

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Department of Religious Studies

THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES OF THE COLOURED PEOPLE
OF THE CAPE FLATS

Donald R. Aeschliman

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ABSTRACT

The Coloured people of the Cape Flats, which lie at the foot of Table Mountain adjacent to Cape Town, represent a people unique in many ways. Racially, they are the product of the mixing of several groups over the period of many years, but culturally they are very similar to the Whites who rule present-day South Africa. They have a strong religious heritage going back to their origins, and all the best known denominations and churches are to be found among them, and are generally well-supported. However, in the course of the past years, a considerable number of Independent Churches have appeared, and it is the purpose of this study to describe these groups as to their origins and make up, and to enquire into the reasons for their appearance.

An early problem faced was that of classification, and when none of the widely-used forms put forth by authors in the field seemed to fit these particular groups a system based upon the individual's view of his linking to God and his personality type, revealed in his worship experience and practice, was devised. This is a division into Participant Type and Observer Type Churches. Case histories of meetings held by representatives of each of these groups reveal the differences between them, and also give insight into the manifestations of the differing personality types.

Attention is given to the Independent Church Ring, an attempt to bring together into one body many of these groups, and a chapter is included on the leadership of the churches. The role of women in the churches is examined briefly, and an attempt is made to explain why the same people who formed no Independent Churches while in District Six immediately upon their expulsion became active in such a program in spite of the availability of the same denominations within which they had worked for many years. In a final chapter, the classifications

here given are compared with a more general model suggested by Professor J.S. Cumpsty and which to a degree grew out of the findings of this same research.

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Secondly, I am indebted to the late Rev. P.J. February Jr., leader of the Independent Dutch Mission since his ordination in 1925. The Rev. February was one of my earliest and most fortunate contacts, and from the beginning of our friendship showed a lively interest in the study. He was ever ready to assist by providing information gained during his many years as the pastor of an Independent Church, by suggesting leads by which more such groups might be located, by providing introductions and entrance into doors that might otherwise have been closed to me, and by giving generously of his time in fruitful discussions about this phenomena of which he was such an integral part. It was through his intercession that I was able to obtain the minute books of the Independent Church Ring, and thus made it possible for the recording of this particular part of the history of the Independent Church movement. I only regret that he passed away late in 1982, shortly before the completion of this study, and thus did not see the fruition of the research to which he had so generously contributed.

(This summary contains in abbreviated form a record of the research done and the findings and conclusions that resulted from this study. It is included for the sake of any fellow worker in the field for whom the abstract is insufficient. As such, those reading the entire thesis will not find it worthwhile to include its contents along with the body of the thesis.)

A SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT AND FINDINGS

Over the years since the arrival of the White men from Europe in South Africa there has appeared a race of people, the product of the racial mixing of those same Whites, Africans, either Hottentot, Bushman or West African, and the Oriental peoples from the Dutch East Indies. Although racially mixed, they have yet conformed in their cultural development very closely to the Whites with which they have identified wherever possible. Their religion has been copied and learned almost completely from the Whites, whether gained from the first settlers or received from missionaries from Europe and later from America. During the past hundred years however, there have appeared among them in the sandy wastes of the Cape Flats in which they settled or into which they have been moved from their traditional residential areas in Cape Town, a plethora of Independent Churches, similar in some respects but in other ways differing from the groups from which they have sprung. It is the purpose of this study to describe and classify these churches, to attempt to explain in what way they express the needs and desires of the Coloured people, and to begin the task of ascertaining the forces at work in their appearance.

The study has been based upon fifty representative groups, half of which were break-aways from established denominations, the others having separated themselves from existing Independent Churches or having originated from the efforts of a single church-founder. An extensive questionnaire was prepared, and over a period of three years interviews were arranged with pastors and church boards for the filling out

of the questionnaire. When the results were studied and charted, attention was given to a system of classification which would provide insights into the needs of the people making up these new churches and also be indicative of how these needs were being met. Initially, the attempt was made to utilize the division into Ethiopian and Zionist Type Churches originated by Bengt Sundkler in his study of the Bantu peoples of Southern Africa, for there were some similarities. However, it became obvious that this classification could not be used, since the churches of the Bantu were the products of a synthesis between the traditional religions of the Bantu and the religions of the Whites which was not the case in the Churches established among the people of the Coloured community.

Consideration was then given to the division of the Independent Churches into the Church Type and the various Sect Types as pioneered by Ernst Troeltsch, and expanded and modified by subsequent research in the field. In this classification, the Church is the overwhelmingly conservative body which to a certain extent accepts the secular order and dominates the masses. In principle it is universal, that is, it desires to cover the whole life of humanity, it utilizes the state and the ruling classes, and thus becomes an integral part of the existing social order which it both stabilizes and determines as well as reflecting. The Sect on the other hand is a comparatively small group, one which rejects the existing order and calls its members out of their adherence to it. The sect does not strive to dominate the world, it rather renounces it, and calls its members to individual commitment to personal perfection. The sects are for the most part connected with the under privileged, and often see society as sinful or repressive.

As indicated, the original Church/Sect division has been refined by more recent authors, among whom can be mentioned

Betty Scharf, J. Milton Yinger, R. Robertson and E.R. Wilson. The significant contributions of the last is a division of the sects into a sevenfold classification. It was recognized that generally speaking in the South African scene we could with qualifications identify most of the denominational groups with the Church Type, while the Independent Churches shared many of the characteristics of the Sects, although the seven-fold classification of Wilson did not seem to describe the phenomena observed during this particular research project. A search was made for literature on religious groups in what might be thought similar contexts, i.e. comparatively deprived groups sharing the same traditions as their corresponding privileged group and coming to a new self consciousness. We considered the blacks and rural groups in North America and the urban groups in South America and South East Asia, but without success. Taking all available facts into consideration, it was felt that a two-fold division of the Independent Churches into Participant Type and Observer Type seemed best to describe the type of worship observed as well as giving insight into the way in which the worshippers viewed the object of worship and their relationship to Him.

The Participant Type Church is the church of those who see their relationship to God as being a highly personal thing, without the intervention of any person or agency, in what I define as a direct linking relationship. This linking is initiated by the act of faith on the part of the individual, and is usually in the case of the churches studied testified to by a verbal witness and by the act of public baptism, usually by immersion. Essential to this concept of direct linking to God is the belief in an available God, that is a God who is present and active in time and space, in the here and now. This is a God who is able to hear prayers and who answers promptly and in unmistakable fashion. This view of God eventuates in a participation on the part of the worshipper in the service, since he must testify of his

salvation, and share with others his struggles and God's intervention on his behalf in response to his believing prayer.

On the other hand, the Observer Type Church is the church of those who see their relationship to God as being mediated through a go-between, usually the church itself. This of course involves an indirect linking relationship, in which salvation is obtained by being rightly related to the institution which is itself rightly related to God. This relationship must commence as early as possible, so the practice of infant baptism must be carried out, which in some cases may be interpreted as the act of linking itself. A corollary to this indirect linking relationship is an emphasis on God as being transcendent, the One who is wholly "other". That is, he in his supernatural creative power is so far removed from his time- and-space-limited creatures that they have little within them that will enable them to communicate with him. Thus they need this mediator to represent them to God and to communicate his desires to them.

This view of God leads the worshipper to an observer type relationship in which he participates vicariously in the activities of those more suited by training or position to lead in the acts of worship. This mediator is one who is specifically qualified by Apostolic succession or perhaps especially trained as in the case of professional clergy to provide this link between the worshipper and the one being worshipped.

A further division within these two classifications, the Participant Type and the Observer Type, was made on the basis of the particular personality trait of the individual, namely whether he is emotionally or intellectually oriented. The emotionally oriented individual is attracted to a Participant Type Independent Church in which the service is marked by an active and individualistic sharing. This takes the form of

singing, testifying at great length, hand-clapping and even abandoned dancing. This type of individual has not really worshipped without direct physical participation in all that is going on. In the case of the intellectually oriented individual, the type of service sought and which meets the felt needs for worship is one in which the emphasis is on a common belief system, which is witnessed to by behaviour and service. This leads to a strong emphasis on proper dress, and an equally strong rejection of certain forms of recreation as being worldly. The acts of service rendered in the preaching and teaching outreach of the group are all considered part of their participation. They are linked to God by faith, but to each other by common belief and practice.

The emotionally oriented observer tends to find his needs met in witnessing the church at work in the ministry of the sacraments. The beauty of the stained glass windows, the intricate design of the vestments of the priests, the classical movements of the mass and the musical sounds of liturgy and chants, all are pleasing to the emotions of the worshipper. While the member of a Participant Type Church receives his emotional satisfaction through bodily activity, the member of Observer Type Church receives just as complete emotional fulfilment through his senses. The intellectually oriented observer is concerned to see the church at work in the ministry of the Word in the preaching service. Those in our sample were concerned that the minister himself be adequately trained and that he have prepared a well-reasoned and intellectually satisfying sermon. They were very aware of the need for correct doctrine, and of the need for adequate safeguards to protect that doctrine from change.

The differences between the Observer Type and the Participant Type groups were seen to extend even into the pastorate. In the case of the Observer Type, the pastor ordinarily was a much-better trained man, one who had to be able to provide adequate leadership and instruction for his people, and who for

the most part led with the assistance of a Board or Council who shared in the decisions of the church. Such churches ordinarily provided their own training institutions or insisted that their pastors had the opportunity of receiving adequate training. On the other hand, the pastor of the Participant Type group was generally untrained or had the minimum of training. Rather than being a leader and teacher, he was often a catalyst or enabler, who provided the place in which to meet, the music for the services, and then allowed the utmost freedom on the part of those who attended to participate in the service. For the most part, he made all important decisions, and to a significant degree it was seen as his organization much more so than in the case of the Observer Type pastor.

In the course of the survey many instances were found of pastors who had been involved in two, three or even more groups in the passage of years. The reasons for their moves were often quite personal in nature, although it seemed that a search always for the "greener pastures" may have led them from one group to another. The possibility of one of their workers splitting their present work as they had done to the church from whence they had come was always a factor in their planning and program.

In the course of research on the Independent Churches the existence of an organization of these churches called the Independent Church Ring came to attention. This organization, which had come into being in 1941, and which continued through until 1978, was begun for the purpose of providing fellowship among the pastors of the Independent Churches. As such, it developed a rather complex organizational structure, set up various inter-church groups, arranged for inter-church activities and carried on a program of pulpit exchange between the participating bodies. It served to examine and ordain both evangelists and pastors for the member groups, and did its best to foster unanimity in both faith and practice. At one stage in its development it went so far as to write a

constitution for a single church or denomination which would encompass all participating groups and make it possible for others to join, but the effort came to naught. It finally died a natural death more from the lack of a felt need on the part of the Independent Churches than from any active opposition.

The way in which the members of the Independent Churches view their groups revealed further differences between the two major classifications. The members of Participant Types seem to look upon their church as an organization existing largely for their own individual benefit, and are not adverse to moving on to another place when they have exhausted the novelty of fellowship in that place. Further, they tend to look down upon the established church and see themselves in competition to such. It is rare for them to cooperate on an equal basis with any other church, or to speak of them in any other than a disparaging way. On the other hand, the members of the Observer Types reveal an attitude of responsibility for their church, and are willing to serve and give for its development and work. Further, they tend to see themselves as similar to if not one with the established churches and denominations, and will cooperate with them and with para-church organizations.

The women in the Independent Churches for the most part have little say in the work. In the Observer Type groups they are generally expected to attend and to contribute financially, but other than that they have little function. In the Participant Type they make up a great majority of those attending, and are very active in the testifying, in the singing and in the dancing, although the latter is limited to the emotionally oriented groups. However, even here they have little if any say in the organization and planning phase of the work.

Special mention must be made of District Six, since this area from which the Coloured people were moved with the enforcement

of the Group Areas declaration had witnessed no formation of Independent Churches, but those who had been removed into the Cape Flats became the most prolific founders of such groups. Among the reasons advanced, the failure of the established churches to oppose the government in its resettlement plans and the increased personal significance of the church for those moved seem to be the most likely.

A concluding attempt to pinpoint the reasons for the appearance of the Independent Churches indicates that there are multiple causative factors at work. The political, the social, the economic and certainly the personal must all be considered. Strangely enough, there is little direct evidence that religious belief plays any significant role, since all the theological positions espoused by the Independent Churches are to be found in established churches and denominations, and no matter what one's particular orientation, be it in principle or practice, provision for such is already made. Perhaps over all other causes for the appearance of these groups must be seen the uncertainty, the anomie which is the direct result of the government policies of Apartheid, with the accompanying strictures of job reservation, residential separation and the immorality act, all enforced on a disenfranchised people.

In a concluding chapter, the classifications of the Independent Churches arrived at in the course of this study are located in terms of a more general model suggested by Professor J.S. Cumpsty. He identifies three modes of belonging: Direct Cosmic Belonging which corresponds to what we have called Direct Linking and Indirect Cosmic Belonging which corresponds to our classification of Indirect Linking and Substitute or Reduced Reality Belonging which is not in evidence in any particular Independent Church among those actually studied. However, we attempt to explain its absence and the significance of this fact. Professor Cumpsty sees five requirements for a sense of Direct Cosmic Belonging, namely (i) a knowledge of the ultimately real (God); (ii) belief

in the act of God which established the means by which individuals might belong to him; (iii) a knowledge of the conditions of such individual belonging; (iv) assurance that one has and is fulfilling such conditions; and, (v) signs (blessings) to guarantee the validity of the whole. In this context, the religious institution is responsible for the proclamation or teaching of (i) through (iii).

The six requirements for a sense of Indirect Cosmic Belonging are: (i) a knowledge of the ultimately real (God); (ii) a belief in the act of God which established the institution or "bridgehead" in the world; (iii) knowledge of the identifying feature of the institution; (iv) knowledge of the conditions on which the individual belongs to (enters and is maintained in relation with) the institution; (v) evidence that these conditions have been fulfilled; and (vi) signs (blessings) which guarantee the validity of the whole system.

This model to some degree grew out of this study but also was able to integrate patterns of religious belonging observed by Professor Cumpsty in Israel and in similar studies done in South Africa among the Xhosa and Indian population, indicating some more universal validity for the classification and conclusions arrived at here.

CHAPTER 1

THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In the sandy wastelands lying to the east and north-east of the city of Cape Town at the southern tip of the continent of Africa is to be found living a group of people, unique in several ways, among the other peoples of Africa. These Coloureds, as they are called, although scattered to some degree throughout all of Southern Africa, yet are to be found primarily in these so-called Cape Flats into which they have been concentrated by the government policy of segregated residential areas. This restrictive policy has not only prevented their infiltration into the more desirable areas around the foot of Table Mountain, but has also even moved them out of areas in these foothills which have been traditionally theirs.

A glance at the census figures for the whole of South Africa will indicate the degree of concentration of the Coloureds in this particular area. The relevant figures for the Republic are as follows: Orange Free State--25 900; Natal--45 524; Transvaal--108 007; and Cape Province--1 330 089.¹ This means that almost nine-tenths, (88,29%) of the Coloured population are inhabitants of the Cape Province, and specifically most of the Western Cape area. The especially high concentration of the Coloureds in the Cape Peninsula can be seen by the fact that one fourth of the total Coloured population (24,8%) resides in the metropolitan area of greater Cape Town itself. Their location in this area can be explained in terms of the history of their origins, as well as by more recent economic and sociological factors.

As a race, the Coloureds trace their origins to the arrival of the White man in the Cape, and it is a common cynical claim among them that "The first Coloured arrived in the Cape just nine months after the first White man did." Be that as it may, over a period of more than 300 years, the Coloured

race has been developing by a process of mixing among five ethnic groups, all of which have contributed to their present racial and cultural make-up.

When the White settlers first arrived at the Cape, they found the land somewhat sparsely populated by the Hottentots, an aboriginal group that subsisted principally by cattle farming. The first racial contact leading to the appearance of the Coloured population was then between the early Dutch settlers, predominantly male, and the women of the Hottentots.²

Dwelling alongside the Hottentots was another racial group, the Bushmen, who subsisted by a hunting culture. Since these people were considered to be on a lower cultural level than the Hottentots, there was relatively little mixture between them and the Whites.

With the passage of time and the development of an agricultural economy by the Whites, the settlers began to import slaves as a source of low-cost labour. Since the Cape was a colony of the Dutch East India Company, there was ready access to the areas served by that body and slaves were imported from West Africa and from the Dutch East Indies. This resulted in natural biological assimilation between the aboriginal Hottentots and these newcomers, and also between them and the half-caste children of the Whites. There was a further mixture between the White settlers and the slaves imported from the East Indies, the females of which were strikingly attractive. The results of this coming together can still be seen in the Oriental cast in the features of some of the present-day Coloureds. There was also some co-habitation between a limited number of these slaves and the Bushmen who existed on the borders of the White settlement.³

Mention must be made of a relatively recent admixture to the Coloured population that has come about from the union between Coloureds and the Bantu peoples who are moving into the Cape in increasing numbers in search of economic

opportunities. This mixing has taken place between Coloureds of a relatively lower economic level, and does not appear to be of any major importance in the over-all development of the race. It does bear some significance however to the purpose of this study, for some of the Independent Churches which we are examining have appeared in the economically depressed areas where those of the lower economic level are to be found.

Racially speaking then, it appears that the present Coloured population of the Cape Flats has sprung from the mixing of Whites from Europe, Africans, either Hottentot, Bushmen or West Africans, and the Oriental peoples from the Dutch East Indies. To these three majority contributors must be added small numbers of Indians from India and some Chinese.⁴ Demographically, the population of the Republic of South Africa is divided for the purpose of census analysis into four groups; Whites, Coloureds, Asiatics and Bantu. In the census of 1976, based upon figures provided by the Department of Statistics in Cape Town, the population division was as follows: Whites - 4 320 000; Coloureds - 2 434 000; Asiatics - 746 000; and Bantu - 18 629 000. From this it becomes obvious that the Coloureds make up a significant percentage of the population of South Africa, especially as compared to the Whites, and as has already been pointed out, almost 9/10ths of these Coloureds live in the Cape Province, specifically in the Western Cape area.⁵ If one can speak of a Coloured culture, then it will be found in the Cape Flats, and the patterns of life among the people there will be the purest example of their particular life style.

It is interesting to note however, that in spite of the racial admixture that has gone into the formation of the Coloureds, there has been a relatively little corresponding cultural admixture. By and large, the Coloureds of the Cape Flats have a culture so similar to the Whites of similar socio-economic level as to be for all practical purposes indistinguishable. The only significant exception to this general observation is

to be seen in the case of the relatively small group of Malays whose practice of Islam has served to isolate them somewhat from the rest of the Coloured society as well as from other racial groups among which they work, with the result that they have developed an in-group with distinctive social and cultural as well as religious standards and practices.

The very close correspondence of the culture of the Coloureds with that of the Whites can be attributed to several forces which have been at work. Initially, many first generation Coloureds, at least those from the White/East Indies mixture, were raised in White homes, for the most part very much as if they were Whites, and many others were brought up by mothers who were employed in the homes of White settlers. As is usual in such a situation, they tended to adopt the culture of the dominant, that is the White race. The attitude of the Whites toward the aboriginal peoples whom they described as 'dirty', 'lazy', or 'undependable' could not but be known to the Coloureds, and with the natural desire to be accepted into the approval of those in positions of power and of authority over them they would naturally reject anything that would serve to identify them with the darker side of their parentage. This desire to identify with the White racial group is still strong, and it is only the minority of the young, militant, often university-trained sub-group who tend to copy the dress, hair style and attitudes of the Bantu or Blacks. One suspects that they do this for the same reason that their forefathers patterned themselves after the Whites, namely that they expect their future to be more secure with the Blacks than with the Whites.

