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**Homes or Houses? Strategies of home-making
among some amaXhosa in the Western Cape**

by
Ntombizodumo Emmerencia Ngxabi

(Student number MYXNTO002)

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Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. A. D. Spiegel and Dr. F. C. Ross

Houses, not Homes:
Strategies of home-making among some *amaXhosa* in the
Western Cape.

Abstract

*AmaXhosa*¹ in the Cape Town townships use language about home and going home in a way quite different from its everyday use in the Eastern Cape. Their use of these terms suggests their discomfort in accepting their dwellings in Cape Town as their permanent homes. This is evident even among people who have managed to establish themselves materially in town and who have few if any ties with the villages, that are their own, or their parents' birthplaces.

The thesis aims to understand the ways in which *amaXhosa* living in Cape Town understand 'home' and attempt to conform their practices to its requirements. I do this by exploring the life of people in Crossroads, one of Cape Town's townships. It analyses what people say are their needs in a home. Drawing on the data I obtained, it compares people's narratives about a home and their practices as they live in the townships, and the way in which some 'tradition' is made possible. I argue that urban space in its present state does not allow people to freely practice what they say they perceive as their culture. I suggest therefore that because of the challenges they encounter, people are now rejecting urban space in its present form, changing urban life in a way that endeavors to accommodate their needs. I will also be showing in this project that such a process of change comes with a lot of contestations and challenges that at times reinforce the importance of village homes to people. From my observations and the stories people living in Crossroads told me, it is clear that cultural practices, which are regarded as essential qualities of people's livelihood, have to be practicable in a home. These vary from daily life routines to ritual practices. The people always define a home with reference to such cultural practices and whether they are there or practicable in the dwelling types and the living environments they inhabit.

This thesis thus explores the success as well as the failure of the urban space of Crossroads to provide people with what they can truly call homes.

¹The term is used to refer to all the people who call themselves *amaXhosa*, (although these people speak the languages broadly called Xhosa, there are at a close look a number of differences in their ritual practices, see Hammond-Tooke, (1974) irrespective of the region from which they or their parents or grandparents come from in the Eastern Cape. *AmaXhosa* in the Western Cape include all the people whose mother tongue is Xhosa; this includes the *Bhaca* or *Mfengu* people.

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To the people of Crossroads and other people at Nyanga and Gugulethu, who supported me and even opened their doors to me and answered my sometimes irritating questions and at times lent me the right attire to put on when attending their rituals, *Enkosi Mawethu. Umntu Ngumntu Ngabantu.*

To my family, my dear husband, the last year of this project was not easy for you too and it's during this time that I realised your patience. *Ukhule ke Sthandwa sam.* To our children, Sicelo; Sihle and Zenande, who put up with my long hours and even months of being away from home and still afforded to be patient with me, I say, *Ukwanda kwaliwa ngumthakathi zithandwa zam.*

Last but not least, I thank the Almighty for health, strength and His people who have seen me through this work. There were times when I thought I was not going to make it, but His Loving Hand Pulled me through.

Declaration

I, Ntombizodumo E. Ngxabi, declare that this work has not been previously submitted in whole or in part for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in this dissertation from the work or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signed by candidate

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Chapter One: Introduction:

South Africa remains a very unequal country despite its liberation from the apartheid system government (Schlemmer, 1997). Among many other things, access to adequate housing is still one of the main problems for the poor. A state-driven Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) has attempted to close the existing economic gap between the rich and the poor by building houses for the poor. But the RDP policy has come up against various challenges particularly in the housing arena.

I discuss the RDP housing policy in more detail below in this chapter when I discuss space in the Western Cape. However, I need to highlight that, in addition to a reasonable sized house, people need more from their dwellings: the ability to practice what Crossroads people describe as their culture is another vital requirement.

In research conducted for an honors thesis, (Ngxabi 1999), I found that in Tambo Village in Gugulethu, Cape Town, some people think that their new houses do not adequately sustain existing social relations upon which they rely in contexts of impoverishment. For a place to be considered a home, people said, they need good neighbors with whom they can practice *unaniselwano* (reciprocal relations) to cope with poverty. *Unaniselwano* is derived from the verb *ukwanana* (to borrow) with the causative suffix (*-isa*) and then the reciprocal suffix (*-ana*) added and then turned to a noun form. Literally it means the act of causing mutual exchanges, one thing for another (Kropf, 1917: 7).

Yose (1999) confirms the presence of patterns of reciprocity in Marconi Beam shantytown, where women feel that in the old shack areas they have strong social networks similar to those in the villages, and that in the area of formal housing people live a more private life that is not conducive to their economic conditions. The practice of *unaniselwano* not only helps people to exchange goods. It is also a way to enhance good relationships with their

neighbors. The Xhosa phrase '*umntu ngumntu ngabantu*'¹ (a person is a person by people) is fulfilled and practiced in the way that the importance of the next person to the other is expressed, particularly between people who do not share any genealogical history. A home is supposed to allow for such practices that facilitate 'cultural expressions'. In other words, this thesis reveals that people expect, among other things, to be able to live their daily lives in accordance with their custom both in times of need and to encourage good social relationships with other people.

Space and its utilization are also important in making homes. In Sebokeng, in Gauteng province, Adler (1996) learned that the people of Phola Park demolished newly constructed and still vacant RDP houses that had been built to accommodate the residents of that informal settlement. Among the reasons she lists was that the owners of the municipal houses previously rented out their backyards to those who were to be moved away by the erection of the RDP houses, and the owners were afraid of losing an income.

Minaar (1994) says that some residents said that the coming RDP houses would be too inconvenient for migrants who did not plan to live permanently in the urban areas. He learned that problems between hostel dwellers and the people of a township in the East Rand were over the interpretation of what a real home was. Some hostel dwellers argued that a Zulu man should have a big home and cattle and serve under a chief. On the other hand, some township people were in favor of the upgrading of the hostels into family units so that the hostel residents could live with their families. The township residents thought that such living arrangements would bring down the level of violence as men in hostels would not want to fight when living with their families. The real problem seemed not to be the RDP houses as such, but what having a house in town

¹ This is an expression meaning that no [wo]man is totally independent. This phrase shows the importance of having people with whom to share one's life both at times of need and plenty. For example when *umntu* (a person) has slaughtered a beast, [s] he is never happy to eat it alone and very happy when his/ her home is filled with people to enjoy the meat. This term is at times used in connection with the chief, *inkosi yinkosi ngabantu bayo*, (the chief is the chief because of his subjects.)

means for the residents of hostels which, says Minaar (1994), includes gender and power relations. According to Minaar (1994), hostel residents did not like living with their wives in the hostels because then they would not have as much control over their money as they would like in order to spend it on buying livestock. In this thesis I illustrate that many men think that, as men, they should be able to invest in livestock keeping. I argue that rejection of space as a home sometimes occurs when people feel that they are not able to utilize the space they have to their satisfaction and according to what they consider to be 'traditional' ways.

Although not unchanging, custom, tradition and culture are practiced in urban areas and are always at the centre of people's definitions of a home. I argue that people of Crossroads, who call themselves *amaXhosa*, have a set of cultural practices, which are said to belong to them as markers of their cultural identity. This thesis will also argue that many people of Crossroads and surrounding townships accept changes in their custom, culture and tradition only under certain conditions. I shall explore what those conditions are while recognizing that the process of adaptation of culture to fit with an urban situation privileges custom so that people debate what it really is that constitutes not only a home, but their very 'culture' as they see it.

Opening comments

I was in a meeting with friends in Zwelethemba, Worcester in the Western Cape one evening in 1985. I had been living in the area for seven months. I had stayed longer than I had planned to at the meeting, and was thinking about domestic chores I still had to do. I had tried to stay on longer but I just had to leave as the chairperson was mumbling about some issues, and most of the people seemed to be getting very impatient. I looked at the women sitting next to me and whispered: "*Bantakwethu ndisagoduka ngoku kukho izinto endingazenzanga ekhaya*" (my sisters I am now going home, there are some things I have not done yet at home). They all looked at me and said, "Why then

did you come here, if you are still going home? What are you going with? Is it a bus or kombi?" I was so confused; I did not know what they were talking about. I felt I had to say something to explain my leaving early, and now I actually felt as though I had been speaking a different language from what they did. Their use of Xhosa, I realised was very different from what I was familiar with. I asked them, what it was they were fussing about because I had, after all come to the meeting on my own.

They laughed and told me that, when I had said (*ekhaya*) 'home'; they all had thought had meant I was going home to the Transkei. To these people the term '*ukugoduka*' (to go home) did not mean to go to the house where I lived in Worcester but to my 'home', that is the 'original' home at Matatiele from which I had come before coming to Worcester. For them, I should not have used the terms '*ekhaya*' (at home, from *ikhaya*, a home) and *ukugoduka*. This was because the houses where we lived in Worcester are not regarded as 'homes' but just as 'houses'. *Ekhaya* is at home and that is only at *EmaXhoseni* (at the place of the *AmaXhosa*, a reference to the areas of land that became the Ciskei and Transkei 'homelands' (Bantustans) under the apartheid regime). For me the distinction they made between going to the birth home and going to the house I lived in was new. This is because where I was born there is only one place to *goduka* to and that is one's home. For the first time I learned that you can't *goduka* to the urban house because it is not a home but a house.

It was from that experience that I came to realise that the way the Xhosa language was being used in Western Cape, even by some people who are from the same part of the Transkei as I, was different from what I knew.

I left Worcester in 1985 and went to live in Pietermaritzburg (KwaZulu-Natal Province) and came to the Western Cape again in 1996. After living in Cape Town for seven more years, I came to realise that the meanings of the words that are used there for 'home', 'house' and 'going home' are rather different from what would be meant by a Xhosa speaking person born and living in the Eastern Cape. It is from this background that I am trying to understand the cultural

implications of these differences to the people who call themselves *amaXhosa* in the Western Cape.

The research problem

This thesis explores the process of home-making and practicing in the urban areas and the adaptations thereof. Mitchell (1971), Wilson and Mafeje (1963), Hunter (1961), Comaroff (1985), Mehlwana (1996) and the Mayers (1961) demonstrate social change in their work as African people have come into contact with the culture of White people. The present work tries to build on the work by Wilson and Mafeje (1963) in which they demonstrate how African people who lived in Langa Township were affected by the changes that came with life in a new environment. I suggest that Crossroads people made choices from the social dynamics they were confronted with and had to adapt cultural practices that they think are the backbone of their cultural identity.

Wilson and Mafeje (1963) differentiated between the 'townsmen proper', the 'semi urbanised' and the migrants in terms of their quality of clothing, language and behavior. In this work I shall be demonstrating the blurredness of the lines between these categories these days, as some changes have taken place in South Africa.

This work aims to show the aspirations of the people as regards their 'homes' in villages, irrespective of the dwelling types they live in when in town. This is because some people who call themselves *amagoduka* (i.e. those who 'return' to village homes, and who, by Wilson and Mafeje's account, were not inclined to become urbanised) may now also have formal urban family houses where they live with their families in the city while they also manage to keep homes in the villages. Wilson and Mafeje (1963) add that semi-urbanized women were drawn back to the country, first by their children, for neither of the parents wished their children to be brought up in town; and secondly by the security afforded in the country by a close-knit group of kin holding land.

Many people living at Crossroads during 2000-1 lived in their urban houses and with their children, rather than leave their children to be looked after by kin in the villages. I shall argue that such people, who by Wilson and Mafeje's analysis would have been expected to have abandoned their rural ties, today still keep ties with their village homes by going there whenever it is possible for them and their families to do so.

This work will further illustrate that such people leave their children in their urban houses when, or once they are older they go to their village homes as pensioners. Consequently it is not easy to differentiate between urbanized men who, by Wilson and Mafeje's analysis 'have accepted town values and look to the whites' and semi-urbanized men who 'do not accept towns as their home' (1963: 15-21). This is because they all, in some or other way, regard their village homes as their real homes and as the homes of proper Xhosa people.

I also explore the language that is used by *amaXhosa* in the Western Cape to show that they view the living space in the urban area as very different from their homes in the villages of Eastern Cape, and hence they do not fully accept their 'houses' in the Western Cape as their 'homes' or the place where they, as *amaXhosa* should feel at home. This thesis looks at the terms used to refer to some of the meanings of 'home' and 'house'. It also tries to discuss the reasons for the refusal of *amaXhosa* to fully accepting the urban houses and the area as the place of *amaXhosa*. And it endeavors to discuss the sacrifices said to be made by such people while they are living in the area they signify as 'not ours' by calling it *esilungwini* (place of white people's ways). The term itself is one that reflects the sense that such *amaXhosa* have of being out of place in such areas, because, as they see it, they are areas where their own ways (*isiXhosa*) cannot easily be practised in a fully acceptable way.

My respondents consistently reified the notion of culture when discussing their ideas about and practices concerned with making homes. As Thornton (1988) says that the idea of culture has frequently been fused with that of society and they have been used interchangeably to refer to a general social

state of affairs or a more or less clearly recognizable group of people (1988: 19). This is precisely the way Crossroads people and surrounding townships understood the phenomenon of culture. To them, culture was Xhosa society. Their frequent use of the phrases like 'we *amaXhosa*' (*thina maXhosa*) (or the people who came from an African society, as opposed to a white society) and 'it is a Xhosa way of doing this' (*sisiXhosa*) indicates that they connect all the time what they do and their way of living to their feeling of Xhosaness, that their homes should always reflect. To them, what they see as their culture has always been part of their identity. However, this notion about culture leaves aside the fact that cultures, like people, are not static and therefore can never be said to belong to a recognizable group of people because culture changes by borrowing from the cultures and customs of other people.

I am interested in knowing how cultural understandings of space are related to the ideational construction of 'home.' I argue that *amaXhosa* with whom I worked in Cape Town differentiate between a home and a house. I want therefore to understand what it is that constitutes a home and how that is different, if it is, from a house. Before I go on to start that discussion, I first summarise the aims and objectives of this thesis and then go on to consider the methods I have used.

Aims and objectives of this work

The purpose of this project is to investigate: a) What it is that constitutes a 'home' for people in Crossroads, a Black township in Cape Town. b) How the characteristics of urban houses impact on those people's sense of what I am calling 'homeness'² and its relationship to what they see as their Xhosa customs and cultural identity.

² I use this term to refer to all that makes a home complete in terms of the expectations of the people or the occupants of the dwelling.

My area of study was originally Crossroads and in particular the section called Veza, which has 'beginner's houses' (see explanation of the term in chapter two below). It was both affirmations of, and challenges to my hypothesis that a home is defined according to how it allows cultural practices, that necessitated that I consider including the views of people from other townships in my research, especially people from the formal houses whom I had originally excluded from my research purview. This thesis aims to demonstrate that the ability to practice what people consider to be their 'custom' is what makes a place into what they consider to be a home. It also aims to show that the failure of the sort of living space available in the urban areas that constitutes the townships around Cape Town to allow for various 'cultural practices' leads people living there:

- (i) To create an ideational and reified sense of their own culture and use that as the basis of their cultural identity.
- (ii) To create ways and means to convert the space available to them into 'homes', at least to some extent.
- (iii) To keep strong ties with rural 'homes' in order to 'go back' at times when it is said to be necessary to perform many of their customary rituals.

Literature and definitions of a Xhosa home

The purpose of this short section is to look at the conceptions of both the house and the home.

Indlu (pl: *izindlu*) is a hut, or the model 'square' buildings, which does not³ have divisions inside and these were built by the people before the encounter with the white people. It is just a physical building with a particular function, for example food storage, cooking, or sleeping (See Mandela 1994). Vellem says that an *indlu* (house) is one hut that is in the homestead (*umzi*). Does that mean that it is a number of huts that form a home, or that if a man has one hut

³ Now, because of modernization, *izindlu* do have walls inside to divide them into rooms, however that does not make an *indlu* (house) into a home.

instead of series of huts, he does not have an *umzi*, (homestead)? No. I shall define a home later, but for the purpose of this section I shall continue with the definition of a *house*. Indeed Vellem highlights a function of the house when he says: "It is a physical boundary that separates even family members,[the people of the homestead (*abantu basekhaya*) who actually are an element of a home]" (2002:83).

A Xhosa man was allowed to have more than one wife, in which case he would build separate homesteads for all his wives. The word *indlu* would be then used to differentiate between such homesteads by saying, "so and so is so and so's son from the great *indlu* (from the first wife), or from the junior *indlu*. Vellem (2002) says that there is a connotation of pedigree in this use of the word *indlu* as it divides people. In other words, the word *indlu* is not encompassing to all the members of the household. As Vellem puts it, "It is used to delineate members of the same *Ikhaya/ umzi* (home/ homestead) (2002: 87). Conventionally, children of men who share a common ancestor are regarded as children of the same home or homestead. This is because of the connectedness that is brought by genealogy and that is supposed to be observed at all times by all the members of the homestead, even after death. Vellem says, "Connectedness with *ikhaya* is crucial for both the living and the living dead [the ancestors] and manifests itself normatively and in protest" (2002:83). The above explanation then reveals something about what a home is. It is more than just the physical buildings of huts or square buildings.

A homestead is a home to all people who share a common patrilineal ancestor. It is a home to the women entering the clan by marriage as well after they have been ritually incorporated into the clan. The physical buildings of the home do not have to belong or to have been constructed by one's own biological father for a place to be one's home. Such a person may not have built his own homestead in the place or area that is recognized by their ancestors as his or her home. To avoid having to go and ask the relatives or using an old abandoned "ghost homestead" for a place to perform rituals, *amaXhosa* at Crossroads prefer

to keep their village homes well looked after so that they can be used as dwelling places when they are no longer employed. White(2001) writing about *amaZulu* who share a lot in ritual orientation with *amaXhosa* states "sacrificial offerings aim to revitalize the wellspring of social and personal good and they aim to do so contextually, by repairing the proper relations and forms of the home; by negating, as it were, their negation. The project of reconstituting totality is thus a necessary part of the work of sacrifice..."(2001:86) A home thus becomes a space more than just to which people return to rest, but carries the ritual significance to its members that cannot be found in any place unless the concerned place is made by ritual sacrifice into a home. This means that it is a birthright and an obligation, for the members of the homestead to take part in the rituals of the homestead because they share the same blood. This home then, because of its cultural significance, is defined by people in a number of ways that indicate the significance of such a home to the individual.

Coming back to the question of the primary requirement of a single home/ homestead/ *umzi*. Is it the number of huts in a row that make a homestead? No. Poor people have had just one or two huts for a homestead or a home in which they did everything, including sleeping. *Umzi* or a home is an encompassing dwelling for all its members. It is not just the living people of the home that are supposed to be encompassed, but the ancestors as well. In fact in Chapter three we shall see that some people defined a home according to whether they believed that their ancestors were there or not. If they thought that the place did include their ancestors; or that their ancestors were not 'made to be at home', the place was rejected as a home.

Vellem (2002) says that there is a causal relationship of home and health all the time a home is defined. Vellem's definition of a home is "*Umzi* [*ikhaya*/homestead] is an *indlu* [hut/ house] with a kraal (cattle byre), there is no *umzi* without that kraal. An *indlu* must graduate into an *umzi* by establishing a kraal"(2002:88). This may be thought to be too harsh, considering the economic situation of African people at present which makes the acquisition of

cattle difficult. However, Bank (2001) has an explanation that clarifies what I think is Vellem's intention. He quotes one of his informants who also believes in the presence of the kraal for a place to be considered a home, Bank's informant says, "The greatest hearth is this one: the [cattle] kraal. Even if there isn't one- because you don't have any cattle-, you go and speak at the place where there should be one, because the spirits dwell there in front of the houses. When blood is spilt in the kraal, it is split across the whole yard. The kraal is the home (2001:77)

If we look at both the explanation above as well as the definition given by Vellem, then one can't help asking the question, what then is the significance of the cattle byre in the home? I have used the word, 'religious' (c/f Chapter Three) in defining what I sensed in some of the ways people defined a home. Mndende (1999) says that the cattle byre is used to call upon the ancestors. This means that the place is used during the times of crisis and ceremony. Again, Vellem (2002) makes an intriguing connection between the rituals performed in the cattle byre, which are called *imisebenzi* (*Plural*) in *isiXhosa*. Vellem explains the word *umsebenzi* (singular) as work, or service. *Umsebenzi* is work or responsibility that all living members of the household have to the ancestors, but Vellem's use of the word, 'service' goes on to explain the 'religious' factor I have mentioned. If a home is a hut or a house with the cattle byre, then a home is a dwelling place of both the living as well as the dead, with a kind of a 'temple' where the customary rituals are performed. To qualify his explanation, Vellem says, "To build a homestead (*umzi*) is a graduation of *indlu* [hut/ house] into a shrine. It evokes the process of physical building the structure and ultimately an abode for the living dead [ancestors] within the perimeters of these structures" (2002:88). Indeed, Vellem goes on to say, "The ceremonies are performed in *ikhaya* [a home/ homestead], to visualize the practical expression or religious beliefs, values and orientations of African people that are pertinent for public life today" (2002:77)

Who then has *umzi* (a homestead) and who has *ikhaya* (a home)?

From the above explanation we can see that a home and a homestead are the same thing. However, I need to make the difference that I have observed in the way these words are used by *amaXhosa*. The head of the household irrespective of whether male or female will say, "*Umzi wam* (my homestead) to refer to the homestead that s/he is heading. But his/her children will refer to the same as "*Ikhaya lethu*" (Our home). In other words, a homestead is such to the head, who is responsible for the running of the place as well as the nurturing of the offspring members of the place, whereas a home is such to the children of the homestead (whether birth or relative-See Ngubane 1996). A Xhosa man / woman would then say, "My father's homestead, (*umzi katata*) even if the father no longer lives, and such a homestead is run by the living son /daughter. *Umzi katata* (my father's homestead) then becomes a place (a home) where one has the birthright to claim protection whether from the living or the ancestors.

Methods

This section of the chapter aims at describing the methods I used to conduct my research at Crossroads and the problems that resulted from such methods. My argument in this chapter is that one does not have to be a complete stranger in the field of study in order to collect data that is sufficient for anthropological work. This chapter further illustrates that who we are as researchers always has an impact on the kind of data that we collect in the field.

This dissertation is the product of fourteen months of research. Due to my confinement during the year 2000, I could not be in the field for the whole of that year. I thus only conducted my research for eight months that year and I did the rest of the fieldwork from January to June 2001.

Gaining access.

One has to have an acceptable way to work with people. Neuman (1997) and Du Toit (1987) stress the need in the social science field for researchers to follow

ethical guidelines. S.A.N.C.O. (South African National Civic Organisation)⁴ was the gateway I used to get into the field after being referred by an acquaintance. The assurance by someone who had done work similar to mine in the area, that it was going to be easy to get permission, made me think it was going to be just as easy for me as it was for him.

The S.A.N.C.O. chairperson told me he needed the views of other committee members concerning my study, and so he invited me to a committee meeting. In that meeting, the first person that talked to me was not very positive and he asked me why I had chosen to come with my study when they, as the residents, were preparing for local elections. I explained that my coming there had nothing to do with politics and that I was only interested in where it is that people perform their rituals and why. I was made to come to many other committee meetings before I could be sent to the general meeting. When I eventually got there, I did get the permission, but, in that meeting, there were two men who stood up and told me that I must never go to their houses and ask stupid questions. Those are an example of what Neuman calls 'freeze outs' in the field (1997: 355).

Some people were a little suspicious of me, thinking that I was bringing a new political agenda into the area. Yet, after a time I learned to gain their trust. Neuman says, "The researcher's direct involvement in the field often has an emotional impact. Field research can be fun and exciting but it can also disrupt one's personal life, physical security or mental well being" (1997:348). I had to be more careful of the people, who stood away from me than of those that I worked with because those who were with me knew what I was doing, but those who were far did not know and they were watching me.

One of my informants, an older woman, went out and told a group of nine male youth who were playing football on the road one day that I was not what

⁴ This is the residents' organization that works together with other ANC supporting organizations.

they had heard about me.⁵ She told me that she was told that I was a woman who wanted to be voted for in the local government and that I had been introduced in the SANCO meeting.

However, as time went by, I was trusted even by youth. I cannot tell whether this was because I asked some of the youth from the area to help me with my survey. I believe it may also have been that they learned about the kind of information I needed from others whom I had already interviewed.

In some houses it was easy to work with the people, but there were others into which I was not allowed. This is what Sapford and Evans (1979) mean when they say that the process of gaining access continues throughout any period of ethnographic fieldwork: I had by then been allowed by the SANCO general meeting to work in the area, but that did not necessarily give me a right to go into every house. In each I had once again to negotiate that right. In some instances, however, I found that people went to the extent of calling me into their homes or soup kitchens⁶ because they wanted to see me there. I associated this with people's desperation and that because I came from the University of Cape Town, they thought I might be in a position to help them financially.

The survey

To get a 'feel' of the area, as I was not sure where to commence, I did a survey of the area. I asked a youth acquaintance from the church to please assist me with this task and he brought two more friends of his as well. The three youths helped me with this part because, first I was not very familiar with some sections

⁵ She just went and called one of them by name and said: "Do you know who this is? She is that woman. Remember when I told you that *abahlali* (the residents) have let a woman come here to bring unknown ideas? This is the woman. She is not a politician. She is just a (classificatory) child. You know, she comes from Matatiele (district in the Transkei region of the Eastern Cape province)." The young man just smiled and said: I hear *gogo* (grandmother)." And the other group laughed as well, as *gogo* walked away.

⁶ Soup kitchens are NGO supported projects in which hot soup is served daily to the poor in the community to prevent malnutrition.

of Crossroads, and hence I needed someone who knew those sections well. Secondly, for safety reasons I had to be shown exactly which parts of which section were known for violence (Since it was time for local government elections, it was not wise to be alone before making acquaintances.) Thirdly I felt that having youth next to me just for the first part of my work was going to make my access easy in the area.

I was asking questions like place of birth, gender of household head, employment, where my respondents performed their rituals, etc. I had to start with these short and mostly closed kinds of questions and use them as an entry to the field. We recorded the answers ourselves because I did not want to put people in a situation where they had to tell us they were illiterate. I thought literacy was a sensitive question that needed to be asked only when people had had a chance to gain some confidence in me.

I selected my survey sample in terms of quota sampling. I looked for the first 50 houses, in each section of my research area. (Boystown, Unathi and Veza-I discuss the sections in detail in the next chapter). This process created a total sample of 150 houses visited and subjected to the survey.

This method, although not the most preferred for constructing a good representative sample, and with some haphazard properties, proved to be most suitable for my work when it came to selecting respondents for my more intensive qualitative research, which has been the core of the work I have done. All except one of the people I was referred to in order to construct my small sample of ten houses for intensive qualitative research, were in the houses of the people I had already met during my survey. Details of the process of qualitative research are discussed below. During the time my assistants and I were doing the survey, we went to one section together at a time and we worked very closely so that when two were at one house, the other two were in the house next door. The reason for this was that I wanted to be introduced personally to the area and its people. This method was to also assist if a respondent asked more about the study. In such cases my being close by helped and walking and

working together was ideal. When any of the four of us entered a house that had occupants who seemed interested in the questions we asked, [s] he would write the number of the house on the answer sheet (this was not done with other houses we got into) so that we knew it would not be a problem speaking to those people when there is a need for me to do so.

The last house I went into, belonged to MaNgwanya, a woman who was interesting to me because she had heard about me. But she was also misinformed about my intentions and of being there. She had since initially resisted the idea that I should do any research in the area, but who within a few days had not only changed her mind, but had insisted that I come to her house as often as possible. Indeed she began to call me using the phrase '*mntanam*' (my child). This all happened after I had offered to help her brew her beer that she had planned for ritual beer drinking (*igongqo*)⁷. On the first day after the survey, I was in her house to do my first chores with my informant.

The Qualitative Research Sample.

I met the people who formed my qualitative research sample at Crossroads through the people I had met during the time I was doing my survey. My qualitative sample consisted of ten households. After I had met with the first informant, Mangwanya, she referred me to two of her friends who lived on the same street. That fact meant that they had already met my assistants and I during the survey. Of those two, one had told us that he was about to have his son's 'coming out' from circumcision seclusion, which meant that we had already marked the house for revisit. At that ritual I then met two other people

⁷ The word literally means a twenty-litre container. It has however been appropriated to mean the content which is *umqombothi* (African traditional beer) since people do not have the traditional clay pots anymore which were used to make *umqombothi*. *Igqongo* is never made or prepared for too many people. It is aimed at appeasing the ancestors by just the smell of the *umqombothi*, hence it is drunk by close friends and people considered to be 'relatives' in the urban places where people manipulate clanship to suit the needs or to play the role of kinship. (See Mehlwana (1996) and *umhlinzeko* by Mcallister (1991))

who also lived in the street we had surveyed. Although they had not shown much interest during the survey, they too now invited me to 'visit' their places.

Table 1 Households from the intensified sample

Respondent	Birth place	Arrival in Cape Town	Reason	Household size	Children born in Cape Town	Ages of children
NGWANYA	Kingwilliams-town	1972	Job	6 people	2	19 & 16
MANYENGELEZI	Maclea	1990	Job	4 people	0	
FUNEKA	Cala	1991	Education	1 person	0	
ZENZWA	Ladyfrere	1969	Employment	3	0	
NGUBENGCUKA	Healdtown	1969	Employment	3	1	26
ZOLILE	Willowvale	1969	Employment	5	3	15, 13, 9
STENA	Cala	1970	Employment	9	3	29, 17, 14
MAKHULU	Stutterheim	1974	Employment	3	0	
NOMZI	Engcobo	1977	Employment	3	2	16, 11
MANGWANYA	Herschel	1973	employment	1	0	0
TOTAL				38	11	n/a

One of my informants in this sample had not been in the surveyed parts of Crossroads.

