditional tribal law it is only the slaughter of the umqholiso beast and its attendant ceremonies which legalizes the matrimonial union. The slaughter of this beast and its function shall be discussed in the next section.

The return of the ikhetho to the isigcawu marks the beginning of the second phase of the wedding dances. It is during this phase that the bride is formally handed over by her father or his representative to the bridegroom and his lineage. The transfer of the bride is conducted as follows: The person charged with the duty of transferring her starts by reciting the genealogical history of her lineage. As he does so he moves up and down the centre of the isigcawu so that what he says may be heard by as many people as possible. Having finished out-

lining the genealogical history of the bride's lineage, he then takes the bride by the hand and hands her over to the bridegroom and his lineage. He then addresses himself specifically to the bridegroom and the senior members of his lineage. He tells them of the many merits of the bride and also mentions some of her shortcomings. He then asks them to treat her kindly as they would their own child. He emphasizes that if they fail to tolerate some of her shortcomings they should not maim or kill her, but return her to her father or guardian. Finally he says: "Siyakhuleka nina bakwa Sobanibani! Sikhulekela ibomvu! Sicela ukuthi balale bebabili bavuke sebebathathu! (We salute you of such and such a lineage! We are asking for red ochre (i.e. a child)! We plead that they (the bride and the bridegroom) may go to sleep and arise having been blessed with offspring)! In this latter statement the bridegroom and his lineage are formally and publicly given permission to utilize and control the bride's fecundity. This is the most important contractual aspect of the second phase of the wedding dances. It does not, however, from the traditionalist point of view, complete or seal the marriage. By transferring the bride to the bridegroom and his lineage, her father or his representative does not thereby confer the status of wifhood upon her. This status can only be conferred by the bridegroom's lineage through the slaughter of the umqholiso beast and the performance of related ceremonies. Strictly speaking, therefore, the transfer of the bride does not constitute the act which seals the marriage. It is rather an act through which the bride is formally and publicly made available to the bridegroom's lineage for the conferment of the status of wifhood. That the bride is not regarded as a wife to the bridegroom as yet is shown by the fact that the couple does not share a bed on the night following the wedding dances. He only starts sleeping with her legitimately on the night following the slaughter of the umqholiso beast. It may also be useful to note that in order to establish the validity of a man's claim that he is a husband to a woman, traditionalists usually ask: "Uthi ungumfazi wakho wamqholisa yini?" (You claim that she is your wife, alright, did you slaughter an umqholiso

beast for her?). They rarely ask whether the bride ever made a public declaration as stipulated by the Code, or whether her father or guardian handed her over to the bridegroom and his lineage. This, we opine, is instructive of the moment when a marriage, from a traditionalist point of view, really becomes legally valid.

After the formal transfer, the bride is presented by the senior women of the bridal party to the bridegroom's mother. She kneels in front of her and requests her to adopt her as a daughter. Having been formally accepted, the bride makes a public undertaking to be respectful and loyal to the bridegroom's mother - on condition, however, that she also treats her kindly.

This is then followed by the distribution of the umabo gifts. These are, as already stated above, gifts which the bride distributes to specific senior members of the bridegroom's lineage. They consist of sleeping mats, blankets, pillows, dishes, beer sieves and clothing. It is the duty of the bridegroom to furnish the bride beforehand with the names of all the persons who are entitled to receive the umabo gifts. It is important that the names of some deceased senior members of his lineage should also be included. Through the presentation of the umabo gifts to these persons the bride acknowledges their position within their lineage and also encourages them to be positively disposed towards her. When these gifts have been presented, the wedding dances continue and last until sunset. Then all the people, including the majority of the members of the bridal party, disperse to their respective homes. Only the senior members of the bridal party and some young men and women remain at the bridegroom's home.

On this night the bride and the bridegroom sleep in separate huts with their respective relatives.

8.2.4 The slaughter of the umqholiso beast

On the morning of the day following the wedding dances, the young

women of the bridal party ask for the slaughter of the umqholiso beast. Traditionally this request is communicated in song. The singing is led by one of the amaqhikiza while the rest of the young women provide the chorus:

Leader
Siyayithand'inyama!
Thina singamakloza!

Chorus
We---Mkhwenyana!
We---Mkhwenyana!

Translation

We like meat!

Indeed Son-in-law!

We are ravenous eaters of meat!

Indeed Son-in-law!

This song is repeated over and over until the bridegroom's father or guardian responds to the request. Accompanied by the umkhongi, he goes to the cattle kraal where he points out the head of cattle to be slaughtered as umqholiso.

In the presence of the young men and women of both the bride's and bridegroom's parties, the umkhongi stabs the beast with a spear. He tries as best as he can to fell it with a single thrust, for if he should fail, he is obliged to pay a fine of ten cents to the young women of the bridal party for each additional wound he inflicts on the beast. To ensure that the beast does not fall at the first thrust of the spear, the young women of the bridal party sing an incantation:

"May our sister's head of cattle not fall!

May our sister's beast rise!"

As they sing, they clap hands rhythmically to the incantation. The words of this incantation, it is believed, infuse the beast with strength to resist the effect of the spear. To make this even more effective, each of the young women of the bridal party puts one foot on top of the other. The longer the beast takes to die, it is said, the more stable and long lasting the bride's marriage shall be. However, if it dies quickly, this portends that her marriage shall be short-lived. It is the wish of all the members of the bridal party that the marriage of the

bride should last - hence their magical efforts to prolong the death of the umqholiso beast.

When the beast has fallen, its throat is ripped open with a dagger, and its blood is drained into basins for use as ububende (a stew of meat and curdled blood). When the beast has been sufficiently drained, it is put on its back on tree branches for skinning. The bride is then called to come into the cattle kraal with her short wedding spear (isinqindi) and a necklace of white beads (ucu). She places the necklace along the length of the beast's abdomen. This, it is said, symbolizes her purity and good intentions with the marriage. It is then removed and given to the umkhongi who in turn gives it to the bridegroom's mother. The bride is then asked to slit the skin between the fore-legs of the beast with her short spear, thereby making it ready for skinning. Informants say that it is important that the skinning of the umqholiso beast should be initiated by the bride because it is specifically slaughtered for her. It is significant that the bride performs these acts in the cattle kraal (which is otherwise taboo to women) not only in front of her party and the bridegroom's, but also in front of the bridegroom's lineage ancestors, who are believed to dwell in the cattle kraal.

When the beast has been skinned by the young men of both the bridegroom's and the bride's parties, it is cut open. When this is done, special care is taken not to puncture the stomach (inanzi). Informants said that the puncture of the stomach would amount to the symbolic puncture of the bride. The underlying idea here is that the blown up stomach symbolizes the fullness and completeness of the bride's virtue. It could not be established, however, whether the stomach is ever deliberately pierced where the bride has been premaritally deflowered or impregnated. The stomach is then carefully removed together with the intestines and given to specially appointed married women of the bridal party who put these in a bowl. These entrails are known as umnyekezo. Mbatha says: "The word

'umnyekezo' is a noun derived from 'ukunyekeza' or careless sitting or sleeping and showing private parts by a woman. It refers to the exposure of these at childbirth". (1960: 234). Having received the umnyekezo the women dance right round the homestead showing all present that they have received this important portion of the umqholiso beast. Then the bride is called upon to pierce the inanzi (stomach) in the bowl with her wedding spear. By piercing it she indicates her willingness to be deflowered and to bear children. Special care is taken that no portion of the stomach or its contents falls into the hands of witches who may use it to harm the bride. When the bride has punctured the stomach, the women carry the entrails to the bride's natal home where they are consumed.