Whatever the reason, there appears to have developed little of what could be called Coloured culture, other than what might be expected among a people somewhat isolated socially and geographically from the dominant racial group. It is entirely possible that this drive toward identification with the Whites has been a strong contributing factor in the religious

situation among the people of the Cape Flats. It is very difficult to find a Coloured person who does not profess membership in one or another Christian group, leaving aside the followers of Islam. In fact, the Coloureds as a group appear to be more overtly religious than do the Whites, even in the churches and denominations that they share with the Whites. For example, attempts to arrange fellowship meetings between the young people of the two racial groups of a particular denomination have been known to be rejected by the Coloured leaders because they do not want their youth to be wrongly influenced by the "non-Christian", or "sub-Christian" attitudes and actions of the White young people, e.g. in regard to dress (uncovered heads in the Church, women wearing pants) or in regard to accepted and permitted activities (attendance at bioscope, participation in barn dances, etc). Several reasons can be advanced to explain this very religious orientation of the Coloureds. One, offered with a touch of cynicism by a Coloured churchman, is that it stems from the fact that their subservience to the Whites and subsequent rejection and repression has led them to put their faith in God since there seems to be no other source of assistance for them.

One of the roots of this strong religious bent may well be found in the fact that, from the beginning of the race, freedom was based, at least in part, upon the individual's profession of the Christian faith.⁶ Although the majority of the early Coloureds were not slaves, many of them were descended from slaves, and it could not have escaped their notice that the profession of the Christian faith carried with it undeniable benefits, while the opposite laid one open to disapproval on the part of those whose position made them able to assist or hinder the individual's aspirations to a better life. Another reason must lie in the fact that the education provided for the Coloured people from the earliest days was for the most part in the hands of the missionaries or of the church directly.⁷ Until very recent times, almost all Coloured education in the Cape Flats has been what one

might characterize as Christian Education, and the effect of such training during the most formative years cannot have failed to have lasting effects. Even in the 1980s some of the Coloured Churches still retain their own Church schools, for instance, the Independent Congregational Church, the Moravian Church and Die Volkskerk van Afrika. MacMillan and Balkenn in The Cape Coloured Question point out that there was no "Coloured question until the arrival of the Missionaries, since before they appeared on the scene no one spoke out in defence of the Coloureds."⁸ It is possible that the early identification of the missionaries with the political, social and moral aspirations of the people may explain their very "religious" nature, and perhaps to some degree their independence in matters religious, since these missionaries were for the most part from independent or from interdenominational groups.

Economically speaking, the Coloured has come to fill an increasingly significant segment of the work-force of the Western Cape, as well as becoming a potential market for consumer goods to be reckoned with. By and large, job reservation as well as the traditional division of job opportunities has kept for the Whites the managerial positions as well as those sources of employment offering the highest wages in industry and finance. The Coloured has traditionally worked with his hands in jobs requiring manual dexterity, and this custom has continued. At the present, the Coloured male is the bricklayer, the plasterer, the tiler, the painter, the panel-beater and the spray-painter or the cutter in the garment industries. The Coloured female provides the major source of labour in the garment industry which has mushroomed in the Cape Flats area of recent years where she is machinist, cutter and finisher.

However, as the economy has grown, it has become obvious that there are insufficient Whites to provide artisans in the best paying trades such as plumbing and electric wiring as well as

to fill upper echelon positions. Further, it has not escaped the notice of employers that it is usually possible to use a Coloured for many jobs at a lower salary than that which one must pay a White. As a result, increasing numbers of Coloured are finding positions in banks, insurance companies, construction firms, etc. in much better-paying jobs and even in supervisory positions. The positions of nurses, teachers, principals, are now open to all who have the necessary educational and experiential qualifications, and the advent of the various technical colleges in Athlone and Belville have made it possible for the majority of the young Coloured people to aspire toward much more financially rewarding positions than their parents could ever have imagined less than a generation ago.

Mention has been made of the migration of the Bantu into the Western Cape in search of employment. Generally, they have filled the need for the lower paid labourer, with large numbers working in the building industry and for the City Council in the provision of services, as well as for the South African Railways and Harbours. The steady upward pressure toward higher-paying jobs on the part of the Bantu constitutes an unsteady factor in the lives of the Coloureds of the lower socio-economic grouping, for as such they threaten the jobs and therefore the livelihood of this particular segment of the group.

In the 300 years since the arrival of the White man in the Cape, most European denominations have been planted in South Africa, and as the result of home missions work from these groups in South Africa or in some cases of foreign mission work from the European or American country of origin, most of these denominations have come into being among the Coloureds. There is scarcely a church to be found among the Whites in Cape Town that is not found also among the Coloureds, with more or less, usually less, contact between members of the same church on opposite sides of the Colour line. This development of church work among the Coloureds has continued

almost as a matter of course from the very beginning with little visible difficulty, with the average Coloured accepting the division on colour lines with the same quiet spirit as he accepted social and economic stratification.

Part of the significance of the almost universal Christianization of the Coloured people is that they have not developed their own unique organizations by any process of synthesis between the religion of the Whites and an aboriginal faith such as has been the case in many of the Bantu peoples of Southern Africa. A study of the Independent Churches among those peoples such as has been undertaken by Sundkler,⁹ or West,¹⁰ must commence with an examination of the traditional religions, for the beliefs and practices of the Independent Churches can only be understood in terms of the merging of the two diverse traditions. Among the Coloureds however, there appears to be little of a religious nature that is unique to them, and almost all the beliefs and practices of the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats are but reflections of that which they have historically practiced and observed among the White Churches from whence they have sprung.

A further result of this almost universal Christian orientation of the Coloured people is that the independent groups formed are for the most part well within the limits of what might be described as "orthodox" belief. Again this is in sharp distinction to the African Independent Churches which evidence many wide and serious departures from the accepted Christian norms of belief and practice. Obviously this orthodoxy of doctrine in the Coloured Independent Churches is in part a legacy of the years of education in Christian schools and the almost universal practice of church attendance, on at least a part-time basis.

It may not be amiss to suggest however that the outlook for the future is somewhat bleak from a Christian point of view, for with the secularization of the school system, and with the

failure of many of the independent groups to provide the kind of basic Christian teaching and experience for their members as the former generation received in the established churches, the generation now growing up in the Independent Churches will have little or no grounding and preparation in orthodox Christian doctrine and practice.¹¹

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Notes on Chapter I

1. Department of Statistics, 1976 Census
2. Reuter, E.B. 1934; page 8f:

"In those areas of contact where one group by virtue of its superior military power imposes itself upon another, the difference in social status is such as commonly to prevent any considerable amount of intermarriage. This, however, does not prevent the amalgamation of the races, perhaps does not even retard the pace of racial intermixture. In a slave regime there is a more or less open appropriation of the women of the subject group to serve the needs of the master class. It presently comes to pass that the servile women welcome or even seek association with men of the free group because of the special consideration that such association may bring to them in other relations, because as mixed bloods and relatives of the ruling group their children may have a higher status and an easier path of life."

(This seems a rather fair explanation of what took place in the formation of the present Coloured people from the time of the first settlers until very recent times.)

3. Venter, A.J. 1974; pages 18-22:

(This monumental work by Al Venter, 548 pages, covers the Coloured people of all of South Africa since their appearance over 300 years ago in Cape Town, and examines their lives throughout the entire Republic of South Africa. He spent years in researching his subject, and the list of individuals interviewed is indicative of the breadth of his study. It is far and away the most comprehensive and reasonable evaluation of the present situation extant.)

4. Cilliers, S.P., 1963; page 9
5. Cilliers, S.P., 1963; page 16
6. Ziervogel, C., 1938; page 13

"Emancipation laws made by Hendrick Adriaan van Rhee de tot Drakenstein, also known as Lord Mybrecht, commissioner to the Cape in 1865.

1. Every male half-caste could claim freedom as a right at the age of 25, and every female half-caste at the age of 22. Provided only that he or she professed Christianity and spoke Dutch."

Cilliers, S.P., 1963; page 61

"By its charter the Dutch East Company was pledged to spread the doctrines of the Reformed Church among the heathen of the Cape, and the Dutch settlers lost no time in carrying out their interests to Christianize the people with whom they came in contact. Sometimes it was carried out in a half-hearted fashion ... but it must be admitted that a Coloured person who professed Christianity was legally entitled to the rights of a white man."

7. Ziervogel, C., 1938; pages 63-68

(Record of coming of the various mission organizations to S. Africa from 1537 through 1858 when the Rt. Rev. Dr Robert Gray founded what became Zonnebloem College.)

"All these societies established and maintained schools at their own expense. These schools were attended by Coloured and White children who sat side by side."

8. Macmillan W.H. and Balkenn, A.A., 1927; page 56

9. Sundkler, B.G.M., 1948

10. West, Martin, 1975

11. Pope, Lister, 1942; page 118

Points out that a sect cannot long continue as a sect, for it must provide for the needs of the children of its members, and it can only do so as it becomes a church.

CHAPTER II

INTRODUCTION TO THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

The Cape Flats area, in which most of the Coloured people of Cape Town reside is plentifully supplied with churches. All of the regular denominations are represented, usually by very adequate buildings and experienced staff, and for the most part carry on broad programs for their members and adherents. However, there has been a regular movement on the part of the people of the Cape Flats toward Independent Churches which have appeared since and even before the dawn of the Twentieth Century.

During the past 75 years, a stirring in the Cape Flats has resulted in the founding of almost one hundred recorded Independent Coloured Churches which now exist alongside of the Coloured branches of the White denominations. Some of these one hundred dropped from sight soon after their appearance, but most have continued either to eke out a precarious existence, or, in some cases, to grow in numbers and in wealth until today they make up an estimated 10 to 15% of the total Church-going population of the Cape Flats. Obviously there are special forces at work causing the appearance of these new groups for the same period of time has not seen a similar wave of church-founding among the Whites with whom the Coloureds are most closely identified. This study is concerned with these Independent Churches.

Over a period of seven years contact was made and an on-going relationship was established with some sixty Independent groups. In the early days of the study, it was not realized just how many existed, since there was no means of obtaining any listing of such organizations. A first approach was made to the municipal authorities, only to be informed that they kept no record of church groups as such, only of those who owned property. This list was obtained and provided a starting point, giving access to the better-known and longer-established

bodies. When a start was made in visiting these groups, the question was always asked as to how many other such groups existed, but the answer was almost always the same, namely that there were a few scattered around, but no one really knew how many there were or just where they were to be found.

As I began to do interviews with the leaders of these better-known churches, I would often discover the names of other groups. The group might be mentioned as one from which they had obtained a member, or perhaps as one to which they had lost members over a period of time. Usually only a name was dropped, rarely an individual pastor or leader was known or if known was left unidentified. A list was kept of these names of groups, names of pastors or leaders of such groups, and names of individuals who had formerly belonged to such groups or who had left the church being interviewed to join this new group. Sometimes, but rarely, it was possible to find some of these names in the telephone register, and thus contact them quite simply. In other cases, they could be traced through the assistance of the Rev. February, who proved to be an almost inexhaustible source of information. Often some of these names remained on the "unknown" list for many months, even a year or longer until a chance question or remark might serve to identify them or reveal where they could be contacted.

At the same time as this search for such groups was going on, the second and in some cases the more difficult task was being faced, namely that of winning the confidence of these Independent Churches so that they would willingly participate in the quest for information. In order to bring some structure to these potentially chaotic interviews a questionnaire was prepared, to be filled in by the interviewer, on the more basic factual and theological attitudinal issues. This appears as the last appendix to this thesis. Initially, I had rather rashly hoped that all I would have to do was to find such a group, walk in and introduce myself to the pastor,

hand him the questionnaire with a self-addressed stamped envelope, and wait at home until the completed form was returned. I even went so far as to attempt this, and discovered immediately that no answers were forthcoming, not because they could not, but rather because they would not reply. I discovered that none of these groups saw any reason why they should give me information, especially any significant information about their church and the program they carried on. It became obvious that much time and patience was going to be required to gain the confidence of these leaders and their people, and so for almost three years I put aside all of my other Sunday activities and disappeared as it were into the Cape Flats from early to late. As time wore on, I discovered that it often required more than just Sundays, for I had to visit the mid-week services also, as well as taking part in Saturday functions if I were to be accepted by them and even more important if I were to be able to evaluate the answers I eventually received in the questioning process.

Although some of the Independent Churches, for example the Independent Congregational, the Docks Mission, the Calvin Church, were no strangers to Whites in their services, for most of them a White person in one of their meetings was a unique experience. In the vast majority of the cases the members and adherents had no history of any relationship whatever with a member of the White group in other than that of servant-master. To see me suddenly appear in the door of the house/garage/class room was to inject considerable uncertainty into the proceedings, and in retrospect, knowing the people and understanding the situation better, I can realize just how upsetting my presence was. However, having found such a group meeting, I persisted, going back week after week. I was told later that I was suspected of being a member of the Special Branch, a specialist arm of the South African Police. Somewhere along the way, I discovered that wearing a clerical collar served to establish my standing or bona fides, and

seemed to make me more acceptable.

I was surprised, in spite of all the uncertainty engendered, to be asked to preach in almost all of these new groups, even the first time that I visited them. In retrospect, I realize that they presumed this was my reason for coming, namely to instruct or to exhort them. At first I willingly took the pulpit, but before long I began to realize that my doing so meant that I was not seeing these Independent Churches as they were in themselves, so I adopted the policy of not preaching unless I were called on to do so at a later date, but rather just going along to visit and to have fellowship with them in their worship service. Little by little, I was accepted, and apart from a rather elaborate welcome from the pastor, I was able to sit in and just worship with them.

After several such visits, I was then able to open up to the pastor the fact that I was doing a study of the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats, and since his group was representative of these I would like to go through a questionnaire with him. The initial response was generally very guarded and suspicious. The immediate question was "Why?", and I had to convince them that nothing was being done on behalf of the government, the police, or any other organization. I discovered that the most effective approach was often that of pointing out to the pastor that his church was unique, or represented a unique grouping, and as such it should be included in such a study. I made the point that unless such a study were made and the results recorded then this portion of the history of the Coloured people would surely be lost, and his own place in that history would be lost with it. I soon discovered that it was not enough in most cases to convince the pastor alone. Usually, after he had been brought around it remained for him to convince his board that this would be a good thing with which to cooperate. In several cases, the members of the official board would not agree to their pastor going through the questionnaire unless they were

present and able to participate in the interview. In another case, the pastor contacted me several days after we had gone through the interview and asked me to change several answers he had given, obviously revealing that he had taken the opportunity of reviewing some of his statements. When I made the changes, I realized that by so doing he was making his statements internally consistent. In another instance, I received a letter from the Board of the Church, requesting that I change one of the statements made relative to the ordination of their pastor. All of these events seemed to indicate that the churches took the survey rather seriously and that their answers reflect rather fairly the true state of affairs.

In a few cases, the questionnaire could be gone through relatively quickly, requiring from two to two and a half hours, however, it usually required much longer. Often this was the result of the necessity to explain the exact nature of the information required in each question, and to provide an acceptable reason for asking the question. It was often the result of the felt need of the pastor or board to justify the answers given. I very rarely tried to hurry the interview, for often in this self-justifying explanation was to be found additional information as to the group being surveyed and leads to other groups not yet discovered or interviewed. On several occasions it was possible to evaluate and even correct answers given by one church on the basis of statements made incidentally about them on the part of other groups in the course of their interview. It was not unusual for such an interview to be extended over two sessions on subsequent weeks, but I soon discovered that it was not worth while to attempt to hurry the process.

After the interview had been completed, and the information typed up in the standard form, I frequently found it necessary to visit the group again to check on some of the facts given. For instance, most of the Independent Churches have several branches, many of which are in adjoining areas of the Cape Flats.

In these cases, I always made a point of visiting as many of the branches as possible. I have visited in branches of the Calvin Church from Retreat to Elsie's River, in the several branches of the Independent Dutch Mission, of the Docks Mission, of the Selfstandige Rynse Kerk. In the cases of these established bodies, all of whom have buildings and regular programs, this presented no problem, and the observations made in the branches fully confirmed the claims made in the original interview. However, in instances involving some of the more obscure groups this was often not the case. I am reminded of one instance in which I tried over a period of several weeks to attend some of the branches of the Independent Church presided over by a self-styled 'bishop'. I finally resorted to subterfuge, and actually trailed his automobile from his home in Bishop Lavis on a Sunday morning when I saw him leaving dressed in his bishop's garb. He was less than pleased when I pulled up behind him when he stopped in Grassy Park for a meeting which I had heard him announce two Sundays previously in his regular group in Elsie's River. It was almost amusing to witness the messengers being dispatched to round up as many people as possible while we were served tea and the meeting place, a garage, was readied. He apologized profusely for the small group that finally gathered, making several excuses. However, I took the opportunity of talking to some of those present while he was otherwise engaged and discovered that he did not really have ongoing work there, but simply appeared from time to time and called the residents together for a service. I obviously treated such claims to a large number of branches with considerable caution on the basis of this experience and others of a similar nature.

By and large, the three years spent week after week in this survey, while very useful in gaining information and insight into the Independent Churches, were not particularly profitable in terms of the worship experience and instruction from the Bible. The preaching was usually of a very low

calibre, although there were heartening exceptions to the rule. As will be pointed out in a further section of this report, the services often went on hour after hour, and I developed the ability to "switch off" and spend the time making plans for other work. During these years my wife learned to expect me home late to dinner and often even later to bed at the end of the day.

As time went on, I was increasingly asked ahead of time to come to a special service and preach, or perhaps to come and either offer or share in the administration of Holy Communion. I was invited to baptize, to share in the reception of members, and to assist in laying hands on men being ordained to the ministry. I was invited to say a word of greeting at 21st birthday celebrations and to speak the comfort from the Scriptures at funerals. Only as I became more than just another census-taker or sampler-of-Coloured-opinions was I able to enter fully into the lives of the people and to begin to feel that the conclusions I was drawing from the information received reflected in any true sense the actual situation existing in the Cape Flats.

For the most part, I was received with unfailing courtesy. On only two occasions did I meet with open hostility. In one instance, I was able to visit the leader of this particular group where I had not been welcome later on in his place of business and after several conversations convince him of my good intentions toward him and his group. We have since become if not close friends at least respecting acquaintances. In the other instance, I was brusquely informed, after several visits to the church, that under no circumstances would I be given an interview and therefore there was no reason for my ever attending their meetings again. In the face of such a definite dismissal, I accepted the rejection and have not returned. During the years since these initial contacts, I have made it a practice to drop in on representative groups from time to time, not only to observe for the purpose of the

study but also to renew fellowship. I believe that my visits are gladly received, and I sense a real warmth in the welcome, and an ongoing interest in me as a person, as well as in my research. The Coloured people are very hospitable, and their hospitality has been extended to me again and yet again.

Eventually, a total of almost 60 groups were identified. The basis of choice used was that the group must have originated in the Cape Flats, and must have arisen from the efforts of Coloured leaders and must be carried on by them. This ruled out one Coloured group, the Cape Town City Mission, which operates solely in the Cape Flats with mostly Coloured pastors. However, it was begun by Whites and is still generally under the control of Whites. For statistical purposes, several almost identical groups were lumped together, so that the final figures are drawn from the 50 separate groups listed in the appendix.

It must be stressed that some Independent Churches have appeared suddenly, continued for a year or so then just as suddenly disappeared. Many times in the course of the investigation I came across the names of groups that had existed for some time, but could no longer be found. Often these were groups with which a pastor had worked before founding his present church. In other cases they were groups that had arisen from a split, had continued for a time and then had simply faded from sight. It is because of this impermanence in their existence that such groups are often known as the "mushroom churches" by observers in the Coloured community. Thus the graph that indicates the appearance of the Independent Churches over the past 80 years, Chart A, page 35, can only tabulate those that have survived, and were actually in existence when the survey was carried out. We must assume that over the years many other groups have completed their short life cycle and have been forgotten. However, it does seem that the appearance of such groups has been accelerated in recent years with the movement of the

Coloured people from their more settled existence in District Six and even in Athlone out into the more primitive settlements in Elsies River and Ravensmead, areas in which there has been the most activity in the formation of Independent Churches. In a subsequent chapter we will discuss the significance of District Six in the formation of such Independent groups.