I was introduced to him by an acquaintance I first met at Philani, a nutrition center in the area, and who herself did not want to take part in my research. I then managed to make several of my own contacts, returning to houses that I had surveyed in different sections at Crossroads. The nature of the information I found I needed resulted in my also having to enlarge my qualitative research sample into the neighboring townships in order to understand better some of the

claims that were made by various people of Crossroads. In order to do this I added eight people to the sample, primarily to comprehend issues dealt with in Chapter Four (the *Intonjane* ritual). One of my informants at Old Crossroads introduced me to her relative who had just had the ritual performed for her in the Eastern Cape. I met the other three women in a taxi. I had started the conversation about *intonjane*, asking the woman who sat next to me why there were men's initiation huts everywhere along the road and yet I had never heard anything about *intonjane* in the township. To my surprise all the taxi's occupants eagerly took part in the conversation, but only three of them all (all women) agreed to give me their telephone numbers so I could visit them at home and have interviews with them about the issue we had talked about in the taxi. Of the four remaining, one was the old woman affectionately called Makhulu whom I met at a ritual at Unathi (see details in Chapter Four). Two are twins I had met in another taxi, and the twins introduced one to me.

Operationalisation: on qualitative research.

I used an interview guide to collect some qualitative data to ensure that I did not miss out on asking the important questions. I also conducted informal interviews. I had closed and open-ended questions in obtaining my qualitative data as well. This technique was used for the ten households in Crossroads as well as with the eight individuals who were only from Crossroads.

The interview data that I collected consisted primarily of: the birthplace of both the household head and the children and whether the children lived with the parents or were living elsewhere. I asked the occupants their year of arrival and reasons for coming to Cape Town. I needed to have information on the length of the occupant's stay in their current houses, and if there had been any movements around Cape Town and or whether there had been children born when living in Cape Town. I asked about the relationship between the people who constitute the household, as well as the whereabouts of the parents of the household head and their place of birth. I asked if the parents of the household

head or the household head him/ herself was employed or was on pension or unemployed. I asked whether the households have had to perform a ritual recently, the kind of a ritual if any as well as where such a ritual was performed. I also asked both the adults and the youth in the households about the place they now considered their homes, considering the number of years they have spent in Cape Town, and why the place is considered to be their home.

I added some more questions for the eight women who informed me more on the issues discussed in Chapter Four (*intonjane*). Such questions were whether the informant knew anything about *intonjane* and whether she had it performed for herself. I asked whether it was performed before they were married if they were married or after, whether it was performed voluntarily or as a result of a need and what that need or demand was, who is or was responsible for the performing of the ritual in the family.

I also asked the people of all ages that I could get information from about the use of language, especially around the terms like, *EmaXhoseni*, *endlini*, *ekhaya*, *ukugoduka*, etc. These questions helped me find the people's interpretation of a home and what constitutes a home for them.

I tried to avoid always having papers with me because doing that, according to Neuman (1997), can lead people to change their behavior and start 'acting out' for a researcher. The information that I collected each day was recorded immediately I returned home. I did this both on paper and recorded on the tape recorder my immediate comments and thoughts on the day's events when I got home. In writing my field notes I made sure I had paid detailed attention to daily activity, as I knew the importance of dedicated perseverance in fieldwork. When recording the data I did not leave out my own feelings on what took place on each particular day, and doing that has helped me to remember clearly the events I have recorded when I have had to draw on my notes to write this dissertation. I used the tape recorder in some situations, such as during rituals, where I felt too much would be happening for me to remember all that was said.

Participant observation

“Participant observation involves establishing rapport in a new community, learning to act so that people go about doing their business when you show up and removing yourself everyday from cultural immersion so you can intellectualize what you have learned...” (Gans, 1968 quoted by Bernard, 1989: 68)

Anthropologists are known to be the people who leave their homes to live with their subjects in order to collect good quality data. This presumes that it is otherwise not possible to do good participant observation, which is described by Bernard (1989) as the foundation of anthropology. Moreover, the idea that anthropologists must leave their homes to do good fieldwork implies that they are in some or other sense always foreign in the field. For myself however I found this idea implausible because I share a lot with the residents of Crossroads, in that I lived in a neighboring township. I am also black like they are and I speak the same language as they do, did not need to learn their language. (Although I did have to learn the use of language for example see my opening comments above). I found myself in a strange situation as I was working with people I could not completely envisage as strangers but yet I also could not call myself a full insider. In other words, like Mehlwana says of his own situation, “In [my] situation the boundaries of the field were not evident because [I] share some of my informant’s life experiences” (1996: 17). However in a number of ways I felt I was a stranger in my ‘field’. I did not sleep at Crossroads, because I stayed only five kilometers away from the place. This means that I visited the area during the daytime and only participated in people’s day activities.

I felt the field was so big I was not sure I would be doing myself a favor by just talking to anyone that I came across. Also I did not feel very safe, as I have indicated above. (It was during the local government elections, and the area was violent. Three people were gunned down during the time of my research). It was not only my own safety that I was concerned about but also my respondents’. As Mehlwana (1996) indicates at times researchers can put the lives of the

informants in danger as well as theirs. To solve these problems, I tried to stick to the people that were introduced to me by other people I had met during the survey or the people that were introduced to me by other people of Crossroads.

Participant observation, creates hardship and a feeling of uneasiness in the researcher. I felt uneasy especially during the first week of my participant observation, and now that I think about it, it was not merely because I was afraid of the political situation and violence, but because I was subconsciously questioning myself about the right I had to interfere in other people's lives. Anthropologists have asked themselves as scientists, over and over, about the rights they have to record and publish people's private lives. Early in the 1940s the question of ethics in anthropology had already been asked. For example, Yans-Mcloughlin (1986) quotes Bateson who when confronted with such questions during the World War II, wrote, "Now that we have techniques, are we in cold blood going to treat people as things? Or what are we going to do with these techniques?".... (1942:84) The problem Bateson raised around the information collected, was whether it was to be handed over to the colonists, especially since the anthropologists knew that the information could be used by the colonists against the subjects. I did not know what really to tell tat'uTshawe when (an elderly resident) he told me that he personally did not like the idea of the people coming to 'study' their community. He told me he was afraid because he did not know where the information gathered would end. I just told him that my intention was to make known, the world view of *AmaXhosa*. I could not reassure him about who would read the work I was trying to write. Neither could I reassure him of the intentions of the potential reader. The above problems resonate with those Gluckman refers to when he says, ... "Those anthropologists who have worked among literate peoples have often found that their informants are only too well aware of the hazards of publication"(1969: 42)

While doing participant observation I also found myself at times doing things that put me in strange positions. Yet I could not pretend to be a complete outsider who knew nothing at all about everything that was happening around

me. For example, when I told MaNgwanya (see above) that I was going to help her, if she would allow me, because I wanted to see how she made her *umqombothi*, I could not maintain the façade because I was so familiar with the process. Thus when the time came for me to help her, as she had allowed, I remember her saying, "you know what you are doing but you just want to test me". This was because I had not realised that I was actually ahead of her with my actions. (I had brought cold water with which she was to mix her ingredients.) In this way I can say that I brought 'some' knowledge of local culture to my field. I had not wanted to pretend that I did not know what she was doing, but I wanted her to tell me what and when to do the various activities. These are just some of the difficult parts of the role of being a participant observer. And it is in connection with these situations that Bernard says to the participant observers... "Try also to develop your skill at being a novice, at being someone who genuinely wants to learn a new culture. This is because other members of your own culture are often better informants than you are about that culture, and if you really let people teach you, they will." (Bernard, 1989: 144)

Reflexivity

I have already mentioned here above some difficulties I experienced to do with my informants. I was a Xhosa woman and not a researcher. The observable similarities between my subjects and me overshadowed the untold differences, which were, for instance, that I grew up in villages near Matatiele. This northern part of Transkei is situated between Lesotho in the North West and Kwazulu-Natal to the North. This means that the two areas, which are geographically a few hours away from Matatiele, have strong influence on the cultural aspect of the peoples of Matatiele. This different local culture of Matatiele makes me a 'different Xhosa' from *amaXhosa* of Crossroads whose majority come from the Transkei as well as Ciskei. Secondly, I grew up in the villages, and the little time

I spent in an urban area was in Natal, a place with Zulu social dynamics. As a result, during my research, I found myself behaving in ways that were to my subjects strange for a 'Xhosa' woman. As a black 'Xhosa' woman for instance, I was expected to know exactly what to wear when attending different rituals and a number of times I did not have a clue. I was a hybrid, and that did not make things easy some times.

Besides the fact that I worked with people who speak the same language as I do, my gender may have influenced the nature of the data I collected. Bernard (1989) says that, by the 1930s, Margaret Mead had already made clear the importance of gender as a variable in data collection. (See also Keesing 1973). One's gender has at least two consequences for one's role as a researcher: It limits one's access to certain information, and it influences how one perceives others. I am aware, for example, that, as a woman, I could not be in the specially constructed temporary byre with men during a young male initiate's coming out ritual, and that I therefore missed out on a lot of the men's discussions at what is a crucial moment during male initiation. But I also know that my gender made it possible for women to talk to me more easily than had I been a man.

As a parent, I also had advantages with people who were themselves parents, for they related more easily with me than they would have with someone who was not a parent. I had a portfolio in the church as well, and that did have an impact on the quality of data that I obtained. For example, one of my informants on the issue of *intonjane* was a member of the same church as I am. She and I were relatively close, but she never told me she had just undergone the initiation process until I asked her after I was referred to her by a relative of hers living at Crossroads. I associated this with the fear that people still have as the missionaries regarded *intonjane* as heathen. (See Chapter Four for Christianity and initiation.)

Conclusion

In this chapter I have introduced the research and tried to reflect on the methods of my research and related problems. I have also reflected on how I think I have in some ways influenced the kind of data that I obtained. This work therefore has in it, the interpretations of a person who in many ways was a stranger, but also in a number of ways, an element of the same set as the researched people. Although scholars such as van Warmelo and Chidester say that the tribal distinctions are fictitious, invented and imagined, and historians saying that these differences have been 'flags of convenience' for the anthropologists (Chidester, 1992:2), my ethnicity was felt during the time of research. The way I have interpreted what I saw during the time of my research as Bell (1993) puts it "Is shaped by who [I am]."

Summary of Chapters:

The research problem in this thesis is discussed in the following manner. Chapter One is my introduction and the methodology used in collection of the data. In Chapter Two I locate my main site, in the history of the Western Cape, the history of the area and its origins, the demographic material and the social services available in it. In Chapter Three, I explore the way people themselves described a real home as regards what it provides or should provide for them, and I argue that people reify their culture, "see[ing] it, and talking about it as a coherent system of roles as well as [using it] to talk particularly about their lives" (Keesing, 1985:36). The reification, I add, causes contestation among the people concerned. In this chapter I also argue that some people make attempts to change their houses at Crossroads to fit their own assertions of home which I show creates contradictions and contestations over the idealised process of home-making. I then use Chapter Four to illustrate, by way of both case studies as well as stories I was told, to show that people use what they regard as village methods to forge the kinds of relationships they think provide them with '*homeness*'.

In Chapter Five I look at the experiences of people who are trying to settle in their new houses to argue that the process of distributing such houses is not considerate of the people's understandings of home and home-making. I also examine in this chapter, how some rituals are used as the means to create bonds of dependency on the part of women on their male counterparts and the village homes. I argue that people's imagined only correct way to do the girls rite of passage encourages them to consider only their village homes as the rite place and space to perform this ritual. I also argue in this chapter that the girls puberty rite of passage is used as a tool to mend the broken relationships between the living and their ancestral dead instead of the original function, the rite of passage. Chapter Six, my conclusion, returns to consider the reasons why people are reluctant to fully accept the urban areas and their urban houses as appropriate places and spaces to be called home. It goes on to summarise the characteristics of a house that would, for such people, be considered a real home—characteristics that reflect the ability of such houses and spaces to accommodate their residents' cultural values.

Chapter Two: Western Cape History and Space

Introduction:

In this chapter I wish to locate the Western Cape as the province of my study in the history of South Africa during the time of apartheid laws. I eventually discuss how the failure of influx control laws resulted to the increase of the then informal settlements such as Crossroads. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the origins of Crossroads as a residential area for African people.

Apartheid policies

Writing about the apartheid laws and how they were used to separate residential areas according to race in South Africa, Seekings (1997) suggests that the ability to contain something is the ability to control it. He goes on to say that the apartheid government mutually constituted space and social relations, just as has occurred anywhere else. But what made South Africa's case distinctive was the fact that it was only those people who were classified as 'non-whites' who were increasingly obliged to live in the remote parts of urban areas. The apartheid government's Group Areas Act segregated residential areas on the basis of a racial (population group) categorization⁸. This resulted primarily in the removal of people classified Black, Coloured and Indian from where they were living to places far from city centres. And, while some poor whites were also removed from the centres of the city and allocated houses elsewhere, these were in areas not as far from the city centres as those demarcated for the various subcategories of 'non-whites.'

The attempt by the apartheid government to secure labour-power of African people without citizenship, has been a major feature of state urban policy,

⁸ The categories as well as the subcategories of the South African people came as a result of the 1950 Population Registration Act, which laid down three basic definitions, black, coloured and white as categories of the people. The classification of population [was] neither based simply on physical features of race, nor inspired by racist assumptions of innate difference and inferiority. It existed to divide and control in terms of access to political rights and economic resources and thereby to maintain white power and privilege. (see West, 1988)

leading to both controls of rural-urban migration and segregation of those whose presence in the 'white' cities was unavoidable (Lemon,1991 quoted by Ross,1993). I now briefly explore the apartheid government's attempts to keep African people away from the urban areas and the cities in the Western Cape context. Furthermore I explain that, in the Western Cape, living space was distributed to black people as long as they were fit to work for white people and that the sort of living environment allocated for African people did not cater for their needs as anything more than supposedly single working individuals (Ramphela,1993).

In the Western Cape African people were given second preference in employment because of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy of 1954 which was ostensibly introduced to ensure that people classified Coloured would be able to find jobs in the Western Cape (i.e. west of a line drawn on the map from Plettenberg Bay to Rietpoort) and not have to compete with Black people from the Eastern Cape and elsewhere. The other goal of the policy was to limit as much as possible the number of African people working in the area, in line with the more general policy that lay behind the influx control legislation that applied across the whole country and that alienated African people in the urban areas.

Having been forced to survive on only thirteen per cent of the South African land with poor agricultural growth and deteriorating living conditions, black people did not stop coming to the Western Cape and other urban areas in South Africa, thus indicating the failure of the legislation of influx control. What made matters worse was the 1966 announcement that there would thenceforth be a 'freeze on black housing' (Ross,1995). What this announcement did was to cause a shortage of houses for black people.

In the late 1970's the growth of illegal squatter settlements in the Western Cape became enormous following the Soweto uprising in 1976. The uprising had strengthened the people's sense of power to resist the apartheid government while weakening the government's power to control the people's movement (see Giliomee 1997). When people lived in the areas that the government did not

'mark' for that purpose, the then government then referred to them as 'illegal squatters'⁹, and therefore persecuted them.

From the discussion above we can see that people in some ways had to fight their ways into the urban areas because the then government was using the laws to control their influx. The purpose of this short section of the chapter is to indicate that irrespective of the influx control by the government, people continued to come to the urban areas. Wilson and Mafeje say

That in the 1900's the tax law necessitated the payment of the poll tax by all black males of the age eighteen and above. The necessity for paying taxes, the desire to buy goods offered by European traders while their indigenous goods were losing their value, and the growing land shortage, made it impossible for the community while following their only known old methods of agriculture, to live on the land, and drove men and even women to work for Europeans. (1961:9)

Having had to live under the afore mentioned conditions in the homelands, I argue that *amaXhosa* came to work for salaries/ wages in the urban areas in order to improve the living conditions in their village homes. I argue that *amaXhosa* had expectations that were unmet by the life they had to live in the urban area of Cape Town.

Below I locate my field of research in the geography of the 'Black residential areas' in Cape Town.

Crossroads—Historical Background

I conducted most of the fieldwork research for this project in an area known as Crossroads, in Cape Town. Crossroads is an area designated for that part of the population categorised as 'black' during the time of the apartheid government. The area is situated close to the Cape Town international airport, between two other areas designated for black settlement, Khayelitsha and Nyanga. I needed to verify some of the information I got from Crossroads people. Crossroads then became the core but not the sole site. I also interviewed people from New Crossroads, Nyanga, Gugulethu and Khayelitsha. In this part of

⁹They were illegal also in terms of the Illegal Squatting Act of 1951.

the chapter I describe the historical development of Crossroads, the main site of my field research, and I explore the daily life context of Crossroads people.

Kiewiet and Weichel (1980) and Cole (1986) describe how black people who lived in a squatter camp in Modderdam were forcibly removed in 1974 from that area because it was too close to the nearby 'white' as well as the neighboring industrial areas. These people were unloaded in the plains of Crossroads and left there with tents as temporary dwellings. Other people who resided in the area did not come from Modderdam but from Unibell, and Crossroads itself. The then government used the Illegal Squatting Act of 1951 to get rid of the squatters. Their shacks were demolished and women cried, as they were loaded onto trucks to be put in tents in the open field at Crossroads. Kiewiet and Weichel, (1980) Graaff (1983) and Nash (1985) all discuss the promises that were made to the people about how Crossroads was going to be developed for them. Cole (1986) says that there is further evidence that the population of Crossroads grew, both because of the hopes that the promises generated and because it was, at that point, one area where people who sought a place to set up home could do so relatively unhindered.

But the promised development did not happen very quickly. Instead the then South African government had another agenda for Crossroads people. Nash (1985: 4) and Cole (1986: 76) quote Dr. de v. Morrison, then deputy minister of Co-operation and Development at the Western Cape congress of the Nationalist Party saying on September 29, 1983 that: "Crossroads is a symbol of provocation and of blackmail of the government. We want to destroy that symbolism at all costs. We want to destroy that unlawful philosophy by dispersing them to Khayelitsha."

Because of the conflict between the local leaders at the time, Crossroads had a divided local committee, which the residents had originally intended to facilitate control of resources donated to the area by outside supporters like the Black Sash (a white liberal women's Non Governmental Organisation) and others, as well as to represent the residents when meeting with such people as the Black

Sash. The committee, then called the executive, was lead by two men Memani and Ngxobongwana¹⁰ between whom there was increasing tension that resulted, eventually, in the creation of two quite distinct and conflicting factions who acted as leaders, the warlords for the people (Grogan 1980; Cole 1980; Kiewiet and Weichel 1980; Nash 1985; Moreku 1996). In 1983 Khayelitsha first began to be built after P. W. Botha, the then South African State President, and Dr Piet Koornhof, a member of his cabinet, had flown over the black townships in a helicopter, to see what could be done to solve the continuing crisis in the Cape Peninsula (Cole, 1986: 67). Khayelitsha was built alongside the False Bay coast line and some 25 kilometres away from Cape Town's central business district.

Malihloa, one of my informants described how in 1985 and 1986 Crossroads residents were forced, even violently, to move, the police telling them to get out of Crossroads because 'black houses' had now been built in 'their' area (Khayelitsha). But most of the people in Crossroads refused to go to Khayelitsha, as they said that it was too far away from town and it was going to be too expensive for them to travel to work.

From this brief historical sketch one can see that Crossroads is one of the many areas around South African cities that started out, during the apartheid era, as squatter camps for women who needed to live with their working husbands but could not obtain formal housing, primarily because of the then government's influx control policies. But, instead of being demolished, as the then government would have liked, and tried to effect, Crossroads grew and those told to go to Khayelitsha resisted (See Nash 1985).

By the time of my fieldwork, Old Crossroads accommodated about eight thousand households. The 1996 census records a population of 23 549 persons,

¹⁰ These were the two leaders at Crossroads who led the people, saying that they stood for their interests. However they disagreed on a lot of issues, especially those of collaboration of Ngxobongwana with the local authorities, the leaving out of other residents of Crossroads from the 1979 survey, his oppressive nature of rule that resembled the rural chiefs in the urban area, etc. (see Cole, 1986: 56-57)

although I would guess that that figure has probably increased radically since, with people now living in a new section which accommodates people who have come from elsewhere, including the neighboring townships.

Old Crossroads is now divided into three main sections which differ from each other in terms of the kinds of houses that are built in each. The three sections are Boystown, a shack area, Unathi, a formal housing area constructed during the last few years of the apartheid era, and Veza¹¹, a large area of very small formal houses constructed in terms of the post-apartheid government's Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP)—see below.

The shack area that borders the N2 highway is called Boystown and consists of about two hundred shacks. It is a minimally serviced area where people use common water taps and pit toilets. Those Boystown area shacks situated closest to the N2 are not very close to one another, with some limited space between them. Those a bit further away from the highway are closer to one another and not very big. Most of them are just two little rooms with very little or no space alongside to pass by or to hang washing in. It is in response to the overcrowding in this area and in other parts of Old Crossroads that now a new section called Veza is being built.

The second section of Crossroads, called Unathi, was built during 1980s when Mr Ngxobongwana and Mr Memani were leaders of the Crossroads population. Unathi is situated at the centre of Crossroads, between Veza on the East and Nyanga on the West. Unathi is itself divided into three subsections:

- Old Unathi comprises formal housing consisting of four-roomed semi-detached houses, each with its own outside toilet and shower. There is not much space between the houses, but sufficient to allow some building extensions. Houses are provided with running water and electricity. There are about five hundred houses in this area.

¹¹ This name of both the section and the houses in it is derived from the Xhosa phrase '*Veza unyawo*' which means 'show foot'. This comes from the fact that the houses in this section are very small. People teasingly say that when a big man sleeps in the house, the feet will protrude to the outside of the house. .

- The second subsection of Unathi is called Stocks and Stocks and Bester Homes, after the two private-sector companies that developed the area and built houses there for people whose employers could afford to subsidize them financially to buy the houses. This is the smallest part of Crossroads, comprising about a hundred houses, all of them built from face bricks and cement blocks. The difference between these houses and those designed and built for the local council at Unathi is that the Stocks and Stocks and Bester houses have their bathroom and toilet facilities inside the house while, in the council houses, these facilities are outside. The spaces between the Stocks and Stocks and Bester houses are narrow.
- The third subsection of Unathi consists of about a hundred houses that people call *Emasakeni* (Xhosa, place of bags). The name is said to come from the fact that these houses were built by a company that used bags filled with sand to build the walls. A developer called Wimpy built that subsection. There is even narrower space between *Emasakeni* houses than there is at Stocks and Stocks and Bester Houses. It is not easy to see whether a person is standing in front of their own house or a neighbor's.

Map 1 : Crossroads



I shall discuss Veza section after a short background to Reconstruction and Development Programme as this section is a product of the implementation of R.D.P. The houses built at Crossroads after Khayelitsha was built (see above) were simply inadequate. Housing then became one (among many others) of the challenges that the new government of African National Congress (ANC) had to address. The ANC consequently developed a working policy that was called the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), a broad-based strategy aiming to overcome the legacy of apartheid and including a proposal regarding housing provision¹²: As a policy the R.D.P. included plans for restructuring the provision of education, housing, etc and poverty eradication in general. For the purpose of this thesis I shall only discuss the housing question of the RDP. The ANC had proposed a detailed framework as they envisaged that,

It [was] not merely lack of income which determined poverty. An enormous proportion of very basic needs [were at the time] unmet. In attacking poverty and deprivation, the RDP [aimed] to set South Africa firmly on the road to eliminating hunger, providing land and housing to all [our] people.... (1994: 14).

Since 1995, the RDP has been implemented in those areas that were declared as needing to be reconstructed. In the Western Cape, those areas included many of the black residential areas that had been created in terms of apartheid's residential segregationist planning policies. They were included especially in order to eradicate the life threatening shacks in which many poor South Africans live. What are known as RDP houses (\pm 27 square metre house with no dividing wall in a 200 square metre plot)¹³ have been and continue to be built in such areas, one being Crossroads. It is the size of these houses that gives them the term 'beginners houses'. Most of them are two rooms and meet only the very basic standard for RDP houses which is:

¹² The RDP proposals regarding housing followed the same line as the 1956 calls by the Freedom Charter for 'housing for all' (see ANC,1992).

¹³ Cape Argus 7,June,2000 page 4.

As a minimum, all housing must provide protection from weather, a durable structure, and reasonable living space and privacy. A house must include sanitary facilities, storm-water drainage, a household energy supply (whether linked on grid electricity supply or derived from other sources such as solar energy) and convenient access to clean water (RDP, 1994:23).

The R.D.P. however only aimed to meet only part of the requirements of the people since no provision is made by R.D.P. for bigger households. The houses are built for people who may not be beginners in terms of the household size. In Chapter Five I discuss the effects of inevitable households separation as individual household members move to separate R.D.P houses. Moreover in the remainder of the dissertation I discuss in detail the people's needs from a home which are unmet by the bigger, let alone the R.D.P. houses in the urban space of Crossroads.

Having discussed the implementation of R.D.P. at Crossroads, I now turn to discuss the R.D.P. section of Crossroads called Veza.

Veza is the largest and the third section of Crossroads. It starts from the immediate end of Unathi in the Eastern part and it spreads down right to Lansdowne Road in the South and up to the Lower part of Crossroads on the road to Delft. Veza is the newest part of the area and was built under the new R.D.P. policy of the new government. There were about four thousand houses at Veza during the time of my research and the area was still being built. The houses have one or two rooms with a toilet and a shower outside.

Having illustrated the background of Crossroads as a black residential area I argue that as people lived in this area, they experienced alienations and pains that will be discussed in more details in the next chapters. I argue that the unfavorable conditions that people lived under challenged peoples' understandings of their cultural identity. The result was that in the attempts to address notions of cultural identity, conflict was created, as we shall see in Chapter Three.

Who are the People of Crossroads?

I have used this section to reflect on the places of birth of Crossroads people to enable the reader to understand why the urban life impact was of significance for Crossroads people. Another reason for the discussion of places of birth is socialization and this will be evident as I discuss the cultural conflicts between the young socialized in urban areas and the older group that was brought up according to the 'village way of life'.

Density and sizes of the households differ in the three sections and so do the ages of the household members. At Boystown I noticed that most households were small with the average of 3.5 people. Also the population consisted of older people than did that of the other two sections of Crossroads. I attribute this evidence to more moving of younger people to Veza and other RDP areas in the neighbouring townships, as unlike the older people youth did not own livestock which was the reason for some of the former to prefer living at Boystown to moving to Veza (see chapter three). At Unathi, average households density was 4.75 people per household with some households having a maximum of 9 people of mixed ages. This may be because of the fact that the houses at Unathi are bigger than those at Veza which is another formal housing area at Crossroads. Veza's household sizes had an average of 2.74 and the population consisted mostly of younger people compared to those of Boystown and Unathi.

The diagrams below indicate the household densities according to the sections of the area.

Figure 1. Household size in Boystown (n=50)

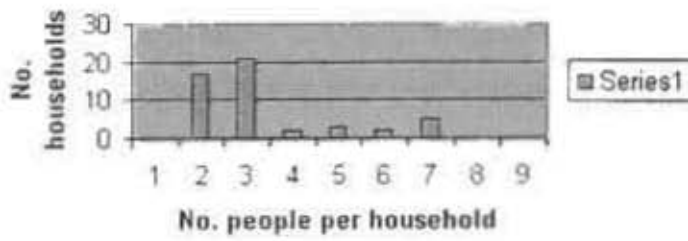


Figure 2. household size in Veza (n=50)

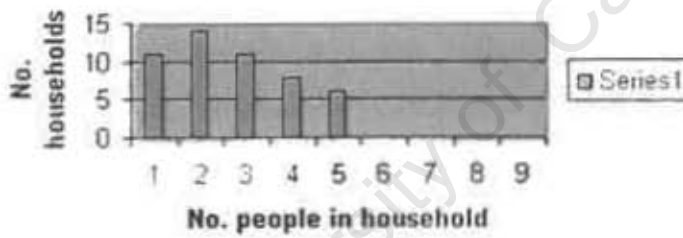
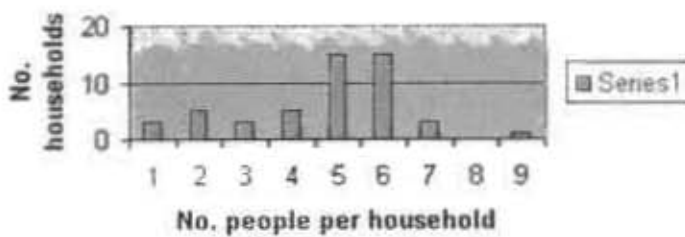


Figure 3. Household size in Unathi (n=50)



Crossroads is a recently constructed township whose residents are people who, as Cole (1984) and Nash (1986) point out, previously defied the old apartheid regime of governance. Of the total of one hundred and fifty houses that I surveyed from the three sections of Crossroads, one hundred and thirty six belong to the people who were born in the Eastern Cape, three are from Lesotho, nine were born at Gugulethu, and two were born in foreign countries. (see Table 2)

Table 2: birthplaces of Household heads (from the survey n=150)

Section	Lesotho	Eastern Cape	Gugulethu	Other
Boystown	1	49	0	
Veza	1	18	4	1
Unathi	1	69	5	1
Totals	3	136	9	2

The latter two have been living in Crossroads only for a year each; they are immigrants in South Africa. Most of the above mentioned people's main reasons for moving from their birth homes to the Western Cape is to seek employment. Only eight of nine that come from Gugulethu told me they lived there because they got houses in the area and not particularly because of their own employment reasons.