The gall bladder is removed and stored in a separate receptacle for later use on the bride.

After the removal of the stomach, the rest of the beast is then cut up and distributed under the direction of the umkhongi. The head and right flank of the carcass is given to the bridal party who divide it among themselves as follows: The head is given to the adult men, the fore-leg to the young men and the hind-leg to the bride's mother, the chest to the women and the insonyama (flesh covering the ribs) to the bride's father. Where the bride's father or guardian is not going to deliver the isigodo or isilumatho beast, the head of the umqholiso beast is given back to the bridegroom's party. The head then symbolically fulfils the function of the isigodo beast. What remains of the beast is taken by the bridegroom's party, and devided among its members.

Informants say that the bride and the bridegroom are not allowed to eat the meat of the umqholiso beast. When asked to state the reason for this prohibition, they said: "Umakoti nomkhwenyana abakwazi ukudla ukuhlanganiswa kwabo" (The bride and the bridegroom cannot eat the symbol of their unification). The umqholiso beast, therefore, unites the bride and the bridegroom in a

matrimonial relationship and links the living members of their respective lineages in an affinal relationship.

In terms of traditional Mkhwanazi tribal law it is the slaughter of this beast which confers the legal status of wifehood (ubufazi) upon the bride. Prior to its slaughter, she is strictly speaking, an inkehli or ingoduso (fiance). This has been noted by a number of other scholars, including De Jager (1937: 75), Breytenbach (1971: 192) and De Clercq (1975: 274). De Jager's statement on the significance of the umqholiso beast is particularly enlightening. He writes: "Die um-Qoliso is sinoniem met ons huweliks-formulier, waar die man en vrou plegtig belooft om mekaar nie te verlaat nie. As die bees nog nie geslag is nie, word die meidjie nog altyd as 'n intombi (ongetroude meidjie) beskou, al het haar man al kinders by haar verwek: sy kan nie die naam van um-fazi (vrou) dra voordat sy nie die bees ontvang het nie" (Ibid: 75). It is regrettable, however, that in spite of cumulative ethnographic evidence that the slaughter of the umqholiso beast seals the marriage, amendments to the Code have still not provided for or accorded it its traditional legal significance. It would also appear that the attitude of the White judiciary has been and is still that the slaughter of the umqholiso beast and its attendant ceremonies only have a ritual function and are not of legal importance. This attitude is clearly reflected in the decision of the N.A.C. in the case of *Sila v Masuku*, 1937, N.A.C. (N and T) 121. It is our opinion that this attitude stems primarily from insufficient acquaintance with the gist of the ceremonies attendant upon traditionalist marriage. Through its non-recognition in the statutes and the declaration of the Courts that it is mere ritual, the slaughter of the umqholiso beast has been denuded of its traditional legal significance. It is, furthermore, our opinion that by declaring the real traditional legalizing ceremony a mere ritual, a confusing void was created in the substance of the process of traditionalist marriage. That such a void was indeed created is shown clearly in Lewin's comparative statement on customary unions and marriage under Common Law. He says: "... under the

Common Law ... no marriage is valid unless the ceremony has been performed by a duly authorized marriage officer, who may be either a magistrate or a minister of religion - hence the phrase "civil or Christian rites". Certain formalities must be observed in this ceremony and certain words spoken by the marriage officer and by the parties to be married. When this has been done, the marriage is legally completed and normally there are written records to prove its occurrence should any doubt arise at a later date. A customary union, however, is marked by no such precise legal ceremony, certainly not in point of time..." (1941: 13). The void created in the substance of the process of marriage by the non-recognition of the umqholiso beast, necessitated on the part of the White Courts, the fixing of a new point in time when a customary union should become an accomplished legal reality. The result of the effort to do this was the similization of the customary union with marriage under Common Law. An official witness to stand in a position similar to that of a marriage officer in Common Law was introduced; and the bride was compelled by statute (sections 59 (1) (c) and 62 of the Code) to make a public declaration before the official witness. The registration of all customary unions was made compulsory by section 65 of the Code, in order to prove the existence of the customary union in case of future disputes. This similization of the customary union with marriage under Common Law was obviously inevitable because Common Law was apparently used as the norm. It cannot be doubted that the ambivalent views now existent among traditionalists as to when a customary union comes into being, are the direct result of this similization.

It was strongly emphasized by informants that in its traditional cultural setting the umqholiso beast has absolutely nothing to do with the invocation of the ancestors of either the bridegroom or the bride. Its slaughter is a purely secular act which confers the legal status of wifhood upon the bride and inaugurates certain legal responsibilities and obligations for the marrying couple and their respective lineages. Omission to

slaughter this beast does not anger the ancestors, and neither does it lead to the illness or barrenness of the bride.

What finalizes this important ceremony of ukuqholisa is the sprinkling of the bride with the bile of the umqholiso beast. This ceremony is called ukucecisa, and it is performed outside the homestead near the main entrance to the homestead (isango). When the bride has been duly sprinkled with bile, the gall-bladder is inflated and tied around the wrist of the little girl who is left in the company of the bride. This girl is called umakotshana (literally: little bride). It is this girl who attends to the bride's needs during the early stages of matrimonial life when traditional taboos still prevent her from moving freely in her husband's home. After the ceremony of sprinkling the bride with bile, the remaining members of the bridal party prepare to depart for home.

8.2.5 The slaughter of umeke goat and the consumation of the marriage

It is customary that before leaving for home the maidens of the bridal party ask the bridegroom to give them a goat for slaughter. This goat is known as umeke. It is given to the girls as a fee for the impending defloration of the bride. As already indicated earlier in the section on defloration in chapter 5, traditionalist girls conceive of the virginity of each girl in their age-group as constituting part of their communal virtue. They therefore understand the defloration of one of them as affecting them all. It is for this reason that they ask for the umeke goat. If the bride has already lost her virginity, however, they do not ask for this goat. It is now becoming common practice to substitute the goat with money. The amount of money asked for is variable, but it rarely exceeds R5,00. Having received the goat, the girls ask for its slaughter and consume it. The bride, however, is not allowed to partake of the meat. Where money is given, it is used by the iqhikiza to buy refreshments for the group. After the entertainment the girls leave for home.

On this night the bride and the bridegroom start sharing a bed legitimately. Informants say that in the past the newly married couple were given new mats to consummate the marriage on. In the morning the paternal grandmother of the bridegroom took the sleeping mats and hung them outside for everybody to see. If the mats were bespattered with blood, it was sufficient proof that the bride was a virgin. She was publicly praised in song and kind remarks. However, if the sleeping mats were without the expected blood, she was publicly criticized and called all sorts of names. Her disappointed bridegroom took an old grain basket (isigabetho) and removed its seat. He then thrust his head through it such that it came to rest on his shoulders. With this he proceeded to the bride's home where he sat, at the main entrance (isango) to the homestead, in stern silence to register his indignation. This act was a symbolic indication to the bride's parents that he found their daughter's vagina "already wide open". This practice has completely died out, and we did not encounter any such event during fieldwork.