One of the first questions to be answered concerning the Independent Churches was that as to their origins. We will consider later the origins of the ministers of these groups, and the origins of the membership, but initially we must examine the circumstances under which groups of people separated themselves from existing churches en masse as it were, to begin a new church. Of the 50 groups which formed the source of this study, exactly 50%, 25, traced their origins to the coming out of a group from one of the established denominations. In all these instances, they came out as a group, with their own pastor who had been either a member or a worker in the original church. 16 others, that is 32%, had originated with the departure of the group from one of the Independent Churches. Of the remainder, 9 in all, the pastors or original founders came from Independent Churches but claimed to have come out by themselves and started their group from scratch. Although one must take their word for this, the suggestion was made in two or three instances that some other pastor who had made the same claim had in actuality brought out a group with him. It appeared that this was looked upon as somewhat unacceptable, and not to be admitted if it could be denied.

The 25 that were constituted by splits or break-aways from established denominations can be divided as follows:

<u>No. of groups</u>	<u>Congregation of origin</u>
6	Apostolic Faith Mission
4	Dutch Reformed Church
3	African Methodist Episcopal
3	United Congregational
2	Assemblies of God
2	Methodist
1	<u>Pinkster Protestante Kerk</u>
1	<u>Old Apostolic Church</u>
1	German Lutheran
1	Church of the Province
1	Rhenish Mission

Several of those questioned could give no specific reason for the original division which resulted in the new congregation, or perhaps it was felt that the reason was not all that commendable. There seems to be little doubt that in some cases it was a personality conflict involving the pastor of the new group, and this will be discussed at greater length in the chapter on Leadership within the Independent Churches. Some reasons given however were quite similar in several breakaways (see Chart B, page 36). For instance, two who came from the Dutch Reformed Church referred to the attempt of that church to divide the Coloured members from the White members. Of course, in dividing the Coloured members away to begin the new church, the new leader effectively accomplished that which they condemned in the original church, namely the separation of the races. When this was pointed out, the argument was advanced that in these new Independent Churches there is no limitation placed on who may become members, and I as a White man was very cordially welcomed to attend and participate, but of course the final effect has been that of dividing the Coloured people among whom the new church was founded from the White-led Churches.

This same reason is also given by two groups that broke away from the United Congregational Church, that is the Independent Congregational Church and Die Volkskerk van Afrika. Both pinpoint too much White control in the United Congregational Church as the reason for their leaving. Only one church in this group that broke away from the established denominations

admitted to personal reasons. This was the case in the formation of the Algemene Sendelinge Kerk from the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The founder had been an elder in the AME for several years, and was apparently passed over in the choice of men to be ordained, and left to begin his own church with a group who took his side in the conflict with the local AME. It is interesting to note that he obtained property on the same street, Halt Road, in Elsies River, about a mile away and built an exact replica of the AME Church from which he had come.

In only one case a matter of doctrine was reportedly involved. The Reformed Old Apostolic Church broke away and according to their claim have led out several dozen congregations because the Old Apostolic Church has departed from the original teachings of that church when it was first formed in Germany in the mid 19th century. They feel that the Old Apostolic Church, which has been rather eclipsed in the Cape Flats by the New Apostolic Church which broke away from it some years ago, has itself moved in the direction of the same heretical doctrines as those held by the New Apostolics in order to increase its appeal, and the Reformed Church is attempting to restore the original doctrine first enunciated by their founder.¹

In the case of two of the churches that left established bodies the break away was triggered by policies emanating from the leadership which was in a foreign country. The Independent Lutheran Church was formed because the members in Elsies River of the German Lutheran Church were dissatisfied with the policy that required all church property be held by the German Lutheran Church in its headquarters in Berlin. They claim that they worked to build their church, they contributed toward its upkeep and the operation of services, and therefore they should hold title to the building. When this was refused, they left more or less in a body and erected a new church building.

The Independent Rhenish Church was formed by the Rev. Gideon Thomas who had been trained by and was an ordained minister of the Rhenish Mission society whose headquarters was in Germany. The time came when the Mission decided to terminate its work in South Africa and turned all its schools, clinics and churches over to either the Dutch Reformed Church or the Moravian Church. The Rev. Thomas felt that they had no right to do this, and so led his entire congregation out to begin the Independent Rhenish Church, which today works alongside both the Dutch Reformed and the Moravian Churches.

Whereas the majority of the Independent Churches that broke away in a body from an established Church can give a reason for that division, by and large those who came out of independent groups are unable or perhaps unwilling to give a reason for the break. The reasons when given are general statements such as "We did not feel at home there anymore", or "They had made changes of which we did not approve", or "They didn't treat us fair". One cannot escape the impression that whereas those in a regular denomination felt a loyalty or at least a responsibility to that denomination that required some legitimate reason for splitting from it, those whose lives had been spent in Independent Churches lacked that sense of loyalty, and were more free to separate themselves without giving any justification either to themselves or to anyone else.

A further evidence of this greater sense of responsibility to one's church that seemed to be present in the established denominations and in the groups that broke away from them is seen in the fact that only 3 further splits occurred in these 25 groups that came away from the denominations while 17 took place in the groups that themselves had broken away from Independent Churches.

Reference has already been made to the sudden appearance, and often equally sudden disappearance of these break-away groups, and some consideration must be given to the reasons for this phenomena. It must be understood that the very nature of the service they provide, the needs they meet, and their dependence upon the activities of only one person, namely the founder, all go to contribute toward this transitory nature. Such an organization may appear more or less full-blown in a matter of weeks. The founder, who would explain that he has been led by God to initiate a new work, or perhaps a branch work of an already existing church, begins to hold services in his home and simply invites friends, relatives and neighbours to come. This is the familiar "Cottage Meeting", which is well-known in the Cape Flats and a type of ministry almost universally practiced by churches there. If he has adequate accommodation and, perhaps more important, one or more accomplished guitarists preferably with a high gain amplifier, then he can be assured of a crowd. The provision of the facilities for a service is thus the basic prerequisite for a new group, and once the sound of the music is heard then people will gather. We have often witnessed this effect, and recognize that the sound of the amplified guitars takes the place of the more traditional pealing of church bells in calling people together.

In coming to attend this meeting, the people are in no way committed to the leader or to his group, and it can be suggested that in many instances their coming is of little more significance than is involved in attendance at any social gathering or place of public entertainment. This is not to say that there are not very serious people seeking help and comfort among those who attend, but the overwhelming conclusion gained from attendance at many such gatherings is that this is not primarily a religious gathering. As such, those who come to this particular meeting will come the following week if they enjoyed themselves this week, if the music is heard again and if they

have nothing better to do. It would thus appear that the new group is meeting a social need not being otherwise met, rather than a definite spiritual need, which would tend to drive them back again and again or to some other place in their search for satisfaction.²

The writer witnessed the frustration of a leader of such a group when he attempted to expand to a new area. He had been carrying on a work with considerable success in Elsies River, a very economically-depressed township, for some time. However, having obtained a much better job, he was able to move his home to Belhar, a rather exclusive suburb not too far distant from Elsies River. He announced that he would be opening a new branch in Belhar, and proceeded to repeat the same pattern that had been quite successful in Elsies River. However, all did not go well. Not only did he fail to obtain any support whatever from his neighbours in Belhar, but was quite openly opposed and even rebuked in face to face confrontation, leading him to denounce this new area in which he now lived as a veritable "Sodom and Gomorrah". What he failed to realize was that the unmet need he was catering to in Elsies River, namely that of providing entertainment and an opportunity for social interaction, was non-existent in Belhar. The higher socio-economic level in the new township made possible the possession of colour T.V. sets, automobiles and all the mobility thus provided. Social needs were being met, and his rather blatant broadcasting into the area was rejected by the neighbours as being "low class" and rather out of place in the community.

It is necessary to note that the opposition he met was not directed against religious groups meeting in houses as such, for at least three regular denominations were carrying on house meetings in the area at the time awaiting the erection of their permanent buildings. Those who were aware of unmet spiritual needs were gravitating to these

established groups whose methods of advertisement were more in keeping with the tone of the community, and the rest of the people were well able to meet their social and entertainment needs in other ways than attendance at an Independent Church.

Notes on Chapter II

1. Mehl, Roger, 1970; pages 222f
Mehl describes this process, so common in the appearance of sects, in which a new group arises with the stated purpose of restoring the pure doctrine from which the main body has drifted away. "Once free of the value judgments that a majority church levels against it, the sect appears as a 'denomination, section, or group of believers separated from the main church'. There is undoubtedly an element of truth in this definition; the origin of the sect is always traced back to a schism, to a separation. Yet the act of separation and divorce is seldom unilateral. Often it is difficult to say who has separated, and who maintained the continuity, i.e. who merits the appellation of sectarian."
2. Simpson and Yinger, 1953; page 524
Describing services in Independent Churches among the Blacks in the American south: "The church services themselves have an entertainment/recreation function. The more of a show, the more members."

ADDENDUM TO CHAPTER II

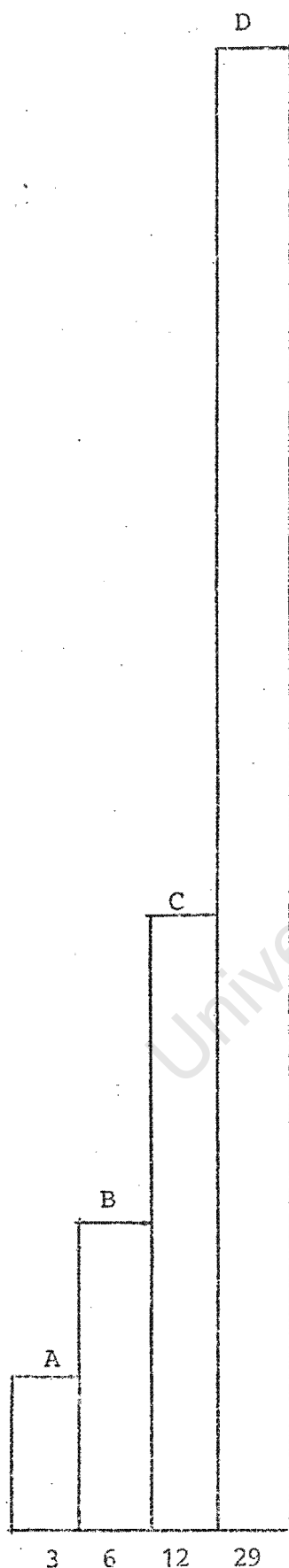
QUESTIONNAIRE STATISTICS

On the following pages I have attempted to illustrate in the form of bar graphs some of the most significant statistics obtained in the interviews by which the questionnaires were completed. Most of the information gleaned from these interviews will be dealt with thematically in later chapters.

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Chart A

Numbers of Independent Churches appearing over 20 year periods 1896-1976



- A. The years 1896-1916
- B. The years 1917-1936
- C. The years 1937-1956
- D. The years 1957-1976

It is obvious that some churches that were founded in the earliest days have fallen away and are therefore not reflected in this graph.

The significant fact established by these figures is that the great majority of the Independent Churches were founded in the most recent times. There is certainly the indication that the rate of their appearance has accelerated since the forced removals and resettlement of the Coloured people out into the Cape Flats

Chart B

Reasons given by founder or leaders for beginning the new Independent Church

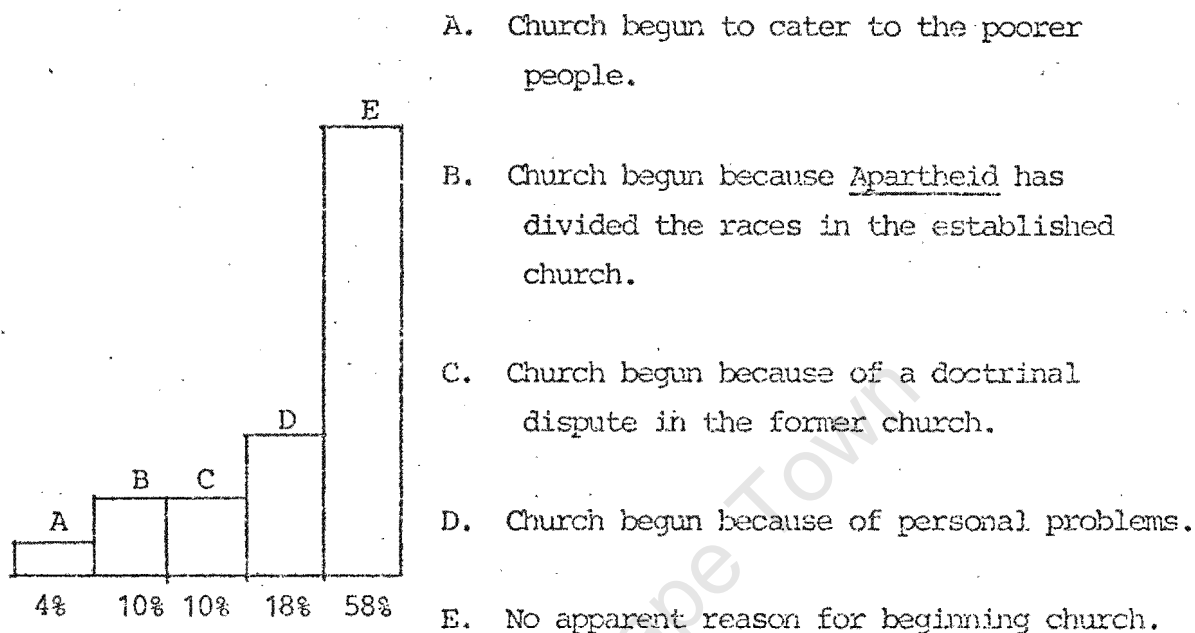


Chart C

Source of the membership of the Independent Churches

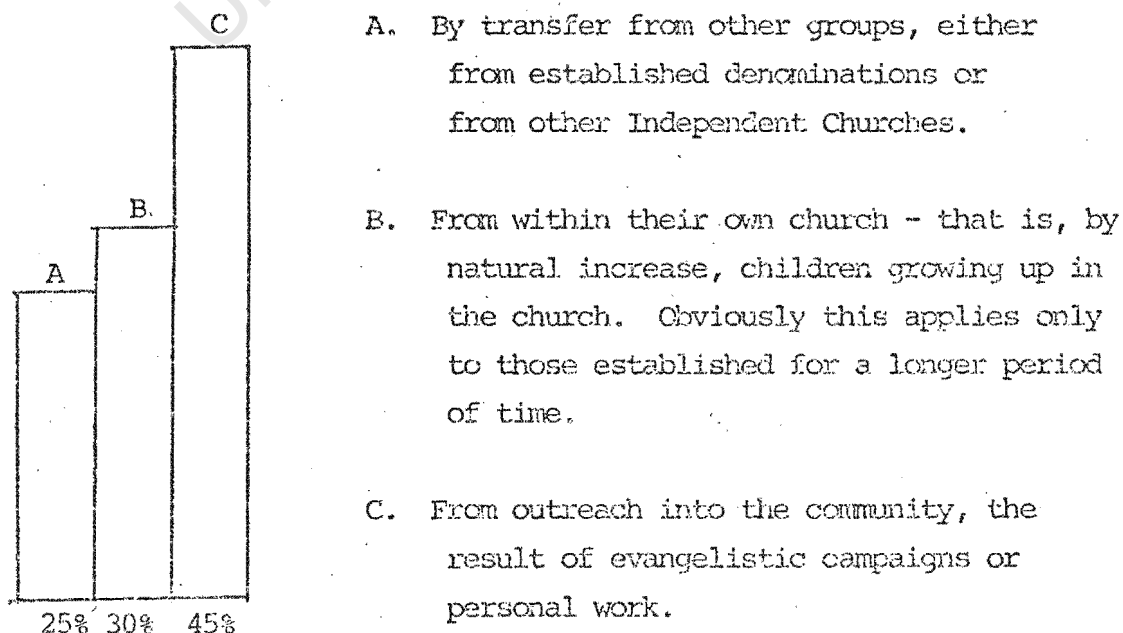
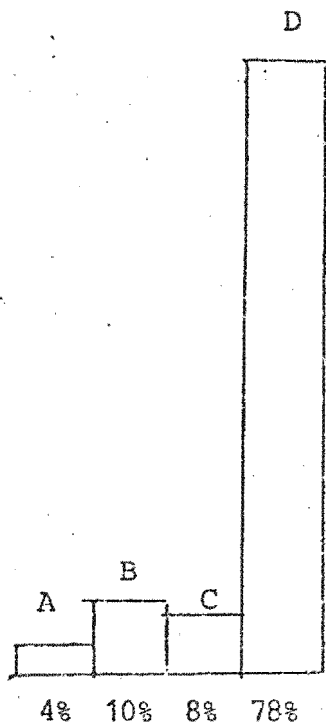


Chart D

Types of training reported for the Founders of the Independent Churches

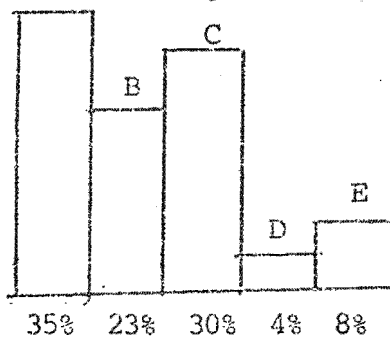
- A. Correspondence course or courses, length unknown or unreported.
- B. Some residential training, length of time spent not recorded.
- C. Unknown. May mean none, but informant probably would not wish to report this.
- D. No ministerial training whatsoever.

Chart E

Property Owned by the Independent Churches

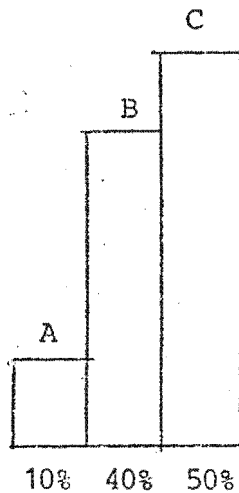
Note: For the purposes of this graph, either a church stand or a church

A building on a stand is counted as one piece of property.



- A. No property owned at all.
- B. One piece of property only.
- C. Between two and five pieces of property owned.
- D. Six to ten pieces of property owned.
- E. More than ten pieces of property owned.

Chart F

Types of church government practiced by the Independent Churches

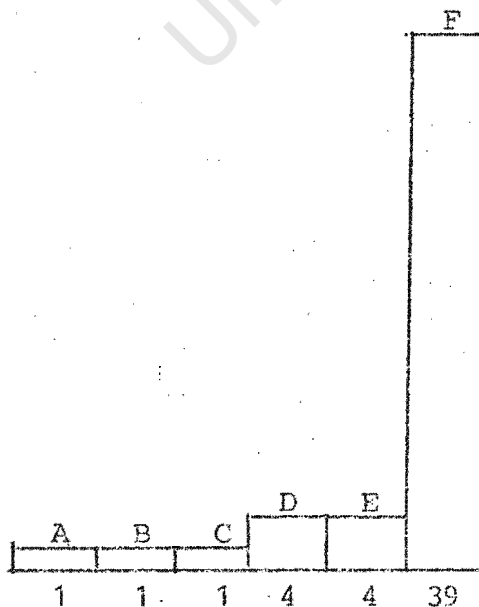
A. Congregational type church government

B. Representative type church government

C. Episcopal type church government

Note: The Episcopal is strictly a one-man rule by the founder/pastor. However, the representative type is often the same, especially in the case of the Participant Type groups, for the board or council may well have no real function other than that of giving assent to the decisions of the pastor and represent basically an honorary position.