Of the 150 households that were surveyed, 100, consisted of formal houses. Of the 100, 94 household heads indicated that they would want to be buried in their birthplaces, or the places where their umbilical cords were buried. According to isiXhosa, when a new born baby's umbilical cord falls off, it is dug into the wall of the great house of the home of the baby's father. The homestead then becomes the root of that particular baby for as long as the baby lives and the mud(soil) of the house becomes a strong connection between the soil (the territory) and the living human being so that when one gives account of his/her background, they say, "*inkaba yam iseMatatiele kwilali yakwa Magadla*". (My

umbilical cord is at Matatiele in the location of Magadla (the Chief). The place becomes part of the person. They were regular subscribers to burial societies that would take their bodies to their birthplaces, where they will then be buried. Some of these people are women who do not earn much, as they are employed as domestic workers. But they still manage to put aside thirty to forty Rand for the purpose of taking their household members to their birthplaces, should they die while living in the urban areas. From the informal houses, 41 of 50 household heads wanted to be buried in their birthplaces and the rest were unsure because they could not afford burial societies. The claims by both the people who live in formal houses and those living in the shacks indicated that one could not simply think that people are semi-urbanised because they live in a particular dwelling type, or because they have left their children in the village homes. My argument is that people choose what they need from the present situations to give a form of meaning to their own lives. Many people of Crossroads, chose to leave Cape Town townships and go to their birthplaces even if it is after death, irrespective of the dwelling types they live in. Many people at Crossroads told me that they did not regard their houses in which they live now as their homes.

One respondent described urbanites as '*oonontente*' (people who leave their homes to work in road constructions. These people live in tents over a long period and only go home on weekly or monthly basis) He said, " It is a very strange thing to do to stay in the urban house when one is no longer employed. Do you know *unontente*? How can *unontente* remain in the tent while he no longer works for the road construction? Have you ever seen a funeral service in the tents? Those people do die in accidents from the kind of work they do, but they are buried in the places of their grandfathers."

This kind of statement together with many others that I discuss in the next chapter indicate that, people do not accept urban houses as sufficient to be their homes but see them as living spaces while employed. Fifteen percent of these people who maintained that they want to go to their birthplaces when they are no longer economically active have stayed in Cape Town for almost thirty five

years, when they were living illegally in the squatter camps like Modderdam, Unibell and Browns Farm.

Occupation; Source of Income and Education, In the Sampled Households.

My sampled households together with the picture of the survey cannot be a full representation of what is going on in Crossroads. From the ten households I worked intensively with at Crossroads, 73% had one person employed. Of these, two were domestic workers earning less than two thousand Rand and one of the two was also a pensioner who worked as a char. Two were professional workers, four labourers doing unskilled work, two had no clear source of income and one was a pensioner. The daily activities (see below) indicate that unemployment is high in Crossroads. Mehlwana (1996) correctly pointed out the increase in standard ten qualified people who were unemployed by 1994; the same can be said with measurable confidence in Crossroads.

MaNgwanya pointed out to me one day as I was talking to a young man who helps in one of the soup kitchens that,

the children (although they were all aged twenty and over, they are classificatory children to her) you see going to that queue (for soup helping) are educated. They stand in that queue because they have no jobs. It does not matter these days whether children are educated, I do not know what is going on or how people who have children are going to encourage them to go to school when they see others with degrees and standard ten (matric) having no jobs like it is happening these days.

In my survey, I did not ask people about education level. This is because of the sensitivity of this question and the sorts of responses I got from the people the first time I met them¹⁴. Information I discuss of education is derived from

¹⁴ In the meeting where almost every person was there to ask me what it was I was doing, some of the people seemed to have a negative attitude towards what they called "izifundiswa." (academics) For example, some said that they are tired of the *izifundiswa* who came to their houses and ask a lot of questions and never come to tell them what happens to the written texts. Moreover, because of high unemployment rate at Crossroads, some people tend to have their

the ten sampled households only. The total number of the people from the sampled households is 38.

Table 3. Education levels of the members of the households from the intensified sample in Grades from 1 to tertiary education.

AGE	N/A	Grades 1-5	Grades 5-8	Grades 8-12	TERTIARY	TOTAL
0-6 YRS	0	0	0	0	0	0
7-15	0	2	3	1	0	6
15-30	0	2	3	3	2	10
31-40	0	1	2	2	1	6
40-60	0	7	6	2	1	16
Grand total		12	14	8	4	38

Daily life in Crossroads

There is a very high unemployment rate in the area. Of the one hundred and fifty households I surveyed, eighty-seven households (58%) had one or more people employed. The other sixty-three (42%) did not have a single person working. Of the eighty-seven with one or two people working, fifty-one included women domestic workers earning less than R2 000 a month. Some domestic workers were working only two or three days a week and earning about R50. daily. Of the thirty-six that were not domestic workers, only 14 were professional workers. Males are the most unemployed from my surveyed sample as, domestic work is more available than any other unskilled work. The 1996 census indicates that out of 5087 people who were physically fit, 2116 (\pm 45%) were looking for work (Census 1996)

Table 4 indicates the employment picture in the area as derived from my survey.

hopes up when someone asks them about their education levels and occupation. This is because they think that the inquiring person will arrange some kind of employment for them.

Table 4: Categories of employment by area and gender (survey, n=150)

Employment type	Unathi		Veza		Boystown		Total no. hh
	Mhh*	Fhh	Mhh	Fhh	Fhh	Mhh	
Professionals	4	5	1	0	4	0	14
Skilled Workers	5	3	2	2	5	5	22
Domestic Workers	0	22		18	11	0	51
Unemployed	6	5	19	9	8	16	63
Totals	15	35	22	29	28	21	150

Each workday morning almost all the mothers who have young children escort them to local crèches. Mornings are marked by a heavy traffic of people rushing to bus stops either for school transport or to get to work. Because of the high unemployment rate, Crossroads is not very quiet during the day. Youth are always playing on the streets, especially young men, many of whom, I was told, have either passed or left school in standard ten (grade twelve, the final year of high school).

Most of these young men are unable to further their studies because of financial problems. Even those who come from households where there is someone employed, it is usually their mother who, as a domestic worker, earns insufficient both to feed her dependants and to educate her children, particularly beyond high school.

Unemployed women were busy during the day doing their daily chores. Streets were also used to set up stands from which people sell fruit and vegetables. Almost every corner had someone standing there trying to sell

* Mhh—Male Household Headed; Fhh—Female Household headed.

something, ranging from meat, sweets, vegetables and fruit to second hand clothing, etcetera. Men who were not drinking liquor during the day and those who were trying to look out for their families, worked from home. Some worked with steel, making burglar proofing and iron-bar doors, others doing backyard mechanical work, and yet others working in their small backyard gardens. Some unemployed men left their houses in the mornings to look for employment during the day. Of course, there were some men who were already so despondent that they no longer went out to look for jobs, and could not afford to make or sell anything either.

The crèches at which working mothers left their children constituted another means of income generation in Crossroads. Unemployed women, sometimes working in groups, had opened small crèches, either in their homes using one of the rooms in the house, or in backyard shacks that they had built for the purpose. Some crèches were said by the residents to be poorly equipped, and those who run them were not trained to care for others' small children. But employed mothers have little choice and pay the going rate of about R30 per month which, after deductions for the costs of providing food for the children, then provides an income for the women who run the crèches.

There were twelve such facilities operating in homes in Unathi during the time of my fieldwork. There was not a single one at Boystown and Veza. In addition there were various NGO sponsored facilities for young children at Unathi and Veza, some with their own dedicated buildings, including Philani nutrition centre at Unathi. Philani nutrition center provided destitute mothers whose children are malnourished an opportunity to obtain food for themselves and their young children. Under the guidance of trained personnel, the mothers share the tasks of childcare and cooking, while also being given the opportunity to learn about nutrition and to participate in small income generating craftwork projects. Sick children were also provided with medicines.

There were five schools as Crossroads, two lower primaries, two higher primaries and one High School. Once the time of the day came when schools

closed, the streets were again filled, by children coming from school and by mothers fetching their children from crèches. In the evenings it was seldom quiet. There were meetings for members of the local community twice or thrice a week. The local residents' committee and S.A.N.C.O. (South Africa National Civic Organisation) met. During these times one had to be very careful about the streets because even the quieter parts of Crossroads during the day became very violent at night. Gunshot sounds and screams were not uncommon. Woman abuse and armed robberies were regularly reported in the mornings. There was a big dispute at Crossroads during the time of my research concerning the distribution of the RDP houses to people and the building of a business complex¹⁵ and that resulted in violent behavior fuelled by the gangsters as well as the violence taking place in the neighbouring Phillipi¹⁶.

Social Services

Although the residents said that these were not of the highest standards, and not adequate for the needs of Crossroads people, there were a few services available to the residents of this area.

There was no police station in Crossroads during the time of my research. The nearest one was at Nyanga, some 2 to 3 kilometers away. The community Peace force has an office at the West entrance of the township. During the time of my research it was these volunteer 'peace police' that did most of the local police work, and, when necessary, they sent cases to the police. However, given the voluntary nature of their service, their office is not open during the night, a time which is the most corrupted by crime.

Two soup kitchens fed people who went there for food. One was run by the Salvation Army, the other by MamNzotho, a strong local woman who sponsored by an NGO called 'Warmth' (War Against Malnutrition and Hunger). She offered soup to the destitute each weekday, and also sold her own goods, like

¹⁵ See Cape Argus, Wednesday, 2, May: 2001 page 3

¹⁶ See Cape Argus, Tuesday, 10, April: 2001 page 2

*vetkoeks*¹⁷, tea and sandwiches, from the same 'container' stove she used for soup distribution. She did that to generate additional income as she did not have a husband and was otherwise unemployed. The Salvation Army facility operated on Tuesdays and Fridays providing both food and affordable clothing, the latter being sold to those who can afford it. The clothing sales were done in order to generate income to buy food again for the next day's meals. Given the high unemployment rate, particularly for youth, it was not uncommon to see young people queuing for the soup.

There were no formal shops in the area. Some individuals ran small retail outlets (*spaza* shops) from their houses, selling essentials such as milk, bread, eggs, and paraffin. A number of home taverns (*shebeens*) sold liquor to people almost twenty four hours a day. These were marked by very noisy popular music and screams of either happy or crying people, women usually, who were frequently abused by their male counterparts.

There was a complex with a number of facilities at Crossroads. The complex was situated along the N2, on the East of Boystown and towards Veza. Facilities in the complex were: Philani flagship, an NGO sponsored project, and another social service facility that provides unemployed women with diverse skills such as fabric painting, paper painting, and some dressmaking. The products of the handcrafts learned by women were sold to local and international tourists that visited the centre every second day of the week. The tourists visited Philani flagship through the network the Philani flagship women had with the tourist guides who brought both local and international tourists to the townships. Women at Philani flagship said that the tourists bought a lot more from them than did local people and that tourists did this so that they could learn about South African history and culture.

There is a home called Beautiful Gates, for A.I.D.S. sufferers, run by the Roman Catholic Church. Only two of the twenty-three children there came from

¹⁷ Vetkoek is a bread dough that instead of being baked in the oven, is deep fried in vegetable oil in scone size portions.

Crossroads. This was because, the home's management believed, AIDS was so stigmatized that people do not want their neighbors to see them and therefore sent their dependants to a facility some distance away. The rest of the children in the facility came from Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plain. There was also, *Imfesane* (Mercy) for the mentally disabled children, the centre catered for children from Gugulethu, Khayelitsha, Nyanga, Mitchell's Plain as well as from Crossroads. The complex also has a house that is used to prepare South African Xhosa cuisine that is only sold in bulk for particular sorts of occasions and or tourists.

There were also a number of church buildings in the area, for example, the Salvation Army, the Apostolic Church, the Anglican Church (not a formal building but a shack). A number of other churches had no buildings at Crossroads but rented school classrooms for their activities. Those were the Zionist Churches, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and others.

Also worth mentioning there was a developed site in which a shopping complex on the east side of Unathi, at the beginning of Veza, that was in the process of being built. However, during the time of my research not much was happening at this site as there was a dispute concerning the constructors and the community.

Conclusion:

I have used this chapter to introduce and to describe my research field and its history in the republic of South Africa from the era of the apartheid government to date. I have illustrated that Crossroads people are mostly the people who have had to resist the government in a number of issues relating to the settlement of African people in the urban areas of the Western Cape.

Chapter Three: Expectations of and Expressions about home.

Living away from 'home', uprooted people have become part of a society – the host society – whose idiosyncratic cultural features may well be at odds with their family's former culture. Elements of the earlier home culture continue to circulate and be transmitted from generations to generation by the family's saga and its distinct social rules. Such discrepancies between former home and current host cultures embody the reality of the uprooting (Apfelbaume 2000: 16).

Introduction:

In this chapter I demonstrate by way of case studies how living in Crossroads was not very different from living in a foreign country for the people who told me that they were restrained from practising their culture according to the ways of their village homes. For them, sometimes their customary practices were in contrast to what was done in urban life ways that, they said, were new, unfamiliar and sometimes frustrating. The purpose of this chapter is to understand how residents of Crossroads defined what a home is according to their views and what, for them, constitutes a home. This chapter also demonstrates how people envisaged a home and how they forged some of the practices they regarded as customary, to continue the rural imaginary homes while living in the urban areas.

Conceptions of a home:

Although he writes about former hostel dwellers, somewhat different from the population with which I worked, Bank's (2002) comments are pertinent to my research population. Bank says that, in spite of the fact that they no longer remitted resources to rural kin, former migrants of East London's East Bank continued to invest in migrant identities. He adds that: "these men often exaggerated their connections with the villages as well as the differences

between their own masculinities and life-styles and those of other urban residents" (2002:169)¹⁸.

I argue in this chapter that people in Crossroads envisaged their village homes as the standard by which to measure what I call the 'homeness' of the urban township dwelling types they lived in. Consequently, many strived to make their lives in the urban houses resemble that of their village homes by forging some of the imagined ideals while in the urban areas, and by working out ways by which to reverse what they saw as the demise of their culture due to living in the urban areas.

Case studies form the gist as well as the first part of the chapter: I use them to discuss, according to the people, the definitions as well as the expectations they had of a 'home'. The second part of the chapter looks at the strategies that Crossroads people had used to forge a feeling of 'homeness' and to awaken and "signify the rural identification and attachment" (Bank 2002:8). Lastly I analyse what people had said was the ideal as regards a home and what a home should provide for people, and compare it with what was practised. I do that in order to clarify my argument that people held on to ideals of what a home should have provided for them, and that, when living in urban houses, they forged various sorts of practices that provided them with a sense of 'homeness'. Moreover, I argue that these practices created contestation and conflict among people with regard to how to identify which practices most essentially symbolised what they said was their culture.

As language is part of culture, I noticed that language around home and going home was used differently from the way it was in rural Eastern Cape. Consequently I start out by looking at language and its use to reveal the distinct way that indicated that terms like *ukugoduka*, *igoduka*, *irhanuga*, *emaxhoseni*, *umxhosa*, *indlu* and *ikhaya* (see glossary) were inseparable from people's definitions of a home.

¹⁸ McAllister (2001) also says that in Shixini, Transkei farming was used by amaXhosa as a form of identity.

In Crossroads and other surrounding townships, the word 'home' (*ikhaya*) was used in two senses, firstly in a spiritual and psychological sense and secondly in a physical sense. As we shall see, it was not just the existence of buildings in the villages that was said to make a place a home. Rather, it was, I was told, at times, the power that the 'home' exercised or had the right and ability to exercise over the members of that particular home, irrespective of their geographical location, that actually made it a home.

Just because I am suggesting that Crossroads people conceptualised a home and its relation to custom in particular ways should not be interpreted as implying that they had a static idea of culture and custom. Rather one needs to recognise, in their constructions of these notions, that they recognised and accepted some changes, changes that were debated at various points. Some people seemed to accept with ease changes rooted in villages more easily than they were prepared to accept those initiated in urban areas.

For example, some people from Nqamakwe district in the Eastern Cape told me that in their village some residents did not send their sons to the mountain at the time of seclusion immediately after their circumcision surgery. Instead, they said, the initiation school would take place in one of the relative's huts or at an unused house belonging to a friend, so that the initiate was not in the immediate proximity of his mother and of women in general. The reason for this change in customary practice was said to be an effort to protect the initiates from *amagqwirha* (witches).

This was a change, as initiation had, since the 1900s, been socially constructed and practised, especially by *amaXhosa* men, as a ritual that separates men from women and therefore, in contrast to *intonjana* (women's initiation rite — see Chapter Four), performed away from home and women (see Hunter 1962, Wilson 1966, Soga 1973). Some people in Nqamakwe, I was told, had seen the need to change as they felt that the old method was not effective in protecting them and their families from the death that they associated with

witchcraft. This showed that changes could be, and often were identified and negotiated.

There was a difference, however, in the level of acceptance of changes between changes that originated in urban areas where such changes were forced on them by their urban situations, and those that came from an institution that people recognised as their own, and where they therefore felt they had the right to suggest changes.

Case 3.1: Rejecting the urban origins of change

Mbalo was a man from Peddie in the Eastern Cape. He lived with his wife and three children, two of whom were in senior high school at Crossroads. The third son had stopped going to school in the twelfth grade (std 10). Mbalo himself had passed a second form at school. In December 2000 he told me he was about to go home (to Peddie) because his brother's son was going for initiation soon. Mbalo had planned to take his son to Peddie for initiation only in 2001. But seeing that his brother at home was doing it for his own son, Mbalo wanted to go to Peddie two weeks before the actual circumcision date to speak to his brother and see if it was possible to bring his own son, who lives with him at Crossroads, to be initiated together with the son of his brother: "so that the family could cut expenses and avoid having similar rituals in two successive years". Mbalo was not going to have his son initiated in Crossroads, but had planned to take him to Peddie because he did not have a byre at Crossroads and he was not prepared to *yala* (counsel) his son in a temporary byre (see below) like other men did in Crossroads. Secondly, he told me, he did not have the right old men in Crossroads to *yala* his son.

Because I had heard about the new changes like the Nqamakwe one mentioned above, I told him about what I had heard, and he told me that he knew about such changes and he actually gave me the names of other places that were using new methods in the rural Eastern Cape. I then asked Mbalo why he had problems with the new changes in Crossroads and he told me that people in the Eastern Cape could make changes because they have the right to do so, but people in Crossroads had left their homes in the Eastern Cape and thus have no right to make changes to *amasiko* (cultural rituals) that belong *emaXhoseni* (in the place of Xhosas).

From the Nqamakwe story and Case 3.1 we see changes in what was regarded as customary practices. The responses to the changes made by the people were not similar. The Nqamakwe change was accepted well and

respected, or at least I never met anyone who rejected it. This was because Crossroads people thought that people in the villages had the right to change their cultural practices whenever they felt it was necessary. The resistance that Mbalo revealed to having a temporary kraal in town revealed a negative attitude that he had of the urban areas as a place he at the time did not have the power to convert fully into a place he could call a home. He did not believe that people in *esilungwini* (place where things are done in a white person's way) were qualified to come with suggestions as to (as he put it) "how I should practice my own custom".

If the changes had come with situations and/or institutions that were regarded by those experiencing the change as not qualified to make such changes, then the changes were less readily accepted as legitimate. Such changes then took long to be accepted and were always seen by people as forms of intrusion into their cultural institutions.

Mwaipopo (2001) says that in Saadani in Tanzania when *ujamaa*¹⁹ had prevailed, the fact that women were able and actually encouraged to take to fishing as a means to sustain their families was regarded by men as an influence only of what we might describe as modernisation. Fishing had previously been socially constructed as a kind of work for men only, and they disapproved of the change because it had been imposed by outside forces.

It is thus not change itself that people resist in such situations. It is the right that what they see as a foreign institution has over them that they question. In the Saadani case, that institution was *maendelo* (modernisation—Mwaipopo 2001:155). In the Crossroads case, it was the pressures coming from the urban and the "failure of modernisation to create the conditions of a stable, modern existence" (Bank, 2002: 8). It was because of various failures and pressures

¹⁹ The country (Tanzania)'s description for co-operation based on African familiihood. The major aspect of the *ujamaa* programme included, the relocation of what were scattered populations into concentrated localities, with the aim of expediting social service delivery and simultaneously, to inculcate a socialist ideology as the main approach to social and economic development. (Mwaipopo, 2001:57)

that, in trying to cope with urban presence, some people had tried to alter their cultural practices to a measurable extent (see Case 3. 5). But people have also painted a picture of an ideal home in the rural areas, an example to which I now turn.

In language used to refer to home and going home, a sense of permanence was attached to defining a home. This becomes clear in case 3.2 that demonstrates that such permanence cannot easily be imagined as existing or being possible in urban houses.

A home, according to Felski (2000: 22), is a firm position from which we 'proceed' (whether every day or over longer periods of time) and to which we return in due course. This definition of a home contains a central element that, although my respondents did not verbally communicate it as such, was always there in their explanations of what constitutes a home. The central theme was the element of a home as a place where people started their life journeys, whether short or long term ones. *AmaXhosa* of Crossroads, one example of a place regarded as *esilungwini*, told their stories in a way that showed that they did not regard *esilungwini* as an ideal place for a home. In other words, in order for them to feel completely at home they wanted to go back to the places of their own and their parent's birth.

Case No.3.2 –Home as a place of rest.

MamTshawe, a Charismatic Christian who therefore, as she pointed out, did not believe in ancestors, told me, when I was doing my survey, that although she did not need the ancestors in her life she and her husband would *goduka* (go home) when their retirement time came, and would leave their four-roomed Crossroads house for their children. 'Going home' (*ukugoduka*) gave a home, in this perspective, an element of a level of permanence, implying that she believed had come to live only temporarily *esilungwini*. MamTshawe described a home thus, "*kaloku ikhaya yindawo yokuphumla*" (but a home is a place of rest), thus implying that it is opposed to the place of *impangelo* (working for wage).

MamTshawe's (case 3.2) definition of a home as a place of rest was widely understood in various different contexts of permanence, as shown below.

The word *ukuphangela* is derived from the verb *ukuphanga*, meaning to eat as fast and as much as you can so that the person you are eating with from the same plate gets as little food as possible. This means that people were aware that, while working for their white employers (who were virtually the sole employers at that time), they were in competition for products with their employers and with one another. Such competition necessitated that, whenever possible, they ate as much as they could although they were the ones that were only getting the crumbs from the plate. The word *ukuphanga* is also used frequently in Xhosa by and about children. For instance, it is used to describe situations where children of rich men invite those of the poor to have *amasi* (sour milk) with them, and where the poor children are so hungry—as if they do not know where their next meal is coming from—that they eat as fast, and as much, as they can. By the end of such a meal, the host children would have had only a few spoons while the visitors had filled their stomachs.

Use of the term to describe wage work in the city means that people thought of themselves only as visitors, even aliens in the urban places, aliens who came simply to 'fill up their stomachs' and leave the place. It also suggests that they thought of themselves as the poor who came to compete with the employers who had plenty anyway. They were not unaware that they were on the losing side because employers had made it impossible for them to have a fair share as well as to fill up their stomachs. But they came to try nonetheless. Moreover, as another respondent told me when I asked to probe if the competition was only against the employers or between the employees themselves: "*Ukuphangela* is when one competes against the person who does not belong to the same group as the opponent, what ever the difference between the competitive parties, if the competition was between the employees, the word would be '*ukuphangelana*' which means to compete against one another about food. But as you ask, I think the reason why people feel out of place in the urban areas, as it is, is because

somehow the focus has been lost, and yes, people [Africans] do compete against one another." (Interview, June 2003)

This explanation, by an educated person, indicates the 'loss of focus' that is imposed by the capitalist system on *amaXhosa*. The difference between *ukuphangela* and the same word with the suffix-(*ana*) shows that *-ana* the competition is now focused not on the intended opponent, who is supposed to be different from the rest of the people because s/he has the means of production, or s/he is the boss. The suffix *-ana* indicates that something is done between or against people (or things) of the same kind, and in this respect, 'same kind' is 'black' or 'poor'. That is why the respondent also pointed to the moral degradation among *amaXhosa*, which is the result of them competing with one another instead of helping each other. She sees this kind of competition as a loss of focus maybe because to her, (or according to village lifestyles) *amaXhosa* should be lending one another a span of oxen to cultivate their land, instead of closing themselves in their little yards with fences and ending up living like white people in their urban houses. *Ukunqomelana / inqoma*²⁰ used to be the ways of life in the villages.

Describing the breakdown of such reciprocity among the residents of Marconi Beam, Yose (1999) says that the blame was put on the process of moving to formal houses, which were seen to represent real urban lifestyle as opposed to the rural lifestyles in the urban areas that were represented by the informal settlement. In 1999 I also came across the same kind of notion when I did my honours project in Gugulethu (Ngxabi 1999) some Tambo Square shanty dwellers were reluctant to move to the new Tambo village formal houses as they said that they did not want to go and live in the area where they knew no one to share with and borrow from as they were unemployed and because living in the formal houses meant living a more private life. These people told me that life in

²⁰ *Ukunqomelana/inqoma* is to give any animal e.g. a cow or cattle in exchange for the labor of looking after the animal. When the animal has given birth, some of the offspring is then given to the person who has been looking after the mother animal. This way, the poor were helped to start their own way off poverty. (see Alverson's (1978) discussion of *mafisha*).

the informal settlement was more like that in the village homes than that of the formal houses. To them what made homes was more than just the formality of the houses they were now getting. People said that it was easy to ask a neighbour for anything that they needed in the informal settlement than it would be in the formal houses. They said that it was important to keep the relations they had forged with their neighbours. Spiegel (1999) also says that because of their relocation to formal houses which hindered the ease with which they could maintain their earlier reciprocal relationships—relationships of a kind they were used to in villages—people talked of the shanty areas as rural and the formal housing area as urban spaces (or places).

This shows that urban areas and the capitalist way of life were often seen by people as taking away their culture of togetherness and communality, something they saw as central to home and home-making. Instead, capitalism was seen to be instilling a competitiveness which was then understood as a loss of focus on one's own ways, as people were supposed to be helping one another and not working against others. This was a state of strenuous and alienating life, which indeed, necessitated some kind of rest (that comes with being *emakhaya* -in the place of homes) after being exposed to it one's entire working lifetime.

Coming back to Mamtshawe's comment (case 3.2) that a home is a place of rest: she meant that the reason she thought that her *indlu* (house) at Crossroads was not a home, had to do with the fact that the reason she came to Crossroads was not to rest but to work (*ukuphangela*). In this context, work (*ukuphangela*) referred not only to doing physical or productive work, but to working for money. For instance, when people in Crossroads complained, '*ayikho imisebenzi*', (there is no work), they did not mean that there was nothing to do, but that no one had any work to offer to them as *impangelo* (wage labour); there was no *imisebenzi* that became the means to *phangela*.

When she said that a home was a place of rest, Mamtshawe did not mean that there was nothing to do at home. As a Xhosa speaking person myself, I know that in *isiXhosa*, when an old man on pension in the Eastern Cape decides

to drive a span of oxen and cultivate his field, he is not regarded as resting in any literal sense, even though it is said that by going home on pension he has gone there to rest. Rather it was said that *uyasebenza* (he is working, but using a different form for the verb to work) as opposed to *uyaphangela* (he is working for a wage). The physical work he does might be even more physically challenging than the work he did *esilungwini* while he worked for a wage. But he was regarded, especially by people who were still employed, as someone *ophumle* (who is resting) because he did not *phangela* anymore.

This contrast between working for wages and doing socially prestigious work has been described for Tswana by Jean and John Comaroff (1992) when they show that *tiro* (to do/work) was used to imply that one worked for oneself as opposed to *mmereko* (from Afrikaans *werk*) which connotes to do for wage labor. Hoyt Alverson (1978) too has demonstrated that in Gaborone, men from the eastern Botswana valued *go itirela* (doing/working for oneself), as they said that it betokens personal autonomy, over *go bereka* (working for a wage) (1978: 148). Lately, Bank (2002) also talks of the kind of work that is seen by people who do it as a 'labour of love', that is, the kind of work that people connected with their rural identity (2002: 189). That is why a former migrant, when he told his friends who still had to work for white people, would say, "*Kaloku mna ndiphumle, ndidla endala ngoku*" (But I am now resting, I now live on the old [money]). His use of the word *endala* (the old) implied that he lived on a pension, money that had always been deducted from his salary, like one would preserve food using any method for future use. In this context to rest, (*ukuphumla*) included both the physical rest and the psychological relief, that one feels when one no longer had to work (*ukuphangela*) for an employer or an oppressor, a situation that was regarded as humiliating but necessary regarding the inescapable capitalist and racially discriminatory way of life, and one which, in order for people to cope, they regarded as temporary. Hoyt Alverson (1978) reveals the way in which elders in Botswana, although having worked in the mines themselves, described mine work in terms of the theme: "the mines

destroy humanity" (1978:222). In the example of the old man above, his work of cultivating his fields in the Eastern Cape was regarded as work (*umsebenzi*), albeit in a different context. It was his own work and the product thereof was his in full, unlike in the situation of an employee. This kind of work in a way carried what I call 'customary prestige' that was only possible as the old man was living in his own home where he lived as an owner of his own labour and production, as opposed to *ukuphangela*.

Zolani, a 27 year old male student, originally from Ugie in the Eastern Cape, said "My home is where my great grandparents and my parents are resting." In this context, rest and home indicated a level of spiritual permanence and were inseparable, as Zolani was talking about his ancestors, people no longer alive and now buried at Ugie. They were *lele* (sleeping, i.e. put to rest) in the surroundings of their birthplace. For Zolani, his home was a place that had the graves of his ancestors to whom he could call during times of social crisis (see case 3.3 below)

People in Crossroads also defined home according to their cultural identities and conceptions of some qualities, which were said to be central in order for a place to be called a home. These include certain spatial characteristics; particular kinship relations that enable certain ritual practices and patterns of sharing that are defined as Xhosaness. The cases below, reveal three of these aspects: (1) a space that enabled cultural practices; (2) Material and social provision; and (3) power exercised.