8.2.6 The slaughter of isigodo and the annointment of the bride.

A few days after the slaughter of the umqholiso beast, another head of cattle is slaughtered at the bridegroom's home. This beast is known by a number of names i e ubhoko, udondolo, isilumatho or inkomo yokubeka. This beast is presented by the bride's father or guardian to the lineage of the bridegroom. In the past it was presented publicly on the wedding day during the dances. Presently, however, the practice is that when the bridegroom's people are about to deliver the ilobolo herd, the bride's father or guardian stipulates that one of the beasts in the herd shall be the isigodo and should be left behind at the bridegroom's home. There are, however, a few isolated instances where the bride's father or guardian takes this beast from his own herd and delivers it to the bridegroom's father prior to or after the wedding. Bryant says that this beast was usually accompanied by two other beasts which were not slaughtered (1905: 188). According to informants this was also the

case among the abaKhwazani in the past. These two beasts, they say, were meant to supply the bride with milk during the period when traditional taboos prevented her from drinking milk from the cows of her husband's lineage. Owing to the scarcity of cattle nowadays, it has become common practice to deliver only the beast for slaughter.

The slaughter of the isigodo beast is the exclusive affair of the bridegroom's lineage to which members of the bride's lineage are usually not invited. Unlike the umqholiso beast which is slaughtered for a secular purpose, the isigodo beast is slaughtered for a ritual purpose. Through its slaughter the bridegroom's father or guardian invites his ancestors to come and see the bride. It is important that they be invited to come and see her because they should know the person who has been acquired with the communal property of the lineage (i.e. ilobolo). In this respect it is important to bear in mind that traditionalists usually speak of cattle as the communal property of the living and deceased members of a lineage. It is also considered important that the lineage ancestors should know the woman who is going to mother additional members of the lineage. During the ceremony they are beseeched to bless the bride with healthy offspring and to ward off all evil that may be directed at her by witches. Failure to report the arrival of the bride through the slaughter of this beast, amounts to slighting the ancestors. Such behaviour angers them and causes them to afflict the bride with ill-health and barrenness.

All present at the ceremony, with the exception of the bride, consume the meat of the isigodo beast. As a rule a goat is always slaughtered for the bride on this occasion.

At the end of this ceremony the bride is taken to the indlunkulu hut where her husband's mother anoints her with fat (umfuma). After the anointment, she is given a child to carry on her back. The child is then deliberately caused to cry. By this act the

bride is symbolically shown that she is expected to bear children.

For all practical purposes the slaughter of the isigodo beast and the annointment of the bride complete the protracted and multi-phased process of marriage.

8.3 The transfer of the bride and the wedding among non-traditionalists

The procedure followed among non-traditionalists in as far as the transfer of the bride to the bridegroom's home is concerned, is basically the same as that described in respect of traditionalists. There are, however, slight differences in the details. These differences are a reflection of the variable influences of Western secular and religious institutions upon the tribesmen. The general tendency among many non-traditionalist tribesmen is to blend traditional usage and Western practice.

8.3.1 The departure of the bride

Among non-traditionalists there is no house or hut designated as indlunkulu. The bride, therefore, spends the night preceding her wedding in the company of her sisters, friends and senior female relatives in one of the bedrooms.

Early in the morning the bridal party starts preparing for the departure of the bride. The bride, assisted by her senior female relatives and friends puts on her wedding trousseau. If she has not had a child, her whole outfit is white to symbolize her "purity". However, if she has already had a child, she is debarred from wearing white. In stead she wears an ordinary dress of any colour, except black. Black is associated with bereavement and mourning and would be inappropriate as an alternative colour for a convivial occasion such as a wedding.

While the bride is dressing up, her bridesmaids and page girl also put on their dresses. Contemporary custom also decrees that they should never wear black, for the same reason that we

stated in respect of the bride.

The parents of the bride and some of their relatives also wear their best in preparation for the impending occasion. Other relatives and friends, however, busy themselves with packing and loading on trucks the goods which the bride shall take along to the bridegroom's home.

When the preparations for the wedding have been completed, a short prayer, led by the head of the family, is held to dedicate the bride to the care of the Almighty. After the prayer the bride is given brief counsel by the senior members of her entourage on how to play the role of a wife and daughter-in-law. It is particularly stressed that she should not forget that throughout her married life she shall be acting as her family's and lineage's ambassador at her prospective husband's home. Her misbehaviour shall not only tarnish her reputation, but shall also cast a bad reflection upon her agnates, particularly her father. When the counselling is finished, her father or guardian takes her by the hand and publicly leads her out of the house. Some non-traditionalist fathers and guardians who still honour their lineage spirits and have cattle kraals, do lead their daughters into the byre, where they are, in traditionalist fashion, dedicated to the care of the ancestors. Those who do not have cattle kraals merely lead their daughters out of the house and invoke their ancestors as they lead them into the cars which shall carry them and the bridesmaids to the church where the wedding shall take place. Those non-traditionalists who do not honour their lineage ancestors do not invoke the ancestors. They merely lead their daughters into the vehicle set aside to transport her and her bridesmaids to church. The departure of the bride from home is a sorrowful occasion which is often marked by the controlled shedding of tears by the bride and her relatives.

8.3.2 The wedding ceremony

As a rule, the bridegroom and his party arrive first and take their reserved seats in front in the church building. The bride, her guardian, bridesmaids and the rest of the bridal party arrive later and enter the church when all attending the ceremony are seated. As a rule the bride enters the church hand-in-hand with her father or guardian and they march forward slowly on the aisle to where the bridegroom and his attendants are seated. The bride and her father or guardian are followed by the page girl and bridesmaids.

On arrival near the altar, where the bridegroom is seated, the bride's father or guardian silently hands her over to the bridegroom and she takes her seat on his left. Some bridesmaids seat directly behind the bride, while one seats on the left of the bride. The bridegroom's bestman seats on his right whilst his other attendants seat directly behind him. Unlike among traditionalists where the bridal party and the bridegroom's party seat and dance separately during the wedding, there is no separation of the parties in church. They seat intermingled right through the wedding ceremony.

As a rule the marriage ceremony is conducted by a minister of religion who has been empowered by the State to act as a marriage officer. The wedding ceremony is conducted in accordance with the liturgical pattern prescribed by the congregation to which the minister officiating belongs. As liturgical patterns vary from one congregation to the next, only the major features of the marriage ceremony shall be described.

Generally the wedding ceremony is opened with a prayer by the officiating priest and a hymn is sung. Thereafter, the bride and the bridegroom are each asked to declare publicly that it is with their free will that they wish to enter into marriage. They are also asked to declare that they are not at the time of the wedding ceremony parties to any subsisting marriage or customary union. This is done in compliance with section 22(3) of

Act 38 of 1927, as amended, which stipulates that: "No minister of the Christian religion authorized under any law to solemnize marriages, nor any marriage officer, shall solemnize the marriage of any Black person unless he has taken from such a person a declaration as to whether there is subsisting at the time any customary union between such person and any woman other than the woman to whom he is to be married and, in the event of any such union subsisting, unless there is produced to him by such person a certificate under the hand of a magistrate, that the provisions of this section hereinbefore set out have been complied with". When the bride and the bridegroom have made their respective declarations, the minister presiding asks them to exchange their wedding rings and hand them over to him, which he blesses and inserts into their fingers. Then he publicly declares them husband and wife. The minister's public declaration of the couple as spouses completes the marriage.

At this stage a prayer is often said to dedicate the newly wedded couple to the care of God. Then there follows a sermon by the priest which is addressed particularly to the bride and the bridegroom. They are especially lectured to on the problems of marriage, their obviation and solution. They are also warned that when God ordained the sacrament of marriage he did not make a proviso for divorce. They should therefore live in peace and allow themselves to be guided by God throughout their married life. The sermon is very often followed by a prayer and benediction which concludes the ceremony.