Chart G

Other distinctives claimed by the Independent Churches

A. Seventh-day worship

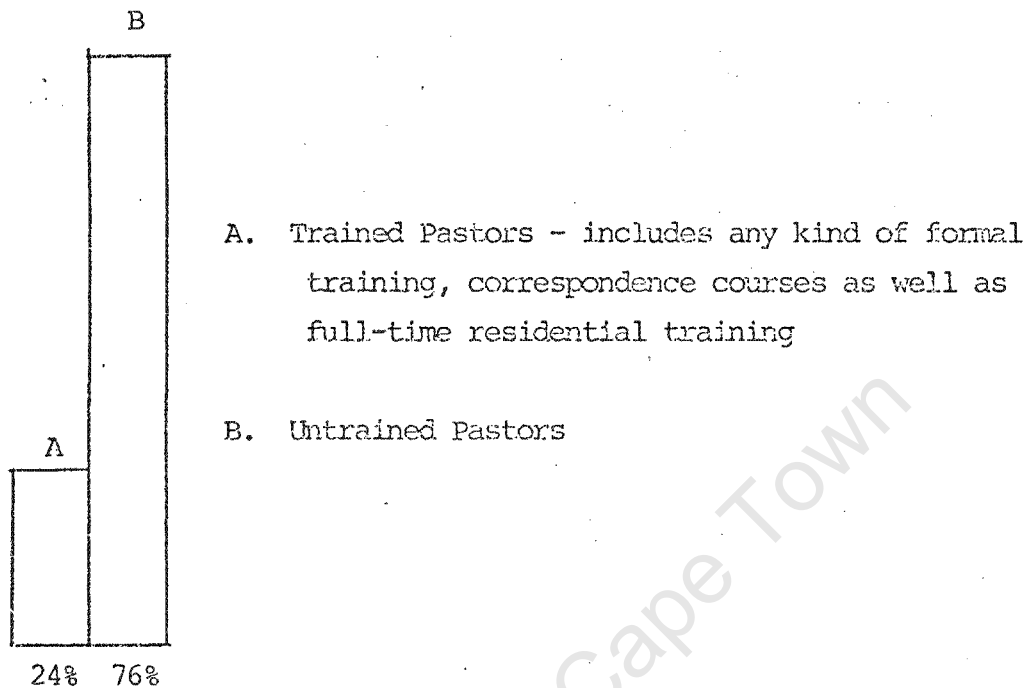
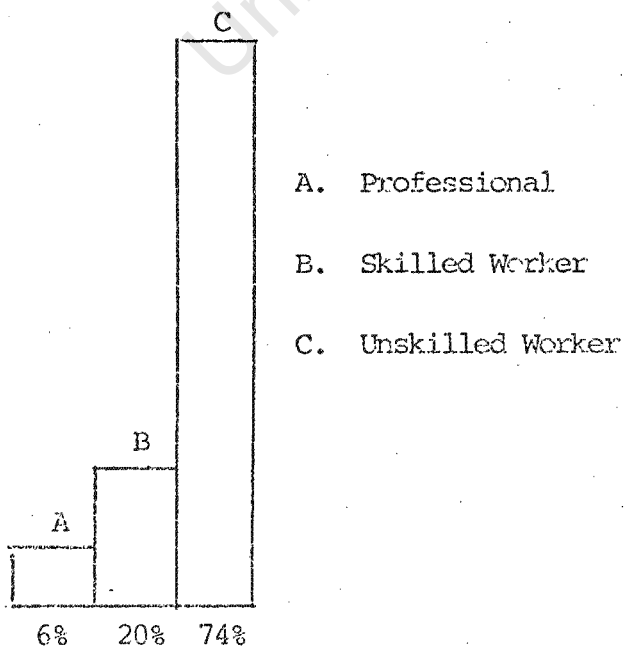
B. Christian-Brethren type of
Communion service

C. Local ownership of properties

D. Footwashing before Communion
serviceE. Jesus-based unitarianism. The
"Jesus Only" groups

F. No distinctive whatever

(Number of churches in each category)

Chart HLevel of training achieved by pastors of the Independent ChurchesChart IEconomic level of members of Independent Churches as indicated by type of employment

CHAPTER III

A CLASSIFICATION OF THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

One of the first requirements for analyzing and understanding the appearance and function of the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats is that of arriving at some adequate means of classification of the many and diverse bodies. This classification could be accomplished on a very superficial level, simply by fixing upon some unique belief pattern, some variation in method of worship or even upon a particular organizational pattern and making the division along those lines. Of course, this would provide us with smaller groups with which to work and to analyze, but unfortunately would do little in clarifying the particular forces that led to the appearance of the differing bodies or the specific needs being met in each case. That is to say, the method of classification must be based upon differences that are, hopefully, in themselves sufficiently basic to provide clues as to the reasons for which individuals have joined themselves to one or another particular group, and why, when they may make a change of membership or adherence, they move to one rather than to another church group.

Existing Classifications

Since these Independent Churches of the Cape Flats exist in somewhat close proximity to the Independent African Churches, of course in the same country, often in the same towns although not in the same segregated townships, the initial thought would be to adopt the now classic division used in evaluation of these Bantu groups of which several thousand have appeared. This particular classification was originated by Bengt Sundkler and developed in his Bantu Prophets in South Africa.¹ It was modified and applied more specifically to the Urban Bantu by Martin West in Bishops and Prophets in a Black City.² This method of classification divides all Independent African Churches into Ethiopian and Zionist types, based somewhat

simplistically, some have thought, upon differing degrees of reaction against or affiliation to the White man and his religious forms. However, as indicated earlier, the situation among the Coloureds of the Cape Flats differs substantially from that existing among the South African Bantu, and to adopt the same classification without further evidence of suitability would be clearly wrong.

The major difference, and it is specifically this which invalidates the African Church classification as a means of dividing the Coloured Churches, lies in the fact that the Independent African Churches have sprung for the most part, from a synthesis arrived at between the traditional African religious system and the Christianity brought to the Africans by the earliest missionaries. This traditional African religion was primarily animistic in nature, and centred on attention to the amadlozi, the spirits of the ancestors. This religious tradition carried on under the direction and with the assistance of two types of leaders other than the elder of the family, namely the diviner and the specialist in "medicines". When the Christianity taught by the Missionaries came in contact and soon conflict with this traditional religion, the results were threefold. For some, there was a turning away from the traditional and an apparent complete acceptance of the western traditional Christianity offered. The result of this acceptance is to be seen in the appearance of many strong Bantu Churches, both those of the main-line denominations and those that have grown out of the Independent Mission organizations.

On the other hand, there were those who rejected the Christian gospel as being foreign, and perhaps imperialistic, certainly the "white man's religion", and so have retained their traditional religion.

A third group emerged which attempted a synthesis between the two and did their best, not for the most part consciously of

course, to weave together the most prized teachings and standards of the traditional religion with that which they felt was acceptable or useful in the newly-offered Christian religion. Since these are neither Bantu Christian Churches of the first group nor strictly traditional Bantu religious groups of the second type, they are generally classified as Independent African Churches. It is this group that Sundkler divides into Ethiopian and Zionist Types.

At this point it might be useful to note a more recent attempt by Harold W. Turner to provide a classification which will be valid for all of Africa.³ He recognizes (i) Neo-Primal Movements, which are simply new forms of traditional or primal African religions. They are not Christian, but they borrow from Christianity whatever they feel is useful to update their primal religion in terms of new knowledge. (ii) Hebraist Movements which have adopted the Biblical tradition in its Old Testament form, with no particular reference to Christianity as such. These individuals regard themselves as African Jews. (iii) Christian Movements which can be further subdivided into Older or Historic Churches, e.g. the Bantu Christian Churches of our earlier classification, and Independent Churches. Turner sees Sundkler's classification into Ethiopian and Zionist as further divisions of this group of Independent Churches.

Sundkler himself describes the division as follows: Ethiopians are Independent Bantu Churches which have seceded from White Mission Churches chiefly on racial grounds. Their programme is characterized by an interesting ambivalence. They are in reaction against the White Mission organizations, yet their church organization and Bible interpretation are largely copied from the Protestant Mission Churches from which they have seceded, modified to some degree by the African stress on rank and ritual. Zionists are Independent African Churches which call themselves Zionist, Apostolic, Pentecostal, or like terms. Historically they have their

roots in Zion City, Illinois, United States. Theologically the Zionists are now a syncretistic Bantu movement with healing, speaking with tongues, purification rites and taboos as the main expressions of their faith.⁴

Since the Independent Coloured Churches have appeared among a people whose dominant, in fact almost total religious tradition has been that of historic Christianity, this particular form of classification, African though it may be, has little utility since there is no synthesis of two competing religious systems in the case of the Coloured Churches. Such non-Christian influences as there have been were diverse and seemingly of minimal significance. It is not of course beyond possibility that the Coloured people under social and political pressure might develop a much more clearly-defined group identity and take to themselves symbols of that identity. Independent Churches might then develop to express that identity, but for the moment this does not seem to be a major enough influence at work in the situation for the Ethiopian-Zionist classification to be used without imparting quite inappropriate ideas into the situation, even though, as will be seen, it bears some relation to my observer-participant division.

On the world scene, there is a vast literature, written from many viewpoints, attempting to explain and evaluate the phenomena of the appearance, development and demise of Independent Churches, for such have come to light all over the world and in many differing social, economic and political situations.

The classic work in this field was done by the pioneers, Weber and Troeltsch, the latter of whom produced an influential classification of types of religious organizations into Sect-Type and Church-Type.⁵ Of these, the Independent Churches would be nearest the Sect-Type. Subsequent scholars

have questioned, modified and added to his initial classification, but in general it has remained as the description of the two basic types of religious organizations, even though he wrote of an age prior to 1800.⁶

In brief, Troeltsch defined the Church as that type of organization which is over-whelmingly conservative, which to a certain extent, accepts the secular order, and dominates the masses. It is at one time both the author and the outcome of the social order. In principle, it is universal, that is, it desires to cover the whole life of humanity. On the other hand, the Sects are comparatively small groups; they aspire after personal inward perfection, and aim at a direct personal fellowship between the members of each particular group. From the very beginning, therefore, they must organize themselves into small groups and so renounce the idea of dominating the world. Their attitude towards the world, the state and society may be indifferent, or at the other extreme actively hostile, or somewhere on the median, simply tolerant.

The fully developed Church utilizes the state and the ruling classes, and weaves these elements into her own life; she then becomes an integral part of the existing social order. From this standpoint then, the Church both stabilizes and determines as well as reflects the social order. In so doing, however, she becomes dependent upon the upper classes and their development. The Sects on the other hand, are connected with the lower classes, or at least with those elements of society which are opposed to the State and to what they often see as sinful or repressive society.

The essence of the Church is its objective institutional character. The individual is born into it, and through infant baptism he comes under its miraculous influence. The priesthood, and the hierarchy, which hold the keys to the

tradition of the Church, to sacramental grace and the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, represent the objective treasury of grace. Compared with this institutional principle of an objective organization, the Sect is a voluntary community whose members join it of their own free will. An individual is not born into a sect, he enters it on the basis of conscious conversion. In the sect, spiritual progress does not depend upon the objective impartation of grace through the sacrament, but upon individual personal effort. The sect therefore, does not educate the nation en masse, but it gathers a select group of the elect and places it in some degree of opposition to the world.

As has been pointed out, subsequent authors have modified and added to this Church-Type/Sect-Type classification. Betty Scharf, in The Sociological Study of Religion says: "In the modern usage, Troeltsch's definition of a sect has been widened and simplified. The criterion is that the sect holds religious beliefs which diverge in some aspects radically from those of existing groups, or of the secular world. Whether the divergence is chiefly on doctrinal, ethical, scientific or political matters can be left open."⁷ This is better for our purpose, but as we will see, most of the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats do not appear to hold views that diverge radically from those of existing Church or secular groups.

J. Milton Yinger in The Scientific Study of Religion, was one of those who offered some further refinements to the Church/Sect dichotomy.⁸ He sees a six-step classification which ranges across the entire spectrum of possible organizations as viewed from their involvement in society as a whole, and the degree to which the individual finds personal involvement in the organization. Yinger's second type is what he calls the *ecclesia*, a term which he admits to having borrowed from Howard Becker's adaptation of the systematic work of Wiese. The *ecclesia*, as here described,

is an organization that has tried to be a universal Church but has failed because it has become so well-adjusted to the dominant elements of society that it has left the needs of many, particularly those whom H. Richard Niebuhr designates by the term "disinherited",⁹ frustrated. By its orientation toward the more-favoured element, it has led to the formation of less broadly-based groups by those outside the centres of political, economic and social power. These outsiders band together in groupings that more effectively meet their religious and social needs, and reflect their personal and political aspirations in a more satisfactory fashion.

In Systematic Sociology, Becker describes the ecclesia as: "a social structure which is predominantly a conservative body, not in open conflict with the secular aspects of social life, and professedly universal in its aims. The fully developed ecclesia attempts to amalgamate with the state and the dominant classes, and strives to exercise control over every person in the population. The ecclesia as an inclusive social structure is closely allied with national and economic interests; as a plurality pattern its very nature commits it to the adjustment of its ethics to the ethics of the secular world; it must represent the morality of the respectable majority."¹⁰ It seems, taken generally, this description fits rather well the White Churches and their Coloured branches in the contemporary South African situation. It is of course recognized that there are divisions, namely denominations, in this ecclesia, but by and large they stand in relation to South African society much as has been described here by Bekker.

If this identification be reasonable, then the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats will appear alongside the ecclesia, on the side away from the Church as first described by Troeltsch. Since some of Troeltsch's sectarian classifications have been absorbed into the ecclesia we will not expect to find them in the Independent Church but others will

appear. Taking this description of the ecclesia by Becker, it would appear that some of the causes of which the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats are the effect can be deduced. In a social, political and economic structure in which they are relatively disadvantaged, it appears that many of the Coloured people do not find their needs being met in an ecclesia type Church system, since it "attempts to amalgamate with the state and dominant class", and they therefore band together in new in-groupings which provide them with a greater commonality of situation and purpose.

Thus, if we accept Yinger's ecclesia type group as representing the so-called established Churches, be they White, Bantu or Coloured, then we are prepared to attempt to classify the remaining groups, the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats. Unfortunately Yinger's further divisions, three through six which are: the denomination or class church, the established sect, the sect and the cult, do not seem to contribute materially to the effort to arrive at a better understanding of these Independent Churches, for these divisions represent stages in the movement from the cult, which he describes as a new syncretist movement in its early stages marked by small size, search for a mystical experience, lack of structure, presence of a charismatic leader, up to the denomination or class church which has failed in its attempt to be a universal church because it still retains some sectarian tendencies and is limited by class, racial or sometimes regional boundaries. The established sect and the sect are steps on the way between these two extremes. There are certainly parallels to be seen in the Independent Churches with these four groupings, but the attempt to pigeonhole each church into one of these classifications would accomplish little in terms of explaining the forces that have led to their appearance and the needs of their members that are being met.

In 1970 Roland Robertson produced yet another classification by which religious movements could be described and their

movements charted.¹¹ After analyzing the many attempts made in the past, from Troeltsch's Church-Type and Sect-Type up through Yinger's six-fold division, he concludes that they all fail to provide for the classification of non-Christian movements, and proceeds to suggest his own four-fold division which he believes will be applicable to all religious movements of any type. On the one hand, basically similar to the Church-Type, he classifies the Denomination. This group is all-inclusive in its membership, having few requirements other than the willingness to identify with the group for membership, and holds itself to be one of many legitimate groups, that is it is pluralistically legitimate. Similar to the Denomination is the Institutionalized Sect, which shares with the Denomination its pluralistic self-conceived basis of legitimacy, but differs in that it holds to an exclusive membership principle, that is, it sets up standards which must be met and adhered to in order to obtain and continue in membership. Thus it is somewhat less universal than the Denomination. His third classification, the Church, like the Denomination has an inclusive membership principal, being open to all, but differs from that body in that it holds itself to be uniquely legitimate, that is, the Church is regarded by its effective leaders as the only valid religious vehicle, unlike the Denomination which regards itself as one of a set of many acceptable religious vehicles. Finally, the Sect is exclusive in its membership principle, requiring certain standards of those who align themselves to it, but unlike the Institutionalized Sect holds itself to be uniquely legitimate.

Robertson's classification, arrived at by an evaluation of the position of a group on the basis of two tests, namely Membership Principle and Self-Conceived Basis of Legitimacy, certainly seems to explain some of the differences which obtain between various religious groups within the same overall grouping, such as Christian, Buddhist, Shintoist, etc. However, it seems to fall short of our needs in classifying the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats in that it does not

attempt to differentiate on the basis of what we consider to be very basic, that is, the individual's conceived relationship with God, and the way in which this conceived relationship differs from person to person as the result of individual differences. A further seeming shortcoming is its use of terms in a way that differs radically from what has been the accepted classification, thus leading to considerable confusion. I refer to his use of Institutionalized Sect to describe a group that is in its own evaluation just one of a whole set of acceptable religious groups, while he uses the term Church to refer to the group that holds itself to be the only valid religious vehicle, the one unique religious body. He has departed here from the much more familiar Church-Sect dichotomy of Troeltsch, and I feel that such a reversal of commonly understood and accepted use of classifications can only cause confusion.

Another author to face the problem of the classification of religious movements is Bryan R. Wilson.¹² He suggests, in somewhat similar fashion to Yinger, that our work has in fact outgrown Troeltsch's dichotomy. Wilson indicates that sects are not easily marshalled into a few dichotomies, but actually can be classified on the basis of several different criteria. In this work quoted he develops a classification which he believes might be used in the analysis of sectarian movements in Christian as well as non-Christian and even non-Western environments. In order to do so he takes as his central criterion the sects "response to the world", in the conviction that this response will reflect the doctrinal thought of the sect, although it is not determined by that alone. His classification is based upon seven differing categories, and seems to be quite exhaustive. I list them here as he presents them:

1. The conversionist sect. This is the typical sect of 'evangelical' fundamentalist Christianity. Its reaction towards the outside world is to suggest that the latter is corrupted because man is corrupted. If men can be changed then

the world will be changed. This type of sect ideally takes no interest in programs of social reform or in the political solution of social problems, and may even be actively hostile towards them. Seen in Salvation Army, Assemblies of God and independent evangelical sect.

2. The revolutionary type sect. Its attitude towards the outside world is summed up in a desire to be rid of the present social order when the time is ripe, if necessary, by force and violence. This type of sect is hostile at one and the same time to social reform and instantaneous conversion. Seen in Jehovah's Witnesses.

3. The introversionist sect. Sometimes referred to as the pietist sects. Completely indifferent to social reforms, to individual conversion and to social revolutions. Their reaction to the world is simply that of retiring from it to the security gained by personal holiness. Seen in certain "holiness movements" as well as in the European pietist movements of the eighteenth century.

4. Manipulationist sects. These sects insist especially on a particular and distinctive knowledge. Sometimes referred to as gnostic sects. They frequently proclaim a more spiritualized and ethereal version of the cultural ends of global society. They do not provoke conversion, but rather offer the facilities for learning their systems. They have little or no group life, since their gnosis is impersonal. The Christian Scientists, the Rosicrucians and Scientology are examples of this type of sect.

5. The thaumaturgical sects. These sects believe that it is possible for men to experience the extraordinary effect of the supernatural on their lives. They affirm that normal reality and causation can be suspended for the benefit of special and personal dispensations. Their principle representatives are spiritualist groups whose main activity lies in seeking personal messages from the spirits, obtaining cures, performing miracles. Their most characteristic activity is the 'seance' or public demonstration.

6. The reformist sect. This type of sect studies the world

in order to involve itself in it by good deeds. It takes unto itself the role of social conscience. It accepts a place in the world without being of the world or touched by its impurity. It holds to the view that faith without deeds is in vain and believe that the sect is the leavening of the lump. The Quakers are an example of this type of sect.