People in Crossroads defined a home in terms of the extent to which it enabled them to enact particular cultural practices and ideals. By 'culture' I do not here mean that people had a singular lifestyle. *Isithethe* (custom) and *isiko* (culture) were the words they used in defining home and *Xhosaness*, including all those 'customary/cultural' identity markers they did not want to shed in the context of their living space. Their cultural claims were despite the differences between them in the intensity of their cultural practices in their daily lives, class-based differences in lifestyles and differing family traditions. They were cultural

practices that people brought with them to the future because they felt that losing the practices might alienate them from their culture. As I have indicated above, some people told me why they could never accept the urban spaces they lived in as homes. For example, Noluvo, a woman from Butterworth in the Eastern Cape in her late thirties who had been in Cape Town since she was ten years old, said: "This place can't be a home, it does not allow us to have our own livestock. You know we need those to perform our rituals" (Interview, May 2000).

Because the Cape Town metropolitan council did not permit the ownership and keeping of livestock within the urban area, some people thought such an environment could not be defined as their home because they needed cattle to secure their spiritual and physical well-being. Noluvo told me that a diviner had advised her that she had to have an initiation ritual performed for her to alleviate her sickness. In chapter four below I deal with the issues brought up by other women who told me that they strongly believed in their rituals, and that, for one's place of residence to be one's home, circumstances and conditions at that place should not inhibit one from performing those rituals. When explaining to me her present problem, Noluvo told me that she believed what the diviner had said: that the sickness that had been bothering her for a long time was due to the fact that both her parents had died while in Cape Town without performing her "*khulisa*" (growing up) ritual; and that she could not have it performed in town because it had to be done by a man from her clan. In addition, she said, the diviner had said that it had to be done 'at home' where her father's family performed their rituals. She was very bitter about this prescription because she had never been close to her father's brother (FB) whom she had now to ask to perform the ritual for her.

Hylton White (2001) has also shown how the responsibility of living relatives to perform rituals that were not performed by those who have passed comes to be salient. White continues:

In retrospect the life of the child becomes a contradiction, a being in a world in which she has not been made to be socially possible, so that the dead who are watching over her home neither recognise her as theirs or accord to her their protection. And so the living have to return again and again to the past and to act as if they were agents of its present, "completing" what is now seen to have been fractured all along by an absence (2001: 11).

The above quote may be relevant as well to an adult whose babyhood / childhood rite of passage was not performed and in such cases the living adult relatives would be expected to play the role of performing the before omitted ritual by which they return to the past to correct their mistake emanating itself in the present.

A home was also defined according to what it provided for people both materially and socially. One example was food that people said should come to them without their having to pay for it with money. Fields that bore crops were also said to be among the properties of a home, while others mentioned traditional medicinal plants and roots that they dug from the ground and used to cure people. For example, when asked why she said that Crossroads could not be her home, even after living there for more than twenty years, Mangwanya, an old woman and diviner in her late sixties and whose birthplace was in Herschel in the Eastern Cape, said:

I do not have a problem with the place (town), my child, in itself. The problem is that I am a diviner and I need to have medicine. Here I have to buy these things from people who go to the Transkei to get them. Usually these people are very expensive because they charge people for their bus fare [that they paid in the bus going to the place they got their plant medicines from] as well. Also, these people are at times untrustworthy. So the best thing is for one to go to the place where there is medicine yourself (Interview, May 2000).

This means that some material needs that were not met made people paint, in their minds, a picture that signifies their birth places as their real homes, and not their urban houses. (Later in this chapter I explain my own observation of the definitions of a home and the circumstances that affect them.)

Furthermore, a home was defined according to its ability to exercise power over people who are members of that home. This is the spirituality of a home to the living people.

Case No. 3.3: Home as medicine

Nomzi was from Lady Frere in the Eastern Cape and had lived at Crossroads from 1984 with her three daughters. She had a four-bedroomed house in Crossroads and a modern motorcar, which she drove herself. But, she said, the assets she had in the urban area did not have the power to allow her physical and psychological relaxation: ("*ukuphumla emzimbeni nasengqondweni*" lit: rest in the body and in the mind). She went to Lady Frere twice or more times a year. She told me that, for her, a home was where she was able to put herself in a state of just being a child (meaning that she could stop taking charge of anything). She said that one could not do that in a city house because there one has to think about many things that one is in charge of, for example one's job, one's children and so forth. Nomzi said to me that "*Ikhaya liyeza*" (a home is medicine) and added that she was always in better physical health when she was at her birth place because, she said, that is where her umbilical cord was buried (see Hammond-Tooke 1969) meaning that it was in that homestead where she was introduced to her ancestors as a child.

Having been introduced to the ancestors in that homestead made the place significant to Nomzi, in large part because it was in that homestead where the spirits of her ancestors were invoked and given the authority to watch over her (see White 2003). In a way she was supported and nurtured there, by her ancestors. The place thus became a home that, whenever she needed protection or to regain a sense of personal security in her adult life, she would go back to in order to claim again her childhood treatment from her ancestors whose dwelling place was still that home, and that home only.

The rural home was a home, according to the aforementioned people, because it is in this place that their ancestors were buried, and because it was there that they could comfortably perform their customary rituals and obligations to their ancestors. If such a place was also believed to have the power to be able to heal, particularly diseases people regarded as social rather than physical, it was then said to be one's home. For instance, it was not necessary that one

had to have been born in the particular homestead for it to be regarded as one's home. In such cases, a home to the person was the homestead that could be rightfully used to perform a healing ritual for that person. If their father had not built a home in the villages, such a homestead could be one belonging to one's father's brother or a father's father. I discuss in greater detail such examples in chapter four below.

What I need also to clarify is that what was regarded as a home was always offset by comparisons with an urban house, whether a formal building or a shack. However people recognised a difference between a formal house and a shack in a greater sense than the physical structural difference. This was because at least some people had managed to forge their cultural practices and what they said to be their 'life pillars' more easily in a shack than they said they could in a formal house. One of the main reasons given for this distinction was that the size of a shack's yard was commonly larger than that around a formal house and thus provided a locus for the celebration of various customary practices that were said to be impossible to undertake without such space. This finding resonates with Yose's (1999) from the Marconi Beam shack area that people regarded shacks as representing a rural lifestyle in the urban context.

Ardner has said "social life is given shape by and corresponds with the so-called 'real' physical world and its reality" (1981:11). This is a point Ramphela (1993: 7) confirms when she points out that, to a large extent, inhabited space has a major impact on the individual's perception of their place in society (1993:7). Indeed Ramphela (1993) goes on to illustrate how physical space limits or enables not only people's movements but also their sense of dignity. Writing about the residents of overcrowded migrant workers' hostels around Cape Town, she drew a clear picture of the way the shameful conditions in which those people were living set physical space limits that defined, in very clear terms, culturally recognised contrasts between inside and outside, private and public, family and non-family, security and insecurity (1993:3).

I would add that physical space constraints also set limits that culturally define what can be regarded as 'home' and what a place that is seen as 'away'. The descriptions by Crossroads people, of the properties of, or what constitutes a home indicate that the places in Cape Town where they lived did make them feel outside or away from their homes; that they felt as if they were not in their own homes but in houses that could not offer the kind of security that makes them feel completely at home.

In Nomzi's comments (case 3. 3), for example, we can see that a real home was not thought of in terms of the formality of the buildings, but in terms of social health and the power that the homestead had over her. Nomzi could not really feel safe in her Crossroads house because she did not feel the psychological security that she was able to feel at her rural home. Moreover, Nomzi's insecurities were chased away in her 'home' by the feeling of cultural identity—a feeling that she did not get in her Crossroads house. Having a picture in her mind of an ideal home elsewhere was Nomzi's way to cope with the alienating feeling that she experienced in her Crossroads house.

From my own observations it was apparent that most popular definitions of a home did not really stress a dichotomy of rural and urban, even though people often used words that referred to those two characteristics. Urban townships and villages were often used in comparison simply because they were a means by which to make sense of the differences in living environment – again a point that is implicit in Yose's (1999) account of Marconi Beam shack residents as they were moved to formal houses nearby. The notions of rural and urban have long provided a way that life's contrasts present themselves to people, useful for reflecting on the qualities or ways of life from which people had to choose their own ways to live (Spiegel, 1999).

What I am saying here is that my informants had found themselves in situations where they felt they had had to get used to a new way of life, that of urban township environment that did not provide for the practices to which they were accustomed to in their village homes. They then used what they knew to

interpret their world. Because of their past, which was what had established the norms for them, the properties and characteristics of their village homes became the centre of their definitions of a real home. From most of the definitions people gave, it was as though they were saying that home had rural qualities and could not easily be transposed to formal urban areas.

However, that was not always the case. A much more important element that I found in people's definition of a home is the psychological relief from a number of pressures that a home provided for them. For instance Mbalo (see case 3.1) perceived that people from the urban areas could not legitimately alter *isiko* (custom), and his home was the only place that had the right to do so. His son could thus only become a man if circumcised in his home. In that way the 'home' provided Mbalo with pride and with a source for the 'authenticity' of both his son's manhood and his own *isiko*.

It is not, however just its rural characteristics that made the place such a 'home'. Rather it is the fact that the place provided the people who, according to Mbalo, were the only ones who had the right to make necessary changes—a factor that meant that he could then still accept the changed practices of custom as authentic examples of that custom.

The example I have given of the popular contrast drawn between work and rest (*ukuphangela* and *ukuphumla*) also shows that a home was defined in terms of provision of the sort of rest that provided Crossroads people with the kind of relief that made them feel at 'home' again as opposed to being just temporary visitors, sojourners who had come to urban areas only for a futile exercise of competing for living resources against the rich. Persons who no longer had to do that considered themselves as being back home where they could take things at their own pace again.

Again one notices that in some ways a home was defined in terms of its provision, to the members of the home, with freedom to depend on it. In this situation, what made it a home was the presence there of some power or source of power, for instance, the presence of the graves of the parents or

grandparents. This because in *isiXhosa*, as we will see below, dead people are able to communicate with their living descendants.

In their definition of a home, people like Nomzi and Zolani (case 3.3) expressed a feeling of 'homeness' in the places they called homes, not simply because they were in the villages, but because in these places there were graves of important people in their lives upon whom they felt they could depend for nurturance and guidance. They said that in these places they could drop their guards as parents, and be guided and put themselves in a state of being vulnerable and under the guard and guidance of their ancestors. In other words, a home was defined less in terms of its village character than in terms of its ability to provide people with some feeling of safety as they unwound and relaxed from the pressure of daily life that comes with being in charge of the events of the day.

The case studies below demonstrate reasons that people who lived in Crossroads gave for thinking that the urban houses they lived in were not 'homes'. It has to be borne in mind that the cases used were of people living in all the three kinds of dwellings available in Crossroads: shacks, bigger four-roomed houses, and two-roomed RDP houses. This means that it was not the question of the type of an urban dwelling that was a reason for regarding their expectations of a 'home' as being unfulfillable by their various urban houses.

Case 3. 4: *Ingulo yasekhaya* (home illness)²¹ and home.

Funeka was a 35 year old woman who lived with her brother at Unathi, the area of formal four roomed houses. Both were employed, Funeka at a bank and her brother as a teacher. When she got sick she went to her

²¹ *Ingulo yasekhaya* is any kind of illness that is believed to have been manifested in possession by the spirits of the ancestors, and that especially requires the patient to become a diviner. It derives its adjective '*yasekhaya*' (of the home) from the fact that one is only possessed by the spirits of one's own relatives, and also that the propensity to suffer the disease (experience the calling) runs in the genealogical line. If one is possessed by the spirit of an unrelated person then one can be cured by medicine instead of being put through a diviner's initiation ritual – an extended process.

home of origin, at Cala in the Eastern Cape, because no physician in Cape Town could tell her what was wrong with her, except that she 'had stress'²². She told me that her father had wanted her to look for a job in the Eastern Cape but she did not want to work and live there because she was afraid of *amagqwirha* (witches). This was because she had consistently been sick throughout her years there of schooling and right until she had passed her matriculation and left to come and live with her uncle (father's brother) in Sea Point, an upmarket Cape Town suburb.

During the two weeks she was at 'home', Funeka's father took her to a diviner who explained that she needed to accept that she was suffering from '*ingulo yasekhaya*' (home illness) and a goat was slaughtered for her to appease the ancestors. This ritual had to be done at her birthplace, and the place where her grandparents had been buried. A necklace and bracelets of white small beads were made for her. At the time of writing, it had been eighteen months since she had accepted that her problem was one of home illness and she had not again been sick after the performance of the ritual.

Because of relatedness of the above case to the next I have analysed them together. I argue here that physical space, time and blood-relatedness are three elements that define a 'home'. Below is a case that shows the importance of the dead being buried in their place of birth.

Case 3. 5: Birth place as burial place

Zolile was a forty-six-year old man living at Unathi with his wife and two daughters aged seventeen and thirteen. Zolile's father, now a pensioner in Willowvale (Eastern Cape) had a house in Gugulethu, but he had retained strong links with his Willowvale 'home' while he was working in Cape Town. Zolile was a third son of five. His eldest brother had also worked in Cape Town, living with his mother for six years after his father got a house. But they still went back home regularly. While the three were living in Gugulethu in 1973 (father, mother and the eldest son) the eldest son was killed in an accident. According to Zolile, his grandfather (father's father) did not believe in what he called 'cultural nonsense' and he ordered Zolile's father (his son) not to waste money by taking the body to the Eastern Cape. Instead, he argued, they should bury the deceased in Gugulethu.

²² Just as people are said to 'have high blood' (in other words to have a high blood pressure count) others are diagnosed as suffering from stress, which is then described as 'having stress' — as if both are diseases in and of themselves, rather than symptoms.

Two years before I met them, Zolile's then eleven-year old daughter, I was told, had started behaving in a way that Zolile and his wife felt needed special attention. She would sit and talk as if she was talking to someone, nodding her head and saying 'I will tell him.' When they asked to whom she was talking the girl told them it was a man whose name she did not know. After a year of these 'strange' behavioural episodes, the girl lost her eyesight. They took her to several specialists but the cause was not diagnosed. They then went to a diviner, who told them that the man that came to visit the little girl was Zolile's deceased eldest brother, and that he was asking the girl to tell Zolile to take him 'home'. Zolile's grandfather, who had ordered the older brother's burial in Cape Town, was himself by now long dead, while Zolile's now seventy-three year old father was living in Willowvale. The diviner suggested that, while Zolile's family was still talking about the issue and working out related expenses, they could go to the grave and '*ngxola*' (scold) (see Ngubane 1977: 59; White 2001) the deceased man so that he would cease bothering the girl. They should also announce at the graveside that they had heard his request and were working on it. Zolile showed me the girl who was no longer blind but physically fit after they had done the *ukungxola* (scolding) ritual. *Ukungxola* literally means to scold a person. *Ukungxola* ritual means that traditional Xhosa beer is made and then in the morning on which it is to be drunk, entitled people, (blood relatives) like the father or the male father's side, agnatic relatives of the deceased who is believed to be causing the problem, go to the grave and tell him, standing next to his/her grave, to stop bothering the child who is suffering because of the problem. They then promise the deceased that they will soon attend to the complaint. The beer can only be drunk after 'talking' to the deceased has been done, and only elderly people are to drink that beer (see Ngubane, 1977).

In Xhosa and other Nguni²³ customs, the space where people bury their dead is of importance (Ngubane, 1977; White, 2003). Its importance derives from their valorisation of a communal way of living, as is reflected in the commonly cited maxim: "*umntu ngumntu ngabantu*" (a person is a person by other people). Mostly, the phrase is used in reference to the living, but, I would add, it includes relations with the dead as well. Case 3.5 above confirms my suggestion. Zolile's rejection of his formal house at Unathi as his home comes

²³ "The Nguni can be divided into a Northern Group- the Zulu and the Swazi people- and a southern group which is made up of amaBhaca, amaBomvana, amaGcaleka, amaMfengu, amaMpondomise, amaMpondo, abeSotho, and abaThembu, and they together comprise the Xhosa Nation." (Mandela,1994:4)

from the experience he had with the spirit of his dead brother. The message that had been conveyed to him by his daughter's illness was that his dead brother did not accept *esilungwini* (the place where things are done in a white person's way) as the place where he wanted to be buried. The relationship between the siblings, the blood, not just between Zolile and his brother, but between him and the older, ancestors who were buried in their villages acted as a determining factor as to the place Zolile would regard as his home. If town could not be a home for his dead brother, it was not a home for him either. As Zolile said, with a sigh, "This place is not my home, I have a home that my ancestors know at Willowvale. The only reason my wife and I live together here is because I do not like living alone here and my father spent most of his working time with my mother too until he retired from employment." (Interview, April 2001)

Ngubane (1977) has discussed this kind of communal relationship between living and dead, although she was not writing about a home but the right and wrong places of burial of the dead, when she discusses the kinds of spirits that were believed to be responsible for divination powers among the Zulu. According to Ngubane (1977), and White (2003) spirits of the people who were not buried in the correct places wander and bring havoc in the lives of those who are still living. My point here is that my Crossroads respondents defined a place as their home if they thought that the place was regarded as such by their ancestors, and that, when one talked of a home one was talking of a place that was not just of themselves, but of the spirits of the ancestors too. Ngubane's explanation fits well with the reasoning behind cases 3.4 and 3.5. Funeka (case 3.4) had to go not just to the Eastern Cape, but to the place, the physical space, which was regarded as a home by her ancestors as well. The presence of the graves made the place sacred to the living relatives. This space was charged with the power over the living so that it was 'respected' and referred to as '*indawo yoo tatomnkhulu*' (the place or space of our great grand fathers).

In Zolile's daughter's case (case 3.5), the ritual of *ukungxola* was performed at the burial place of the person who was believed to be inflicting the girl's illness. This was because of the two-fold importance of people in a person's physical and spiritual life. The first relates to the fact that the buried person was not buried with his ancestors. In Xhosa custom, when someone died, it was said that '*uye kooyisemkhulu*' (he has gone to his great grandfathers). This shows that, even after death, a person was said never to be alone but to reside with a group of relatives in the next realm. The presence of the bones of the deceased in the grave where the relatives of Zolile (case 3.5) scolded the deceased enabled them to transcend the physical realm to the wandering spirit that was inflicting pain on the child. Ross (1997) says "Performance (rituals both secular and sacred) are a means to bridge what she calls 'fundamental discontinuities in life' ". She goes on to say "Ritual performance has the effect of transforming and reasserting historical time and chronologies. It creates space for the performance of particular moralities, and in so doing, creates and recreates boundaries" (1997: 5-6) The same reasoning is found in Zolile's child's case (case 3.5) where the performance of the scolding ritual was used as a means to mend the discontinuity in the life of the child and the parents. In other words, the ritual became a tool to correct the uncorrected past, where the living relatives acted as agents of such correction (see White 2001).

The same explanation applies to Funeka's case (case 3.4). In order for her relatives to cure her, they had to ask a diviner on their behalf to appeal to the non-living community of their relatives from the correct physical space and resolve the problem that was experienced in the here and now. In other words, to use White's phrasing, " And so the living have to return again and again to the past and to act as if they were agents of its present" (2003: 11). Funeka's home, then, was the place of her living ancestors (the kin who had to perform the ritual) as well as the dead ancestors, where they are buried, a 'respected' space that cannot be changed.

The second aspect of the importance of communality that was revealed in Zolile's child's case (case 3.5) is that of the dependence of the dead on the living. The spirit of the dead man used a 'blood' relative to communicate his inability to cross over to his ancestors because of being buried in the wrong place. Once more, the wrong of the past (at the time of his burial) was communicated so that it affected the present of both the living and the dead.

My informants used the stories related here to explain what made and did not make homes for them and what the properties of home were. The two cases confirmed something expressed by another informant. When asked what constituted a home for her she said: " A home is a home with the people that have the responsibility to help you, so that should they not do so, they are punished by those who look after the family [in other words, the ancestors]" (Interview June, 2000). This statement once more emphasizes the importance of people in a home, both those who are alive and those who have passed on. This means that a home, for people such as the quoted informant, was a place where the presence of all the salient people (living and deceased) was felt, people whose responsibility and interest was to keep the household's members bound together under any circumstances, irrespective of where they were presently living. In the case of the last quoted informant, Madlamini, she too was referring to a rural home where parents and grandparents were buried. She said that their presence defined the place's 'homeness' through their power to communicate to her and all her siblings and relatives in ways that ensured that whatever was done inappropriately could be corrected.

The above were examples of the reasons given by my respondents as to why their village homes were still to them their real homes, rather than their Crossroads houses where they lived. This was despite the fact that some had established themselves fairly well in terms of material belongings in the urban area. Yet they stated there was something missing in the urban houses that precluded their being considered as their homes. However, since some had lived

for a long time in their urban homes, they now felt the need to bring some rural qualities into their urban houses. I now turn to those kinds of processes.

I use a case to illustrate people's use of material belongings to make changes to the urban place where they lived so that it might resemble what they regarded as a 'home'. Ferguson (1983) argues that Lesotho men keep cattle as a means to have a form of wealth that is not easy to convert into cash by women. I argue below that keeping livestock was one means some Crossroads men used to turn their urban living spaces into places that resembled their village homes while also ensuring that they had access to material resources.

Case 3. 6: Livestock in the urban shacks.

Zenzwa was a man from Lady Frere in the Eastern Cape. He was in his early sixties and he lived in a Boystown shack with his wife and an unrelated twenty-six-year old man who worked as his herdsman. His two children (aged Twenty and 24) lived at Veza, in an RDP house that belonged to Zenzwa. Talking about his livestock, Zenzwa said, "*Ndiyayithanda gqitha imfuyo. Kunjalo nje andikwazi ukuhlala ngaphandle kwayo.*" (I love livestock very much and I can't live without it) He had a herd of nine cattle and a flock of twelve sheep. He had a huge yard around his Boystown shack with a wire and wood byre and a corrugated iron sheep shed. During the day, the herdsman looked after the livestock, taking the cattle to an open field near Cape Town's international airport and allowing the sheep to graze in the narrow zone between the shack and the neighbouring highway. Each day Zenzwa's wife would go to the market place at Nyanga bus and taxi terminus to collect cabbage leaves discarded by the vegetable sellers there, to be put into the sheep and cattle kraal and stable. She also filled the halved motor tyres there with water for the animals to drink. Zenzwa was available at his shack only during week-ends and evenings, because he worked Mondays to Fridays as security officer for a local clinic. When he was home, he helped his wife to care for the animals and sometimes went to the pasture area if one of his cattle did not come home for the evening. Zenzwa told me he had not accompanied his children when they went to live in his new RDP house because of a space shortage there: the RDP house was too small for the whole family and, above all, there was no space in the formal housing area for a stable or byre. That meant he would have had to get rid of all his livestock, and that was problematic for him because he adored them.

Case 3.6 is an illustration that some people used the rural standard and way of life to define what a home should be or feel like. Using Zenzwa's words below I illustrate that he created a temporary home for himself away from his home in the villages, using the possible features he had in his mind for a home.

Zenzwa told me he felt that he was able, to an extent, to make a home out of the shack that he lived in at Boystown because the space there had allowed him to live as a 'man' of the kind that he believed men at *emaXhoseni* should be: "A Xhosa man must have livestock (*imfuyo*), and he has to provide for his children and family; and cattle and milk are the best way to make a Xhosa home." In other words the relatively large space of the shack area and its surrounds allowed him to engage in a practice that satisfied him in that it fulfilled what he regarded as the traditional and cultural ideals of Xhosa masculinity and status. When I asked him why he did not move to the new section where he has a formal house, Zenzwa replied:

It is not too bad here in the shacks. The place is almost similar to *emakhaya* (place of home). The main problems that we have here as livestock keepers—as you can see, I am not the only one with a kraal—is thieves and that it is illegal to have cattle in the town areas because they cross the roads and cause accidents. I love livestock very much as a Xhosa man. Livestock is the dignity (*isidima*) and power (*amandla*) of being a Xhosa man. That is why the white people forced our fathers to get rid of cattle, because they knew that if they had them they would never need anything from them (whites) Livestock is my life, without it I can't perform my cultural customs.

When I asked if he performed any such rituals in his shack, Zenzwa told me that he performed all rituals that necessitated the slaughtering of an animal only at Lady Frere whence he came. In other words, Zenzwa did not keep livestock in the Boystown shack area because he liked it there or because he wanted to turn the place into his real home. He simply kept them because to him livestock was something with which every Xhosa man should associate directly. He referred to the time when the apartheid government had forced rural people to reduce their livestock numbers, ostensibly to avoid overgrazing but, by his own reasoning, because whites were determined to have people having to depend on them for a

living. He thus wanted to continue as a rurally based man would. His statement that the shack area was similar to *emakhaya*, indicated that he appreciated that this was a property of the area. But that said, the area was not sufficiently like *emakhaya* for him to want to turn it into his home. This is evident in his statements such as "I take my cattle and sheep home to my relatives when I think I need to do so because I can't cope with too many cattle and sheep here". The shack area he lived in allowed him the opportunity to look after his own livestock until he was happy to take it home where he had people whom he regarded as suitable to help him when performing his rituals. He used the importance of the presence of relatives as a main property of a home in most of his statements. Boystown lacked that. For instance, when asked what the difference was between his shack and his home in the villages, Zenzwa used the statement,

Yes I have just told you that staying in Boystown is similar to living in the place of homes, but it is of utmost importance to have people of your blood in your home, here I only live with my children, who are still very young. They cannot on their own address my ancestors (*ukunqula*) on my behalf if something happened to me. My brother is the only person at home who can do that. I do not have anyone here that knows my parents, or anything about my past for that matter.

In a way, Zenzwa's action revealed his wish to convert the urban shack area into a temporary home, not just a house, until he was able to go to his home permanently. What this means is that for people whose way of life was informed by the standards of rural culture, that way of life and its properties where it is possible to practice them, become the means to minimise alienation. Under such circumstances, I think one can say that people conceptualised degrees of 'homeness', where there were long-term temporary homes, with the qualities of home that were possible to practise in the urban areas. Indeed the purpose of this chapter is to show people's perceptions of a home, and, moreover to show that, although they talk of urban areas as not their homes, their rurally-informed ways of life have survived urbanisation and still carry on in the urban areas. This

is something that indicates the change and remoulding of urban areas to what people regard as homely although temporary living spaces.

Quoting Devisch (1995) who wrote about the people in Kinshasa, Bank says that "The failure of modernisation to create the conditions for a stable, modern urban existence has led urban inhabitants of [that] city to create new urban communes which emulate [the matricentral] rural village structures which oppose the alienating project of whitening..." (2002: 8). In a way, livestock keeping in Crossroads helped Zenzwa and others like him to reconstruct their sense of cultural belonging through emulating rural village life ways.

Yose (1999) has explained that people at Marconi Beam indicated that the shack areas they were moving out of to settle into new formal houses had properties that they identified as those of villages. The same could be said of the shacks at Boystown, at least for men who kept livestock. Although not in my sampled group, I also met five men in Gugulethu who lived in shack areas there just to be able to keep livestock. These men explained that they did not want to part with their livestock just because they lived in an urban area. Like Zenzwa, their concern was that, if they did not have livestock, they would have lost the dignity of being real Xhosa men as well as something that, for them, was a property of a proper home. They also indicated that there were various risk factors in keeping livestock in townships, thieves and car accidents being among them. However, people who strongly wanted to keep livestock risked it because, for them, having livestock was a way of being what they said was a traditional Xhosa man. None of them ever indicated any interest in selling their livestock, explaining that people go to nearby white farmers to buy animals for use in rituals. They too had bought their livestock from such white farmers, in Phillipi and Browns Farm, but neither for sale nor for ritual slaughtering. They added that they had to keep the papers to prove purchase in case of legal inquiries, not because they intended selling the cattle and sustaining themselves thereby. For that they turned to regular wage employment, as did Zenzwa.

Tat'u Tshawe, a man in his sixties, was a returned exile who told me he had studied agriculture in exile, that is, cattle and sheep farming. Now, he said, he wanted to speak to the local government so that something was done to have a special camp for people who wanted to keep livestock while living *esilungwini*. He did not himself keep livestock. But, he told me, he wanted to devise a means for people to claim back their power, and he had thought that having livestock would help Crossroads people by being able to make money through livestock sales, and also by having their children consuming home-made sour milk (*amasi asekhaya*). Like Zenzwa (case 3.6) Tat'u Tshawe referred with some bitterness to the stock control that had been imposed on Eastern Cape people in the 1950s. He said:

It is not right for us as *amaXhosa* to live without livestock. It is our life. You know, the Boers knew that our strength lay in our livestock, and they forced our fathers to get rid of them, saying that they had too many. They ignored the fact that livestock die sometimes. I was an uncircumcised boy at that time. I saw how painful it was when my father had to sell some of his oxen. Livestock is the means to run a homestead. Without it a Xhosa man does not have a home. The Trust Boers²⁴ would come and call people to the chief's 'great place' and tell them to sell their cattle. I could see that my father was hurt. You know, my child, during those times the land was still beautiful. Our culture was still practised. You know, we had girlfriends, but we never took away their pride [meaning virginity]. Their pride was not only theirs, but it was the cattle byre of their fathers. If you damaged a girl as a young man, you knew that you had opened your father's cattle byre because you and your father would have to pay. [with cattle to compensate for the girl's virginity].