When the church service is over, the congregation is invited to attend a wedding feast at the bridegroom's home. The bridegroom, his bestman, the bride and her principal bridesmaid are required to remain in the church building for some time filling and signing the marriage register and other relevant documents. The bestman and the bride's principal bridesmaid act as witnesses and they append their signatures to all the documents which are filled.

8.3.3 The wedding feast

As a rule the wedding feast is held at the bridegroom's home. However, if there is insufficient accomodation for the guests, a school hall is used in stead.

Guests at the feast are categorized into groups in accordance with their importance. Those who are considered as belonging high in the non-traditionalist social hierarchy, like ministers of religion, teachers, evangelists, clerks , nurses and other professional persons are grouped together and served in sessions with the bridegroom and the bride at table. Usually a number of tables are joined together to form a long table such that guests sit on either side of it facing each other. The bride and the bridegroom sit at the head of the table facing their wedding cake. Close to them there sit the bridesmaids and the bridegroom's attendants. The other guests sit at random. This group is served with the best Western dishes available and in Western or quasi-Western style. They are also provided with bottled cold drinks, beer and spiritous liquor.

Those guests who are considered of less importance are often served outside where they are expected to queue for their food and drinks. At times these guests sit in small groups and are handed plates individually or given food in large basins from which they eat communally. The food they receive is not as classy as that served to the important guests at table. It includes samp, mealie-rice, boiled meat an vegetables. They are often served with sorghum beer and other light Western drinks.

During the course of the luncheon short speeches addressed to the bride and bridegroom are made and congratulatory cards are read by specially designated persons. Presents for the couple are also opened here and the identity of their donors announced.

After the luncheon the bride and bridegroom retire to change their wedding attire and put on other clothes for the afternoon.

8.3.4 The wedding dances

The wedding dances take place when all have had a meal. It is here that the traditional division of the bridal party and the bridegroom's party becomes manifest. The bridal party takes the arena first and they sing the songs which they had been practising all along prior to the wedding. These songs are not traditional songs, but are new compositions which have arisen within the ranks of non-traditionalist society. They are sung in choral fashion with a conductor, who instead of facing his choir, takes the foreground and dictates the style and tempo of dancing. When the bridal party has finished, the bridegroom's party, which has been standing still opposite the bridal party, takes the floor.

In some non-traditionalist wedding dances, however, there is no division between the bridal and bridegroom's parties. Instead the two groups mingle and sing popular wedding songs which are known to all non-traditionalists in the area. Here the bride and bridegroom are expected to lead the dancers. The dances continue until late in the afternoon when guests start dispersing.

In the evening a wedding reception may be held at a school hall - all depending on the couple's level of school education. Here a hired band provides music for ballroom dancing and the latest modes of jive. It is considered a sign of refinement to be able to waltz and perform other kinds of "sophisticated" dances. For this reason the bride and bridegroom acquire these skills before their wedding in order to open the dance floor in proper style. When they have duly opened it, others join them and waltzing continues until the band starts playing other kinds of music to which the attendants jive. Normally these wedding receptions drag on until midnight when the guests start leaving in large numbers.

8.3.5 Umabo and aggregation Rites

On the day following the wedding feast the bride distributes the presents she brought along in traditionalist fashion among her husband's relatives. When the distribution of the umabo gifts is over, the bridegroom's senior relatives and the bride's guardian and his companions gather privately to discuss matters of importance relating to the newly established relationship. The bride's guardian relates some of her health problems and emphasizes that she should be treated well by the bridegroom and his relatives. If they are unable to cope with her shortcomings, they should not kill her, but return her home. The bridegroom's mother also states her expectations from the bride. All this is done in typical traditionalist fashion. After this gathering, the bride's relatives depart for home, leaving the bride in the custody of her husband and his relatives.

All the other aggregation rites described in relation to the traditionalists earlier have been completely discarded by the non-traditionalists. The major reason why they have been done away with, is that they are associated with paganism and traditionalist "simplicity".

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

9.1 Preamble

Our research findings, as stated in the foregoing chapters, indicate that ever since the Mkhwanazi tribe came into contact with Western culture towards the end of the nineteenth century, their traditional courtship and marriage practices and the values and notions which underlie them have undergone and are still undergoing transformation. It would appear that the most outstanding and potent factors which have been instrumental in bringing about these changes are Christianity, school education, government legislation and Western socio-economic concepts and practices. The influence of these, however, has not been equally felt and similarly reacted to by all tribesmen. As a result of this, two major categories of tribesmen have emerged whose patterns of thought, value systems and modes of behaviour manifest variable deviations from what is regarded as traditional and orthodox.

One category of tribesmen includes those conservative tribesmen who, in the face of the compelling influence of Western culture, still endeavour to adhere to and sustain traditional forms of courtship and marriage. The other category comprises those tribesmen who, because of their hospitable disposition towards innovation and sustained exposure to Western concepts in secular and religious institutions, manifest variable Western-oriented patterns of thought and behaviour in courtship and marriage. As a result of this dichotomy within the tribe, one finds traditional and quasi-traditional patterns of courtship and marriage co-existing with several other Western-oriented patterns. The general picture which emerges, in as far as these facets of Mkhwanazi tribal life are concerned, is one of conceptual dissonance and behavioural inconsistency. Nevertheless, there is evidence of attempts at synthesis and re-organization.

9.2 The choice of lovers and spouses

It was established that Mkhwanazi tribesmen choose their lovers and spouses on the basis of a number of considerations, the most important being character, physical features, ethnic membership, kinship, educational achievement, occupation and socio-economic status.

Both traditionalists and non-traditionalists consider it important that in the choice of lovers and spouses consideration should be given to physical appearance. In their opinion, prospective lovers and spouses should ideally answer to the prevailing notions of beauty or handsomeness. Both categories of tribesmen share similar ideas on the handsomeness of men, but they tend to differ slightly on the beauty of women. Whereas traditionalists are inclined to be attracted by women with robust bodily features and "negroid" facial traits, non-traditionalists show preference for slim women with "caucasoid" facial characteristics. This tendency is largely due to the influence of the press and other media of communication which project an essentially Euro-American image of feminine beauty.

Though both traditionalists and non-traditionalists consider physical beauty an important factor to be taken account of in the choice of prospective lovers and spouses, they concur that the character of the person intended should be given the highest priority. Their concepts of good character coincide and conflict in certain respects because of their dissimilar cultural bases. Traditionalist notions of good character derive from the traditional value system, whilst non-traditionalist ideas of good character derive partly from the traditional code of morality and partly from Christian teachings. Both categories of tribesmen concur that the elements which make for good character on the part of a prospective bride are: humility, amiability, respect, industry, honesty and continence. Similarly both groups uphold the view that what contributes to the good character of a prospective bridegroom are industry, respect, honesty and firmness.

These categories of tribesmen concur on these elements of good character because they are provided for in both the traditional and Christian value systems. There are however differences in point of view in as far as the multiplicity of male amorous attachments are concerned. Whereas traditionalists condone and admire the Don Juan complex because of their polygynous orientation, non-traditionalists are compelled by Christian dogma and the general Western inclination towards monogamy to condemn it as an index of immorality.

It was also established that both traditionalists and non-traditionalists cherish the ideal of ethnic endogamy, but the vehemence with which they insist on it is not the same. Unlike traditionalists, non-traditionalists tend to be more tolerant towards ethnically mixed love relationships and marriages. This, it would seem, is due to the influence of Christian dogma which emphasizes the brotherhood and equality of man irrespective of ethnicity.

In their choice of lovers and spouses all tribesmen, irrespective of their degree of acculturation, still adhere to the traditional rules of exogamy.