7. The utopian sect. This is perhaps the most complex type. Its response to the outside world consists partly in withdrawing from it, and partly in wishing to remake it to a better specification. It is more radical than the reformist sect, potentially less violent than the revolutionary sect, and more constructive on a social level than the conversionist sect.

In view of Wilson's own statement that when sects persist, they always undergo processes of mutation, one may be forgiven for suggesting that this seventh division is more or less a catch-all into which to place individuals and groups who do not readily accept classification into one of the other six, as well as those who are in the process of change from one of the six to another. Wilson's inability to point certainly to any existing organization, even taking into account the many hundreds of types of sects from which to choose, as being typical of this sect would suggest that it does not represent any actual group, but is rather an 'ideal' type of classification which should exist, even if it does not, if for no other reason than to round out the system of classification.

Wilson's more recent book, Magic and the Millenium, further develops this same seven-fold classification,¹³ but not in areas significant for this present study. It is interesting to note that this seven-fold classification has grown out of a four-fold division suggested in an earlier 1967 work.¹⁴ This division was: Conversionist, Adventist, Introversionist and Gnostic, and was based essentially on the response of the sect to the values and relationships prevailing in the society, and reflected the depth of the desire to alter these by altering

men, to prepare for the day when they will be swept away, to replace them with higher inner values or to discover new and better ways to reach the world's goals.

Much time was spent in considering these various types of classifications, beginning with Troeltsch and moving on down to Wilson. While as has been suggested, the established denominations are representative of the Church-Type organization, the ecclesia of Becker and Yinger, we are left with the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats as Sect-Types and with the necessity of finding a workable means of dividing them into more useful groupings. Yinger's four divisions of Sect-Type organizations, although potentially applicable, do not seem to contribute to fuller understanding of the Independent Churches. For instance, his Denomination or Class Church might describe the Calvin Church or the Volkskerk, his Established Sect the Dock's Mission, his Sect the larger number of the groups we are studying, divided into Acceptance, Avoidance and Aggressive categories, and his Cult the heterodox Reformed Old Apostolic Church and the four "Jesus Only" groups. However, having done this, we have not been assisted in understanding either the forces that brought them into being or the reasons that particular individuals will associate themselves with one group rather than with another.

Bryan Wilson's seven categories are potentially useful, but present the writer with several difficulties. To begin with, Wilson has attempted, as did Robertson before him, to develop a system that can be universally utilized to analyze sectarian movements in non-Christian as well as Christian environments. As such, his divisions are of necessity much more general than otherwise, and include categories which we would not expect to find exemplified in the very Christian, very Western type of environment of the Cape Flats. Some of the Independent Churches studied might be pressed into Wilson's sect classification, but others cannot be found reflected there. One cannot escape the conviction that Wilson's categories may not be specific divisions of groups so much as descriptions of individual

responses and attitudes. Granted, there are sects which are generally conversionist in nature, but several of the attitudes which characterize members of such sects are recognized as characteristics of individuals in almost any of the other divisions listed by Wilson. Further, and most important of all, it must be noted that neither Robertson nor Wilson deal specifically with the individual's relationship with God, choosing rather to base their categories on the individual relationship to society or to the social order as seen in its institutions.

From the beginning of this study it has been obvious that these Independent Churches were appearing as the result of and in order to meet certain needs, or as the result of certain felt deprivations. Thus they are not really sects in the exact sense that the word is used by Troeltsch, Robertson and Wilson, but they are Churches or perhaps more often Churches-in-the-making that have appeared as the people of the Cape Flats have attempted in their relationship with and worship of God to compensate for the deprivations they suffer in their situation as the Coloured people in the present-day Republic of South Africa. Charles Glock points out just how important deprivation can be in the formation of new religious groups, especially those which arise among 'fringe' peoples.¹⁵ He rightly indicates that deprivation may be other than economic or social, it may include also quality of life, a subjective conviction that the individual or group so deprived is somehow missing out on privileges, opportunities or security that is due to them. Glock's deprivations are for the most part those which affect the middle-class but can generally be applied even to those of the lowest classes. An example of such felt deprivation in the area of quality of life eventuating in the appearance of a religious in-group or sub-cultures is to be seen in the appearance in Russia of the Hassidim, the "pious", among the Orthodox Jews.¹⁶ In what can only be seen as a revolt against the stifling pressures from civil authorities on the outside and religious authorities on the inside, this group developed a

life style which involved feasting and dancing and even the use of alcohol in what must be seen as a means of escape from an unbearable life situation. We will note similar tendencies in some of the Independent Churches included in this study. Thus it was concluded that the only way to establish a useful system of classification was to return to the analysis of the facts given by the Independent Churches themselves, and then by evaluation of similarities and differences arrive at meaningful categories, and this was the method utilized.

At this point it becomes possible to indicate the reason for the choice of Independent Coloured Churches as the title for the groups with which I did this work. Several names have been used by writers in Africa to describe just such groups. Among them are: Adjustment Movements, Crisis Cults, Nativistic Cults, Reformatory Cults, Religio-Political Movements, Proto-Nationalist Movements, Movements of Revolt, Movements of Rebellious Prophets, Syncretistic Cults, Pentecostal Cults, Zionists, Apostolics, African Churches, and Ethiopian Churches.¹⁷ I have chosen the name used because these groups are truly Independent, that is, non-denominational or non-established churches. Then they are Coloured in origin and membership. I am aware of the emotional overtones attached to the use of this term, but it is a means of designation, and as such must be utilized if we are to know of whom we are speaking. Finally, Church, for they are not truly Cults or Sects. It is undeniable that no one calls their own group a Cult or Sect. This title is used to designate the religious bodies of others than ourselves, and carries with it the weight of disapproval or criticism,¹⁸ so I have chosen to use the term Church, for if not already completely recognizable as Churches, some at least are certainly Churches-in-the-making.

The Development of a Classification

To return to the development of the classification employed. The headings under which the results were initially collated were:

Reasons for the New Church,
 Training claimed by or for founder,
 Doctrinal Distinctives held by the new Church,
 Type of Church government,
 Membership claimed,
 Number of branches claimed,
 Property Owned,
 Source from which membership came,
 Birthplace of members, e.g. within or outside the
 Cape Flats,
 Type of employment of members,
 General doctrinal type of belief, e.g. Pentecostal
 or non-Pentecostal.

Upon first evaluation, it appeared that the major division by which these Churches could be classified would be between Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal types. This division could be rather simply determined, based upon the answers to the doctrinal questions, namely: When do you consider a new believer receives the Holy Spirit, at the time of salvation or in a separate experience subsequent to salvation? Does your leader practice tongues, healing, prophecy? Does your membership generally practice tongues, healing and prophecy? Since one of the basic tenets of those who refer to themselves as the Pentecostal Churches is that the gift of the Holy Spirit since Pentecost must be comparable to its first giving at Pentecost subsequent to the ascension of Christ, they see the reception of the Holy Spirit as a separate experience that is normally accompanied by physical manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit, namely tongues, prophecy and healing. Thus those who answered at least four of these seven questions in the affirmative, including always an affirmative answer to the first question as to the reception of the Holy Spirit in a separate experience subsequent to salvation, were rated as Pentecostal.

At this point the Pentecostals were classified as Type 'A' and

the Non-Pentecostal as Type 'B'. Now the previously-described listings were re-examined, but divided between Type 'A' and Type 'B'. The results were sufficiently clear-cut to suggest that this was a true classification and not just one reflecting some one particular shade of belief or of practice. The results of this second evaluation are charted in the bar graphs at the end of Chapter IV, page 116, but the major points are easily extracted as follows. Note that in the graphs, Type 'A' is referred to as Participant Type, and Type 'B' as Observer Type. Of the membership, 33% of the Type 'A' groups were born outside of the Cape Flats, while only 20% of the Type 'B' came from outside. This probably further explains the fact that Type 'A' Churches used Afrikaans in 94% of their services while Type 'B' used it in 84%. The types of employment of the members of the two groups indicates a somewhat different socio-economic base, in that the token 3% professionals in the Type 'A' membership must be compared to the 11% professionals in the Type 'B' membership.

There is a difference in the concern for Church organization in that only 50% of the Type 'A' Churches claimed to have Doctrinal Statements, while 58% of the Type 'B' actually had prepared and were able to produce such documents. The economic level of the membership as well as the felt need for permanent facilities is reflected in the statistics that 90% of Type 'B' Churches owned property, either buildings or Church sites, while only 50% of the Type 'A' did so. It is perhaps in the area of the pastors that the most dramatic differences are found. 94% of the Type 'A' pastors have no training compared to only 50% of the Type 'B' pastors. Further, as an indication of the level of secular education attained by the pastor, for this is one of the requirements for receiving State permission to perform marriages, only 16% of the Type 'A' Church pastors are Marriage Officers compared to 63% of the Type 'B'.

Although this initial division was made on the basis of Pentecostal or Non-Pentecostal doctrines and practices, considerable difficulty was experienced in accounting for these differences, in view of several further factors observed. In the course of individual interviews, it came to light that a fair number of the Type 'B' Non-Pentecostal Church members had been originally members of the Type 'A' Pentecostal Churches, but upon elevation of their socio-economic status had left the Type 'A' and joined themselves to the Type 'B'. This seemed to equate a changed socio-economic status with a doctrinal change, which was very difficult to explain, since there was no corresponding change in other doctrinal convictions held.¹⁹ Additional interviews showed that the rank and file membership of the two types were not particularly concerned about these specific doctrinal differences which had been used to distance the Pentecostal and Non-Pentecostal Churches, namely those having to do with the timing of the giving of the Holy Spirit and the manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit. When pressed for reasons behind their changes of church attendance, most of those interviewed were unable to give any, and took refuge in general statements to the effect that they just seemed to feel that this new group were better people, or that they were friendlier, or perhaps more significantly, that the people in this new Church were "more our type".

Upon further investigation and based upon more observation of the services held by these two major classifications it seemed that although the division was valid, it was not truly based upon doctrinal distinctives but rather upon a view of the individual's relationship with God which was revealed by the extent of their active participation in the service of worship itself. Based upon this new insight, the Type 'A' Churches which had formerly been described as Pentecostal were now described as Participant-Type while the Type 'B' Church were no longer described as Non-Pentecostal but rather as Observer Type.

The rationale behind this new division into Participant and Observer Type is to be found in the description of Mosaic religion as primarily the linking of man to God. This particular definition was suggested by Professor John Cumpsty and developed into two major types, Direct and Indirect linking. Direct linking is the phrase used to describe the relationship existing between a man and his God when the man comes to the object of his worship directly without the intervention of another individual or any institution, or corporate practice or ritual. In this instance, the individual involved established the relationship with the object of worship by faith, usually evidenced by obedience to the standards of conduct laid down in sacred writings, and this apart from any outside intervention. Obviously, this is completely individualistic, and membership in an external and organized body is considered unnecessary, except for mutual support in the individual quest, and in the case of extremely individualistic mystical experiences may even be considered detrimental to personal religion. The linking process is usually, in the Christian context, described as "accepting Jesus Christ as one's personal Saviour", which statement emphasizes the individualistic and personal nature of the relationship established.

As already mentioned, this linking is initiated by the act of faith on the part of the individual, and is in the case of the churches studied, ordinarily testified to by verbal witness and by the act of public baptism, usually by immersion. Even though Christian fellowship is prized, and the believers in any one place join together for mutual encouragement, exhortation and instruction, the church "does" nothing for the individual's salvation, and in some circles even the title "Church" may be rejected because of its institutional overtones. In those cases, it is set aside in favour of a more general designation such as "fellowship of believers", or "Believers' meeting", and the building in which the meeting is held may be referred to as a "gospel hall" rather than as a church.

Since linking in this instance is a personal relationship, the communion and baptism are not considered as mediating Divine grace in any way, but are held to be a testimony to others of the existence and continuation of that linking. This being the case, it is of little or no import as to who administers the ordinances as they are called, and this may be done by any lay person in the congregation, or even by the individual himself if the situation demands, as in the case of individual communion and as has happened historically in self-baptism. It follows from the basic convictions of this individualistic linking process that an ordained or even trained clergy is neither needed nor particularly desirable, for they may constitute a danger to the proper understanding of the personal and direct relationship existing between man and God.

An essential corollary to this concept of direct linking is the emphasis on immanence, that is, belief in an available God. The doctrine of God as available holds that God is present and active in time and space in the now and here. He is a God who sees the conditions existing in the world, and enters into the needs, feelings and struggles of his people in all their activities. In other words, he is present to hear and to answer prayers, and as he does so, it is the responsibility of his people to acknowledge publicly his activities and to praise him for his being and gifts. This view of the availability of God is usually coupled with the concept of similar activity of the powers of darkness, commonly centred in Satan as the attacker of the brethren.

That this is the view of God and of the supernatural powers held by those who associate themselves in the Participant-Type Churches is without question. Their testimonies are replete with references to the situations in which they asked God to assist them in dealing with everyday problems, and they praise him for the way in which he met them at the point of their need. The prayers for healing and the constant testimonies as to healing received are simply additional evidences of the understanding of God as being completely immanent. It seems

at times that there is very little understanding of God as being transcendent, for he appears, apart from his powers which they invoke on their personal behalf, as little more than a man writ large who comes alongside for their individual benefit.

Usually those who see religion in terms of such direct linking have no strong ties to any particular group, but move more or less freely from one fellowship to another, since such groupings are at best only a gathering of those who have experienced a similar religious experience. In its early stages, this kind of fellowship usually begins with a prayer circle or cottage meeting of those who have similar convictions about the nature of their linking experience, and from this initial fellowship grows a rather loose organization. The similarities between this description and the Participant-Type Church found in the Cape Flats appear sufficient to indicate that we have here a valid division. The emphasis is placed on the individual's personal experience and the need is felt to verbalize it both to impress others and one suspects the person himself that this direct linking does indeed exist and that the individual is in reality firmly connected to or is "in Christ Jesus". The mobility of the believers in their free and easy travel from one fellowship of believers to another and the de-emphasis on the function of the pastor so that he is more an enabler than anything else fit well into the pattern of direct linking between the individual and the Immanent Divine.

To return to our basic classification; whereas the Participant Type Church is made up of those who believe they are directly linked on the basis of their own faith and practice to an immanent God, the members of the Observer Type Church believe that they are indirectly linked to the object of worship by an intermediary, usually the Church itself, but also perhaps a charismatic individual leader. Under these circumstances, the individual is much less involved personally in his relationship to the object of his worship. Between the person and God is

thus interposed the divinely connected bridgehead which mediates the grace of God to the individual and therefore the individual needs primarily to establish an adequate relationship to this institution, organization, or charismatic figure. In the case of a church it implies a high ecclesiology.

This relationship must commence as early as possible, so the practice of infant baptism is carried out, which in some cases may be interpreted as the act of linking itself. In this instance, the water of baptism washes away the original sin and makes the child a member of the family of God. In other instances, the baptism is considered more as symbolic of that linking which will finally take place at confirmation, where it has more individual content. In this matter of indirect linking, communion is a partaking of the body and blood of Christ, either in terms of a hard line transubstantiation which holds that the elements become the body and blood of Christ or of consubstantiation which teaches that Christ is in, around and under the elements. Preaching is probably understood in sacramented terms or the church as the bearer of and the context in which is preached the Word. With this concept of indirect linking, the effectiveness of the water to wash away sin and the transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ and the preaching of the Word, thereby making them vehicles of Divine grace depend upon the standing or position of the one who administers the sacrament.

Thus worship, in the case of indirect linking, must depend upon the fitness of those who minister, and this fitness is usually insured by apostolic succession which claims that those serving have been ordained by the laying on of the hands of someone who has been ordained by ... and so on back to the twelve apostles and Christ himself. Obviously in this view, the sacraments have no power or merit in themselves, and so must be administered by someone who has the requisite standing and authority.

This needed intervention of an institution and individuals uniquely suited to bridge the gap between the person and the object of his worship comes from a concept of God which emphasizes not his immanence or nearness but his transcendence. This doctrine of the Transcendent God holds that God is wholly "other". That is, he in his supernatural creative power is so far removed from his natural time- and-space-limited creatures that they have little or nothing in common with him, and certainly very little common ground to enable them to communicate directly with him. Often this conviction is stated in terms of the very limited nature of man's existence, on one minuscule planet revolving around a seventh rate sun in an obscure corner of one galaxy among the countless galactic universes. How can one man then consider that the God who has called into being all this vastness and complexity and who superintends its continued existence will have either the time or the capacity of entering fully into that man's daily struggles? Rather it is for man to stand in awe before his vastness and worship him for his being and power.

This concept of God will of course be associated with those whose worship takes the form of observation rather than participation. This individual stands or bows before God as he participates vicariously in the activities of others more suited by position, training or talent to lead in the acts of worship. As pointed out, the imposition of one specifically qualified by Apostolic succession or perhaps one especially trained as in the case of professional clergy is essential between the worshipper and this awe-inspiring transcendent God.

In this view of man's relationship to God, the Church becomes the Ark, the means of salvation, and all the individual must do is to get aboard, that is, become rightly involved with the Church. One recalls the statement of an individual who when questioned about his relationship with Jesus Christ replied: "When I am sick I go to a doctor, he is trained in these matters and is able to care for my physical needs, so I just put myself

in his hands. In the same way, when it comes to my spiritual needs, I do not try to analyze my problems, or to prescribe something for myself, I just go to my priest, he is trained in these things, and he is able to care for my soul." Part of the means by which the Church is validated, at least in the eyes of the individual concerned, is in the education and hierarchy of position of the clergy, the size and ornamentation of its buildings, the complexity of its ritual and the vestments worn by officers and clergy. All these serve to convince the observer that he is in touch with an organization that is able to link him effectively with that awesome, transcendent Divine.

Again it would appear that the Observer-Type Church fits well into this pattern. One may obtain intellectual satisfaction from hearing a well-prepared and delivered sermon or emotional fulfilment from observing a beautifully-presented eucharist feast, but in the final analysis one observes the process by which the church of one's choice proves its suitability to provide the link with the Divine First Cause which the worshipper desires and requires. The more erudite the speaker, the more beautiful the building, the more complex the vestments of the officiating clergyman the greater the conviction of the worshipper that he has placed the eternal destiny of his soul in the hands of one who "knows about these things and is able to care for my soul". Thus the emphasis in the Observer Type Church as in our sample, is on obtaining property and erecting buildings, the training of pastors and their ordination, and the writing and making available of all-encompassing doctrinal statements, often in flowery and rather incomprehensible, at least to the average member, phrases.

In summary then, we feel that the classification of the Independent Churches as Sect-Type groups, along the lines of the classic Church/Sect division is valid insofar that the main-line White or White-sourced denominations and churches are recognized as the Ecclesia of Becker rather than the Church as described by Troeltsch. The further subdivision of the

Independent Churches, seen therefore as a Sect Type, is best made into the Participant Type and the Observer Type, which are the outward manifestations of their basic linking with the Divine. One factor in their make-up does vary significantly from the Sect Type of Troeltsch, and that is the fact that they generally do not see themselves as being in exclusive possession of eternal truth. This exclusivistic conviction is found in a tiny minority only, but in the case of the majority they see themselves as preaching the same truth as that held by the Ecclesia, albeit with differing emphasis or perhaps to a differing strata of society. As such, they would rather seem to be potential denominations, and in some cases as we will see, they have developed into very large denominations that are accepted on a co-equal basis by the leaders in the "established churches" of South Africa.