Tat'u Tshawe's interest in livestock came from the fact that he thought it would help develop business opportunities for Crossroads people like the white farmers had on nearby farms. He was concerned about people who were

²⁴ The word 'trust' refers to the South African Native Trust (SANT) that was established in terms of the 1936 Natives Trust and Land Act ostensibly to be the custodian of land kept aside for African people's use and occupation. The process of 'betterment' (de Wet 1995) was overseen by the SANT, and, as indicated earlier, often included enforced culling of livestock deemed to be more numerous than any particular area's carrying capacity. The state agents were employees of SANT, and they came to be known (as here) as Trust Boers, as the imposition of betterment came to be known as 'the Trust'.

unemployed saying that if there were a chance of income coming from selling livestock, people would be better off. However, his immediate switch to the 1950s betterment planning process, and the negativity he expressed towards it, showed that he saw the process as having destroyed a central point in the properties of Xhosa homes. Tat'uTshawe told me that he had spoken to Thabo Mbeki while they were preparing to come back from exile, and told him that he was worried because he was not a highly educated person. He said he had wanted to return to the country with something to help improve people's lives, and Mr. Mbeki had suggested he take the course in agriculture. Tat'uThsawe also told me that he had been a member of the committee of the residents of Crossroads that negotiates with the city council for the provision of cattle byres for people who want to have such as a means of earning a living. However he told me that nothing had come out of their pleas to the council yet except for promises. His interest in livestock was therefore two-fold: First it was to empower people, so they could regain their economic independence; and their sense of cultural autonomy through reminders such as traditional foods like home made sour milk, an act that could help reawaken the culture of *amaXhosa*. Second, in a statement loaded with a whole lot of meaning, he talked of livestock as the 'life of *amaXhosa*'—by which he meant that *amaXhosa* were dependent on livestock (he called them *impahla* (goods; chattels) for their rituals. He used the word *impahla* to signify the use of livestock to do *umsebenzi* (work; in this case ritual work, or the work of the ancestors – see Murray 1981), the responsibility a household must fulfil to appease the ancestors (see above).²⁵ Tat'u Tshawe thus meant that it was the duty of a man to have livestock (*impahla*) so that he could use those to perform necessary rituals as his household grew. It was, he added, the duty of every father to look after the well being of his household, and particularly to ensure their social health through performing rituals.

²⁵ In this perspective, *umsebenzi* was more than just work. It included rituals for the ancestors that a living person could not escape, once it had been established that they were the ones who carried that responsibility.

Since it was precisely that kind of ritual and cultural practice that were at the centre of people's definitions of what constituted a home, one could say that Tat'u Tshawe wanted to devise a method that would enable people who would spend the rest of their lives in Crossroads to continue their cultural practices. His cultural sentiments were expressed even more clearly when he started talking about women's virginity and its relationship to men's cattle byres. He did not talk of compensation for virginity damage in terms of money. His specific mention of cattle indicates that he attached livestock to men's power and their preference for livestock over money. Tat'u Tshawe's longing for livestock keeping showed another property of a home as he knew it that was missing in town. Using agricultural skills, his claims seemed to be saying, would allow him to reconstruct his childhood home with his recollections of home made sour milk. This was not only for him, but also for other *amaXhosa* that lived in the neighbourhood.

In the Boystown shack area alone I discovered six families that had cattle, sheep and/or goats. For each, having to move to a formal house brought a threat not just to their livestock but to their ability to provide their households with places they could turn to when there was a social crisis—in other words with homes. Gwala, a Boystown resident with livestock, explicitly connected 'homeness' with livestock keeping when he explained how *unhomely* it was for him to live without livestock. He said:

A man is the head of the household. Should I have to save my home now from some kind of a crisis, I mean a real crisis that warrants me to do so, I would use my livestock. In that way I would have been a good example of a man to my children. Just think about it. It really feels as though one is living in a tent when a Xhosa man does not have anything to rely on in case of a health crisis. When I grew up, my big brother came from Gauteng without a cent, and he needed to have a ritual (*isiko*) performed for him. My father's younger brother (*tat'omncinci*) saved him with a goat until he could go and work for his own cattle. Tell me what do you think would have happened if *tat'omncinci* was not there? A ritual brings everybody back to their entitled people, (blood relatives) and place. Just imagine when your desperate child comes home and you as a father are not able to help. You cannot rely on money. Money is like water (meaning it's hard to keep).

As Hunter (1936: 69) pointed out so very long ago for the Mpondo:

Cattle are the means of keeping on good terms with the ancestral spirits and so securing health and prosperity, because maintenance of good relations with ancestral spirits depends upon making the proper ritual killings of cattle at various stages in the life of the individual and in sickness).

For men like Zenzwa (case 4), Tat'u Tshawe, Gwala and others, having livestock in the urban area was a form of keeping on good terms with the ancestors, even when not living in their village homes. Having livestock in town was thus one way of attempting to make a long-term temporary home of one's urban living space. The failure of formal urban housing areas to accommodate such people's livestock made them prefer to live in informal settlements where there was space to build a cattle byre.

Twenty years ago, and writing about people in Lesotho, Ferguson (1983: 649) said that Basotho livestock owners tended to regard livestock more as a reserve asset or property of pride than as a commercial commodity. What we see from the examples above is that the same kind of livestock 'mystique' has been carried into urban areas by some *amaXhosa* who held strong beliefs in the value of livestock in a man's home, albeit an urban place.

This did not mean, however, that keeping livestock was equivalent to living in a proper rural home for all Crossroads people. My sample is not large enough to justify such a conclusion. But the fact that there were even a few households which practised urban livestock keeping and resisted parting with their livestock, referring as they did to their fathers' resistance to the culling that followed betterment in the 1950s and 1960s, was sufficient to suggest that the idea was not completely foreign.

Zenzwa's (case 3. 6) love for his livestock came from the pride he felt when looking at the cattle and 'knowing' that, although he did not have wealth in the form of money, his family looked up to him as a father that supplied them with food in the form of milk. Indeed, the first question he asked his wife when he found me admiring his cattle when we first met was whether she had given me

amasí (sour milk) to drink, adding immediately: "In this, my place, people do not go hungry" (*andinandlala mna apha kule yam indawo*).

I now want to turn to discuss sour milk and my interpretation of why Zenzwa or even Tat'uTshawe keep bringing it up. For a person that has the conceptions of a home in a traditional way, there are always foods that are regarded as traditional. White, when speaking of the Zulu people, who are also Nguni like *amaXhosa*, says "they spoke of a class of nourishing things they called the 'food of Zuluness' or synonymously, the 'food of the people', which was distinguished from the 'food of Whiteness', " (2001:55). White continues to add that, at first sight, the quality evoked by these classifications is whether or not these foods are indigenous in origin; and to some extent this is indeed what people mean when using such terms. Zenzwa (and Tat'u Tshawe) put emphasis on sour milk because they regarded the food as 'traditionally authentic', the food of Xhosaness that of course is then also the property of a 'home'. Sour milk is important for them to boast about because it is the food of the place of homes (*ukutya kwasemakhaya*). Coming back to the phrase, 'in this place of mine', used by Zenwa when he first met me: This, 'his place' thus enabled him to feel he was a man and a provider. Yet Zenzwa still did not call 'this place' his home. It did not qualify for that status since he anticipated a time when he would put his cattle on a truck and return to his rural home. But, for the moment, he constructed his urban place as somewhere where he could still exercise certain power through keeping livestock and feeding people with sour milk. His place was therefore better than just a house (*indlu*). It was a kind of temporary home from home.

By using the examples above I have argued that some people tried to keep a continuity between the life they lived in *esilungwini* and that which they believed to be the way of their 'homes' (*indlela yasemakhaya*) I have argued also that Zenzwa, Tat'u Tshawe and Gwala's examples illustrate that some people preferred not to separate themselves from what they perceived as their 'home' way of life (*indlela yasemakhaya*). When people from the villages left their places

of birth, they had to learn and accept the ways of city life. This means that, for example, in order to have sour milk for a meal they had to buy it. Zenzwa and the others who kept livestock did it to continue to live in a rural way that did not, on a daily basis, require money from the people in order to have a meal.

Earlier I mentioned the fact that Zenzwa had a young herdsman living with him and his wife and who was not related to their family. Zenzwa told me that some time previously he had come back to the shack and found the young man there. He was then just arrived from the Eastern Cape and seeking a relative and a job. The relative was, however, no longer in Crossroads, and no one could then trace him. According to Zenzwa the young man was tired, hungry and desperate. So he was given sour milk from a calabash and a place to stay until he was ready to leave. Food sharing is a symbol of acceptance of the individual by the person giving food, and the young man soon realised that, in his destitution, he had found a home away from 'home' in Zenzwa's place. In that sense, for the young man, the very fact of the presence of livestock, and the hospitality he received, was a reminder of the norms he knew from his rural home and identified with. He then decided, after unsuccessfully seeking employment, to remain on as Zenzwa's herdsman.

I now turn to two further cases to illustrate and argue that the methods some people used to compensate for their lack of certain properties of home in the place where things are done in a white person's way (*esilungwini*) were not always understood by others and were constantly debated and contested as to whether they could be regarded as authentic Xhosa custom and culture which defines a home.

Case 3. 7: The Temporary Byre

Ngwanya's son went to an initiation school near Crossroads during October and returned in November 2000. I only found out about it when he was about to come out and I went to the family's house at Unathi just two days before the day of the young man's coming out. There was a temporary byre built of tree trunks and branches. Ngwanya had no

cattle as he lived in a part of Crossroads in which cattle-keeping is impossible. Ngwanya's wife told me that, in order for them to do things in a way closest to what they do at home in Kingwilliamstown, they had to have a place where men would sit and talk and address the ancestors. The byre is conventionally or traditionally that place (See Mndende 1999; Hunter 1962) and so they built a temporary one which they would destroy after the day of the coming out celebration (*umgidi*). The sons, men and daughters of the homestead also use a byre as a sacred place where the animal sacrifices are made and ancestors addressed.

Ngwanya's building of a temporary byre for his son's initiation showed what it was that some householders believed they had sacrificed by coming to live in the urban areas, and they enacted that which was ideal when they saw the need. Ngwanya knew that, in order for him to be able to address his ancestors, he had to stand in the byre (see Hunter, 1962; Mndende 1999). He also said that, according to what he saw as his culture, something from which he felt somewhat estranged while in town, "A Xhosa man is a person of the cattle byre. I therefore can't counsel my son in the house or just outside". The symbolic expression a, '*indoda ngumntu wasebuhlantl'* (man is a person of the cattle byre) meant that a man's identity as a man was through his ownership of livestock. To describe a man as a 'person of the byre' is an antonym to saying, "a woman is a person of *egoqweni* (the place of the stack of fire wood)²⁶, (an expression equivalent to saying that "a woman belongs in the kitchen"). His being able to be in the kraal was an important symbolic part of his role in welcoming his son to manhood. Ngwanya's actions showed how he was making an effort to force the urban house to accommodate his own way of home-making which includes performance of *umgidi*. Sichone,(1994) described the importance of rituals in the urban areas as he stated how such rituals were meant to revive people's

²⁶ These expressions have something to do with the place where men and women urinate. Men would stand against the wall of the byre and relieve themselves, while because the byre is taboo to women, they would go and squat next to their stack of firewood that they collected to relieve themselves. It also has something to do with the place where men and women respectively participate during a ritual. Men (and daughters) would be in the byre to address the ancestors and killing the beast, while daughters-in-law and their mothers-in-law will be busy getting the firewood ready for the cooking and roasting of the meat.

national identity (also see Mayer 1971). Sichone added that "The revival of such rites of passage could solve many problems created by westernization by reverting to moral traditional instruction such as is offered during initiation" (1994:14).

The act of building a temporary byre should also be seen as means of creating a new way of life in the urban areas, a way of life that Ngwanya thought was his own as a Xhosa man. The act should also be seen as a step in the process of trying to convert what was regarded as an unfriendly urban environment into a place with ritual potential that could make it feel more caring and homely.

As we have seen above, Ferguson (1983) tells how the mystique around cattle keeping restricted Basotho women from selling livestock, even in times of crisis. This shows the cultural power that was attached to cattle. Moreover, such power is characteristic of the village homes that are regarded as authentic by Xhosa men, and, in the same breath, the presence of the temporary byre may also be a symbolical representation of power expressed to the young man as an inspiration by his father, the purpose for such inspiration being to communicate imagined characteristics of an authentic Xhosa home.

The fact that the byre was a temporary one was a characteristic of an urban formal house. Moreover, it was a good indication of why the house Ngwanya lived in was insufficient to be a home because it did not allow for the kinds of cultural expression that cattle keeping enables and thus alienated those people who valued that form of cultural expression. Indeed, Ngwanya told me that he had built the temporary byre only because it would have been very strange to have his son counseled in the open space. Referring to his home in Kingwilliamstown he said that he knew from there that a home always had a byre, even if there were no cattle anymore, because a byre was the place from which to call to the ancestors. When I asked him whether everybody at Crossroads built temporary byres for initiation purposes, he admitted that most sent their sons to their village homes for such rituals, precisely because they did

not know how to address challenges such as that which he had tried to deal with by building a temporary cattle byre. However, he added, all those who did perform the ritual at Crossroads built and used temporary byres—because, he added, a temporary byre was the best one could do to recognise one's Xhosaness even though not everybody around agreed with such practices.

Ngwanya and others who might have wanted to could not have permanent cattle byres on their house sites at Unathi because of spatial constraints. And those led to disagreements about whether to meet some people's desire to perform their rituals at Crossroads but in a way as close to that at *emaXhoseni* as possible. Those disagreements were associated too with efforts some people made to create a sense of at least temporary 'homeness' in the urban areas where they resided.

By contrast with those who tried in a sense to create a kind of reformed Xhosa cultural movement in town, there were others, such as Mr Malizo (a man from Gatyana in the Eastern Cape who now lived at Gugulethu with his wife who came with him to their now residential house, also from the Eastern Cape; and four children who were all born in Cape Town,) and Mbalo (see case 3.1 – I shall collectively call them conservatives²⁷) who were extremely reluctant to accept urban-led changes to what they regarded as real Xhosaness. Such people said that it was implausible for a man to try and make a 'home' out of his urban house by building a temporary byre. Their argument was that a cattle byre was a dwelling for the ancestors where no woman should come even close, something that the space constraints of urban living precluded occurring. There was contestation too about what should happen to such a byre or the space on which it was built since the temporary byre would have been destroyed soon after the ritual. Those who thought it was wrong to erect a byre for a particular purpose and then destroy it said that it was a very strange thing to do, and one that went

²⁷ I use this word to mean people who both talk and act as cultural representatives of what they assert as culture without trying to mean that such people can't accept changes and or growth in their culture or without trying to imply any form of backwardness on their side.

against custom (*ayililo isiko* lit. 'it is not custom'). They added that that was because women would subsequently use that space as their resting place. Conservatives of that kind added that a place with an ancestral presence, such as a byre had, and needed always thereafter, to be 'respected' (see my argument about women's avoidance in Chapter Five).

A temporary byre in an urban area is something of the kind that Lefebvre calls a representation of space that tends towards a system of (intellectually worked out) verbal signs (2002:136). Those I call conservatives thus argued that there should be no difference between the way a space is used and the way it is conceptualised. If the ancestors have occupied the space, women, especially those regarded as daughters-in-law to such ancestors, should not at any time in the future use it.

I have so far argued, by a way of case studies, that some people who felt alienated in their urban houses constructed ways to fill the gap between the feel of those houses and what they said were the features of a home. However, I have also indicated that reformist attempts to construct 'homeness' and Xhosaness in town were contested by people who believed that custom could never be changed or reformed to fit urban life as it was experienced in places such as Crossroads during the period of my research.

Conclusion

This chapter was aimed at arguing that Crossroads people used the standard of village homes to measure the extent to which their urban houses give them a sense of what I call 'homeness'. Because the urban houses do not have the qualities that are said to be essential in a proper home, they were then described as nothing more than the residential space for people who intend going back to their permanent homes when their time of retirement came. The case studies reveal contestations about what constitutes Xhosa culture as peoples see it. In this chapter I have also demonstrated that the language that Crossroads people use in connection with 'home' showed that while they lived in

the urban houses, they felt somehow out of place as the urban areas are called the place where things are done in a white person's way (*esilungwini*) and the homes in the villages are envisaged as a place of rest (*indawo yokuphumla*) where work (*umsebenzi*) is different from wage work (*impangelo*). I also used case studies to that some people had resisted moving from their shack areas to the RDP houses because to them the space constraints in the RDP houses was going to prevent them from living the sort of life they say is the home one (*indlela yasemakhaya*). I have, however shown that there were disagreements among people as some did not agree that authentic cultural practices could be done in the urban areas.

This chapter has aimed to clarify what it was that made a place a home or what it was that made it not a home but just a house with respect to some Xhosa people's definitions of a home. I have used case studies to illustrate the power that Crossroads people associated with the home, where they felt they could not experience true physical rest in their urban houses because they felt that they had come to live in them only while they worked to earn a living from wages from employers against whom they saw themselves as competing for resources. I have used cases to show that people associated 'home' with rest, death and burial, and that they excluded their urban houses from their ideas about what constitutes home. They did so because those houses were located in urban areas that were associated with 'white people's ways' and to which people came ostensibly for the sole purpose of finding income generating work conventionally through waged employment.

Another purpose of the chapter has been to show that people used their ideas about what constitutes a rural home to define what they understood to constitute a real home, and that they compared that ideal with their houses and relationships at Crossroads. Indeed such understanding of a home as the ideal were also observed by the Comaroffs (1992), who noted that Tswana migrants resisted culturally by using narratives opposing a *seTswana* (way of the Tswana) world to that of *sekgoa* (ways of whites) The *amaXhosa* at Crossroads with

whom I worked did likewise when they contrasted life in *esixhoseni* (place of Xhosa ways) and that in *esilungwini* (place where things are done in white person's ways). Crossroads people also regarded the city as a place of alienation that contrasted with the village or rural home as places where they could feel fulfilled and where there was a culture they could identify with.

The chapter has also shown that the village/township binary that people constructed was based on their experience and that therefore, as they became familiar with means to manage the urban townships they attempted to alter it so that it might, to some extent, incorporate their rural ways.

Having shown the various strategies that people used and developed to create something that resembled 'home' in town, I would argue that the way they did so reflects a strong tendency on their part to reify what they regarded as their culture. This has been illustrated in my discussions of the contestations that accompanied processes of slowly making the urban space into the kind of living space that at least some people felt they might be comfortable in. The case studies that show the kinds of disagreements that occurred about how to live in an urban area show that, for some, real Xhosaness and Xhosa culture is immutable while for others it is malleable and adaptable to urban ways of life. Explaining the kinds of disagreements that occurred between those who tried to make 'homes' out of their urban houses and those who refused to accept that that was possible, I have argued that those disagreements set up debates where at least some people now talked about their urban-based practices as acceptable *isiXhosa* (ways of the Xhosa).

When describing the way his women informants talked to him about their culture, Mitchell (1975) says that their culture became a "thing" to which women could lay a claim. Their idealisation and objectification of what they treated as their custom had shaped their willingness to talk about their culture as a coherent system. Elevation of 'culture' to a level of political symbol' says Mitchell was a product of colonial encapsulation that made one's way of life and ways of life a 'thing' to be articulated and objectified (1973:36-37). The debates show

the process of the remaking of the urban areas by the people. To use Bank's words "Rural culture is now not only signified in the cities, but it is reclaiming African cities" (2002:8). What I have attempted to show in this chapter is that for at least some Crossroads people their attempts to bring what they regarded as village values and practices into the city, in order to turn their houses into homes, was a way in which they were remaking the city in the fashion of what they regarded as rural (or has village properties) and authentically Xhosa. In Chapter Four, I argue that, irrespective of such contestations, there were other methods used to forge homely relationships necessary for survival in town that all people in areas such as Crossroads used, irrespective of whether they were what I have called conservatives or not.

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Chapter Four: Social relations in Crossroads

We left our brothers; our sisters and our parents in the villages (*ezilalini*). Even if your parents were dead in the villages, there was someone who is your blood relative you could rely on. No one is supposed to be alone, yet here in the place of the white man (*emlungwini*) we are all alone. Now because we need to have someone as some kind of a relative, just like the way things are at home, we make our own relations. You know many years back, our brothers came to a place of wage work (*empangelweni*) with older men from the village who had found the job for them. The old man, irrespective of whether he was a blood relative of the young man concerned or not, he would act as the parent to the young man and council him when there is a need. But as you know, we came here on our own, that is why we make our own relations with other people because otherwise we would not survive. (Interview, Nonceba Matyana: January 2001)

Introduction:

In the previous chapter I based my discussion on the assertions of home made by Crossroads people. Among other things, their assertions included how people were helping each other in the village homes instead of competing with each other. Based on such claims I examine in this chapter how, people created forms of networks that revealed their conversion of urban Crossroads into places they considered homes by using village methods to forge homely relationships. As I have indicated, some Crossroads people said that the urban space they lived in was inadequate to be their homes and as a result they were instilling village oriented social relations in the place to make it resemble their homes in the villages. I show here how people including those born in Cape Town created urban networks to construct the relationships of security they associated with village homes.

Working out survival strategies:

In the previous chapter I have indicated that it was not just the nature and structures of village homes that people considered were properties that made a place a home, but particular social relational qualities that were associated with

such places. Social networks that created the feeling of village life were not common between the people who were born in the Eastern Cape or in the villages only, but were created and used by people born in Cape Town as well. Partly this is because Crossroads is not a very old township and therefore people who were born in Crossroads were youth whose parents were born in the villages. For instance when doing the survey I came to two households that were headed by youths whose parents used to work in Cape Town and live at Crossroads. Those parents had homes in the Eastern Cape and they were buried there after their death at Crossroads. Their children who were in their late twenties told me they intended keeping their village home and to 'live according to their parents teachings'.

But another reason for the survival of village oriented social networks is that there was a yearning by the people to live according to the way of *amaXhosa*. It is possible that the concept of African renaissance that has been called upon by the South African state president has influenced people to look for what they call 'our roots'. I am saying this because indeed, since the announcement by the state president, there has been a noticeable change in the way people talk of their culture as black people. Nowadays people prefer to buy what has come to be known as 'traditional Xhosa attire' to western fashion. In other words, I am saying that the social networks that people say are a property of village ways of life are reserved because they are seen as African people's cultural feature (see Mayer-1971). This I am saying because these kinds of relationships were common even among other townships like Nyanga; Gugulethu and Khayelitsha.

McAllister (2001) indicates that the process of home-making (*ukwakh'umzi*) in Xishini in the Eastern Cape, included good relations that included beer drinking and co-operative work. As I show below, Crossroads people, especially women did work together in attempts to build not homesteads but a sense of 'homeness' while they lived in the urban areas.

The quote in the opening of the chapter refers to the urban areas as a place of *impangelo* just like we have seen in the previous chapter how that perception

is a reason for people to feel out of place in the urban areas. However, I need to show that people play an active part in making the urban areas suit them. This discussion identifies the attempts that people made to remake the urban areas so that they had some properties of their village homes.

As earlier, I again use cases to illustrate how such social relations, known to be part of 'homeness' in villages, were forged to enhance such a feeling in town.

(i) Commensality

Ukubolekana (reciprocal relations), is another important aspect that was identified by *amaXhosa* at Crossroads as an act that gave a place the feeling of 'homeness'. Their claim about reciprocal relations is based on the perception that *ukubolekana* is a direct opposite of *impangelo*. *Ukubolekana* creates relaxed relations instead of the competition that comes with wage labour *esilungwini*. Through reciprocal relations people forged relatives and family with the people they were not related to. They said that they needed good neighbours with whom they could practice reciprocal relations in order to feel at home. This feeling of *homeness* brought about by *ukubolekana* was confirmed by people I (Ngxabi 1999) met at Tambo Square, a shack area in Gugulethu. It was associated with the mutual relations that had already been formed, not with Tambo Square itself. What I am saying is that Tambo Square, as an area of shacks, allowed people to practise types of social relations that they associated with villages, and that were to be destroyed in the formal housing area of Tambo Village to which they were to be relocated. This consequence of relocation was a result of people not being moved to the same areas in the formal houses as their erstwhile friends and shack-area neighbours. Moving to a new formal house was thus seen as a threat, especially to the people who valued and used neighbourhood as a relationship of material exchange and more (see De Wet, 1995 and Yose, 1999).

In Crossroads too, I observed a number of kinds of reciprocal relationships that people had developed which were said to be similar to those used in their

village homes. I was told that such reciprocal relationships were used to make their social lives meet the different sorts of social crises they might find themselves faced with. The case examples below indicate such strategies.

Reciprocal relations were not restricted to exchanges of edible resources, but spread to the sharing of labour and fuels, although it was only in Boystown that I found people sharing fuel. It was during the hot months when I did my research so I did not witness women going together to fetch wood from the two areas where they said they did collect during the winter months. Those areas were EmaChineri (the place of the Chinese - because there were Chinese traders who had shops in the area) and next to Delft. The women told me that during the cold season they would go as a group to collect wood to heat up their shacks. When they got to their shacks, they would pack it together in one pile called *Igoqo* in Xhosa and would use the wood sharing it between them. Below I shall use the words by one of the women I am referring to as she told me her version of the significance of sharing fuel. I first want to discuss someone else's version of this kind of reciprocity. Mr Mnconywa who was a teacher in the discipline of African languages in the Eastern Cape, who had come to Cape Town to visit his friend, said these words in connection to the gathering of firewood,

Igoqo (the stack of fire wood) is something significant, not just to women, but to the life of the family as well. Women's diligence is displayed by, among other things, the size of their stack of wood, especially the kind of wood that is collected in bundles and carried by head. In turn this demonstrates their ability and intention to keep alive their households by protecting them from cold. There is something that is sacred also about the stack of wood because fire in a Xhosa context is used in performance of many rituals. When people share such items as food or any other item, it is easy to associate their behaviour with helping each other because of poverty, but the sharing of firewood stack has a deeper significance. (Interview, Fundile Mnconywa: December:2000)

Nonceba, a woman who shared both electricity (which I witnessed not only in her house but in many people whose households were not part of my sampled households as well) and firewood in this way with her neighbour, told me that sharing such resources was an example of life at *emaXhoseni* (at the place of

amaXhosa) and also a way of expressing *ubuntu* (humaneness). She told me that such relations not only ensured a sense of *homeness* for adults; it was also a way to create homes for their children. As she said,

You know, as we have been working and living like this with my neighbour, we build homes for both our families. My neighbour's house is like a home to my children now, they come here and enjoy not only the heat from the heaters we use when it is cold, but we buy green mealies from farms and roast them outside in the braziers (*iimbawula*) as well when we have collected firewood. It is such a nice experience. It feels like what we would do at home. Here [in Crossroads] one needs to make one's home by creating 'brothers and sisters'. *Umntu uyazenzela ikhaya kunye nezihlobo*. (lit: a person makes one's home and relatives). When we do that, our children learn to like each other as *izalamane* (siblings).

The practise of sharing resources made the shack area relatively more like a place of homes (*amakhaya*) than of just houses (*izindlu*). Reciprocal relationships not only facilitated friendship between neighbours, but it formed imagined extended homes for the neighbours involved in the networks constructed around those relationships. When writing about the people who still maintained their Xhosa conservativeness in the 1980's in East London, Bank (2001) says that what made them keep their co-operative working was the social glue of their commitment to the building of *imizi* (homesteads). Nonceba and Mamfene (Nonceba's friend and neighbour), also had an objective of using what they knew as the acceptable way of *amaXhosa* to create a bond between their families that resembles the one that exists between blood relatives. They were doing what they thought possible to make *imizi* out of their houses. However, what they did by not only going to the forest together, but by packing their bundles of wood so that they build one stack, was a symbol of adopting each other's family as one. As I have shown above, Mr Mnconywa commented that wood has a ritualistic significance. In a home, where the brides still live with their mother-in-law, they pack their wood in one stack as they all belong to one *umzi*. Once more, in agreement with work co-operative work as a kind of reciprocity in the rural Transkei, McAllister says " It is evident that both beer drinks and co-operative work constitute the homestead in a particular way... the basic unit of production

in rural Transkei is the household, but its productive activities are not simply a material matter but also a social and moral one. The individual homestead as the productive unit is inseparable from the social relationships that constitute it." (2001:177) This is evidence that Crossroads people had used the sharing of both material things and labour as the proper method of living in homes while they lived in the houses, in other words, the creation of social bonds was their way to change as much as possible, the urban areas to suit their own cultural needs.

The type of life lived in the shack areas was one that enabled aspects of a culture of reciprocal exchanges that was hindered by the lifestyle expected of people living formal houses. Yose (1999) says that the similarity between the urban informal settlements and the mud houses of the Eastern Cape as well as other village homes is the temporary nature of the buildings. She says:

Marconi Beam was an informal settlement. Its houses had been built with temporary material and containers, material that could be easily destroyed. People perceived it or saw it as the equivalent of a rural area. Most houses in the rural parts of the Eastern Cape, where most of the population of Marconi Beam came from, are made of mud. As a result the people at Marconi Beam saw the lack of permanency of their shacks as similar to the mud houses found in the rural houses which are also semi-permanent and are easily destroyed (1999:29).