Educational achievement and occupational status tend to divide tribesmen into mutually exclusive groups whose members tend to choose their lovers and spouses within their own ranks.

Similarly socio-economic status tends to create cleavages within the tribe. People who are similarly acculturated and are more or less of equal socio-economic status, tend to choose their lovers and spouses within their own social classes.

9.3 Courtship

Courtship, it was established, is an important aspect of Mkhwanazi tribal life because it is an avenue to marriage, which is the basis of the family - a fundamental institution in the tribal social structure.

Traditionalists view courtship with an approving attitude as long as it is conducted in accordance with their standards of decorum. However, owing to the effects of Christian teachings, Western educational and social institutions, non-traditionalists manifest a wide range of attitudes towards courtship. Some are complacent towards it, while others view it as an avenue to sexual licence and should, therefore, be discouraged.

The uninhibited attitude of traditionalists towards courtship encourages their youths to initiate and conduct their love relationships with unabashed "openness", which facilitates control and supervision. The non-traditionalist condemnatory attitude towards courtship, which stems mainly from Christian teachings, has caused their youths to resort to secrecy and at times to rebellious behaviour.

Among traditionalists the control and supervision of the sexual life of young girls is exercised by amaqhikiza, who are older girls of the same generation. The institution of amaqhikiza has become obsolete among non-traditionalists, and their supervisory role has been taken over by parents, particularly the mothers, church elders and school teachers. Whereas communication between amaqhikiza and their younger sisters is intimate, continuous and uninhibited, the same cannot be said of their substitutes within the non-traditionalist ranks. Parents, church elders and school teachers tend to discuss sex and love relationships with a noticeable sense of discomfort and their attitude is basically condemnatory towards these issues. This tends to stifle and discourage meaningful discussion and it further promotes furtiveness among the youth. As a result of this, guidance, control and supervision are almost impossible to carry out for the new custodians of the morality of the youth.

Whereas traditionalist young men are taught the skills of courtship and supervised by their elder and more experienced brothers and companions, non-traditionalist youths are not.

Traditional rudeness and the conventional attitude of indifference towards suitors during the early stages of courtship still persist among traditionalists. Among non-traditionalist girls one encounters a variety of responses which range from traditionalist indifference and hostility to politeness as understood in the Western context. The extent to which a girl exhibits rudeness and indifference depends on her disposition towards her suitor, her personality and the extent to which she has been effectively imbued with Western notions of etiquette and deportment.

Assistance by relatives and friends in courtship, which is common among traditionalists, is very rare among non-traditionalists as they opine that such behaviour would be tantamount to encouraging immorality.

Love magic and potions are still widely used by traditionalists. Some non-traditionalists do take recourse to these, but others shun them for religious reasons.

Both traditionalists and non-traditionalists publicly condemn the habit of bribing a girl with presents whilst wooing her. There is evidence, however, that some non-traditionalist young men secretly break this injunction and give the girls they wish to win money and cash commodities. There is also a growing tendency on the part of some non-traditionalist girls to accept such presents, whilst traditionalist girls still view them as outright bribes and refuse them vehemently.

An impression was registered that while the majority of young traditionalists court primarily for purposes of marriage, a growing number of non-traditionalist youths court for sensual purposes. Marriage, as an objective, is at the beginning of courtship a secondary consideration. It only becomes important later when the love relationship has matured. This sex-oriented attitude towards love relationships seems to be related directly to the influence of the press and movie films. An awareness of

this tendency has prompted some church denominations to discourage courtship in its conventional form and to advocate church-sanctioned and supervised love liaisons. Although these measures seem to have worked well in some congregations, in others it seems to have promoted furtiveness and made the control and supervision of youthful love relationships impossible.

Though the ideal of premarital chastity is still cherished by all senior tribesmen, irrespective of degree of acculturation, there seems to be a growing tendency among the youth, especially non-traditionalists, to indulge in premarital sexual intercourse as is attested by the rise in the number of premarital pregnancies.

It was noted that in all cases of premarital pregnancy the prevailing attitude among all tribesmen is that the genitor or his guardian, where he is a minor, is the offending party. The impregnated woman's guardian is invariably regarded as the victim, as it is his rights, in respect of the woman's fecundity, which have been violated. Premaritally impregnated women never sue for damages in their own names as they are regarded as minors and do not have the legal capacity to act.

Damages demanded by traditionalists in respect of first premarital pregnancies invariably amount to three head of cattle. These are the ingquthu beast, ingezamagceke and imvimba. For all subsequent premarital pregnancies they demand the two latter beasts. Non-traditionalists, on the other hand ignore tribal law and the provisions of the Code and ask for variable amounts of money which are arbitrarily decided upon by the guardians of the women involved.

9.4 Marriage negotiations

Marriage negotiations among the Mkhwanazi tribesmen are protracted and they follow the same general pattern which earlier authors like Bryant (1948) and Krige (1936 a) described in respect of Zulus of the preacculturation era. However, owing to the varied

intensity of the influence of Western acculturative forces within the tribal area and the dissimilar reaction of tribesmen to these, several variations in details of procedure are now discernible within this general pattern.

There are four major phases through which marriage negotiations pass among all tribesmen, irrespective of their degree of acculturation. These are: the informal phase of marriage proposal, the phase during which marriage negotiations are formally opened and pursued, the phase of the delivery and receipt of ilobolo and the final phase at which the bride is delivered to the bridegroom and his lineage.

The general rule among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists is that before marriage negotiations are formally opened at lineage level, the lovers should make an agreement to marry. Such an agreement, however, is not legally binding upon them and it does not encumber them with any obligations towards each other. In fact as minors they lack the legal capacity to contract. Theirs is merely an informal agreement to let their respective lineages negotiate their espousal.

The power of conducting marriage negotiations is vested in the senior members of the patrilineages of the intending spouses. As a rule it is the intending bridegroom's lineage which initiates the negotiations, using the services of abakhongi (emissaries) to liaise between it and the intended bride's patrilineage.

Among traditionalists the initial stages of marriage negotiations are invariably marked by indifference, antagonism and arrogance towards the representatives of the intending bridegroom's lineage. In the case of non-traditionalists a wide range of attitudes is discernible during the early stages of the negotiations. Those who have not yet sufficiently internalized Western notions of etiquette and refinement still tend to manifest traditional

antagonism towards the abakhongi. However, persons who have adopted Western values and behaviour patterns behave in a friendly manner towards them. It seems likely that as the process of acculturation gains momentum within the tribe, traditional antagonism will give way to a general spirit of friendliness during marriage negotiations.

Among traditionalists marriage negotiations are invariably conducted in the indlunkulu hut, which is the seat of family government and the shrine of lineage ancestors. To them it is important that matters of such magnitude as marriage negotiations, which involve the loss of a lineage member, should be dealt with at an appropriate locale set aside, as per tradition, for the exercise of lineage power and authority. Furthermore, it is essential that such a delicate matter should be dealt with in the presence of the lineage ancestors who control the destiny of all the living members of the group.

The corrosion by Christianity of the belief in ancestors and the systematic discouragement of actual polygyny and a polygynously-oriented mentality among non-traditionalists, have led to the decay of the intra-homestead hierarchical division which made provision for the indlunkulu section and hut. As a result of this, marriage negotiations among these tribesmen are carried out in lounges which have no specific connection with the supernatural and are not specifically set aside as venues for the discussion of important lineage matters.