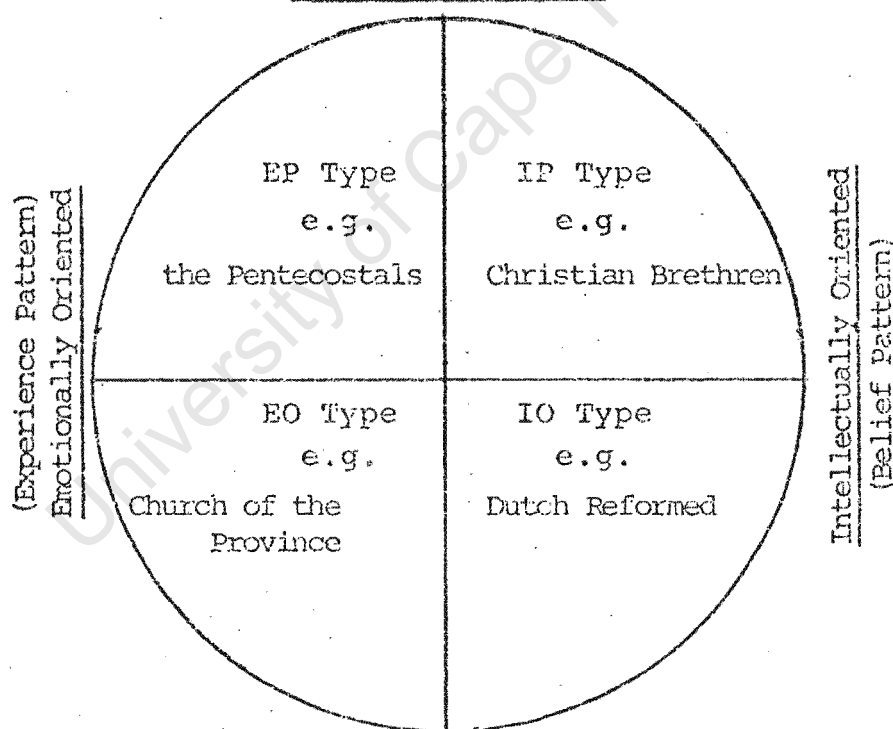
A Fourfold Classification

The division into Participant Type and Observer Type is not sufficiently precise to describe all the differences recognized among the people and practices of the Independent Churches. In the general sense, this is the basic division, but within each of these two classifications is to be found a further break-down based not on the relationship to God so much as on the basic psychological orientation at that point in time of the individual member. We must recognize that different personality types will tend to manifest their convictions as to the ultimate nature of the Divine and their approach to that Divine in ways suited in each case to their particular contemporary emotional orientation. H.C. McComas in his book, The Psychology of Religious Sects, goes into considerable detail in defending very precise and varied classifications of the sects. We cannot apply much of his work to the Independent Churches, but we do feel that one of his basic presuppositions is valid here. He states: "It is evident that the two distinctive traits in human nature, the intellectual and the emotional, are two poles around which other traits gather. If we spread the characteristics of the sects before us, they will

fall into a plan which shows one of these poles upon one side, the other upon the opposite side, and graduations shading from the one to the other in between."²⁰

If we apply this insight to the individuals who go to make up the two classifications already arrived at, Observer and Participant Type, we find that we are forced not into a linear graph with graduations shading from one extreme to the other, but rather into a segment-type graph, with the Participant and Observer Types representing opposite poles of one axis, while the intellectual or emotional orientation of the members involved represent the poles of the other.

(Available God) Participant Type (Direct Linking)



(Transcendent God) Observer Type (Indirect Linking)

Recognizing that the individual differences would probably include all possible shadings from one extreme to another, we are yet able on average to arrive at four differing types of relationships evidenced between the worshipper and his God. For purposes of clarification I have identified these four differing types with four well established churches in the

South African scene, all of which are well known and have their equivalents in most Western countries. It will be our purpose later to apply this classification to the various Independent Churches in order to better describe the way in which they meet the particular needs of the people who are associated in them.

1. The Participant Type Church for the emotionally oriented individual makes up perhaps one half of all the membership of the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats. In the contemporary South African Church scene, this group is represented by any of the large group of Pentecostal Churches, such as the Assemblies of God, the Full Gospel Church, the Apostoliese Geloof Sending van S.A. Kerk, and others. In these groups, the linking between worshipper and the object of worship is of the most direct type, and is witnessed to in the worship service by participation in more or less abandoned activity. We will describe later services in the Independent Churches which are typical to such groups, indicating the place of singing, dancing, shouting, waving hands, etc. Being emotionally oriented, the members of these groups are interested in the experience of the power of God, and their testimonies of being able to tap that power in healing, economic sufficiency, etc., indicate that they want a God that is at hand and is able and willing to intervene on their behalf in a world that is essentially unfriendly toward them and usually beyond their control. They are linked to God directly by faith, but that faith requires constant reassurance through evidence of divine power being available to them. For this reason testimonies are very important, for these indicate to all and sundry that they are in contact with that power, and the fact that others testify in the same way and to the same experiences serves to convince them that this in which they are involved is not simply a subjective experience that has arisen from their own personal needs or perhaps has been sent as a deception of the Devil, but is rather a true system of worship and life.

Little emphasis is laid upon God as he is. His attributes, other than his omnipresence and his omnipotence, are by and large ignored. The constant exhortations to "Praise the Lord", which are followed by abandoned singing and dancing seem to have little reference to engaging in contemplation of God and offering praise to him for what he is in himself, but serve rather as opportunities for physical expressions which in the extreme bear unmistakable similarities to the disco scene.

2. The Participant Type Church for the intellectually oriented could be recognized anywhere in the world as an assembly of Christian Brethren. Here we find the concept of direct linking at its purest, with the denial of any special order of clergy, and even the rejection of the term "Church" for their places of worship, lest people be misled into thinking that the building represented something to which association could give them any credit or relationship with God. Their intellectual orientation is evident firstly in a negative way, in that they reject with varying degrees of scorn any emotional expressions in the worship service. It is evident positively by their emphasis upon a belief system which links them to each other on the basis of shared convictions. They take great delight in the exposition of Scripture, for with their rejection of a set-apart Clergy and an authoritative Church they take the Bible to be their only standard for faith and life. However, this exposition of Scripture can at times take the form of seeking even more and more imaginative spiritualizations of historical events, places and institutions. Where the emotionally oriented individual participate by emotionally inspired activity in the worship service, the intellectually oriented individual participated by ordered behaviour and service. Thus the strong emphasis on proper dress, rejection of sport, bioscope, and even classical music as being "worldly". Attendance at services, witnessing, a constant and faithful devotional life, and services in prisons, hospitals and the open air, are all

considered to be part of their participating service. They are linked to God by faith, but to each other by common belief, by practice and by the right use of 'flag' words, e.g. "Washed in the blood", "holiness", and such. Both of these two divisions within the Participant Type Church are truly participating, either in the open and obvious involvement in the worship service as is the case with the emotionally oriented individual, or in the active involvement in acceptable behaviour and service as in the case of the intellectually oriented individual.

It must be emphasized that although both the emotionally oriented and the intellectually oriented Participant Types see themselves as directly linked to an available God, there is a basic difference in their attitude toward God. In the case of the emotionally oriented individual, the availability of God is important because of the power that is available in the relationship for him. Thus it is not surprising that the Pentecostals come for the most part from lower socio-economic groups. In their jobs, in their community life, they are not actors, they are objects of the activities of others. They do not lead, they follow, they do not control life and their destinies, they are rather controlled by others. For such a people, the assurance that they can be directly linked to an all-powerful God who will hear and answer the prayers of his people in ways that go far beyond all that can be accomplished by mere humans has an almost irresistible attraction. The constant reiteration of the promises of God to hear and answer the prayers of his people gives ample evidence of their fixation on this part of the nature of God, his limitless and available power.

On the other hand, the intellectually oriented individual, as represented by the Christian Brethren, while equally concerned with his direct linking with an available God, is more concerned with the person of God than with his power. For the most part, the individuals associated with this particular

group and others of this type, come from a higher socio-economic strata, and as such exercise considerable control over their immediate environments. However, their emphasis upon behaviour and service makes them aware of their human limitations in the matter of motive, of consistency, of true love toward man and God. Thus they are concerned to compare their lives constantly with the perfect standard which was God as revealed in Christ, and the content of their preaching centres largely around this perfection of God and the contrast which it makes to the imperfection of man. In fact, one often feels that they do not consider they have had a worthwhile sermon unless the speaker has "hammered" them, to use the expression often heard in the Cape Flats, by pointing out how they have failed and are failing, and by comparing their inadequate service to that which was rendered in the past days. The concept of the power of this available God is not absent, but it receives considerably less emphasis than the character of God, and the example and constant exhortation to perfection that this provides for the dedicated believer.

3. The Observer Type Church for the emotionally oriented individual represents a rather large segment of the established church in South Africa, including as it does the Church of the Province of South Africa, the major English-speaking body in the country. However, it makes up only a very small part of the Independent Churches, for reasons which should become obvious in our description of the type. In this church, the individual involved observes the church at work in the ministry of the sacraments. The emotional needs of the worshipper are met in the beauty of the stained glass windows, the intricate design and stitching of the vestments of the priests, the classical movements of the service of communion and the musical intonation of the chants and liturgy. One might include here even the scent of the incense as being pleasing to the emotions. Whereas in the Participant Type groups, interpersonal relations are important since for most, emotional satisfaction is possible only by participation when

others are also engaged in the activity or at least present to see one's activities, in this instance the presence of other observers is non-essential and may even constitute an irritation or barrier to one's observation of and immersion in what is happening "up front".

The fact that an emotionally oriented member of an Observer Type church can actually worship when the only person or perhaps one of a mere handful in a large cathedral in which the sacrament is being offered in all its ritual is completely beyond the comprehension of an emotionally oriented member of a Participant Type church. Whereas the Participant Type receives emotional satisfaction through bodily activity the Observer Type receives just as complete emotional fulfillment through his senses alone.

4. The Observer Type Church for the intellectually oriented, is best represented in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, although the Presbyterian Church could also be used as an example. These worshippers are observers not of the church at work in the ministry of the sacraments as in 3, but of the ministry of the Word in the preaching service. As such, the pastorate is important, for only from educated and trained men can come the correct interpretation and application of that Word. The church is important, not in its possession of the sacraments, but rather in its continuity in the Apostolic gospel, its statements of dogma, and its provision of a pastorate prepared and ready to defend the church's historic position. The intellectual satisfaction is found in the appreciation of a well-prepared, logically consistent and well-presented sermon. Again there is a minimal need for participation with others, for the belief pattern is an individualistic experience, and does not require the presence or approval of others for its validation, so long as it is consistent with the traditional stand of the church. Thus belief, ethics and right convictions are essential, but for the sake of the church as a whole. As long as the men "up

front" are adequately trained to be able to recognize right doctrine and heresy, then the man in the pew can be sure that they are in contact with the ultimate Truth and he is able to relax and allow them to represent him before God. They will baptize his child, confirm him in the faith, and relate him to the church as a whole.

University of Cape Town

Notes on Chapter III

1. Sundkler, B.G.M., 1948
2. West, Martin, 1975
3. Turner, Harold W., 1979; pages 56, 57, 83
4. Sundkler, B.G.M., 1948; pages 53,55
5. Troeltsch, Ernst, 1956; pages 331-343
6. Johnson, Benton, 1963; page 221ff
 Johnson indicates the shortcoming of the Church-Sect division advanced by Troeltsch, since there is no "Church" as he uses the term in most countries today. He suggests a better division to be:
 "A Church is a religious group that accepts the social environment in which it exists."
 "A Sect is a religious group that rejects the social environment in which it exists."
 It appears that this classification is of limited usefulness, being descriptive only, and taking no account of the reasons behind the acceptance or rejection.
7. Scharf, Betty R., 1970; page 106
8. Yinger, J. Milton, 1970; pages 262ff
9. Niebuhr, H. Richard, 1957; pages 28-32
 Niebuhr, in evaluating the social causes behind the appearance and continuation of denominations, indicates that economic factors are often pivotal. His second chapter, "The Churches of the Disinherited", explores these economic factors at work from the first century up through the days of the Reformation and into the present. He cites the Anabaptists, the Quakers, the Methodists and Salvation Army as illustrations of such groups that arose from within the disinherited. As indicated, he sees these economic forces at work from the very beginnings of Christianity. "The development of the religion of the disinherited is illustrated not only by the history of various sects in Christianity, but by the rise of that faith itself. It began as a religion of the poor, of those who had been denied a stake in contemporary civilization ... It was addressed to the poor of the land, to fishermen and peasants, to publicans and outcasts."
10. Becker, Howard, 1932; pages 624-628
11. Robertson, Roland, 1970; pages 113-118
12. Wilson, Bryan R., 1970; page 27ff
13. Wilson, Bryan R., 1970; pages 18-27
14. Wilson, Bryan R., 1967; pages 25-29

15. Glock, Charles Y., 1964
 Glock's paper, "The Role of Deprivation in the origin and Evolution of Religious groups", appears in Religion and Social Conflict by Robert Lee and Martin Marty, Editors, on pages 24-36. The same article is found in Sociological Perspectives, edited by Charles Glock and R. Stark and entitled: "On the origins and Evolution of Religious Groups".
16. Zborowski, Mark, and Herzog, Elizabeth, 1952; pages 166-405
17. Turner, Harold W., 1979; page 55
 Although Turner wrote from ~~West~~ Africa, and these names are those which for the most part have been applied to the native African groups, their very diversity indicates to some degree the ways in which they have viewed their churches and the ways in which they have been viewed by others.
18. Rhodes, Arnold Black, 1972; pages 26, 27
 "It would not be difficult to point to denominations which would not now be naturally regarded as sects, but which undoubtedly were sects at one time. Implied in the above is the fact that to call anybody a sect is to pass something of a negative judgment upon it. It is not simply an objective characterization, it is to some extent a condemnation."
19. Budd, Susan, 1973; pages 106, 107
 Budd describes this same phenomena as follows:
 "A pentecostalist congregation in a neighbourhood that was growing more affluent changed its beliefs in several predictable ways. Material wealth and secular concerns came to be seen as consistent with rather than a barrier to full spiritual life; science, whilst still subordinate to divine purposes, was no longer sinful but useful; women could still demonstrate their spirituality through emotional outbursts at meetings for worship, but men were now seen as more fitting leaders of prayer meetings. Those members of the church who were marginal to society, who had previously found release from their sense of failure in mutual confession in an atmosphere of warm empathy, now found that their outbursts were seen as not quite respectable. The increasing accommodation of the church to society had made it more successful, but had led to conflict between its members over basic beliefs."
20. Mc Comas, H.C., 1912

CHAPTER IV

THE PROPOSED FOUR-FOLD CLASSIFICATION OF THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

Having established the four-fold division of religious organizations based upon the worshipper's view of God and his relation to him and upon the particular personality orientation of the worshipper, we will now apply this classification which has been illustrated by reference to better-known groups, to the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats.

1. The Participant Type Church for the Emotionally Oriented

This type of organization finds the bulk of its membership among the poorer members of the community, often among those who have immigrated to the city relatively recently. In many instances their membership is largely female, and many of these women are in difficult financial straits because of drinking or absent husbands. A description of a typical evening service in one of these churches will serve to convey information as to what they seek to do more adequately than further explanations even though it may necessitate some repetition in the thematic chapters following. This is not a fictitious meeting, assembled as it were from incidents that regularly occur in such services, although it would certainly be possible to do that, but is the description of the evening service on the 2nd October 1977 of the Gospel Fellowship Holy Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa held at 209, 7th Street, at the home of their pastor and founder, the Rev. W.J. Blaauw.

The place of meeting is a very decrepit house in which the Rev. Blaauw, the occupant, has removed the wall between two rooms making a fair-sized chapel in which the group holds their gatherings. The service was announced for 5 p.m. but the people only begin to straggle in about 5.15. A few chairs behind a table upon which stands a speaker's rostrum indicates

the front of the room, and between this table and the first benches is a cleared space covered by carpet pieces, the whole roughly three by four metres in extent. The benches are for the most part backless, and stand in four rows, with a few others around the three walls. The congregation, which numbers almost 50 adults by the end of the evening, has a ratio of about four to one, women to men, including several teenage young women. There are also a dozen or so children of pre-school or early school age. The men, with the exception of the three who sit in the body of the room with the women and children and who do not appear to be considered Christians, are either musicians or elders and sit on either side of the table at the front end of the room. The pastor and his evangelist sit behind the table, and the visitor is ushered to a place with the elders on their side of the central table. About eight or ten of the women are rather neatly dressed with hats or knitted caps, but the majority are wearing everyday house dresses with handkerchiefs on their heads. The men in front wear coats and ties in conservative colours.

The Rev. Blaauw, who founded the church in 1969, has a Standard V education. He was ordained in the Pentecostal Mission Church of Christ by the Rev. F.D. Du Plessis. Since this Church is defunct and the Rev. Du Plessis could not be traced, no checking back on his service with them or reasons for leaving is possible. By his own record, he was originally a member of the Apostolic Faith Mission, from which he and a certain Ngongomana, a Xhosa, broke away, on "unimportant" grounds, and started the New African Bantu Holy Apostolic Faith Mission Church of South Africa in 1959. In 1969, again on "unimportant" grounds, the Rev. Blaauw broke away and began the present group, leaving off the Bantu identification and adding "Gospel Fellowship".

The church claims 46 members in the home group which was visited, and 165 in branches in seven widely separated areas. All members are unskilled labourers, and the majority were

born outside of Cape Town, and belonged to other churches before coming to Elsie's River. They do not have a doctrinal statement, and the Rev. Blaauw is rather vague about most points of doctrine. The church government is Episcopal in nature, with the Rev. Blaauw exercising complete control over all activities. There are no membership requirements, just willingness to attend meetings, in fact there is no membership list, all those who come are considered members.

The meeting begins when the two electric guitars are plugged into the battery-operated amplifier, and the pastor leads in a couple of choruses. These are not choruses in the usual sense of the word, but rather are just four or five lines, sometimes of a hymn, which are sung over and over again. One was repeated twenty-three times, by actual count, and many went on even longer. When the music began, everyone sang, at first rather quietly, but as the music began to pick up tempo the people joined in with much clapping of hands and shuffling of feet, and soon everyone was standing, swaying and moving from side to side.

The young pastor-in-training began to run or dance around the perimeter of the carpeted portion, clapping his hands, followed by a group of the children. This seemed to be his particular function, for he did this on every occasion when the congregation joined in singing. As the choruses were repeated over and over the people seemed to build up into an ecstatic state, with ever more abandoned clapping of hands and shuffling of feet. Some have the knack of clapping with a particularly explosive sound, and when this is done by many people at a time in very rapid cadence especially in a somewhat confined space, the sound is quite mesmeric. On occasion the people would become so emotionally involved that when the music stopped they would continue dancing and clapping, making a SH---SH---SH---SH sound by expelling the breath between the tongue and the roof of the mouth, and in some cases would require several minutes to come back to reality. It seemed that the longer this

Was required the more fervent were the expressions of "Praise the Lord", and "Amen".^{2,3}

After two or more choruses had been sung, "to get the Spirit active", as the Rev. Blaauw expressed it, testimonies were called for. An individual who felt led to testify would remain standing after the chorus and then would begin to speak. With almost no exceptions, these testimonies were delivered in a high, shrill, almost falsetto and very unnatural tone of voice. Since this is not a usual phenomena amongst the participant groups there seemed to be no reason for it, however when the evangelist spoke it became obvious that those testifying were simply mimicking his tone. Often the testimonies were delivered with eyes closed and hands raised, and those who seemed to have been the most practiced and appreciated added "praise the Lord", "amen", or "hallelujah" in the midst of their machine gun type delivery. These words were dropped in without affecting in any way the flow of words, at any point in the sentence, and often with no attempt to make any kind of sense. "Ek was 'n groot sondaar prys die Here wat al die dinge van die wereld doen hallelujah, en ek het nie die dinge van die Here amen gesoek nie prys sy naam." ("I was a great sinner praise the Lord who did all the worldly things hallelujah, and I did not seek amen the things of the Lord praise his name.")