While I do not agree with Yose's (1999) argument that the similarity between urban shacks and rural houses is based on their temporary nature —mud houses are not temporary in the same way that shacks are — I agree that people perceive some form of equivalence between rural life and urban informal settlement life. The reason, which Yose (1999) also recognises, is that the formal houses, especially the smallest ones, do not provide space for various forms of cultural expression that people associate with rural life. Yose goes on to say "The physical structure of the [shack] settlement therefore leads people to perceive it as similar to a rural area." (1999:29)

From the explanations of a home above, we have learned that a home is a place where there are people who know and accept that they have a responsibility to help one another (see Case 5 above). From the above discussion

I have demonstrated how people created a sense of 'homeness' in their houses by sharing their resources between each other.

Below I discuss how people forged families by adopting clan mates with whom they did not share a common ancestor to make their lives in the temporary urban houses resemble those they conceptualised as authentic village homes.

(ii) Clan name relations

The purpose of this short section is to argue that common clans, as they were known to be the basis of social relatedness, were used to create relatedness, the social bond that people imagined as an essential element of homes and the home feeling in the place of the white person's ways. This notion, I argue was based on the explanation that a home is a place where there are people who have a responsibility to help one and they therefore used clanship as the 'reason' to create some imagined obligations of one to another as 'relatives' or 'family'. First I use literature to define what clanship is and how people before have used it. The second discussion will be on how Crossroads people have used clanship according to my argument.

Clan names were used a great deal to forge relationships that people needed in the urban areas (Mehlwana 1996; Spiegel and Mehlwana 1997). Debating what exactly kinship is, Carsten (1998) uses Strathern's words, "kinship in the English view is defined as being the meeting place of nature and culture" (1992a:87). This means that kinship can be seen as simultaneously part of nature and part of culture. Moreover, Ngubane (1977) says that for ancestors to participate in one's life they have to have been blood relatives, sharing the same genealogy. Mehlwana's argument was that, by definition, a household consisted of members who recognised that they shared social relationships that might or might not coincide with genealogical ties (1996: 24)—a definition that shows why kinship at times can only be understood in social rather than genealogical terms. Although Mehlwana is not using clan relationships argument to argue that it was

used to create a sense of 'homeness' but as means to share resources in the face of poverty, my own intention is to show that in Crossroads people made compromises to change the life of the town to resemble that of their 'home' place, using kinship even if there were no genealogical links between them. In the villages people had closely knit relatives from their genealogical lines. I now will be showing, with the use of case studies that the 'rural like' relatives are created in accordance with clan names, not biological ties, to create relationships that enhance the imagined family or home. Below is an example of relationships based on clanship where there were no genealogical ties but only shared clan names.

Case 4.1: Imagined sisterhood

Nocawe was a woman who lived in Unathi (formal houses section) with her son and daughter, both of whom had been born in Cape Town although she had lived in different places in Cape Town before coming to Crossroads four years earlier.

When I went to Nocawe's son's twenty-first birthday party, there was a group of six women who all wore red pinafores, and were referring to each other by a single clan name (Radebe), the same clan name as Nocawe's. They were cooking, dishing out food to the people, writing the names of the people who made donations, etc. In that respect they were acting like Nocawe's family members. Yet not one of them was a blood relative of Nocawe although she kept referring to them as 'sisters of mine' (*oodadewethu*). I first did not realise that they were all Radebes. Nocawe told me to give the present that I had brought to 'her sister' and she pointed at the person she was referring to. The rest of the 'red apron women' were busy working, some cooking while others were busy preparing the plates, washing them for use later, a task I decided to assist with. Then one of the women called me and asked me to call Nolundi because there was a telephone call for her. The woman was surprised when I told her I did not know who Nolundi was. She had seen me talking to the woman who turned out to be Nolundi and even giving her the present I had brought for Nocawe's son. I told her that I only knew the clan name of the woman who had accepted the present and not her first name. She asked me, how I could use that clan name in a place like that when there are six MaRadebe's, all wearing red pinafores. I felt very stupid because I am the one who had introduced myself as MaMiya (my clan name) in the first place to Nolundi, which might have been why she did not bother telling me her first name either.

My argument here is that people used common clan based relationships to create the feeling of *homeness* in the urban areas where they did not have any blood relatives to help them. Assembling a group of women of the same clan name is a powerful tool both in terms of economic and human labour needs. Clanship based relations create first the basis of an imagined *isalamane* (a sibling or *umntu wasekhaya*) which in turn provides the right or access to treatment different from that given to anyone else. The presence of her 'sisters' made things easy for Nocawe as they were attending to everything that otherwise would have needed her or her family's attention. She told me that it had even been their idea that she had a party for her son's birthday because she had been supporting them in their family occasions.

Such use of clan names had, she said, been the best thing to do for her family because, having only been in Crossroads for three years, she had managed to create many 'relatives' and friends through them and they all felt responsible for looking after each other because they were 'sisters'. She added,

They are my eyes and ears in everything, they are going to make sure that everybody gets a plate of food, even if I am busy with something else. We need to make homes for ourselves here '*ekuhambeni*' (in the place where we are visitors/ or estranged; lit: the place to which we have gone).

Nocawe had left her biological sisters in the Eastern Cape, but she had managed to make the 'house' she lived in feel at least partly like her 'home' in the Eastern Cape by forging strong relationships through clanship. Below I show the relationships built through home towns in order to forge ties with someone in the *esilungwini* place.

(iii) Using home town as a basis for relationships and sharing

In many instances people in Crossroads used the town of their birth as a basis for sharing a number of resources. When I was at Ngwanya's son's *umgidi* (coming out ceremony – case 3.7) six people out of the fifteen who were helping on the day of the ceremony and the day before that, were from the area around

Kingwilliamstown, Ngwanya's birth home. The Kingwilliamstown group seemed to be the ones who were actively involved in the hosting of the ceremony unlike the guests who just sat and sang and danced. I argue that people in Crossroads used their hometowns to help create bonds of brother/sisterhood between themselves, which in turn recreated a feeling of their village homes in their minds while they lived in the urban areas and shared some local rural notions of a home. In other words, my argument is that people used their common rural orientations to a particular rural place in order to recreate a sense of rural *homeness* in the urban areas. Being socially related was seen clearly both during the times of crisis and celebration. When I asked Ngwanya (case 3.6) why he had so many people who came from Kingwilliamstown helping him with his son's ritual, he said,

We come from the same town, I also come from *eQonce* (Kingwilliamstown). We do not have any relatives here except for only a few. When performing a customary ritual, (*isiko*) one needs to have *abantu bakhe* (*lit.*: one's people) [meaning one's relatives]. At Kingwilliamstown most of these people knew my parents and home, so when they are here, I feel as if I am at home, especially when I perform a ritual like this one. It is easy when one has people who know how one's custom works as our customs are the same in the area. These people remind me of my home and they would not hesitate telling me when I am doing something wrong (Interview, November: 2000).

Ngwanya did not have blood relationship with these people (his guests), but they manipulated a social relationship to remind him of his home and his father, whom these people knew well, to recreate in his mind a rural-home feeling at Crossroads. Wilson and Mafeje (1961) also say that at Langa people used their home towns as a basis for social relatedness rather than tribalism²⁸.

Nonceba, in the opening of this chapter says that their brothers came to the work place with the elder men who were also from the same village. What she refers to is not different from what was observed by Wilson and Mafeje (1961) in the 1930's at kwaLanga. However, Wilson and Mafeje saw the calling of relatives and friends to the place of work by those who already worked at Cape Town as

²⁸ During the time of Wilson and Mafeje, people used to fight on the basis of their tribal differences. This was not the case at all during my time of writing.

nepotism (which is not incorrect in terms of language). But Nonceba 's account reveals that the idea of calling a relative or a neighbour's child to the work place when they here there is a vacancy, was as a result of *amaXhosa's* way of avoiding letting the youth wander alone in the urban areas. By bringing homeboys (and home girls) (*abakhaya* and not *amakhaya* as said by Wilson and Mafeje 1961) to work with them in the urban areas, people brought *ubukhaya* (homeness), the ways of home, to the working white man's place. This was a way by which *amaXhosa* like the present people of Crossroads made it a point that while they were in the urban areas, or the place of wage work which McAllister (2001) says was regarded by *amaXhosa* as a dangerous place, they never lost the feeling of *homeness* where there are people who take responsibility to ensure one another's welfare instead of *ukuphangelana* (working against each other) In other words, "A sense of home is inseparable from a sense of the network of relations, past, present, that bind people in a neighbourhood together" (Allen and Schlereth, 1990:158). By coming to the work place with the neighbours and or relatives, the young people of Wilson and Mafeje's time, to an extent, brought the sense of home with them, unlike Crossroads people who have to make that feeling up with the people they met in the urban areas.

Clyde Mitchell (1971) also observed the use of hometowns among people in an urban situation on the Zambian Copperbelt. At Crossroads this was also a means used not only to forge family and friends in a place people called '*esilungwini*', but also to carry a feeling of *homeness*, particularly as they performed rituals.

Hometowns were used in the urban areas still, as was done during the time of Wilson and Mafeje at Langa in the 1950's. However, Ngwanya and the others in this text did not use an *abakhaya* (homeboys) strategy only to encapsulate themselves in the urban area and protect themselves from urban influences in the way that Mayer (1961) described. The forged relationships were also used to

bring the village home to the urban so that the urban could at least partially be reshaped to meet their needs.

Below I bring in the views of people not brought up in villages. These people also imagined village life and the forms of Xhosaness practiced in villages to be the best way of being Xhosa because, they said, village people grew up at the place of *amaXhosa*, in other words they grew up at home places. When looking at such people, Apfelbaume (2000) has said that, for people who have left their home places for another, their multiple, often competing cultural histories impact upon their construction of self in such a way that they construct shifting identities. People such as that in Crossroads also had shifting identities because they referred to themselves as *amaXhosa*, but sometimes they would say plainly that they were not proper *amaXhosa*. The people of Cape Town's townships, especially those that thought that they had been living in the place for too long, always referred to themselves as *amarhanuga* (from *ukurhanuga*: to tramp seeking work; Kropf 1915: 369) Their use of the word *amarhanuga* to refer to themselves means that they regard themselves as people who still need to go back to their homes as they were living in the place that is not of *amaXhosa*, but of employment seeking. They usually expressed this in a way that revealed the wish to have not turned into *amarhanuga*, for example when they said things such as: "when we were still real *amaXhosa*..." or "we do not know much now, we are losing our *ubuXhosa* (Xhosaness) we are just *amalawu*"²⁹ (cultureless people)

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to show that people in Crossroads made attempts to bring to the townships, the social relations that were said to have the property of villages and therefore home feeling, by forging relations with other people using the concepts that they said were from their villages and were

²⁹ "*Ilawu*, derived from *'ilawu lentaba'*a rogue, someone without customs and traditions, ..." (Wilson and Mafeje, 1963:13)

properties of real homes. My argument is that people made efforts to replicate village culture in the urban townships to bring about the feeling of 'homeness'. I have shown that such relationships were also practiced by people who were not born in the villages and people who have said that they had stayed in the urban townships for a long time. I suggested that the survival of such practices is caused by the general need that people have of going back to their roots, and that that may be connected to the revival of African culture through the renaissance that has recently been called upon by the South African state president.

I have also shown that Crossroads people used home town as a basis for forging social relationships and that that practice is an old one, in use since at least the 1950s. (see Wilson and Mafeje 1961) to avoid losing the feeling of 'homeness' while staying in the urban areas. Therefore, I suggested in this chapter that calling and bringing neighbour's or a relative's child to work was not mere nepotism but a mechanism by which people preserved a sense of 'homeness' (*ubukhaya*) by bringing *abakhaya* to the urban areas.

In the next chapter I shall attempt to show that although the feeling of home was created by Crossroads people in their urban houses, there were times when the forged relations fell short as they were trying to settle in the urban areas. In other words I shall demonstrate in the next chapter that Crossroads people faced challenges as they tried to settle in the urban areas and such challenges could only be dealt with by going back to the village homes and such situations reaffirmed in their minds that their village homes are their only real homes.

Chapter Five: One's house or homestead people's home?

Kindred were bound together throughout their lives in a comprehensive system of mutual rights and duties, which were almost as binding in the agricultural society of our own past as in some of the surviving primitive societies studied by anthropologists. But as a result of the social changes set in motion by the industrial revolution, the kindred have, we are told, become separated from each other. (Young & Wilmott, 1957:xv).

Introduction:

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss how some people's understanding of home and home-making affected them during the process of settling in urban areas. My argument is that settling in urban areas sometimes challenges people's preconceptions about what constitutes a home, challenges that may reaffirm for them that urban areas in their present state cannot be their permanent homes.

In the first section I show that people's socialization, in other words what they understood as proper from a village perspective, were challenged by their having to live in the new urban RDP houses. This resulted in people whose early socialization was in villages feeling out of place in their city houses, as they found the lifestyles they had to abide by to be quite out of place in terms of their sense of what it means to be *amaXhosa*. What they regarded as the proper Xhosa way of life was thus challenged. Another way to demonstrate the challenges of people's preconceptions of what constitutes a home, that I use in the second section of the chapter is to illustrate that people had to repeatedly go back to the villages to perform some cultural rituals which they said could not be performed in the setting of the urban areas. This, I argue, reaffirms that urban areas are not considered as proper homes for *amaXhosa*, at least for those who insist on going back to rural places to practise what they see as their proper Xhosa cultural activities and rituals.

Challenges of Urban Settlement:

In Chapter Three I argued that people of Crossroads reify their culture. Consequently they are able to point out those practices that are acceptable to them, and those others they say are fallacious in their culture. The reification, I argued, causes contestations and disagreements, as the people I called 'conservatives' rejected some practices by those people who tried to practice their cultural rituals in the urban areas. In this chapter I aim to focus on the process of settling in urban areas by taking a perspective on the views of the people who are settling in those urban areas. It is their side of the process that I want to view so that I foreground the personal experiences of people about home-making in the urban areas.

Below I focus on the new lifestyles that come with separation of family members as they move out of their old houses or shacks to the new small RDP houses. I demonstrate that the separation particularly affects elderly women who, as a consequence, feel their power over their household being threatened, which in turn means that they see the likely disintegration of the households that they were trying to build. Below is a case study of an old woman whose household was split as her daughter got a new house to live with her own child.

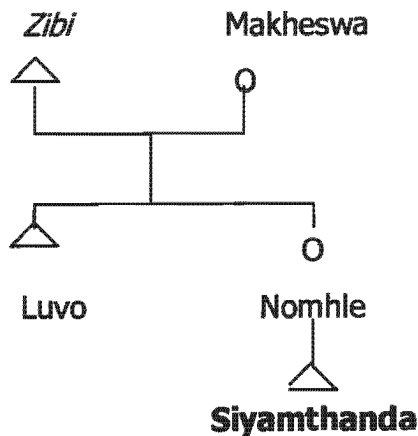
Case 5.1 Breaking the bond.

Makheswa was a widow. She lived at Veza (RDP houses section) with her twenty-six year old son, Luvo. He was employed and she was not. Makheswa and her two children, Luvo, and daughter, Nomhle and her grandchild, Siya, used to live together at Boystown. After she got her own house in Veza RDP section, thirty- three year old Nomhle took her nine-year old daughter to live with her in her own new house. Makheswa's concern was that she now could not look after her grandchild who now lived separately with just his mother. Makheswa said to me:

"You know it is difficult for us as parents these days. When your daughter falls pregnant by a man who does not want to marry her, it is painful. But we always take our daughters back and their children become ours. You know, when your daughter falls pregnant, you have lost your pride as a parent, but you always hope that maybe when that child grows up, they

will look after you, and you take them as your own. They are also supposed to live with us as their mother's parents and know that even though their mother was not married by their father, we, her mother's parents, were there for them" (Interview, March: 2001).

Figure 4: Relationships in case 5.1 ³⁰



Makheswa was not happy for three reasons, as we shall see. The first one was that it used to give her pleasure to look after her daughter's child. Caring, she thought, proved to her grandchild that they (the mother's parents) were more responsible than the father's parents for the personhood of the growing child.

Her words were:

A daughter's pregnancy out of wedlock is not the best thing to happen to the family at all. However, when the daughter is not married, the child is yours, they will look after you and you take them as your own. They are also supposed to live with us as their mothers parents and know that even though their mother was not married by their father, we, her mother's parents, were there for them (interview, February: 2001).³¹

³⁰ Italics used for deceased and bold for the grandchild about whom the misunderstanding occurs.

³¹ Sean Jones noted this notion when he worked with the migrant laborer's children and he said that a child's filial status has been linked to the payment, or its lack, of bride wealth in marriage. (1992:250)

Looking after both her daughter and her grandchild is seen to guarantee their emotional support as well. Deborah Waldrop and Joseph Weber (2001) say that people find satisfaction in grandparental care giving. This is said to give them 'a new sense of purpose and direction for life' (2001: 469) especially when (old) age is making them feel insecure.

In addition, for Makheswa, parenting her daughter's child is a powerful tool that helps her hope for a better future because, whatever her daughter, Nomhle, did to safeguard her own daughter, Siya's future, she, Makheswa, would also benefit from that if they all co-resided. In other words, Makheswa emotionally invested her own security in her grandchild if they lived together. But now the small space in her RDP house did not permit that. To show her discomfort with the issue of having to let go of her nine year old grandchild Makheswa's own words were: "It is not right for an unmarried young mother to leave her parents home to live alone with her child in her own place. According to our culture in the villages (*ezilalini*) we do not do that, and pregnancy out of wedlock does not give girls the right to be parents and to live away from their parents. We, *amaXhosa* know that an unmarried daughter's child belongs to her parents. Not to the single mother and our culture is the only way we know to make homes. This thing of letting her live like this is certainly not our way" (Interview, 2001: February).

From the statements that are given by Makheswa about it being the way of village life and *amaXhosa* to live with one's grandchildren, one would easily think that Black South Africans who lived in the urban areas actually did have a choice between living on their own as parents and living in the same premises with their children and grand children. However this was not the case at all, particularly in the Western Cape; as my first chapter shows there had always been a shortage of housing for Black people in this area as the apartheid government did not provide them. I am not trying to dispute the views of Crossroads people but to clarify that sometimes people used their old way of life to make sense of an unusual present. Makheswa in this particular case referred to the village way of

life as the best because this way of life would have assured her of a (grand) parental role and consequently some kind of assurance for significance in her daughter as well as her grandchild's future lives, things that otherwise would be threatened, especially given their poor economic status.

Neither Makheswa nor Nomhle had money to extend their respective houses, even had they wanted to live together. Nomhle earned little from her work as a packer in a supermarket and her mother was still too young to get an old age pension. The result was that Makheswa was now living apart from her daughter and grandchild, each in their own RDP house, snatching away a source of power (as we shall see below) as well as a feeling of importance from Makheswa.

The second reason for Makheswa's unhappiness revolves around food sharing. (see also Ross (1995) and Mehlwana (1996)). From what she said and her behavior as she talked about it, it became clear that sharing food with her daughter was an emotional issue for Makheswa. She often said, "Our children now cook on their own because of these houses" (*"abantwana bethu ngoku bayaziphekela ngenxa yezi zindlu."*). To 'cook on their own' was, for Makheswa, a frightening sign of her daughter's new-found independence.

When describing the importance of food in strengthening relationships between people, Bourque says,

The actions of preparing, distributing, accepting and eating food in particular social and spatial contexts are used to communicate, confirm, reject and transform notions of relatedness and difference, tradition and modernity, age, gender and ethnic identities and economic, political and social status (Bourque, 2001:85).

Makheswa said that her exclusion from her daughter's preparation and eating of food on a daily basis made her feel as if she had become an outsider in her daughter's life. As Bourque says, food has a role in the creation and maintenance of individual and group identity (2001; 86). When they were living together at Boystown, Makheswa would prepare food during the day for her children and grandchild. She would also weed her small vegetable garden.

These chores made her feel significant. Now that her daughter was cooking for herself and eating from her own pot with her child, the emotions that derived from sharing food from the same pot were threatened. Counihan (1999) illustrates how mothers use cooking and food both to create bonds between themselves and their daughters as well as to feel power that makes them feel important to their daughters.

Makheswa was worried that she would lose the closeness that had been there between her and her daughter when they shared a house. As Counihan says, girls develop in closer relation with the same sex parent throughout infancy and later with same sex role models (1999: 152). Makheswa realized that living away from her mother who has been shielding her, Nomhle would start to recognize other role models other than her, especially now that she "cooked for herself."

The third reason Makheswa was unhappy was that, with Nomhle and Siya establishing a separate household, she now lost control and power over her own daughter. Makheswa's husband had died eleven years earlier. She knew that her son would not be as easy to control as her daughter. In part that was because of the expectation that a woman was supposed to be at home by evening and supposed to sleep in the same place as her family. It is frowned upon when a woman frequently sleeps over at her friends' homes. On the other hand, it is not considered improper for a man not to sleep at home. Veza was a violent place those days and it was not very safe for anyone to sleep alone. People were killed very often. Makheswa knew that if her son decided to visit his girlfriend and not come home, she could not control him except for offering a few words of advice. However, she believed she had both the right and the duty to counsel as well as control her daughter, but only as long as she lived with her and no matter how old she was. When referring to the rural way of life, (*isiko lasezilalini*) as the only way she knew and the way that is challenged by her daughter's moving out, Makheswa yearned for the place with the kind of culture that would not only allow, but would require and sanction her control over her

daughter's life as long as she is unmarried. By this I do not mean that in the villages widows do not have a right to counsel their sons, but I mean that there always is a difference in social expectations between a man and a woman and the fact is that women are expected to be subservient to men. As Makheswa put it, her expectations of the kind and quality of life in Crossroads was based on the rural culture that she knew as the only basis of home and home-making.

Explaining why she struggled with letting Nomhle stay alone in the RDP house Makheswa said: " We *amaXhosa* who grew up in the villages know that a daughter whose bridewealth has not been paid belongs to her parents." The use of this phrase clarifies Makheswa's reason for concern about where her daughter lived. Makheswa's unhappiness was based on the fact that she as a Xhosa who grew up in the villages was expecting to gain something when losing her daughter, Nomhle. Conventionally if Nomhle was leaving her mother to get married, Makheswa would receive bridewealth and thus be compensated for the loss of her daughter. Also, when bridewealth is paid, it also becomes a form of a bond between the two families. If this were the case, the separation of Nomhle from her mother would mean the gaining of new relatives for Makheswa and that would be a way for her to gain another home outside the home she saw being dismantled by the moving out of Nomhle. In confirmation of the gaining of new relatives with marriage, Mindende says, "The two clans, [the bride's and the groom's birth clans] *abakhozi*, are now one as they will share joys, sorrows and burdens-what happens to one is felt by all" (1999:15).

Makheswa's socialization had taught her that an unmarried young woman should not fall pregnant. It had also taught her that should a daughter fall pregnant and not marry, the child born, together with the mother, become the mother's parents' child (also see Jones 1992) . According to her culture, in the undesirable situations where unmarried women actually do fall pregnant, should the father of the child born out of wedlock want to have his child, whether or not he is marrying the mother, he is to pay '*inkomo yesondlo*'. (a beast to

compensate for the expenditure to bring up the child—see Hammond-Tooke, 1976).

Makheswa now saw herself losing not only her daughter but her grandchild as well, without being compensated for either of them, and not because the genitor of the child had failed to pay the *inkomo yesondlo* but because of the opportunity that the state's provision of small RDP houses created for Nomhle to establish a separate household.

Makheswa used sentimental phrases like, "We, *amaXhosa* who grew up in the villages" and "Xhosaness (*ubuXhosa / isiXhosa*) is or is not like that" which I saw as her tool to measure acceptable or unacceptable behavior according to her own perceptions of the culture of *amaXhosa*. I use this to show the emphasis she put on the explanation of home and home-making to show that it was hard for her to accept her daughter's new independent status that she said was a result of her living alone with her child. Makheswa's use of 'culture' and how it does not permit what was happening to her and her grandchild was her means to make sense of the crisis that she found herself faced with.

On the other side however, Nomhle told me that although she would have loved to stay with her mother, it was not reasonable for her mother to leave her brother Luvo, who had extended his RDP house to accommodate his mother, to live with her in an unextended RDP house. Again Nomhle said: "I do not see any reason for my mother to be so concerned about me staying in my own house because I spend most of my weekends with her either in my house or in my brother's house, but the biggest problem is that my brother has a heart problem. His condition makes it necessary for my mother to live with him rather than me." (Interview, 2001: April)

Nomhle, who as I spoke to her showed me by her way of speaking that she would have liked to stay with her mother also kept referring to 'their home' when speaking about her mother and brother indicating that she also thought that her home was about the people (blood relatives) around her and not just the space or building and that the separation of the household into two was not palatable

to her either. This indicates that at times the context under which people spoke of their homes and people was important in their assertions of a home. In Nomhle and Makheswa's context, their concern was not about the home in the Eastern Cape, but about the people that belong to the home. For instance Nomhle said, "our home is no longer the same, at first I was not worried about moving to my own house, but now that it is here, I feel as if our home is somehow broken, but I have to keep my own house as an insurance for my own future when my mother is no longer here." Nomhle's statement reveals that she, like her mother, perceived their home as composed of her mother, brother and Siya, and without such people or with the disturbance of the family came the disturbance of the home as a home is made up of the people of the homestead.

The situation of Makheswa's case is an example where both the youth and the elderly are forced to adapt as they did not have enough money to enlarge one house and live together the way they envisaged their village home. For them, to live according to the ways of the place of the Xhosa (*ukuphila ngokwendlela yasemaXhoseni*) was frequently said to be the best.

If Makheswa had had a choice, she would have preferred to continue to live at Boystown because there the purpose for her coming to Cape Town in the first place could not have been challenged. After the death of her husband she and her children had decided that she was to look after her daughter's child in Cape Town rather than take the child to Transkei to live with her. They had an adequate (although not safe) shack where they could share resources. But after being forced by circumstances to move to the small formal houses, they found they had to live separately.

At this point I have come to the end of an extended case study. We have seen how a grandmother who wanted to live with her grandchild felt unhappy when the child's mother took the child away from her. I aimed the above case study at illustrating that the RDP houses, because of their small size as well as the smallness of their yards, pose challenges to the envisaged ideal of homes.

The purpose of this chapter is to show how people's rural socialization and their expectations of building in the urban areas, which were based on their experiences of a rural way of life, were challenged by their having to live in small new RDP houses. This resulted in such socialized people feeling out of place as what they saw as the way of the place of *amaXhosa* being challenged.

Preconceptions of who should live with whom are challenged by life in the city and this still creates a feeling of guilt as people said that they were failing in the role they were supposed to play, as both parents as well as grandparents. The case study below illustrates a situation different from case 5.1 in that the unmarried parent of the child decided to leave his child with his mother, but that itself became a challenge as the parent could no longer afford to support his own new household in the RDP house as well as his parents' household. I demonstrate in the next case that economic factors have complicated the issue of people with whom one can share the living space with. I argue that life *esilungwini* presents people with what, for them, become contradictions that eventually affect their beliefs and practices about issues like who should have access to whose care. This was not in any way an isolated case. Another grandmother, Mrs. Mthembu's son Bonke lived with his mother and his three-year old son and Bonke worked as a shop assistant. When Bonke moved to his new house at Phillipi, he left his son with his mother, Mrs. Mthembu. Later Bonke could not afford to send money to his mother and as a result Mrs. Mthembu was complaining that she could not afford to do something that she liked a lot, looking after her grandchild because the child's father who used to help her financially, could not now afford to do so anymore as he now had a separate house of his own.

This is still distant from the ideal of the home and home-making that people claim to be their desired way of life. In other words, such cases serve to illustrate that the ways of life associated with village life, which people have been saying is best suited for them can only be successful if households remain intact when houses are supplied to the people. My argument then leads us to the views of

the people on how the RDP houses can be provided without them having to compromise their envisaged process of home-making and responsibilities in such a process. I now turn to such views.

Young people's houses or homes for all?

Bigger land space would really be an advantage for the elderly who prefer living with their families in the same yard. However, as this is not possible in the urban areas, people did have suggestions to help in trying to solve the problem of land shortage in the urban areas. Responses were not uniform. Some people had indicated that they would have preferred to have their children move out because they needed the space, as they were now too old to be kept under the same roof with parents and the rest of the family. This indicates that parents were considerate of their children's space needs. But people said that the way houses were distributed was not commensurate with the people's needs. Below I use examples to show how space was used some time back in the manner that allowed cultural beliefs as well as people's needs, as Hammond-Tooke (1962) confirms.

Malihloa, a woman who had lived with her children at Boystown for the previous sixteen years indicated that, in the villages, people have *iintanga* (sing: *intanga*) – a hut in the household built especially for the youth. Hammond-Tooke (1962) also mentions this arrangement among the Bhaca people. The *intanga* is a hut that the head of the household would build for his youths that have reached a marriageable stage. A young woman would have hers, and if there is a young man in the home he would have his as well. The purpose is to give them some privacy. This hut would allow the youth to have a form of privacy while still living with their parents. Parents respect the hut. They do go in it but very seldom just so that his homestead is respected by the youth concerned. If the youth concerned is a male, then he will use it as a bedroom with his wife when he gets married, otherwise it is used for other purposes if the girl marries). The youth would still respect their father's homestead by not allowing their lovers to

stay in the *intanga* until daybreak. (Conventionally it was the boyfriends who would visit girlfriends and not the other way round). The boyfriend would come at night and make sure he is not seen by people and slip into his girlfriend's *intanga*, and leave as early as possible the following morning before the father of the girlfriend found him. (Hammond-Tooke (1962) says that the boyfriend would otherwise jokingly be made to pay a small sum of money to the girl's father as a gift if he is caught).