In spite of the stipulations of section 95(1) of the Code, as amended, that the demand of izibizo (as described in chapter 6) is illegal, all guardians of intended brides, irrespective of their extent of acculturation, still insist on receiving them from the intending bridegroom's lineage during the initial stages of the marriage negotiations. Unless these are produced as a whole or in part, the marriage negotiations cannot proceed. In spite of statutory stipulation that where the izibizo have been demanded

and given, they should be treated as part of ilobolo, all tribesmen still treat them as distinct and separate from it. It is unlikely that this will change within the foreseeable future.

Whereas the izibizo are standardized among traditionalists, their number and nature among non-traditionalists vary and are arbitrarily decided upon.

Both traditionalists and non-traditionalists still insist on the receipt of ilobolo for their daughters. Without its delivery or promise to deliver it, marriage is not conceivable and is in fact in principle not permissible.

Regarding the nature of ilobolo, it would appear that in the past various articles were used as ilobolo before cattle gained currency. Presently cattle and money are used simultaneously as ilobolo. Traditionalists insist that the whole or part of the ilobolo should consist of live cattle. Non-traditionalists on the other hand usually deliver ilobolo in the form of cash. It would appear that as cattle are steadily diminishing in the tribal area money will ultimately supercede cattle in marriage transactions.

Traditionalists still insist on receiving the number of ilobolo cattle as prescribed in section 87(1) of the Code, as amended, for the daughters of the various categories of tribesmen. They refuse, however, to adhere to ten Rand as an equivalent of one head of cattle as is stipulated in section 86 of the Code. The major reason advanced for this deviation from the provisions of the Code is that in the light of prevailing market prices of cattle ten Rand is too little to be treated as an equivalent of one beast.

Among non-traditionalists, where money is used as ilobolo, there is no uniformity in the amount requested. Instead of asking for an amount of ilobolo which is commensurate with their rank and status, guardians of prospective brides in this category of tribes-

men tend to decide on it arbitrarily. Very often they calculate the amount of ilobolo they would like to receive in accordance with their daughters' educational standards and professional qualifications. The higher their educational standards and the more prestigious their professional qualifications, the larger the amount of ilobolo demanded for them becomes.

Whereas traditional custom stipulates that every man should sponsor the ilobolo for his son's first wife, there is a growing tendency among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists to shun this responsibility. As a result of this development many young men raise the whole or a substantial part of the ilobolo themselves without or with little assistance from their guardians and relatives. It would appear that this trend is due to the waning of the traditional lineage communal spirit and the diminishing resources which fathers and guardians have at their disposal.

Among both traditionalists and non-traditionalists the right of receiving ilobolo is still vested in the intended bride's guardian.

Traditionalists still adhere to the traditional ceremonies which accompany the delivery and receipt of ilobolo. The supercession of cattle by money as ilobolo and the adoption of Western-oriented patterns of thought and behaviour, has led to the disappearance of many traditional and spectacular features of the ceremonies surrounding the delivery and receipt of ilobolo among non-traditionalists.

Ilobolo has several functions in the marital unions of the Mkhwanazi tribesmen. However, views held by tribesmen on these vary. Many tribesmen, particularly the traditionalists, hold the view that ilobolo is a prestation the delivery of which validates a marriage. Other tribesmen, however, do not regard ilobolo

as a validating factor in marriage. They regard it as a mere customary requirement which could be dispensed with if the contemporary tribal socio-cultural atmosphere permitted. The latter view is mostly expressed by non-traditionalists.

Traditionalists hold the view that the delivery of ilobolo entitles a man to paternity over all the children born to his wife. Non-traditionalists, however, do not regard the mere delivery of ilobolo as entitling a man to the paternity of his wife's issue. According to them the control of a woman's reproductive capacity and the title to paternity over her children are transferred to him on the wedding day and not on the day of the delivery and receipt of ilobolo.

There are ambivalent views regarding the compensatory function of ilobolo. Some tribesmen view ilobolo as compensation to a bride's guardian for having lost materially in bringing her up. Others, however, are of the opinion that ilobolo cannot conceivably compensate a bride's guardian for all his efforts to make her the appreciable person she is to the bridegroom and his lineage. To them it is a traditional gift which serves to symbolize the establishment of a socially recognized affinal relationship.

Though some tribesmen argue that ilobolo stabilizes marriage by generating in a man a sense of appreciation for his wife, we do not have evidence to substantiate this view. It would appear that it is a rationalized justification for the continued existence of this institution.

9.5 Preparations for the wedding

Preparations for the wedding involve the performance of a number of activities which take the marriage negotiations further and strengthen the affinal bond being forged.

Among traditionalists the following are the major activities:

- (a) The slaughter of the imvuma goat which is a purely secular function. It serves to remove food taboos from the bridegroom and to confer upon him the status of ubukhwenyana (being a son-in-law). This ceremony, however, does not afford him the right of controlling and using the bride's reproductive capacity.
- (b) The exchange of gifts by the patrilineages of the intending spouses in order to promote mutual acquaintance and friendly relations between them.
- (c) The ukukhehla ceremony which serves to set the prospective bride apart from other unmarried girls and places her on the fringes of the ranks of married women.
- (d) Ukucimela visits by the prospective bride to her patrilineal and matrilineal relatives for the purpose of asking them for donations for her dowry and availing herself to them in order that they may dedicate her to the ancestors.
- (e) The slaughter of the imbuzi yokubika which is a ritual function during which the prospective bride's imminent departure and wedding are reported to her lineage ancestors.
- (f) The ukuncamisa banquet which is a social occasion on which the bride is formally sent off by her guardian.

Some of these activities have been discarded and others retained by non-traditionalist tribesmen. Those which have been discarded are mostly those which have traditionalist ritual overtones and are in conflict with Christian teachings. However, those activities which are purely secular have been retained and modified in various ways to fit into the new socio-cultural amalgam.

Many non-traditionalists still slaughter an invuma goat for a prospective bridegroom, but their aim is primarily to entertain him and to thank him for having delivered ilobolo, rather than to confer upon him the status of ubukhwenyana and to relieve him of food taboos.

The ukukhehla ceremony has completely died out among non-traditionalist tribesmen. Instead, an engagement party is held at which the prospective bridegroom gives his fiancée an engagement ring as a token of earnest. Such an engagement, however, is not viewed as a contract in the legal sense, but rather as a social function at which the matrimonial intentions of the couple are publicized.

The length of the period of betrothal is variable and its length depends on the ability of the bridegroom to sponsor the wedding feast and the ability of the prospective bride's guardian to provide her with umabo gifts.

The elaborate exchange of imibondo gifts has ceased among non-traditionalist tribesmen. They regard these as undignified and not proper for "civilized" persons.

Many non-traditionalists still hold farewell banquets (ukuncamisa) for their daughters a day prior to their departure for the bridegrooms homes. These banquets, however, have been completely shorn of their traditional traits and have assumed a Western-oriented character.

9.6 The wedding celebration

Among both traditionalist and non-traditionalist tribesmen the general practice is to celebrate the wedding at the bridegroom's home.

In the celebration of their weddings traditionalists adhere to the

provisions of sections 59, 61 and 65 of the Code as amended. Where-
as the attitude of the magistrates' courts is that a traditiona-
list marriage, i e a customary union, comes into effect when the
bride makes a public declaration before an official witness as
stipulated by section 59 of the Code, traditionalists regard
the slaughter of the umqholiso beast as validating a matrimonial
union.

Non-traditionalists, on the other hand enter into civil marriages
which are as a rule celebrated in church where they are solemnized
by a priest who is a State-authorized marriage officer in
accordance with the provisions of section 22 of Act 38 of 1927
as amended.