These testimonies usually included some lurid details of the person's past life, the account of their conversion, and ended with exhortations to others to trust the Lord, for what he had done for them He could do for others also. Sometimes the testimonies became quite personal as the speaker would mention people by name and reveal some quite private activities as examples of what people might get up to apart from God. At this point the "Amens" of the group would become very loud. After many of their testimonies, the person speaking would sing a song. These songs, usually one of the hymns from the book, which incidentally was used only for these individual

efforts, were accompanied willy-nilly by the guitars, and usually ended up with the entire group entering in heartily to share the 'solo'.

This pattern, one or two testimonies followed by a chorus in which all joined with dancing in the centre section, went on for an hour and a half, during which the majority of the people had their chance. It was instructive to see how the younger people, some in their early teens, displayed the result of their observation, or one might say conditioning. They also testified, usually to their lives of abandoned sinning, before they had found the true way. Even taking into consideration the wretched conditions under which most of them lived, it seemed obvious that they were mostly just parroting the words heard so often from others without any real sense of reality connected with what they were saying.

Following the testimony session, I as a visitor was asked to speak which I did for about ten minutes, attempting to give some Biblical teaching in Afrikaans and English. The Rev. Blaauw took up what was said and expanded the thoughts at some length in Afrikaans. This was the only teaching or preaching from him during the entire evening. Then the evangelist, a young man who had been sitting behind the table paging through his Bible for some hour or so, was called upon for the message of the evening.

His presentation was pure vintage Participant/Emotional from beginning to end. He read a text, then immediately departed from it never to return. His voice rose to what can only be described as a minimally controlled shriek, the words poured forth like water from an opened tap with scarcely any hesitation for breath, and he established a pattern of moving to his left one step, gesturing wildly with his left hand for one breath, then moving to his right one step, gesturing wildly with his right hand, then back to the left again. Most of this tirade, which had little organized content but which

was composed of a series of references to events recorded in the Bible, was delivered with head thrown back and eyes closed. He spoke at what seemed to be the top of his voice as regards volume, even though the space in which we were sitting was quite confined, and also at the top of his voice as regards pitch. It was here that it became obvious that this high, falsetto shriek served as the pattern which the members were trying to exemplify in their own testimonies.

This went on for about 25 or 30 minutes, while the sweat poured off him. By now the room was dark except for the circle of light that came from the gas light on the table in front of the speaker, and most of the congregation had to shade their eyes from the glare, and so could not look directly at the speaker. As quickly as he had begun he ended, calling for eyes to be closed and heads bowed, and all who wanted to have him pray for them to raise their hands as two verses of a well-known hymn were sung. While the singing was in progress, he continued to shout and scream at the people, urging them to "come out for Jesus". The singing did not end with the two verses, but continued as the people came to the carpeted area and knelt down for prayer.

Again the pattern was pure Participant/Emotional Type, with the supplicants going down on knees and elbows, and the pastor, one of the elders and the evangelist going down on hands and knees beside them to hear what their need was. This is not easy, since the congregation is singing the invitation hymn loudly. However, communication of a sort is effected, and the man then proceeds to pray for the person, who during the prayer raises up to full height on the knees and lifts hands to heaven. The one praying will often hold a Bible over the head of the supplicant and raise the other hand in the air, or will perhaps, if the person is praying for healing, grasp the offending part and press or rub or shake the person violently, at the same time in a piercing shout commanding the sickness to come out. With two or three individuals carrying on in this

fashion at the same time, one can imagine the kind of pandemonium that results.

It was interesting to note that the people who came forward did not do so completely spontaneously. Rather they peeped surreptitiously to see who was free at the moment. It became obvious that the young girls were gravitating to the young evangelist for prayer rather than coming forward when one of the older men was not busy. The young evangelist was a willing cooperater in this charade, and the men or older women who came were prayed for by the pastor and the elder who assisted him. It was usually the custom when I visited a group such as this to be invited to assist in praying for the supplicants, but in this instance, for reasons which I could not detect I was not invited to share in this part of the service.

It was obvious that this particular ritual was utilized to teach the children some of the distinctives of the group. If, while being prayed for, they neglected to lift up their hands, the one praying took their hands and raised them high. If the little ones would tire of this rather strained position in the course of what was often extended prayer and allowed their hands to fall, they would be raised again, and more sharply until they fell into the pattern. This posture of the upraised hands is apparently a very basic requirement for praying in order to receive something from God or to praise Him. In singing it is accompanied by the upraised face and closed eyes, often with distorted visage as though the person were straining and agonizing in the grip of some most powerful emotion.

After the time for praying was finished, requiring something more than a half an hour until everyone was accommodated, another chorus was sung to get everyone active again and to "get the Spirit warmed up". Then it was time for the communion service, and we were informed by the minister that there would be no foot washing this time since the rite would be held at the conference the following week. A tray was brought in from

the kitchen upon which were two bottles of red wine and a loaf of sliced bread. The two glasses on the tray were rather small, and the minister spoke to the elder who left hurriedly. He then explained to the congregation that for this group they required a larger glass, so for about twenty minutes another chorus was sung with much clapping and dancing until the elder returned with a beer mug.

The minister and the young assistant pastor now washed their hands and the minister ceremonially broke the loaf of bread in half after which the two of them removed the crusts from the slices and broke each slice in half. The minister then had the evangelist read 1 Cor. 11 where the institution of the Lord's supper is described and the minister then passed the two plates of bread to the assistant and the evangelist. They passed them to the people who remained seated in the benches singing. After the bread was passed, the wine was poured into the mug, and this passed from hand to hand. Although only about 25 people partook of the communion, it required both bottles of wine, for most people drank rather deeply from the mug when it was presented to them. This was somewhat surprising since several of those who testified had told of having been a slave to wine before they had been delivered from drunkenness by the power of God. One would have thought that this drink of wine might have served to start them on the old habit again. After all had been served, the minister received the elements from the evangelist and the young pastor. One could imagine that the young assistant came from a Catholic or Anglican background, since he handled the elements with an expression almost of rapture; usually with eyes closed and face contorted. This attitude of reverence toward the elements of the communion service is rare among people of participant groups for whom the communion is a fellowship meal of remembrance with the elements serving simply as reminders of Christ's body broken and shed blood.

Following the communion, there was another chorus, after which

the offering was received. The minister exhorted the people to give, since they had to buy a sheep for the coming conference. The collection was received by placing a dish on the table, and the members filed by singing as they put their money in under the eye of the pastor who was an interested observer. There was a closing prayer, a sung benediction, a spoken benediction, and the minister bade everyone goodnight. However, they were not to be put off so easily, and one more chorus was sung with the most abandoned dancing of the entire evening. The people then greeted one another and the meeting broke up about 9.30. Even taking 5.30 as the beginning instead of 5.00 as scheduled, this was not a short meeting. People had continued to arrive for the first two hours, suggesting that the noise may have attracted passers-by or perhaps those who lived near at hand.

The one thing above all evidenced in this meeting was that of participation. Everything was done in such a way that it involved almost everyone. Even the testimonies were punctuated by cries, groans, etc. from the listeners, and if people felt left out while listening to a testimony they could be sure that after it was finished they could sing a chorus and praise the Lord again. Even the "sermon" was not given to instruct but to stir the emotions, and the manner in which the listeners entered into the spirit of the exhibition indicated that they saw it as such. It seems beyond question that children who have grown up in such a participating service or adults who have become accustomed to such would not easily feel at home in any more "conventional" service. Obviously it required no exercise of the intellect to share, but simply the willingness and perhaps also the ability to "let go" and "do one's own thing" within the structures thus set up. It appeared that there was a feeling of fulfilment as evidenced by the unwillingness of the people to allow the meeting to terminate and the expressions of joy and satisfaction to be seen on their faces as they left.

Even though the pastor stated that they believe in and practice tongues, no one spoke in tongues during the course of this extended service except for the evangelist. During the height of his address he suddenly lapsed into gibberish for a few words, using the more or less standard opening phrase which sounds like "shabaat". There was no waiting on his part to see if an interpretation was forthcoming, and it seemed as if none was expected. Again this is more or less the usual practice. Even though the majority of the Independent Churches state that they practice prophecy, tongues and healing, the use of tongues in the classic Pentecostal sense, that is with a message from God given in a unknown tongue and the ability to interpret given to someone else who then communicates the message from God, was never heard in any of these groups. It was not uncommon for the string of gibberish to be inserted into a testimony or prayer with no break or pause, almost as the words "Praise the Lord" are inserted. However, even this use seems to be limited to certain members, including almost always the pastor at least once in the course of the meeting and those who seem to be leaders. One might conclude that to some degree at least it serves to validate leadership or at least indicate spiritual standing.

The amount of physical participation in these types of groups varies from church to church and from individual to individual. The provision of a cleared space for the circling, shuffling, leaping dancing is an essential part of every such group, and this is carpeted if possible for quite often those who participate the most enthusiastically remove their shoes to do so. This dancing follows a general pattern, in that it usually takes place in a circle, somewhat like a follow-the-leader game. If it becomes too crowded for this, then the members taking part will circle each in their own place. Generally it is accompanied by clapping of hands, with each person doing his own thing in beating out the rhythm. If instruments are available, which they usually are, they lead enthusiastically in establishing the tempo, but if there are

no instruments available then the members sing the choruses over and over and dance to them.

Contrary to what might be expected, it is not the young who are the first on the floor, but the middle aged women who take the lead in this activity. They are followed by the children, and it is rather amusing to see little pre-schoolers dancing with gay abandon, swinging their hips and waving their hands in a precise copy of what their parents are doing. Usually the pastor and the older men are a bit reticent to move out and join the action, but as the 'spirit gets warm' they too finally give in to the call of the beat and join in with the rest. The sound of the instruments, which may include saxaphones, banjos, drums and guitars, the gyrations of the dancers, the shadows darting around the walls, all serve to remind one irresistibly of the scene in a disco. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that this "dancing in the spirit" is for some at least a religiously-accepted alternative to that which is expressly forbidden by the standards of their Church. It is certain that for some, especially for the young people, there are no religious overtones here at all, but at best they are playing at Church and at worst caricaturizing what is to some sincere Christians an act of worship before God.

In some cases the individuals become extremely worked up in the course of such a session. This is evidenced in several ways. People have been observed in what seemed to amount to an epileptic seizure, shaking and trembling until they fell to the floor and had to be assisted to their chair when the dance ended. Others shout at the tops of their voices or break into uncontrollable laughter. In one group that met in a rather large but bare hall, a young woman was observed to become more and more agitated as time went on until she went down on hands and knees with her head rhythmically bobbing up and down, barking like a dog. Saliva would drool from her lips and drops would be spattered on the floor, on her dress and on

nearby worshippers as her head bounced up and down. As the dance ended she would be helped into a chair and would slowly come back to normal and would remain so until the next dance at which time she would build up to the same paroxysm again. In the course of visiting this group several times in the attempt to arrange an interview with the pastor who viewed my presence with some suspicion, I had the opportunity of observing this same girl going through this same pattern over and over again. She was quite well-dressed, and prior to and following the service could be noticed chatting very normally with other young people.

With the passage of time this particular Independent Church obtained a building from a White Church that was moving out of a proclaimed Coloured area. They went to considerable effort and some expense to clean it up and paint it, and moved in with great rejoicing. I had to visit them on two subsequent occasions, and was interested to see what effect this new building would have on their style of worship. By and large, except for a certain toning down of the exuberance, there was little change except in the case of this particular young lady. She was easy to pick out, and when the dancing became more active one could see that she was coming under the spell of the beat. However, she never once dropped down to hands and knees, and although she danced as vigorously as any she never abandoned herself to the kind of activities which had been her invariable pattern formerly. Obviously she was being inhibited by the more formal surroundings, suggesting that her actions were under the control of her mind rather than being the result of the Spirit taking control of her which is of course the usual explanation given in matters of this type.

The scene described in the Rev. Blaauw's home could be found in any one of two dozen Independent Churches of this Participant Type in the Cape Flats any Sunday evening, and not too rarely both morning and evening, although in that case both meetings will probably require the same total time as one

longer meeting. The common factor in all such services, as we have mentioned, is that everyone participates. It is possible of course to be emotionally stirred by a situation without participating in it, as witness the tears at a wedding or a gripping dramatic presentation, or the uncontrollable laughter at a T.V. comic characterization. It is also common for one who is emotionally stirred to feel the need of participation. Perhaps the most contemporary example of this is to be found in the rowdiness that has become endemic in the crowds that follow and support certain football teams. In the grip of strong emotion these individuals find it necessary to participate by haranguing the referees or opposition players, by throwing bottles and fruit onto the field, and even by physically assaulting players or supporters of the other team. This participation is even carried to the point of engaging in destructive activities that have no possible direct relationship to the game which has ended, such as wrecking trains, bars or any other accessible public amenities upon which they can place their hands. There seems to be a type of emotional individual for whom an emotional reaction requires participation in one way or another.

It appears that this need to participate is the main-spring in most of the activities of the Independent Churches of this type. Although there may be variations from one group to another within the type, the one part of the service that cannot be omitted is that of the testimonies. No matter how exciting the singing may be, no matter how thrilling the exhortation of the pastor or evangelist, the individuals with this particular personality must participate in the service by giving their testimony before they can feel they have had a part in the worship program or have themselves engaged in an act of worship.

These testimonies in many cases comprise the largest part of the program. The individuals participating are usually the same ones week after week. They strive for effect, attempting

to outdo others who have already or will soon testify in the lurid descriptions of their past life, in the picturesque nature of their warnings of the impending judgment and in the pointed references made to individual sins, and even to individual sinners. On one such occasion, during the testimony service, a young man who was sitting with a young woman next to me stood up to testify. He went to the front of the room to face everyone and began to tell how the Lord had convicted him of sin even as he sat there. Then he related to the audience how he had had a date with his girl friend the night before, and at this point the young woman who had been sitting beside him gave a strangled cry and literally threw herself face down across my lap, and began to weep in a most abandoned fashion. I was astounded until I realized that the speaker was giving what almost amounted to a running account of his activities with this young woman on that date, and was now in his testimony confessing their adultery and asking for prayer for their forgiveness and restoration. What was surprising to me was the matter-of-fact way in which the group as a whole accepted the situation, the only person seemingly upset being the young woman in question. By the time the service was completed however, she seemed restored to her normal self and continued to participate in the closing hymn and farewell.

A common element in these testimonies is the blow-by-blow description of the individual's bodily illness and subsequent healing and/or instances when they had brought healing to others by praying for or laying hands on them. Also very common is the account of the person's financial extremities and the way in which through prayer they received employment or a gift of money from an unexpected source, and usually the amount of money received is exactly the amount required. Quite often individuals who would never be asked to sing in public will take the opportunity of closing their testimony with a hymn or song "that has come to mean so much to me". To a degree, the ones testifying are competing with one another, the prizes being the cries of, "Amen", "Praise the Lord",

"Isn't it so", etc. etc. If they are so eloquent in their testimony as to move the meeting to the degree that it breaks up into shouts and the waving of uplifted hands or perhaps spontaneously into one of the interminable singing sessions, they can then be seated with a deep sense of personal achievement and a powerful sense of belonging.

Since most of those in attendance at the meetings wish to participate in this fashion, the testimonies may drag on for anywhere up to an hour and a half to two hours, until the pastor has to ask that no one else stand to testify. If the pastor is to have any time at all to preach then the testimonies must be limited in length or in number. However, at times it appears that the pastor may prefer to allow the testimonies to continue until it is too late to give a message, since he has not prepared anything, and does not wish to have his unreadiness paraded before the visitor. This fact made it difficult sometimes to assess the usual pattern, since it might well be modified by the presence of the person who is seeking to discover the usual pattern.

Obviously, if all members wish to participate in this testimony time, then the membership must be limited or the program will become too long. In addition, the larger the group, the more chance there is for any particular individual to feel inferior to a goodly number of those present and testifying. In a sense this serves as a limiting factor to the size of such a group, and there seems to be what might be termed a "critical mass" principle in operation here. When a Participant Type Church for the emotionally oriented becomes so large that the average member is unable to obtain a hearing, or has so many able speakers that the average individual feels threatened by comparison, then the individual is likely to be open to the invitation to go along with a split, or perhaps to move out and join with a smaller group in which the opportunities for self-fulfilling participation are greater and more attractive.⁴

One of the results of this need to participate in the giving of one's own personal testimony is the mobility of the membership. Both the individual interviews and the questionnaires revealed a greater mobility in the membership and adherents in this type of church than with the Observer Type Church. A considerable number of individuals were noted who had been members in two, three or even more Participant Type groups, moving from one to another, and the same phenomena was observed in the case of the pastors. It was not at all unusual to meet a family who seemed vaguely familiar and to discover that they had been seen in another church of the same type some months previously, or perhaps some years previously and in more than one other church.

Perhaps the emotionally oriented individual in the Participant Type Church tends to be more mobile as a result of that very personality trait, but one must recognize that in addition to the "critical mass" principle already described above there is the further pressure to move on which stems from the individual's own feeling of worth. After people have shared their particular experiences, ideas and exhortations they do not have all that much more to contribute. Since they have not offered anything from Scripture they do not have more Scripture to call upon for a further contribution, a 'second lesson' so to speak. There is an obvious limit to the mileage that can be obtained from the events of the week since the last testimony meeting, and the individual tends to feel rather foolish standing up and saying the same thing over and over again. Therefore they are forced to seek new worlds in which to share their unique contribution. Conversely, the fact that they have heard everyone else tell about their experiences time and time again over a period of several months may well discourage them from remaining in that particular group any longer.

2. The Participant Type Church for the Intellectually Oriented
As was pointed out in the discussion of our classification this type reveals direct linking in its purest form without the need

present for an emotional expression of the relationship that exists between the individual and God. Their participation is found within a rigid and dignified behaviour pattern and the service rendered through the organization of the local Church or assembly. Again a description of this particular type may best be accomplished through a closer examination of the one Independent Church representative of this type, namely the Docks Mission.⁵

The Docks Mission was founded at an open air meeting on 19th July, 1932 by John Crowe, a Coloured man, then 18 years old. At that time he was assisted by Mr L. Ormand, a Coloured man, and the brothers Harold and Charles Johnston, Whites. The Johnstons' contribution was apparently somewhat limited to the initial stages of the work, but Mr Ormand was a strong supporter of Mr Crowe until his recent death in 1982. The work grew out of a cottage meeting held in Mr Crowe's home and led by his mother, and ministered in the early days to the public in the docks area, hence the name. It has also been said that the name came from the fact that the early cottage meetings were held in a block of small houses called the Dock Cottages, but perhaps both origins hold a part of the reason for the name chosen. The early work spread into District Six, and as the people moved out into the Cape Flats it moved with them. Although the mission initially served the poorer people in what can only be described as a mission outreach, it has undergone a considerable change over the years. Now its membership is only 20% non-skilled, with 50% being skilled workers, and 30% engaged in the professions. This is far above the average for the Independent Churches, and includes the highest percentage of professionals among all the churches observed.

The Docks Mission reports a membership of 600 in their home branch in Belgravia Road, Athlone, and 1 000 in their 14 branches. Although a large number, this does not seem to be excessive when it is considered that the Mission has been in

operation for 50 years and is centered in a large and reasonably controlled, long-established Coloured community. They claim that 100% of their membership was born in Cape Town, placing them at the opposite end of the scale from the group just described.

Mr Crowe has had no training, and does not require training for those who work with him. Even though the local group could easily support him he has a full-time job as a traveller for a drapes and fabric firm. The fact that he is not full-time in his Church is interesting, since Mr Neville Smith, a relative new-comer who pastors the Docks Mission work in Kensington, is supported full time by his congregation. Mr Crowe preaches only on rare occasions and really does not seek the lime-light, although one is aware of his presence and one suspects that he holds final authority although he works with a Senior Council in what is basically a Presbyterian type of church organization.