This was a way of space usage and sharing in the homes by which parents were able to show respect for the youth – much as the youth were expected reciprocally to show respect to their elders. The *intanga* thus also enabled parents to demand respect from the youth. Another purpose that was served by having an *intanga* in the home was to enforce responsibility of both young men and young girls to save the girls virginity by practicing premarital extravaginal sex (*ukusoma /ukumetsha*³²). This was possible because as the young man would be in the premises of the girl's father, he would be afraid to force her to let him penetrate her. On the other side, girls knew that their mothers would unexpectedly enter the *intanga* and demand to do a virginity testing on them as they were now no longer sleeping with other children. Women (aunts but not mothers) had the role of teaching girls about acceptable sexual practices. Mothers had a role of testing young women for virginity. In short the way of life that encouraged the building of an *intanga* also was used to enforce acceptable cultural sexual practices where youth had some privacy that in turn enforced responsibility.

However it is important for me to indicate that these methods of space sharing and sexual practices have been abandoned for some time even in the villages. Mndende said that the abandoning was as a result of the influence of the church and the missionaries who taught African people that it was unChristian to teach children about sex (Interview, 2000: May). That means that

³² At Crossroads, people called this practise *ukusoma*. Hunter (1936) called it *ukumetsha*, but this term is not Xhosa. It is Mpondo, a dialect of the Xhosa language.

people suggested this kind of space sharing because it is the kind of a positive image that they have of their Xhosaness that is no longer there. I also need to indicate that lately some efforts are said at this time to be made by women in some villages to revive this culture of extravaginal sex and old Xhosa ways of sexuality to the youth to reduce the rate of HIV infection³³. Throughout South Africa at present, to ensure the practice of extravaginal sex and safety from HIV infection, married women do virginity testing regularly on virgin girls. If this works, it might revive the village way of sharing and using space that is envisaged at present by Crossroads people.

People who had seen as well as experienced the problems that come with separation of households, like Malihloa, had suggested that they would prefer for their children to be given houses that are next door to their own. If one house was to be allocated to the mother/father next to that of the daughter/son, so that they live just next door to each other, then, this sort of arrangement like *intanga* would allow both old people as well as youth to preserve their privacy and the youth to live a separate life, while at the same time ensuring that help is at hand when needed. This method would in a way work similarly to the *intanga* arrangement.

The idea of close living in urban area is confirmed by the case of Namibians as discussed in Pendleton's (1994) work on black Namibians who, like many black South Africans, were forced to move to smaller formal location homes in a township called '*Katutura*'. Pendleton's respondents told him that, when they were at their old location, their life has been easier than what it was in the new township. Pendleton directly quotes an informant, thus:

Since people could take ground according to their desire, they had big enough erven where they could do anything they wanted. Although we had one graveyard, we dug our own graves and as a result most of our families were buried almost on the same spot to retain the co-residence even after death. They could build up a lot of those small

³³ (Interview, 2002: May) from a phone in radio programme taking place daily between 1 and 4:30 am on *Umhlobo Wenene* FM

houses according to their desires. You could build houses for your families to retain your family ties as it pleased you. (Pendleton, 1994:20)

The form of co-residence that is brought up here by Pendleton's Namibian respondents is what people at Crossroads said would be their own ideal. Yet, as I argue, the present house allocations, as if every household constitutes housing 'beginners', is problematic. This is because most Boystown people had relatively large households before their children moved to the new RDP sections at the time they were allocated a house, and because of their concern that household ties were considered to be essential to create a feeling of 'homeness' in the urban areas. In addition there is also the problem of economic subsistence that is severely affected when members of erstwhile household units find they have to live apart.

So far I have described concerns about space that came from Crossroads people and surrounding townships. The above mentioned challenges were as a result of the fact that people do not perceive homes as just the buildings, that is, the houses, but their ability to permit a particular form of co-residence and co-existence of the people of the household which is said by the people to be what makes it a home.

The challenges that people come across in the process of home-making in the urban areas force them to depend on their kin in the villages. Situations underlying migration to the urban areas are never the same as people are never homogeneous. Some people grew up in situations that forced them to put in the past their birth homes and, when they came to urban areas, they came to settle and never to return. Their birth home problems had made them change their minds about prioritizing the village homes as their homes. Case 5.2 below is an example of a man who said that he had come to start a new way of life in the urban areas, but then encountered problems.

Case 5.2. The home ritual

Khulile was a man who had lived at Crossroads for the previous 18 years. Before coming to Crossroads he lived at Gugulethu for six years with his wife and children. His birth home was Willowvale in the Eastern Cape. His parents had died suddenly when he was a ten-year-old child and he was then forced to live with a relative at Willowvale. He had left his birth home when he was thirteen years old to live with another relative at Mt Fletcher because of maltreatment he received from the relative who first looked after him. He subsequently married at Mt Fletcher, and had a daughter who was diagnosed as having a congenital heart illness.

Khulile came to Cape Town with his family when the daughter was 6 years old. Khulile had done all he thought possible and necessary to keep his daughter, Vuyelwa, healthy. When she was eighteen years old, she underwent unsuccessful surgery that left her dependent on medication. Five years later a cousin of her father visited them at her father's place at Crossroads and advised Khulile to go to his birth home. His uncle, who had looked after Khulile's father's homestead, had died and now, according to this relative, Khulile had to go and 'awaken his father's homestead' (*ukuvusa umzi*³⁴-also see White, 2001). However, Khulile did not want to have anything to do with his father's homestead. He said that his aim in having come to Cape Town was to start a new life with his own family and to build a home for them in the urban areas.

In order better to understand this case, we need briefly to examine the ideals of home Khulile wished to pursue. It was one strongly influenced by Christianity.

When describing the missionaries' attempt to transform the lifeways of Tswana people, Jean and John Comaroff, 1997 (quoted by Ross 2002) say that the missionaries attempted to transform the habitus and thence the person through alterations to material space. Home emerged as two fold: 'a zone sanctified in matrimony, possessed of property, recognized in law and structured by a gendered generational division of labour and a fixed physical space (the residence) set off from the world outside' (Comaroff and Comaroff in Ross 2002:4). They add 'At the intersection of these planes, and conjoining them was

³⁴ *ukuvusa umzi* is an act of making sure that the homestead belonging to a deceased person does not die out, by both rebuilding the physical structure and the performance of necessary rituals in the name of the deceased owner.

the principle of privacy, as both adjective and noun: private property, private life, privacy of home and person. Its obverse: privation' (ibid).

Going back to the issue of cultural borrowing, I would argue that Khulile had faced problems that forced him to put aside his earlier cultural understanding and knowledge of home, that is communal (see case 3.5) and borrow from the notion of a 'private home' in which he could separate himself and his home conceptually from his father and his father's home. Until the recent problem that is the core of my argument, he had accepted that the only and best 'homeness' feeling he and his family could get was from his urban house. He said: "I did not want to have anything to do with my birth home. My relative had treated me like an animal and I just wanted to start my own family, and forget about Willowvale and my relatives". Khulile's perception of home was thus focused around his Crossroads residence, his material possessions and his wife and children, and excluded his other relations, living and dead. I now turn back to Khulile's story in order to illustrate how he suddenly found himself depending on his paternal blood relatives for the wellness of his child and of his whole household.

Case 5.2 , continued

When Vuyelwa was 26 years old she had her first ever very bad epileptic fit. She was taken to her father's place and a distant relative advised Khulile to take her 'home' to Willowvale to obtain *iyeza lasekhaya* (a home medicine-see chapter three). Recalling again the ill treatment he'd received as a child, Khulile rejected the proposal and anything to do with the Eastern Cape. But he agreed to allow Vuyelwa to go if she believed it would help her. Frustrated by her illness and determined to get well, Vuyelwa left both her parents and went, for the first time to the 'home' she had never visited, at Willowvale, accompanied by a Cape Town-based relative born in the same village as Khulile. There she met Khulile's father's brother (her own FFB), now an old man. He told her he had had a dream that she was coming and that he should perform *iyeza lasekhaya* (home medicine) for her, but only once she had undergone rituals 'to make her grow up' (*ukukhuliswa*). This included her going through *intonjane* (girls puberty rite) two weeks after which she underwent *Imvuma-kufa*³⁷ (lit: admission of the illness).

³⁷ *Imvuma-kufa* is a ritual that is performed on behalf of the person who is believed to be sick as a result of his or her ancestors wanting to use him/her as a spirit medium. A goat is slaughtered

The male agnate who performed Vuyelwa's two rituals did not live in the urban areas but he lived at Willowvale the place of birth of Vuyelwa's father. That alone was enough to reaffirm to Vuyelwa that her real home where she could get healing is in the village at Willowvale where his father was born. Also, as Vuyelwa explained, her grandfather (FFB) did not perform the rituals in his own homestead, but he went and had the rituals performed for her at the big home, (*ekhayakhulu*-her father's father's homestead). Vuyelwa, as I spoke to her, kept on referring to her home as the one she called the big home. Her father, Khulile was saving money so that he could go to Willowvale and reawaken his father's home as after the challenge of his daughter's illness and healing, the situation reaffirmed to him that he could not have any rituals performed for any of his children at his house in Crossroads.

When I met them in Crossroads, it had been three years since Vuyelwa had undergone these rituals. Khulile said: "Vuyelwa had never, before this (*isiko*) custom/ritual was done, been able to stay away from the doctor for even two months. It is because of this that I am now bound to agree that a home is about people and how prepared they are to take responsibility for each other."

Fiona Ross has argued against Mary Douglas's view that "'home is here or it is not there', where the latter states that a home does not have anything to do with the questions how, nor who nor when" (2002:5) Her disagreement with Douglas's work is because in her work at Chris Nissen Park, has shown that "making and maintaining home has long been about determining 'when'; 'who'; and 'how' things are done" (2002:5). Ross adds: "and is increasingly about using these criteria to fix relationships in time and space." (Ibid) Below I discuss how Khulile changed his perception of both his village home and house after the incorporation of the three elements of home-making that took place in his daughter's life.

When I spoke to Khulile, he commented about his earlier ill feelings about Willowvale. But he phrased that all in the past tense indicating thereby that since the success of the rituals performed for his daughter by his father's brother, he had changed his mind about the characteristics of a home that he

and the ancestors are addressed to say that the agent is not yet ready to be initiated, but that they are giving in to the demand of the ancestors to work as their agent later on. (Interview with Vuyelwa, 2001:May).

and his family needed. He had come to recognize what many of his peers already accepted: that what constitutes a home is not just his urban notion but is also about the 'who' who constitute a home – in his case his living relatives who were able to reinforce home for his family by demonstrating the 'how' in what constitutes a home in their act of performing the ritual, thereby saving his daughter from an illness that he now knew was caused by another 'who', his ancestral dead. Khulile's earlier plans to live in his urban house privately with his wife and children had been critically challenged when his blood relatives had, on his behalf, performed a ritual that had functioned to heal his daughter. Khulile's case illustrates the challenge that a man faced and how it forced him to look up on his rural kin and rural home for its solution.

Such a challenge, because of its personal and intimate nature, created uncertainty for him about the degree to which he could achieve a sense of 'homeness' in urban areas. In agreement with rituals and people as part of home-making, McAllister says "Beer drinks, killing an ox or goat for a recently deceased grandfather in order to appropriate them or to secure ancestral status of a recently deceased grandfather, too was an act that built the homestead (2001:6). For the first time, Khulile was forced to consider rituals as part of home and homemaking and for the first time he had to face the possibility that his urban house was not going to be sufficient to be a home for neither him or his children because he realized that if rituals which are used to appropriate relations between the living and the living dead are to be part of his life, then they will have to be performed at his birth home as he does not have the necessary components, like a cattle byre; the relatives to address the ancestors nor the space to perform such rituals.

Below, in the final section of the chapter, I build from the earlier argument to add that there is fear of incorrectly performing the rituals forcing people living in the urban areas to both go back to the villages for such rituals and to depend on their kin in the villages to perform such rituals that in turn reinforce the significance of village homes as the only suitable homes for people living in the

urban areas. White (2001) has also found that people do appreciate that at times they make mistakes when performing their rituals. White (2001) said that.

The people of Mfanefile in the KwaZulu midlands performed the same rituals repeatedly whenever it was said that something had gone wrong during the first ritual performance, and even if that error was discovered only much later through people's experience of illness. People then had to make a speech to apologize to the ancestors during the second ritual performance for the oversight during the first version of the ritual, particularly when it was said that the earlier error had resulted in the ancestors not comprehending nor assisting in the work [ritual] (2001:152).

I also suggest that the need to perform the rituals in a correct manner that is recognized by the ancestors is linked to respect that I have earlier suggested is a significant element of what constitutes a home. I argue that like *intanga* allows for respect between the young and the elderly people of the homestead, *intonjane* as a ritual allows for the kind of respect that prepares the family for the loss of their daughter who is about to leave their home to be a member of a new homestead. This means that *intonjane* in this respect functions as a ceremony to pay respect to both the living and the living who have looked after the young woman.

In Crossroads, it was people's perceived need that they do their rituals correctly that emphasized their sense of dependence on their village homes and rural kin. This means that people could not fully settle in the urban areas without referring to their real homes as the homes in the villages or *emaXhoseni* (the place of *amaXhosa*). The reason for their reference to *emaXhoseni* as their village homes was fuelled by challenges such as that of the case of Khulile above who could not perform his daughter's *intonjane* in the urban areas. Before I relate the next case study, which is also about girls' puberty rites, I now turn to define the ritual.

Intonjane is a word derived from the Xhosa word '*intombi*' (*pl iintombi*), meaning a young, sexually mature, unmarried, but marriageable woman. *Intonjane* is the diminutive form, which has to do with the fact that the young

woman going through the ritual is not an *intombi* until after completion of the ceremony. Cloete (1996) says that the word *intonjane* means "girl being initiated". Hunter (1936) says the word *intonjane* derives from the verb, *ukuthomba* – to menstruate for the first time. The word *intonjane* then has been associated with a young woman's first signs of physical maturity by various earlier anthropologists. Hammond-Tooke (1974), Hunter (1936) and Kohler (1933) all say that, immediately after a girl's first menstruation, the ceremony called *ukuthombisa* (a causative form of *ukuthomba*) meaning 'to attend on a girl during her first menstrual period' is performed (Cloete, 1996: 15). *Intonjane* is thus a rite of passage, in van Gennep's (1960) sense of "a series of passages from one socially defined age to another" (1960: 67). According to Soga (1932) and Mndende (1999), *intonjane* is analogous to Xhosa men's initiation as it prepares women for adulthood and marriageability much as men's initiation prepares boys for the social status of having a right to get married and have their own children. In essence, *intonjane* was a ritual that was supposed to give young girls the status of *intombi*, the only socially recognized stage in which a woman could be married. It is important to note that *intonjane* only appears in my own research work as a narration (and not something I observed) by women who told me that their inability to perform the ritual was damaging to their cultural identification.

Writing about men's initiation, Philip Mayer (1971:7) argued that the reason why nearly everyone continued to support initiation in principle is nationalism (either African nationalism or Xhosa tribalism), which he said was to be found among all classes of the Xhosa-speaking population at the time he conducted his research. I wish to argue that in the same vein, there appears to be a growing concern among women with the performance of *intonjane*. My informants linked the inability to perform the ritual to problems of space in the urban areas. From the stories related to me about *intonjane*, it is clear that many people thought that Xhosa women's initiation was as important as is Xhosa men's initiation. However from all the cases in this chapter, we will notice that, for the women in

Crossroads and surrounding townships, the girls' puberty rite was performed only after people had experienced some kind of problem which was then interpreted to be the result of the wrath of their ancestral dead about their having abandoned this rite of passage. Nosiselo, one of a pair of twins in their early forties and who lived in Crossroads explained to me that

Intonjane is of utmost importance to *amaXhosa*. My parents did not perform the ritual for us until only two years ago when I was very sick. Do you see how big I am? I am the second twin and my sister is the first one. You can see she is very small, but she is healthier than me. I am the one who suffers most and, if there is something wrong, even when we were little, I would get sick all the time. Two years ago I was very sick and no doctor could tell what was wrong with me. My father just knew that the reason for my illness was that I needed my *intonjane*. We did not even have to go to the diviner because my father knew that there was something that he had not done for us. He came to Cape Town to fetch my twin sister and me. I was so ill that he had to hire a van so that they could make me lie down in the van all the way to Stutterheim.³⁶ I tell you, I was well just after the slaughtering of the first goats of the ritual. So, when one's ritual has not been performed, especially if one is from a family that used to observe customs (before coming to the urban areas) like mine, it is like that person has not been incorporated to their own homes (Interview, November 2001).

Every time I asked them about *intonjane*, Crossroads women would frown at me and ask me 'Where do you come from?' This is because they believe that all *amaXhosa* are supposed to 'know these things'. To them I was accepted as a Xhosa until I demonstrated my ignorance and asked about *intonjane*. Thereafter I was treated differently. One informant once remarked that she had thought that I was a Xhosa but realized I was not really when she heard me asking the twins about *intonjane*. Irrespective of the fact that the ritual is performed only infrequently these days, Xhosa people are 'supposed to know' it and about it. 'The *amaXhosa* as a people should know' said one woman (Interview, November:2001) It is from this notion, that I turn below to discuss its

³⁶ An Eastern Cape town.

importance and how performance of the girl's puberty rite has reinforced women's dependency on their village homes as well as on their male kin, and how that in turn meant that people were unable to conceive of their urban dwelling spaces as proper homes.

When the '*izinyanya*' (ancestral dead) reveal to you that you need to do something (a ritual) to correct your mistake and you are living in the urban areas, it is a sign that you are important to them and that the custom is important too. You are bound to go home and do it correctly. In such cases you cannot do it in your house at Crossroads as if you are an *itshipha* (someone who has abandoned a rural home; an absconder (see Mayer, 1963:3 -Interview, June 2001).

The above statement by MaMajola (see case 5.4 below) tells us about the way rituals are understood by Crossroads people. In the above example my informant was referring to a ritual that she said was not just a choice, but the result of a demand by her ancestral dead. As I have already indicated, Crossroads people understood home and home-making as including people who are part of the concerned home, and in terms of the approval and acceptance of the place as a home by the spirits of the ancestors. This last criterion requires ritual performances in the home to be clearly demonstrated to participants that a particular place and group of persons constitutes such a home. In order to later discuss the circumstances of MaMajola's story that I use to illustrate the challenge of having to look for the right place and person, she encountered as she made efforts to settle at Crossroads, I first tell the story itself to which I now turn.

Case 5.3: Looking for the right place

MaMajola was in her early fifties. She was a diviner who was born and had grown up in a township in the Eastern Cape town of Alice. Her father had settled there after moving from a rural village in the Eastern Cape's Tsolo district. Her father had mixed a lot with the people MaMajola now thought had lost their *amasiko* (customs). She became sick after her father's death, and her search for healing led to her becoming a diviner. But the diviner in charge of her initiation did not foretell that there would be problems.

MamaJola said that she had been more sick now, as a diviner, than she was before becoming one. So she addressed her ancestors and asked what was it that she had to do. She explained that more than once she had dreamt that her father's mother was asking her why she was wearing a married woman's headscarf.

The dream had been interpreted as meaning that her grandmother did not know that she was married. When she further inquired about the meaning of this (she knew that a ritual had been performed by her father to inform her ancestors when she was getting married), MamaJola said that it was clarified that it was her *intonjane* that had not been performed, and that, as a result of the skipping of the ritual, her dead grandmother still saw her as a child. She was now planning to go not to Alice, but to Tsolo where her father had been born, a place of the cattle byre manure of his father's home (*emgqubeni wakulotata*). She was worried that there might be no one there to help her, as her father's brothers were all dead. As she told me, the performing of her *intonjane* had to be done in a way acceptable to her ancestors and by the entitled people, (blood relatives), her male relative from her father's side.

It mattered for her where her late *intonjane* was going to be performed. The woman did not even know the village where her father had been born, but because she had suffered for a long time, she was about to start looking for people she had never met before. She told me she was going to talk to the chief, who had to have access to the information she needed. This kind of a challenge, was surely to change MaMajola's perception of her real home. In fact when talking to me for the first time, she did not tell me that she was from Alice, where she had grown up, but she told me she was from Tsolo. It was only when she told me her story that I learned that she had grown up at Alice and that Tsolo was her father's birth home. The challenge of illness had already reaffirmed to her that her home was in Tsolo, not a small township of Alice that she grew up in, but the one that was known to her ancestors. Without even receiving the social healing that she was yearning for, MaMajola had started treating Tsolo as her real home. MaMajola's dream about her paternal grandmother who kept asking her why she was wearing a head scarf can be seen as her ancestor's way of asking her who had paid respect to them for their looking after her as a child, or why was it not reported to the ancestors that she

was ready to leave her birth home for marriage. When describing the ancestors, Vellem (2002) says that they are the custodians of the home, and that puts them in a position that requires their consultation in times of change in the circumstances of the home and the people of the homestead.

I was told a story similar to MaNgwanya's by another woman who was in her forties. Her name was Nolwandle and she came to Cape Town for employment reasons, as she was not married.

Case 5.4. An outstanding rite of passage.

Nolwandle's father had died in the year 2000. He had not taken responsibility for his first wife, son and twin girls for many years; having absconded (*ukutshipha*) and having never sent any remittances to his wife and children in Maclear, nor written to them. He lived with a new wife in Johannesburg and had 2 children with her. One of the twin daughters from his first marriage died at a young age while the other survived. She was working in Cape Town for a partnership of attorneys.

Nolwandle had developed a problem that had started suddenly. Every night she wet her bed. She could not stop this dream. She dreamt that she was going to the toilet and she then urinated in bed. She could not have a boyfriend because of the problem. She could not even go to church revival services at night because, even when she was sitting on a chair at night, a short sleep would steal upon her and the dream would come and she would urinate. Nolwandle had been to many specialist doctors but none could say what was wrong. They all claimed that she was physically well. Nolwandle said that she had been to many diviners as well, and they had all told her she would not stop wetting her bed unless she was to have the *intonjane* ceremony

Her father was dead. She earned very little money to be able to afford this ritual. And, she told me, it was even more difficult in her case because, as a twin, when her ritual would be performed, every time an animal would be slaughtered, there had to be two. This means two *iibhokhwe zokukhulisa*, (growing up goats) two *iinkomo zokutshatela*, (marriage cows) two *iibhokhwe zokuphindela* (going back goats) and two *iibhokhwe zokuphuma*, (coming out goats). Even two blankets would have to be bought for her because the ritual had to be done for the dead twin also.

The need to 'go back' to the 'home' of one's ancestors for the performance of *intonjane* kept appearing in the stories I was told about both already

performed *intonjane* rituals as well as those that were still being planned. People gave various reasons why the ritual could not be performed in their urban houses. Vuyelwa (case 5. 2) said it was because her father had refused to do it for her and also because there was insufficient space for the ritual to be performed at the Crossroads house. In further answer to my question why she did not do it at her father's house, she responded with a question of her own: "Yhoo! How?" she asked. "Where would we get the cattle from?" Vuyelwa asked this question because, she had told me that, one is supposed to use a 'home' beast from which hair is to be taken to make an *ubulunga* (a cow's hair necklace- See Hunter, 1936.) for the initiate. An *ubulunga* can only be made from the hair of a calf born to one of the homestead's cows and that has itself been raised in the home byre.

This reason is different from just the issue of space that was said to hinder the actual performance of *intonjane*. But it does nonetheless refer again to the issue of space, in that urban house yards are not large enough for people to have cattle byres or to keep livestock, and that in turn hinders the performance of *intonjane*.

One case was mentioned in a discussion I initiated in a taxi, about the Xhosa girls' puberty rite. Participants referred to a case of a man who had performed *intonjane* for his daughter at Boystown. For the same reason mentioned by Vuyelwa (case 5.2), people in the taxi thought the ritual could not have been the 'real' thing. My co-travellers that day and my various Crossroads respondents all also emphasised that *intonjane* must always be 'done properly'. For instance MaMajola did not want to go to Alice (where she grew up) to have *intonjane*. For her to have it done 'properly', meant having the ritual done for her at the place of her dead patrilineal ancestors. She thus explained that she had had to do it '*emgqubeni wakulotata*' (at the place of my father's birth home at the byre where there is/was manure). Such a physical space is imagined to have the power to evoke the spirits of the dead in a ritual that is performed to bless the agent, that is, the person for whom the ritual is being performed.

Hylton White (2001), writing about similar events at Mfanefile in KwaZulu-Natal, has also observed the importance of doing the ritual in a prescribed manner. As he says: "...ritual action during the present is commonly framed with an extraordinary careful and reflexive attention to protocols and procedures-based on consultations with those people who are held to know just what should be done" (2001:154).

In the case of Crossroads people, the protocol and the consultations were the grounds that formulated the circle of dependency of women on kin and on the villages where those kin resided, as these people were said by the informants to be the only ones to be able to define the correct way to undertake rituals such as an *intonjane*.

However the importance that was placed on the rural home for the performance of the *intonjane* is puzzling when considering the fact that temporary byres were erected (see Chapter Three above) in some urban houses for use during boy's initiation. Such temporary byres did not have 'umgquba' (manure), yet they were still used, and the ritual was never said to have been done 'incorrectly'.

What can we then say when we compare these two rituals? Does the difference mean that the men's initiation is not used as a means to address the ancestors? Is that the reason why it is not important whether it is 'done' in a 'real' cattle byre or in a temporary one? Does the fact that a woman's *intonjane* must be performed in the vicinity of a regularly used byre mean that *intonjane* has different social significance from a men's initiation rite? That is to say, is it thought that *intonjane* is a practice that enables the future use of the initiate as an agent of the ancestors (see Cases 5.2 and 5.3)? If that is the case then it would be an understandable reason for its omission as a person known to be an agent of the ancestral dead is feared and respected not just by men, but by the *amaXhosa* as a people. Does all this then mean that women are more susceptible to being used by the ancestors than are men? MamaJola together with many other people in and not in this chapter told me they believe that an

undone *intonjane*, is nothing but an outstanding burden that will have to be dealt with no matter how long it takes. The family still owes both the society as well as their ancestors. Hylton White says, with regard to the same issue, "...the emptiness of the past is known through its future, these times being sutured together by troubled memories, dreams, embodied repetitions [that will force people to go back to correct such past] (2001:155). Whyte (1998), as well as Bagnol (2001), confirm this observation that an outstanding ritual can come back and demand its performance by the family through the angry ancestral spirits even years after its omission. In such situations when maybe some of the agents or people for whom the rituals were to be performed are already dead, both White (1998) and Bagnol (2001) say a member from the agnatic family of the agent may take their place. It is in such situations that I refer to rituals as therapeutic or curative instruments. It is also in such circumstances that people connect their definition of an authentic home to their village homes, where they say they believe their ancestors to whom they pay due respect reside. When connecting the ancestors and the home, Vellem says "the ancestors are the custodians of *ikhaya*" (2002:77). If then respecting the ancestors is part of home-making, home should not inhibit such practices that are linked with respect. Below I turn to the issue of respect as discussed in relation to *intanga* to look at the common factor between *intonjane* as a ritual and the provision of *intanga*.

Imbeko/ Intlonipho and Intonjane

It is important to note that during my research, I never witnessed the performance of *intonjane* as it is seldom performed in the urban areas. The description given here is based on a number of people's memories. Unlike the men's ritual, it is quite difficult to perform *intonjane* in the urban areas as all its stages are performed at home as opposed to in the pastures or on the mountain like it's done in the men's initiation.

Intonjane as a ritual creates a kind of space where respect and protocol do not only play an important role, but are also a significant part of the ritual itself.

During the ritual, people play different roles at different times and in spaces that are created within the ritual and for the ritual's success. I will be equating *intonjane* with male initiation rite because of the similarities made by Makhulu, a seventy year old woman I met at a ceremony at Ngwanya's house (see Chapter Three), who lived at Crossroads when she told me about *intonjane*. As women were singing in the lounge, which was then called *indlu yabafazi* (the women's room), a man knocked on a closed door and asked if he could come in. He was let in and he stood in the centre of the room and told women that he had brought their "food" from men. He put on the floor, a twenty litre bucket full of *Umqombothi* (Xhosa traditional beer made with brewed maize meal and sorghum). Women spoke simultaneously thanking him, and he soon left the room.

Makhulu told me that in the *intonjane*, even the songs sung belong to different groups and categories of people. Men are not allowed to sing songs belonging to women and youth can't sing songs that belong to the elders. In the *umgidi* where I met Makhulu, one woman presented the "*ndiyathengisa*" song (a song conventionally sung by women during the *intonjane* ritual. The language in it is coded for women and it excludes men as a group.) While the women were drinking both *umqombothi* and western alcohol, other women joined the presenter in singing *ndiyathengisa*. Makhulu, stopped them and said, "*Ingaba singamadoda sonke lento nombela loo ngoma nje?*" (are we all men here? Why do you sing that song?). This was a very strange question to me as there were no men in the room. No one said anything to respond to her question, instead a different song was begun. I asked the old woman what she meant by the question she had just asked. Makhulu told me that if that song is sung in a room in the presence of women whose *intonjane* has not been performed yet, it could make them sick and the only solution to that kind of sickness is the performance of the *intonjane* ritual. The song was inappropriate because of the space it was sung in and the kind of people who were going to take part in its singing. A

particular kind of respect had to be observed, especially during the ritual used to prepare someone for adulthood.