Whereas traditionalists still perform all the traditional aggre-
gation rites for the bride, non-traditionalists have done away
with these as they are contrary to Christian teachings.

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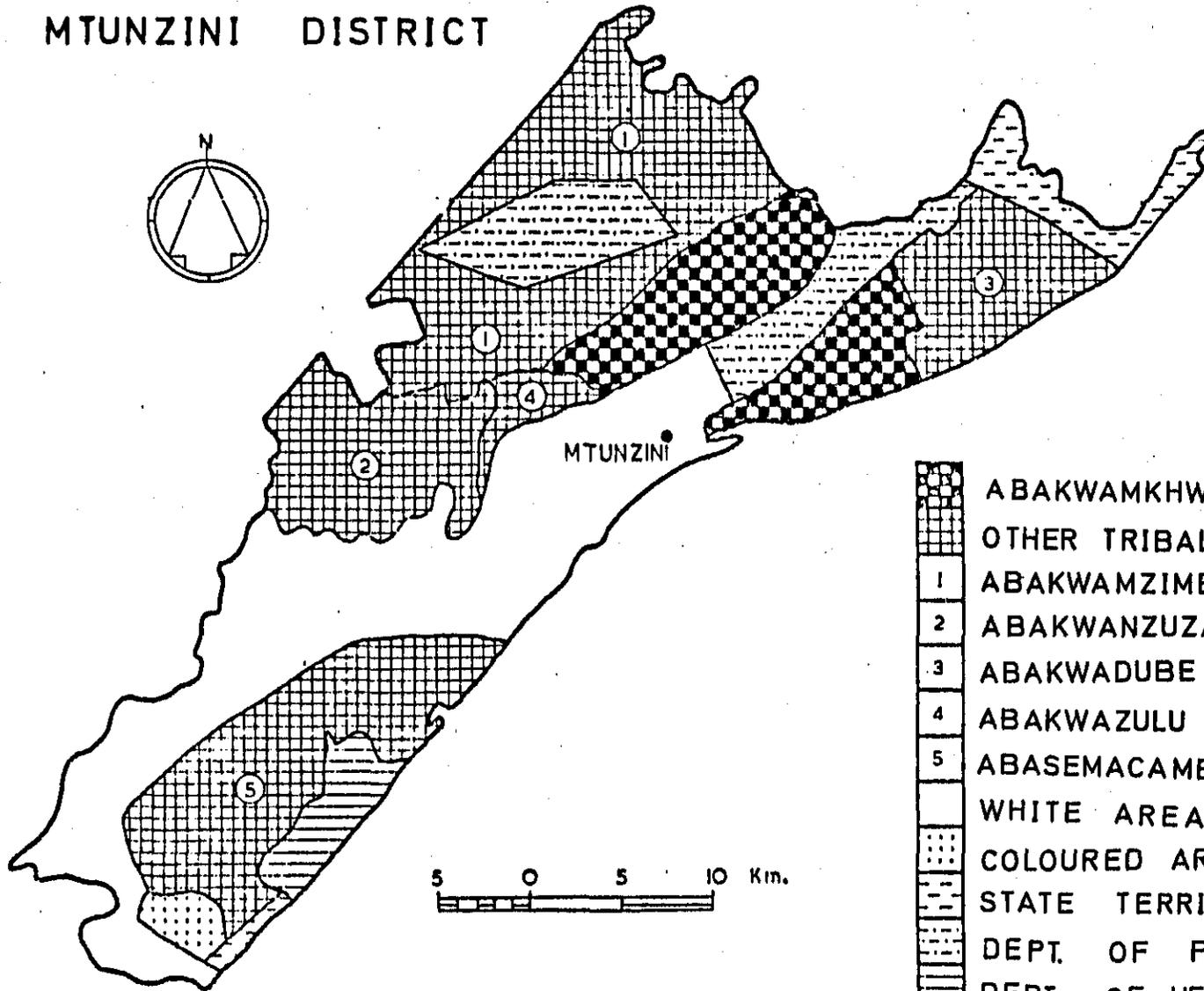
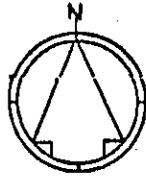
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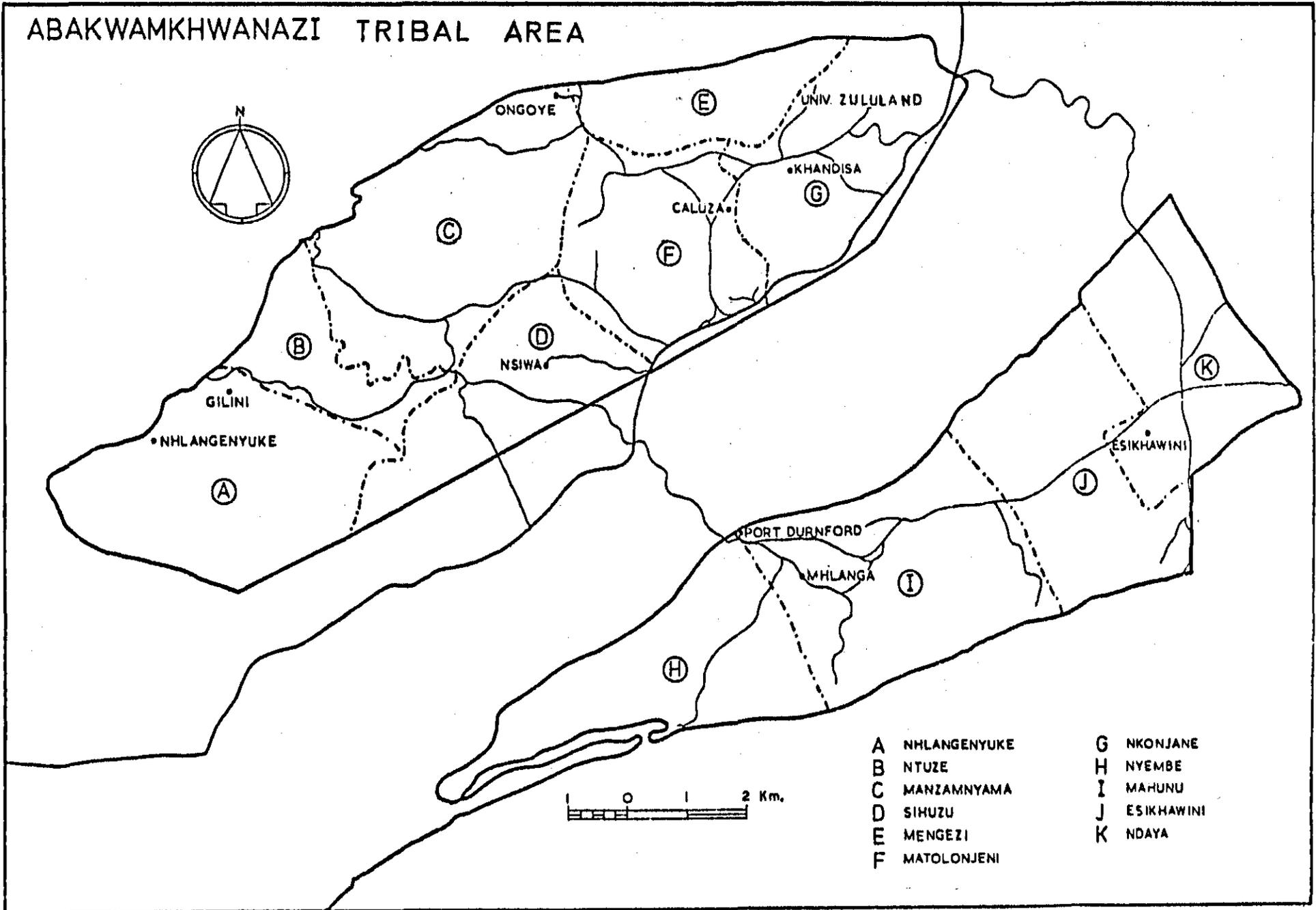
MTUNZINI DISTRICT