In response to my question why she talked about men in the room, she told me that to be a 'man' is to be someone whose rite of passage to adulthood has been performed, be it a woman or a man. She said "*kaloku indoda ayizobrukhwé*" (a man is not a pair of trousers -or someone who wears them). According to Makhulu, a man is a great person (*ngumntu omkhulu*). When the rite of passage to adulthood for a woman is performed, she is being given a 'male' status. However, she becomes a man only when among other women. She becomes an 'adult', meaning, she can now handle responsibilities of being a parent. This new status of a woman however means something different to men. When a girl's (*intonjane/ukuthonjiswa*) is performed, she becomes 'marriageable', 'ripe', but never a prospective leader or a head of a household. Although recognised as an adult among other women, to men the women's adulthood of women does not grant them full independence in a patriarchal society. This indicates contradictions in patriarchy where women are regarded as both leaders as well as the led. The example is shown in case 5.3 of a single young woman who changes her social status after being possessed by the spirit of her dead ancestors. Although she is ideally regarded as a minor because she is a woman, in practice she is to play the role of a leader, a diviner who foretells and solves people's problems.

Makhulu's equation of adulthood to masculinity comes from the social ideal that a man is the powerful figure in a household as someone who is respected by society and who has the right to discipline the wife as well as the children or someone who befits respect from the society.

Makhulu and Cloete (1996) make similar comment on how men and women play different roles at different times and in different spaces during *intonjane* with men occupying the cattle byre and /or outside space while women spend most of their time inside the hut, except when they are tending the food in the fire place. In the *indlu yabafazi*, no man is allowed, and I was told that if a man

was to come in, women have a right to violently take off his clothes and push him out naked. During the ritual, women actually have an extraordinary kind of power in their space and as a result men have to respect them. A home as Malihloa said in this chapter, should allow for the kind of respect that is allowed for by the availability of an *intanga*, to allow privacy as well as respect among the people of the home and like in *intanga* the rite of passage allows such a sort of space. In the *umgidi*, just like in the *intonjane* ritual, men and women use space differently. From what I was told about *intonjane* and what I observed in the male initiation rites, there are many rules that control movements. During 'ritual time' as Mndende puts it, space is 'charged' (1999: 14) with a different kind of energy that has to be respected by all by observing their own part and place. This kind of fiction or performance during the ritual creates an imagined home with people of all ages as well as roles that are associated with a Xhosa home and such a ritual space is used to honor the ancestral dead.

Henri Lefebvre,(2002) when describing human geography says that social space is a product, a social product. Lefebvre also says...

"When we evoke 'energy' we must immediately note that energy has to be developed within a space. When we evoke 'space' we must immediately indicate what occupies that space and how it does so. The development of energy in relation to 'points' and within a time frame. when we evoke 'time', we must immediately say what it is that moves or changes therein." (LeFebvre, 2002:134).

During the ceremony or the *umgidi*, we see these rules manifesting themselves in a particular way that is different from everyday routine. The energy playing in different spaces of the house at different times are according to the imagined rules associated with the ritual. However, I have indicated that *intonjane* was not performed in Crossroads and as a result women said that they forfeited their social standing and the kind to respect that would enable them to stand in their homes with confidence, knowing that their social status of womanhood, or the people who are homemakers has been introduced to their ancestors and the society itself. Men would never marry without undergoing their

puberty rite of passage, but, women did get married without *intonjane* and to some of them, that became as Makhulu put it, a delayed trouble. It was in such situations that the ritual was used as a mending tool to stitch together a torn social fabric between the people and between them and their ancestry. From the cases discussed in this chapter, *intonjane* has indeed been performed or its performance was being planned because of some kind of problems that were associated with its omission.

However Hunter (1961) suggests that fathers of the women already delayed the performance of *intonjane* in the 1930's as they said that they were waiting for their bride wealth before they could perform the ritual. Also, evidence from my research shows that it died down as time went by. From the above information we can see that *intonjane* slowly declined from at least the 1920's to date. My informants give a lot of different reasons for this decline (see below). Both Hunter (1961) and Schapera (1970 on the Tswana), argue that the missionaries played an important role in the cessation of initiation rituals, especially for women. The missionaries used to excommunicate chiefs who were Christians for their continuation with the 'heathen' ways. According to Schapera,

The chief was formerly also responsible in all tribes for organising 'bogwera' and 'bojale'. These were the so-called circumcision (intiation) rites by means of which, every four to seven years or thereabouts, he created new age sets of boys and girls respectively. Most, though by no means all, of the early missionaries considered the rites very immoral, especially because they included the instruction about sexual practices and both the London Missionary Society (by 1845) and the Dutch Reformed Church (by 1869) specifically forbade church members to have anything at all to do with them (Schapera, 1974:126).

One of my informants also indicated that in the Eastern Cape, during the 1950's, the churches also excommunicated Christian parents if they were found to have involved themselves in the initiation rituals as these were regarded as 'heathen' practices. However, among the *baTswana* as with *amaXhosa*, the boys initiation ceremonies have survived to date. This can be explained in terms of patriarchal power such that men's initiation has been retained while women's

have been forfeited. Womanhood can be seen as having second class status in the society of *amaXhosa*. Faced with poverty, men (as the people who are in charge of the livestock in the homes) prefer to avoid *intonjane* because it requires the slaughtering of cattle which men also associate with their own power demonstration. In confirmation of the expenses related to *intonjane* already in the 19th century, Kohler says this ritual necessitated that

“the father sends word to his sons, brothers and other sib members, who are expected to contribute animals for slaughter according to the degree of their relationship, while members of the household and of neighbouring kraals [homesteads] prepare large quantities of beer (1933:18).

Indeed, Kohler, like the explanation I got from Makhulu, makes it clear that this women’s initiation rite necessitated killing of not one but a couple of beasts (1933:19).

Nozizwe was a woman I met for the first time in a taxi that was full of people. I started the conversation on the issue of *intonjane* with the woman seated next to me but it ended up so big everyone was participating. Generally in that taxi, no one knew any other reason why *intonjane* is not performed in Cape Town. But they also thought it would not be possible for a number of reasons. One reason was space constraints in the dwellings; some mentioned that one has to have the *intlabi*³⁷ when performing the *intonjane* because this ritual is ‘very big’. This group was saying that one needs to constantly address the ancestors during the ritual and that is the task of one’s blood relatives not just a man with the same clan name. The fact that there are barely any ‘real’ relatives in Cape Town is the reason some give for the forfeiting of the *intonjane*.

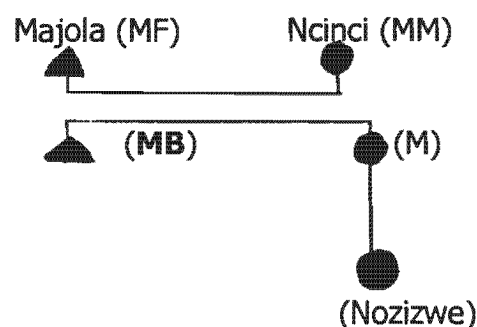
The one-and-a-half-hour conversation on this issue became so intense that a woman named Nozizwe seating next to the driver, two seats away from my seat, burst into tears as she was telling everybody how her mother’s brother (MB)

³⁷ *Intlabi* is a man that is given the status of ritually slaughtering all the sacrificial animals for a designated household. He has to be a man from the same lineage and there is supposed to be only one *intlabi* for all the households under that particular lineage.

used her bridewealth to pay his own wife's *ikhazi*³⁸, and forfeited the performance of her *intonjane*. Nozizwe's mother was not married and Nozizwe grew up at her mother's birth home. When she got married, her mother's brother was the male relative who accepted her *ikhazi*. Nozizwe was angry because she had to perform her own daughter's *intonjane* as she was now old enough, but it was strange as hers as a mother had not been performed yet. It was in the Village 'home' and not in the urban house where she was paid *ikhazi* for. Cloete (1996) also states that in Shixini, one of the *intonjane* rituals she attended was for a woman who had to do her own as her own daughter was old enough and ready to have *intonjane*. Nozizwe was also frustrated because the uncle was now in a poor financial situation, which meant that even if she forced him, there was no way he could afford to perform the ritual for her.

Although the women talked about space shortage in the urban areas as a reason for forfeiting the performance of *intonjane*, not one of them mentioned the fact that as early as the 1920s its performance started declining. Although I cannot say that women consciously chose what to tell me, their telling me of the decline of the *intonjane* performance would have contradicted their claims about its vitality in the present.

Figure 5: Relationships in Nozizwe's case³⁹



³⁸ Bridewealth/ *ilobolo*

³⁹ Bold represents the man who used Nozizwe's bridewealth.

This part of the chapter has aimed to illustrate the similarities that are there between respect in the home and the respect that is observed in spaces created during the performance of women's puberty rite of passage. In other words, not having the *intonjane* for women was said to be equivalent to having not been prepared for the process of home-making which requires that people play different roles while giving appropriate respect at appropriate times.

***Intonjane* and Kinship.**

Kinship plays a significant role in the performance of *intonjane*. In all the cases described above, I have shown that in order for the ritual to be performed the women had to have either in-law or agnatic relatives present and assisting, with male agnatic males having the utmost importance. Thus as we saw, even though MaMaJola's father (case 5.3) was dead, she had to go to her father's birth home so she could have an agnate present, even if it was her father's brother's son. She thus had to go to Tsolo in order to find a man from the same genealogy as her father, because it is only such a person who has the power to address her ancestors. Case 5. 2 also illustrates the strength and importance of kinship ties in the *intonjane* ritual. It was a male agnate who willingly performed Vuyelwa's *intonjane* as well as her *Imvuma-kufa*. Cloete (1996) too points to the importance of good family relations with one's agnatic family in contents of ritual performance. She mentions, in particular, the fact that the person who needs to undertake the *intonjane* has to comply and conform to the demands of her male agnatic members, as it is only they who have the power to oversee it for her. This means that ritual can be used to keep good family relations. In cases 5.2 and 5.3 for example, we have seen women suffering because of disturbances in their domestic hierarchies. As a result the two women had to work very hard to save for their own rituals in order to be able to obtain the assistance of their male agnates to address the ancestors during the ritual and to take charge of relations of hierarchy between living relatives during that time.

In case 5.2, Vuyelwa never knew her father's family before they performed the rituals to cure her, using their own livestock and money. Although her father was alive, he could not be part of the ritual because of his anger towards his relatives who had treated him badly as a child after the death of his parents. However, in this case, as in the others it is a male agnate who must be sought because only he has the power to access to spirits of their ancestors.

Conclusion:

The purpose of this chapter has been to analyze what people told me had been their personal challenges as they were trying to settle in their private, houses instead of their village homes. I have shown, that because of the impact of other people on the lives of the people discussed in this chapter, some of them as a consequence of the RDP house allocation process, women and others suffered as they were separated from their children and grandchildren-all because they became new owners of separate houses, the sizes of which was too small to accommodate their extended domestic units.

I have also shown that ritual performance, especially the performance of girl's puberty rite of passage, since it is performed in many cases long after the woman's actual time of puberty, and because people say that the correct way to do it is to do it at the rural home, reaffirms the importance of village homes and marks again how urban houses are so inadequate as real homes.

This chapter has also demonstrated how the absence of the 'entitled people, (blood relatives)' in the performance of *intonjane* actually reinforces the idea of village homes as the only places where social healing can be obtained. I have already established in Chapter Three that Crossroads people conceive of a home as a place where one could be healed of the illnesses understood to be social in nature and in the cases presented in this chapter it is the 'going back' not only to the village homes that reaffirm the insufficiency of the urban houses as the proper homes, but the going back to the people, the designated male agnate,

who in most times are elderly people living in their villages. Again, I have shown in this chapter that because people want to follow the correct way when performing the rituals, and because the urban houses do not have the sufficient components for them to do so, then the village homes are seen and used for such purposes and thus reaffirming for them that urban houses are not suitable homes. In all, this chapter has served to illustrate that, as Ross (2002) has shown in her work in Chris Nissen Park, home and homemaking for Crossroads people was understood to incorporate the place where a home is, the 'where', the how of the ritual procedures of that home, and the correct people who have roles and places in the hierarchy of the home to establish and to ensure the success of the home.

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CHAPTER Six: CONCLUSION

The purpose of this dissertation and the project on which it is based has been to investigate: (a) What it is that constitutes a 'home' for people in Crossroads, a Black township in Cape Town; and (b) How the characteristics of urban houses impact on those people's sense of 'homeness' and its relationship to what they see as their Xhosa customs and cultural identity. This thesis argues that houses in urban areas, whether formal or informal, are not considered proper 'homes' by people living in Crossroads and surrounding townships. This argument applies even to those people who do not intend living in the villages in future or in their retirement. From my opening remarks I have explained that I was puzzled by the way language around home and going home was used by *amaXhosa* in Worcester, Zwelethemba. I started this project with the aim of understanding what a home is and how it differs from a house as these words were used distinctively by *amaXhosa* in the Western Cape as a whole. This thesis then probes such language use, in order to understand the process of home-making and home.

Together with the two words 'home' and 'house', I had to learn the meaning attached to other words used with these such as '*ukugoduka*'; (to go home) *igoduka* (the one who goes home); '*emaXhoseni*' (the place of *amaXhosa*) and '*emlungwini/esilungwini*'; (the place of white person or the place where things are done in a white person's way).

In the language, I learned that Crossroads people, as I expected since my experience with the people from Zwelethemba, used the word *ukugoduka* (to go home) with reference to their homes in the villages (or their birth homes). The sentimental expression attached to the word '*goduka*' (go home) was different to that attached to the phrase '*ukuya endlwini*' (to go to the house). The question that follows this understanding then becomes, 'how does a home differ from the house from these people's perspective, and what sentiments are attached to which of the two concepts and for what reasons?'

In Chapter Two I have shown that the meaning of the word 'home' has something to do with permanency attached to village homes as opposed to the temporality that is attached to the urban house. The home was explained as that place for which they worked in order to maintain and in order to do that people used a house in the urban areas to live in while staying in the place of the white person (*emlungwini*). In other words, the place of houses (as opposed to that of homes) was used to maintain their homes in the villages. Indeed, in Crossroads people contrasted houses to homes to conclude that the houses in the urban areas were related to wage work (*impangelo*) and home understood as the place of rest where people worked for themselves (*ukusebenza/ umsebenzi*) and did not compete with white people for money and with each other for wage labour.

The term *emaXhoseni* was used in connection with the sentiments of a place of people who lived and worked to build their homesteads and not just houses. This means that the concept was used relation to rituals that enabled people to live without having to shed their customs, just like they would live in the villages. Crossroads people admitted that despite the necessity of rituals to appease the ancestors, in the process of home building, sometimes even at *emaXhoseni* they did not regularly perform them unless there had been indications to do so. They attributed their failing to poverty and the influence of Christianity. However, they said that *emaXhoseni* differed from *emlungwini* in that should such indications be detected, most of the elements of home-building and ritual-performance (such as cattle byres, or space marked for ritual performance, blood relatives and physical space where people of different ages play their respective roles) are present and are part of the home itself.

Another question that is pursued in this project and answered in chapter three is, if *emaXhoseni* is the place in the villages, what then do people who live in the area of houses call themselves? I have shown in the third chapter and throughout this project that Crossroads people (and people from the surrounding townships), educated and those who were not very educated, spoke of the people who do not *goduka* anymore as *amarhanuga*, the people who have lost

their traditional way of life and as a result when speaking of their village homes, spoke of the area of the people who still lived according to their cultural ways and not the cultureless people that they saw themselves as. This idealization of the village homes was common even among the people who had spent more than thirty years in the urban areas and they also called themselves *amarhanuga* as they said that their Xhosaness was not authentic anymore because of their abandonment of their village homes where they could practice their Xhosa ways of life. However, when in crisis situations, the same people would claim their Xhosaness and how that is in disagreement with what is happening to them and that resulted in regular usage of sentimental phrases like 'we *amaXhosa*' (*thina maXhosa*) do not do that (see chapters 3 and 4). In all Crossroads people perceived of their Xhosaness as attached to frequently going home to *emaXhoseni* where there are no limitations (except money) to living according to their concept of Xhosaness. In other words in this project I have shown that Crossroads people's language reveals their aspirations to the village homes as their proper homes irrespective of both their educational background and the type of dwelling they lived in.

In Chapter Three I have introduced the views of the residents of the three areas of Crossroads; the informal settlement called Boystown; the formal four roomed houses areas, called Unathi, and the new section composed of the RDP (Reconstruction and Development Program), on what for these people constitutes a home and from the everyday words used by Crossroads people in connection with home and the process of home-making, I have been able to ascertain what, according to them, were the characteristics of a home and what steps or components were significant in home-making and understanding. However, I have shown in this project that there are a number of attempts that people make in the direction of accommodating their practices associated with a home. The language used by Crossroads people, I have suggested, shows that, although urban life has been accepted and to some extent being altered to suit

some village way of life, people still talk of the houses they live in as 'houses' (*izindlu*) and restrict their use of the word '*ikhaya*' (home) to refer to their places of residence and domicile in 'the village' areas. I have attributed this to be connected to the frustrations caused by impracticality of some ritual practices in the urban areas. Space allows for people to live according to their imagination of home and home-making. I have concluded in this project that there were elements of a home according to Crossroads people that could not be addressed in the urban areas. In support of this argument I have shown in Chapter Five that people have related stories of how they had to look for particular kinsmen when they had to perform rituals. Male blood relatives who are usually elderly people who reside in the villages are said to be the only people who have both the right as well as the access to address the ancestral dead. Ross says, "A lineage describes people in relation to one another as descendants of a common ancestor. Genealogical links express a shared orientation toward historic time. They express also a common set of ideas pertaining to boundaries. 'They' and 'we' are creations of shared notions of relationships that determine how 'blood' and 'time' link people in the present. Genealogy creates boundaries as it generates a fiction of group-belonging." (1997:6). This vital notion of the relatedness of people in ritual performance that in itself is an element of home-making was confirmed by Crossroads people time and again. The process of home-making for these people could not be possible without the people who shared with them the knowledge of relatedness and history, which during the time of ritual, is used to create a special medium to heal the person for whom the ritual is performed in the present. The people concerned argue that urban areas are limited in their capacity to provide them with all the elements of 'homeness'.

Cases 5.2-5.4 have illustrated how people who needed to have rituals performed for them said that they could not 'correctly' perform their rituals without the assistance of their paternal male kin, who are said to be the only

people who have access to their ancestral dead. The 'correct' procedure of the ritual being planned necessitates requirements that are not possible given the present state and conditions of the urban life. Such situations have enforced, in the people's minds, that home is in the villages, where there are people who have both the power as well as the access to reach their ancestors on their behalf and that in turn justifies the villages as the only real homes for them. Rituals, which are a part of the 'how' in the process of home-making also require the participation and presence of the kin. A second component of a home and the process of home-making is the people who become a part of the home.

I have also shown that, in most cases, people who live in the urban areas only perform such rituals as *intonjane* (girls puberty rite of passage) when there has been some kind of a disorder that they then associate with the earlier omission of the ritual. In other words, *intonjane* (and other rituals) are used in their *therapeutic* forms, to use Henderson's (1999: 72) words, to 'stitch together' a torn social fabric. In such cases, there was fear of performing such rituals in an incorrect manner and again looking for the correct people as well as the means to do the ritual practice were reasons for people to go back to the villages for such rituals.

The most significant conclusion to come from my work in Crossroads is that home and homemaking were understood to incorporate the place where a home is, the 'where'; the how of the ritual procedures and other survival means of that home, and the identification of the correct people who have roles and places in the hierarchy of the home to establish and to ensure the success of the home. I have also shown that in urban areas people created good social relations that were based on their rural home principles. Such relations however cannot change the fact that such people are not blood relatives or '*abantu basekhaya*' (the people of the home). In other words, such relations do not hold when it really comes to the situations where blood relatives are needed.

Another significant factor that I have discussed as being the 'how' part of the process of home-making is the ritual which I said is used by the people to bring

about the restoration of social health. However, it is of vital significance that because of its important role in the process of home-making, people want to use acceptable and correct procedures when performing rituals. I have demonstrated this in chapter five and showed that correct elements of the ritual performance were important. White (2001) has indicated that in KwaZulu-Natal's Mfanefile settlement, there was the awareness that it was possible for people to make mistakes when performing rituals and thereby making such rituals null and void. I have shown in Chapter Five that this fear of doing things incorrectly, has forced Crossroads people to disregard as places for real homes all urban areas where there are no cattle byres; no *'abantu bekhaya'*; and no proper means to perform rituals of healing when they are needed. For all these reasons, houses in urban areas such as Crossroads are not considered sufficient to be homes.

Connected to Xhosaness and home, I suggested that Crossroads people explained that even the type of foods eaten was significant as a quality of their Xhosa homes. Men emphasised that if they had a choice their children and families would be eating homemade sour milk, something that they associated with the pride of a home and Xhosaness. But for this man to be able to live the way he did, which he said made him feel dignified, he had to continue living in the shack area from which he might soon be evicted as he had been supplied with a formal house. He and some of his neighbours who kept livestock decided not to move to their new RDP houses because their livestock was better kept in the shack area as they had more space there to allow them to keep their livestock. However, despite my suggestion in the third chapter that Crossroads people say that the informal settlement is similar in a number of ways to villages, this kind of dwelling space is still dangerous in terms of fires and other health hazards. Crossroads people who lived in the shack area liked the fact that they could keep their livestock because they had bigger space there than there was in the sections of formal houses. In other words, the shacks could be used to live a village life while in the urban areas. But I have shown that this alone did not make these people agree that the shack area was a home because they did not

like living in the tin shacks and they still did not have their blood relatives and as a result, I showed that one man called his shack, 'my place' instead of 'my home or my homestead', meaning that the fulfilment was incomplete despite the efforts made to bring the home feeling in the urban area.

Also in this chapter we heard how it is difficult to have cattle byres as there is no space to build them. Vuyani Vellem, in his thesis that argues that "the gains of modernity were not conspicuously intended for blacks and that urban blacks broadly speaking, linger in a limbo (locations or townships) between a religious cosmos [the kraal] and a white city"(2002:167). Ngubane (1995) says that Zulu people (like *amaXhosa*) do not communicate directly with God (*uMvelinqqangi/uQamata*) for day to day routine, instead they direct their requests to their ancestral dead who in turn communicate with God on their behalf. Communicating with the ancestors requires that there is among other things, the cattle byre which according to Vellem (2002) is the most significant property of a home. Xhosa people in the Western Cape as a whole do not use the term '*ekhaya*'(at home) to refer to their houses in the urban areas, instead they say, 'at my house', which is just the walls or the structure according to Vellem, (2002: 61). Here Vellem's (2002) differentiation of a Xhosa home from a house explains why *amaXhosa* not only of Crossroads, but also in the Western Cape, carefully differentiate between their homes and their houses as the houses in Crossroads do not have the cattle byres, which are a significant element of a home as they are used to perform rituals that in turn serve to appropriate good relationships between the living and the ancestral dead. When writing about the significance of the living dead, Gluckman (1965) quotes Radcliffe-Brown who says, "In many societies after a man's death, his social personality, which is the total set of the man's relationships with other members of the community-that is his position as a father to children; husband to wife and so on, survives" (1965:7). This understanding further explains the present failures of the people in forging the urban space into their desired kinds of home, as in a home respect is supposed to be constantly paid through ritual practices to the ancestors who

are still regarded as living as social beings. Crossroads people agree that in order to do that, *iintlanti* (cattle byres) are necessary.

Space constraints have created contestations between those people who make efforts to change their urban situation and those who question the challenges this poses to cultural convention.

I have argued that Crossroads people used their village homes as a standard by which to measure the 'homeness' of the urban areas, and make efforts to mimic the village homes in the urban areas. In the villages there are nuclear as well as extended kin who have roles to play in the home-making process, but they are absent in the urban situation. I have shown in this work that the people of Crossroads have, in a number of examples, shown that the failure of their urban living environment to provide them with the kin, or its dismantling of their existing households contribute to its failure to become their real home. Blood relatives, who are expected to take responsibility for each other by their ancestral dead, were said to be a significant component of a home. Of the many people in Crossroads that I quoted who asserted this notion, was an old woman who even asserted that, should such relatives not accept their duty to their kin in need of their help, they would be 'punished' by their ancestral dead. In another case we saw how a child's illness was a result of the shade of his deceased patrilineal relative being angry about his remains being buried in the urban areas where he used to be employed. This case provides an example of how Crossroads people understood a home to be a place where there are people who have the responsibility to help each other when there is a demand of any form by the ancestors.

I have also shown that by always saying that the villages are their homes, the people of Crossroads did not mean that it is *rurality* that makes a home. I used case studies in Chapter Three to indicate that people's idealised perception of home had a lot to do with whether the place was able to supply them with

their needs, whether spiritual or physical, and I showed that people felt that their urban houses failed in providing such needs.

In Chapter Four, I argued that, to some extent, *amaXhosa* in Crossroads had made considerable efforts to practise the kind of life ways that they said are characteristics of their Xhosaness by accommodating the cultural practices that they thought were possible in the urban space, and I have indicated that by doing so they were trying to preserve what they thought of as 'their culture' and in doing so changing the way they perceived and used urban space to serve their interests.

By having demonstrated the kinds of changes that people made in their use of urban space, my aim has not been to imply that people in Crossroads do not accommodate cultural change. Rather, what I have tried to show, in Chidester's words (1992:1) is that "'tradition' [and culture] might be understood not as in something handed down, but as something taken up, as an open set of cultural resources and strategies that can be mobilized in working out the meaning and power of a human world". I have argued, by way of case studies, that some Crossroads people have long accepted cultural change. These efforts, I explained, were observed amongst all, irrespective of whether they were 'conservative' or not. As I have indicated in chapter three, good social relations, where people did not have to compete with one another for wage work [and other resources] as well as with kin, were said by Crossroads people to be an essential element of a home. It is an element that they said comes from their rural-based understanding of a home. In this chapter I have also shown that the practice of commensality was used to forge a kind of imagined kin group (*ubuhlobo* and *izalamane*) that was said to be a component of home. I have shown in the chapter that sharing resources was not only a means to deal with impoverishment, but was also used as a means to create a kind of bonding that is associated with relatives and membership of and in a home. I have argued this point with reference to the building and sharing of a stack of wood, an item said by the people of Crossroads to have ritual significance in a home. Chapter Four

also explores the use of kin based on common clans and / or hometowns (see Wilson and Mafeje, (1963) and Mehlwana, (1996)); as a way to accommodate what they know as home or comprising home, from their rural socialization. I have shown that, in their state of alienation and impoverishment in urban areas, Crossroads people have manipulated ideas of home and home-making to suit their needs in the urban areas. In other words, clanship is used to first create an imagined membership in *ikhaya* that in turn entails automatic sharing of resources. However, their attempts to settle in urban areas also introduce challenges that I discuss in Chapter Five.

Here I have argued that Crossroads people faced challenges as they engaged in the process of settling into the urban areas. I have argued that Crossroads is not composed of a community of urban beginners only and, because of this, people experienced complications as households⁴⁰ often broke up when economically active youth left behind people who would otherwise have been their dependants. This was when younger people went to live in their own new RDP houses. In the chapter I have also shown that the method that is used at present to supply people with RDP houses is inconsiderate of the types of families that comprise the community of Crossroads, and how that in turn exposes the separated households to impoverishment, as breadwinners move to their own new RDP houses. The process of RDP house distribution is not considerate of the diverse needs and situations of people to whom such houses are allocated.

I have shown how grandparents and their unmarried children were faced with having to make choices between better economic lifestyles and their grandchildren, something that they said was against their Xhosaness. The impact of such challenges is that they tend to destroy an important factor of the component of home as known by Crossroads people, that is, they separate the people of the same home.

⁴⁰ I use this term not only to refer to people who co-reside, but to the relatedness that exists between them and that which is used by Crossroads people to mean the part of home.

In connection with what people suggested as the solution to the problem of household disruption and fission that resulted from their moving to RDP houses, I have discussed the provision of *intangas* and how giving adjacent houses to people who belong to one household might allow for the privacy of young people from their parents without having to put any distance between household members. I have suggested that, if this kind of approach to supplying houses were used, it would allow for respect between adult household members and youth.

Space inadequacy also affects *intonipho*, (respect) which marks relationships between a parent and a child, a daughter-in-law and her father-in-law, a mother-in-law and her son-in-law and between women and men (see Kuckertz (1990); Mayer (1971); Hammond-Tooke (1962)) in the process of home-making. I have also argued that a usage of space for rituals affects the way in which people in Cape Town townships relate to the 'homeness' of the space they live in.

AmaXhosa in Crossroads, Cape Town, thus envisage a home as something more than a house or structure. It has qualities of good social health and life and should by all means not inhibit people's cultural and ritual practices.

Glossary of the Xhosa words often used in connection to home and home-making

<u>Xhosa</u>	<u>English Phrase</u>
<i>Goduka</i>	go home hence (<i>i.</i>) a person that goes home.
<i>Yiya endlwini</i>	go to the house
<i>Indlu</i>	the house
<i>Ikhaya</i>	a home hence (e) ei at home plural..ama-
<i>Irhanuga</i>	a person who has lost his/her cultural values by assimilating the dominant culture.
<i>Umlungu</i>	a white person
<i>Isilungu</i>	the way of the white people, hence
<i>esilungwini,</i>	the place of the white person's ways.
<i>EmaXhoseni</i>	at the place of the <i>amaXhosa</i>
<i>IsiXhosa</i>	language spoken by <i>amaXhosa</i> / ways of the <i>amaXhosa</i> .
<i>Ubuhlobo</i>	Being of [the same] a kind/ friendship/ good relationship
<i>Ubuntu</i>	humaneness
<i>UbuXhosa</i>	Xhosaness
<i>Ilali</i>	Village
<i>Isiko</i>	custom; culture
<i>Isithethe</i>	tradition
<i>Intanga</i>	hut used by a young marriageable child in the homestead plural <i>ii.</i>
<i>Isalamane</i>	a sibling - plural... <i>Iza-</i>
<i>Imbeko/Intlonipho</i>	Respect
<i>Ikhazi</i>	Bridewealth

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