	ABAKWAMKHWANAZI
	OTHER TRIBAL AREAS
	1 ABAKWAMZIMELA
	2 ABAKWANZUZA
	3 ABAKWADUBE
	4 ABAKWAZULU
	5 ABASEMACAMBINI
	WHITE AREAS
	COLOURED AREA
	STATE TERRITORY
	DEPT. OF FORESTRY
	DEPT. OF HEALTH

MAP 1

ABAKWAMKHWANAZI TRIBAL AREA



MAP 2

SUMMARY

CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN MARRIAGE AND ITS PRELIMINARIES AMONG THE ABAKWAMKHWANAZI

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Degree: M A in the Faculty of Arts

The aim of this study was to establish present day courtship and marriage practices amongst the Mkhwanazi tribesmen of the Ongoye district in KwaZulu.

The Mkhwanazi tribe is a branch of the Tonga-Nguni, Mpukunyoni group which emigrated from Swaziland in about 1770. They settled in their present territory in the middle of the nineteenth century and it was only towards its end that they came into contact with carriers of Western culture in the persons of traders, missionaries and agents of the British colonial government. From that time up to now their courtship and marriage patterns, like all other aspects of their lives, have undergone and are still undergoing transformation.

The most important factors which have operated to bring about change are Christian concepts, government legislation and Western socio-economic notions and practices. The acculturative influence of these, however, has not been equally felt by all tribesmen. As a result of this, tribesmen are at various stages of acculturation and this is attested by the co-existence of traditional, quasi-traditional and several Western-oriented courtship and marriage patterns.

Tribesmen consider it essential that lovers or intending spouses should be mutually suitable. Such mutual suitability is decided

upon on the basis of physical appearance, character, kinship, ethnic membership and similarity of degree of acculturation.

Courtship among traditionalists is still conducted in accordance with the dictates of traditional custom and is well supervised and controlled. Owing to the introduction of new notions of morality by missionaries, the infiltration of Western ideas relating to courtship through various media of communication and the disappearance of effective supervisory agencies, non-traditionalist courtship is now characterized by secrecy, and is poorly monitored.

Marriage negotiations are protracted and are conducted by representatives of the patrilineages of the intending spouses who have been authorised to do so. Ilobolo is still an important prerequisite without which marriage cannot be contracted. Where ilobolo takes the form of cattle, as is mostly the case among traditionalists, the amounts prescribed by law are adhered to. But where money is used as a substitute for cattle, the amounts demanded are variable and do not bear any relation to the provisions of section 87 (3) of the Natal Code of Zulu law.

The majority of traditionalists marry according to customary procedure. Whereas the attitude of the courts is that a customary union becomes effective at the time when the bride makes a public declaration, all traditionalists regard the slaughter of the umqholiso beast as the act which validates a marriage.

Non-traditionalists do not enter into customary marriages because they regard them as contrary to Christian teaching. Instead they enter into civil marriages which are celebrated in church and are solemnized by priests who are State-appointed marriage officers. Though the delivery of ilobolo is not a statutory prerequisite for the contraction of a civil marriage, they still insist on it. However, they have discarded all the traditional aggregation rites which are performed by traditionalists to incorporate the bride into her husband's lineage.

OPSOMMING

Kontemporêre tendense by die huwelik en voorafgaande aktiwiteite by die abakwaMkhwanazi.

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Graad: M A in die Fakulteit Lettere en Wysbegeerte

Die doel van die studie was om hedendaagse hofmakery en huweliksgebruike by Mkhwanazi-stamlede in die Ongoye-distrik van KwaZulu te bepaal.

Die Mkhwanazi-stam is 'n afdeling van die Mpukunyoni-groep van die Tonga-Nguni wat in ongeveer 1770 uit Swaziland geëmigreer het. Teen die middel van die negentiende eeu het hulle hul in die gebied waarin hulle nou woon, gevestig en eers teen die einde van die eeu met handelaars, sendelinge en verteenwoordigers van die Britse Koloniale regering as draers van die Westerse kultuur in aanraking gekom. Sedertdien het die patroon van hul hofmakery en huweliksgebruike, soos ook die ander lewensfasette, veranderings ondergaan en is dit steeds besig om te verander.

Die Christelike geloof, wetgewing en Westerse sosio-ekonomiese opvattinge en gebruike is die belangrikste faktore wat tot die veranderings aanleiding gegee het. Al die stamlede het egter nie die akkulturatiewe invloed van die opvattinge en gebruike in dieselfde mate ervaar nie. Gevolglik bevind stamlede hulle in verskillende stadia van akkulturasie, wat bevestig word deur die bestaan van tradisionele, half-tradisionele en selfs Westers geöriënteerde hofmakery en huweliksgebruike.

Stamledes beskou dit as essensieel dat minnaars of voornemende huweliksmaats vir mekaar geskik moet wees. As maatstawwe om wedersydse geskiktheid te bepaal geld fisiese voorkoms, karakter, verwantskap, etnisiteit en gelykheid in die graad van akkulturasie.

By tradisionalistes vind hofmakery steeds plaas volgens die voorskrifte van tradisionele gebruike. Toesig en beheer daarvoor word deeglik uitgeoefen.

As gevolg van die invoering van nuwe idees oor morele standaarde deur die sendelinge en die insypeling van Westerse opvattinge oor hofmakery deur middel van kommunikasiemedie, tesame met die verdwyning van doeltreffende toesig, word hofmakery by nie-tradisionalistes nou gekenmerk deur geheimhouding en swak kontrole.

Huweliksonderhandelings is uitgereken en word gevoer deur verteenwoordigers van die patrilinies van die voornemende huweliksmaats wat daartoe gemagtig is. Ilobolo is steeds 'n belangrike voorvereiste waarsonder 'n huwelik nie gesluit kan word nie. In gevalle waar ilobolo in die vorm van beeste gelewer word, soos die geval is by die meeste tradisionalistes, word daar gehou by die getal soos in wetgewing bepaal. Waar geld egter gebruik word in die plek van beeste, verskil die bedrae en hou dit eensins verband met die bepalinge van artikel 87(3) van die Natalse Wetboek van Swart reg nie.

Die meeste tradisionalistes sluit huwelike volgens die gebruiklike prosedure. Terwyl die houding van die houe is dat 'n gebruiklike verbinding aangegaan is vanaf die oomblik dat die bruid haar gewilligheid tot die verbinding in die openbaar verklaar, beskou die tradisionalistes die slag van die umqholiso-bees as die wettiging van die huwelik.

Nie-tradisionalistes sluit nie gebruiklike huwelike nie omdat hulle dit beskou as in stryd met die Christelike leer. In die plek daarvan sluit hulle siviele huwelike in die kerk wat bevestig word deur 'n priester as huweliksbevestiger deur die Staat aangestel. Nieteenstaande die feit dat die lewering van ilobolo nie 'n statuêre voorvereiste vir die sluiting van 'n siviele huwelik is nie, word op die lewering daarvan aangedring. Hulle het egter al die samevoegingsrites van die tradisionalistes om die bruik by haar bruidegom se linie in te skakel verwerp.