All morning services are identical, the only difference being in the person of the speaker. By 8.30, the time for the service to begin, the long, narrow sanctuary is about one-fourth full. During the singing of the first hymn people continue to stream in until about 300 or so, filling about half the building, are seated. The church is located just off Klipfontein Road, very central in Athlone, and the people come for the most part from the immediate vicinity of the building. However, there is a selection process at work for those who attend are for the most part very well dressed, reflecting the economic status of the membership. This indication of economic level by dress worn is perhaps most noticeable on the part of the young people. It is a well-known saying among the people of the area that if you want to know what the latest fashions are, just attend Docks Mission.

The fact that the membership of Docks Mission is drawn from the upper group of wage earners is not seen only in the mother

Church, but obtains generally in the branches. Even in those areas where the economic level is generally below that of the Belgravia area, the people who are attracted to the Docks Mission Church are the upper level in their area. Pastor Smith, in charge of the work in Kensington, has told of some problems that have arisen in connection with this. Kensington is joined along one side to Factreton, a financially depressed area. Many years ago a White woman from Pinelands began a small work in Factreton among the poorer people, and eventually was able to erect a small chapel where they held meetings. A few years ago she was unable to carry on her ministry there and so asked the Docks Mission in Kensington to take it over. They did this, and for several years the two groups have gone on alongside each other, as Docks Mission Churches under the direction of Pastor Smith. However, the people in the Chapel in Factreton do not feel at home in the church in Kensington, in spite of attempts to bring the two groups together. It will be interesting to see if these poorer people can eventually become in their own minds members of Docks Mission and if as such they can spread this work in their own area. Since the Mission itself originated among the lower income group who have improved their economic status over the years, one would expect that this new group will be able to do something of the same.

The morning service is very simple. There is an opening hymn, a prayer from someone who is named from the pulpit, another hymn, then the message of the morning. Save for the rare occasions when there is an important personage available in Cape Town who might be invited, the speaker is usually one of the men of the local church. For the most part, with some exceptions, these messages show little in the way of serious preparation, consisting in the repeating of the cliches which have been heard over and over again. The audience listens for the most part very attentively, and is always ready to affirm the best-known cliches with murmurs of agreement or subdued "amen's". Generally, the less prepared and less able the speaker, the longer he carries on, and a 45 minute message is

not unknown, although 30 minutes is more the average. In many years of visiting this service, I have heard Pastor Crowe speak only once, and then when a speaker had let him down. The service seems to be a training time for young workers or a prize given to faithful older men to allow them some visibility.

Following the message, the speaker, if one of the elders of the Mission or a well-known local, comes down to the communion table, and reading the words of the institution of the Lord's supper from the Bible, calls on individuals in the audience to give thanks first for the bread then for the cup. He then breaks the large round loaf of bread in half, putting one part broken side up on each of the two plates which are then passed from hand to hand, with the assistance of two elders who work up the aisle. Pastor Crowe remains in the back of the church during this time, and as the elements are passed around he leads out in choruses. He has a very pleasing voice and an exceptional talent in pitching the songs in the correct key, and for the 30 to 45 minutes required for the entire communion service the audience sings choruses, hymns and sometimes even choral numbers. Unlike much local church music, they do not sing just the melody, but add all the four parts, with the result that the quality of music is very high. All this is done without recourse to hymnals or song sheets of any kind.

When the entire congregation has had the bread then the leader hands two large cups to the two elders and these are then passed from person to person along the two sides of the aisle. The cups are filled with grape juice, wine never being used. Originally, one loaf of bread was used and one cup, the "common cup" was used by all, but as the size of the congregation has grown the time required was too long, and now the two pieces of bread and the two cups are passed. The Docks Mission has obviously been influenced by the Christian Brethren, but have changed the pattern in several respects. They do not have closed communion as do the Brethren, and the opening part is more

structured than in the case of the Brethren who strive as much as possible to have the service completely spontaneous.

Following the communion, Pastor Crowe makes a few announcements concerning events of the day and coming week, then during the singing of the closing hymn an offering is received. After the benediction Pastor Crowe goes to the entrance and personally greets everyone present, and it is obvious that he is very knowledgeable about all of his members as he makes enquiries concerning specific things that have happened in their lives or refers to members of their families who perhaps do not even live in Cape Town. There are no children in the meeting, the youngest people present being middle teenagers. For the rare occasion that a child is present, there is an enclosed cry room provided. Following the adult service a childrens' church is held, and a Sunday School is carried on in the afternoon.

The evening service is also very simple, but again very rigidly structured. By 7.00 when Pastor Crowe leads in the opening hymn, the building is full or almost full. Again one sees almost no children, but one is conscious of a large number of young people, again very stylishly dressed. After the singing of the opening hymn and a prayer from one of the congregation, the notices are given and another hymn is sung. Then one of the leaders is called up to lead in some choruses. This chorus singing is nothing like that in the previously-described group, although one might wonder if both customs have common origins. Here the choruses sung are not repeated, and constitute a vast number and variety. The particular songs are requested from the audience, and the organist is able to play any one of literally hundreds, and the people seem to know the words of all. This is not a case of singing the same old ones over and over, although there are favourites that are often repeated, but they are constantly learning new choruses, and although I visit many different churches I always find one or more new ones when visiting or speaking in the evening service. The

people join in heartily, again putting in the parts, and there is some competition to call out favourites so that the leader has to choose which one to sing next. There is absolutely no clapping or other bodily activity accompanying the singing.

Following the chorus singing which may last 20 or even 25 minutes, another hymn is sung, and the speaker of the evening is put on. Unlike most Coloured Churches, both the denominational and the independent, only very rarely is the speaker introduced with more than just his name. The sermon is usually 25-30 minutes in length and must be an evangelistic message. The service is usually closed with an invitation to a public response given during the singing of the final hymn, and any who come forward are counselled by members of the congregation in a back room. With the rare exception when a visiting speaker has gotten carried away, the invitation is never unduly extended, usually no more than one invitation hymn being sung. At the end of the hymn, following the benediction, Pastor Crowe and the speaker make their way to the door to greet the congregation.

One of the surprising things about this evening service must surely be the large number in attendance. While other churches in the area put on special programs with choirs, speakers advertized in the Religious Notices in the week-end newspaper, The Argus, posters on bus shelters, etc. nothing of this sort ever takes place at Docks Mission. The congregation rarely knows who will be the speaker before they arrive and see him sitting on the platform. There is no special music, and the speaker is often not all that special. Yet while other churches battle to keep a handful in attendance, the crowd packs the building week after week. Obviously some come to see and to be seen. It is a popular meeting place, and apparently has become, to some degree at least, the 'in' place on Sunday night. The fact that less than half of these people attend in the morning, which is traditionally the better-attended service, would seem to indicate that some at

least are regular members of other groups who come here for the evening service. One finds it difficult to imagine that it is the message that attracts them, for predictably it will be the same salvation theme that was preached for all the past Sunday evenings, and one does not even know who will be giving it this particular evening, but the crowds continue to gather.

This continued large attendance at a service where there is little to see and little new to hear would seem to indicate that we have here a true participant type group, while the lack of emotional involvement gives evidence of the intellectually oriented membership. Obviously there is participation in the chorus singing, and the fact that a considerable amount of time is given to this activity both morning and evening seems to indicate the importance of this part of the service. However, as we will see, their level of participation is in the area of common behaviour and service.

There is one other general meeting held by the Docks Mission, and this is the mid-week "Ministry Meeting". This is held on Thursday evening from 8.00 to 9.00. The format is basically the same as the Sunday morning service, without the communion. The attendance is roughly that of the Sunday morning service, with some variation as the result of the weather. It appears to be intended for the instruction of the members who are engaged in some form of 'ministry' within the considerable outreach carried on by the Church, but generally, unless there is a special outside instructor, the content becomes a repeating of the same facts and ideas over and over. Since the Docks Mission does not officially approve of Bible Institute training for full-time pastors, their leaders have little new and fresh week by week to contribute by way of solid Scripture teaching. Somewhat inconsistently however, the Docks Mission does not hesitate to use the best trained speakers available, seeming to recognize that such will have more to contribute. One is surprised at first sight to see these well-trained visitors presenting the evangelistic

message in the evenings rather than doing the basic Bible teaching in the morning and during the mid-week Ministry Meeting.

The overall impression one receives of the Docks Mission meetings is that of a participant type program carried on by and for those who know just what they believe and see themselves as separate from all others who do not share their faith. This participation does not consist only in the singing and the communion service, but goes much deeper into a behaviour system and a pattern for Christian service. A word that is heard over and over again at the Docks Mission is "holiness". It is very common to hear from the pulpit, "We are a holiness Church". Over a period of years the writer has heard various Docks Mission leaders attempt to spell out just what this entails, with more or less agreement. One hears from time to time visiting speakers at the Docks who come from traditional "holiness" groups that teach sinless perfection, and one suspects that the word and to some degree the concept has been adopted from them. However, the leaders of the Docks Mission by and large are sufficiently in contact with their people and the world to realize the fallacies of 'sinless perfection', and while using the term holiness tend to apply it to a life-style which eschews the obvious sins of the flesh such as immorality, drunkenness, drug use, dancing, smoking, playing of cards, attendance at bioscope, participation in sport on Sunday, and emphasizes conformity to accepted codes of dress although these apply mostly to women and include the wearing of hats in the Church and the wearing of skirts rather than pants.

Thus a member of Docks Mission can be known by that which he believes for this is preached every Sunday evening, and also by what he does not do in terms of behaviour. Added to this behaviour pattern, which constitutes a part of the Docks Mission's members participation, must be the acts of service which are expected of and generally rendered by members in

good standing. These are mostly spiritual in nature and include in addition to the obvious, such as teaching Sunday School or working with the Youth, and the less obvious, such as leading or participating in Cottage Meetings, which are gospel services held in the homes of unsaved relatives, friends or contacts; prayer meetings in homes or in factories where they are employed, or gospel services in those factories; open air services on Sundays in the areas where they live and work and visitation in hospitals, mental institutions, prisons, reform schools, homes for the aged and nurses hostels. Most of this visitation takes the form of a preaching service with personal contact following. Several singing groups come and go from Docks Mission, the most famous of which is "The Carpenters", made up of three young married couples, which is well-known and in considerable demand in churches throughout the Cape Town area.⁶

Obviously part of the attraction of the Sunday morning and evening services consists in the reaffirmation of one's faith which comes from hearing preached again the same truths that one accepted years ago and which one continues to preach and teach to others on a regular weekly basis. Undoubtedly the regular communion service which is part of the morning believers' meeting attracts many, and it has been suggested that people who have been converted out of Roman Catholicism or the Church of the Province find this particularly fitting. Be that as it may, there is a momentum in the program which having been achieved seems to carry on almost of itself. It is one of the Independent Churches where there is a minimal participation on the part of women, and the "no pants, heads covered" rule is very rigidly adhered to. One evening my wife and I were returning from doing some home visitation and drove by the Docks Mission central building in Belgravia just as the evening service was commencing. Since we had not visited in some time on impulse we stopped and went in. The building was packed, and we were ushered right down to the front to the only remaining seats. Only when we were half way down the

aisle did my wife remember that she had no hat on, and spent a very miserable hour-and-a-half feeling that every eye was on her. However, Pastor Crowe must have put it down to the ignorance of Americans for it did not seem to affect his very cordial relations to us in any way.

The Docks Mission program has not yet shown conclusively that it can be exported, as it were. A branch work was begun in Johannesburg some years ago, but was not particularly successful. One of the leaders there finally took it over and joined it to another group, so the work has had to be started all over again. In the Cape Town area there are several branch works, none of which seems to be able to get out from under the shadow of the mother church with which they co-operate in the annual musical presentation and which they attend for special functions. Four of these have their own buildings, Kensington, Factreton, Cranleigh Estate and Welcome Estate, but none are showing any really significant growth. A new building has been erected in Oudtshoorn, and it will be interesting to see how it will prosper some 300 miles from the home base.

Pastor Crowe's firm hand, supported by a group of men of his own generation who apparently feel a strong sense of responsibility to the program of the church, has kept the local group going and growing. It has been hinted that with his passing and no heir apparent being trained in any of the Bible Institutes the work is sure to fall. However, these prophets of doom, among whom are to be found many local pastors who look upon the Docks Mission as "sheep stealers", forget the fact that Pastor Crowe himself is not trained. What he does have, namely a deep devotion to God and complete selflessness in his approach to the work of the Docks Mission mixed with considerable business acumen and plain common sense, could be found in other workers, and if such a one surfaces with his passing on then the program will undoubtedly continue as a widely-known and generally respected force in the Coloured

community.

The very success of the Mission has made it suspect. Those whose own works are not doing nearly so well are forced for their own self-respect to accuse the Mission of living off other groups, being unnecessarily authoritarian, falling into legalism, etc. etc. However, Pastor Crowe is becoming increasingly visible in the overall Christian community and has for several years taken an active part in the work of the Cape Town Evangelical Christian Council. With this sort of involvement he has become less defensive in his relationship to other groups, and is the only leader of an Independent Coloured Church who is having any significant impact in the Christian community as a whole.

3. The Observer Type Church for the Emotionally Oriented

The Observer Type Church for the emotionally oriented, although comprising one of the largest groups in the established church, e.g. the Church of the Province of South Africa, is almost totally missing among the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats. As was pointed out formerly, this type of church represents that in which the individual is linked to God by means of an intervening organization, and since it is the organization that is of first import, the individual needs to know that the organization has the ability to adequately represent him to God and God to him. In the case of the emotionally oriented, the individual observes the church at work in the sacraments, in the liturgy, in the beauty of the facilities provided. There is an emotional response generated by the forms and rituals being followed, and the individual is fulfilled vicariously as it were through this emotional entering-in with the priest in his activities on the individual's behalf. The intellect need not be present in any particular fashion, for the worshipper need enter into the worship service on the emotional level only, giving himself at that level to what is taking place.

As was suggested, this is difficult for the Independent Coloured Churches to attain to, both for financial reasons, in view of the cost of beautiful buildings and vestments, and also because of the difficulty of claiming the apostolic succession that would validate the priest to act on their behalf in the sacrifice of the mass. Of the sixty groups which make up the bulk of these Independent Churches, only one seems to meet the qualifications of an Observer Type Church for the emotionally oriented, and that is the Reformed Old Apostolic Church. It is the claim of the Old Apostolic Church, a rather well-known, at least in South Africa, sect, that they have re-established the line of the twelve apostles through their Chief Apostle and the eleven apostles subsequently appointed by him. The power to forgive sins and to 'seal' the believer who accepts their doctrine rests in the hands of this apostle.⁷

In January 1972 a certain R.W. Lombard, now deceased, who was an Apostle in the Old Apostolic Church withdrew from them on the basis of doctrine, claiming that they were departing from the teaching of the first apostle who began the Old Apostolic Church in the mid-19th century. Although Apostle Lombard was subsequently unfrocked by the Old Apostolic leadership, he claimed that they were not qualified to do so since his position came from God, and before he died he ordained an Apostle to succeed himself and several priests. We were unable over a period of a year to obtain an interview with this Apostle, in fact we never saw him, for the services were operated by these priests, and all information about the church was given by them.

Although their claim was that the Reformed Old Apostolic Church had come into being to restore the church to that existing when the first Apostle had appeared in Germany, they were unable under direct questioning to indicate just what their group did that was different from what the Old Apostolic Church still does elsewhere in South Africa. One thing that

did surface in various subtle ways was that the racial issue had been present in the origins of their new group, and considerable tension existed between this church and the Old Apostolic Church which according to the priests was under the domination of the White man. Thus it would appear that we have here a body that could have originated strictly on racial lines, and the fact that several Old Apostolic congregations have joined with them as complete congregations seems to support this possibility. One might say that they are basically an anti-apartheid group in the same sense as the Calvinist Church which is also an Observer Type, although for the intellectually rather than the emotionally oriented.

It was difficult to obtain permission to attend a service of this church, and it was necessary to talk to the priests several times to convince them that I was not an agent from the Old Apostolic Church or that I intended harm to them in some way, before they would allow me to observe them at worship. Actually, after the difficulty experienced, I expected something quite unique, and was rather disappointed to find myself in a very ordinary service by any standards. However, the one distinctive was that of veneration of the Apostle, who although he was never there was referred to in tones of highest awe, and for whom the Priests spoke whenever any directions were to be brought. Announcements were made as to his coming for the "sealing" services, the members were urged to contribute generously for his expenses, and everyone was exhorted to prepare for the services that would be carried on when he finally presented himself. Certainly nothing that was said or done in the regular services could give anyone the least assurance that this body was able to link them to God, but it seemed obvious that the Apostle would be taking care of all this when he came. Incidentally, I was informed that I would not be permitted to attend any of the meetings which he would direct and to which he would speak. One would almost be constrained to doubt his existence were it not for the veneration, and, one would suggest, awe that obviously attended

his person and the office he represented. This had to be an emotional reaction, since there seemed to be little intellectual content, and even the priests during our interviews could give no reasoned presentation of the theology which they felt justified their dependence upon this apostle.

This was not in any sense the same extent of emotional fulfilment which is provided by, say, the Church of the Province with the beautiful facilities, practiced services of worship, and all the other emotionally satisfying addenda. However, the worshippers were convinced that by their relationship to the Apostle they were thereby related adequately to God, and the sense of awe and adoration obviously accorded to him indicate the depth of their emotional involvement.

4. The Observer Type Church for the Intellectually Oriented

In terms of our classification this particular grouping involves those who are indirectly linked to God through the Church, and because of the primacy of the intellectual in their make-up, they are convinced that the organization to which they belong is the correct one on the basis of its historical continuity, of its statements of dogma, its trained clergy and leadership, and the high intellectual level of its messages from the pulpit. The individual does not so much feel that this is the correct church as he is convinced of it intellectually by what he observes and hears from the leadership of the body to which he belongs. Thus the pastor, the elders and the deacons are of great importance. They must be appointed in the correct way, they must be garbed in the correct livery, they must make the correct movements and say the right words. There is also intellectual satisfaction gained in following a well-prepared and well-presented sermon, and again the feelings are held to be much less important than the mind. The member of this Observer Type Church does not desire to be emotionally stirred, in fact will probably be somewhat suspicious of a speaker who attempts to do so. What he wants is to be convinced in his mind of the truth of the

statements, and wants to be given adequate reasons which he can accept intellectually why he should respond to the speaker with belief or activity.

There are several major groups among the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats who would be classified in this division. Of these, the Independent Dutch Mission is one of the oldest Independent Churches, and another, the Calvin Church, is the largest. Both of these are the result of breakaways from the Dutch Reformed Church, and both continue to use the same doctrine, ritual, and vestments. Both have separated basically because of the racial issue.⁸ For an example of a service of a church of this type, I describe a visit to the Calvin Protestant Church in Athlone, which is the mother church of the denomination. The Calvin Church was founded by Dr I.D. Morkel on 15th October, 1950, being started as a protest against the principles of apartheid with an initial membership of 3 000 people. Dr Morkel was trained in the Dutch Reformed Church in the Transvaal, was ordained by them, and had been one of their pastors for five years at the time of the breakaway. In his own words he describes the distinctives of the Calvin Protestant Church as: "its emphasis upon evangelism and its determination to be a success apart from European leadership and assistance." The Calvin Church presently counts congregations in 24 centres in South Africa with a membership of 35-40 000. The value of property held in all branches is over three million rands.

The Calvin Church places great emphasis upon the training of its pastors, and has its own night school training institute, called Die Brandende Bos (The Burning Bush) at which all pastors are required to have four years of evening classes following their completion of Matriculation (High School). Most of the pastors of the Calvin Church are full-time in the ministry. Many of the congregations of the church have come across from the Dutch Reformed Church as a body, with simply the transfer of membership, and in a few cases with the transfer

of church property also. Basically, it would appear that the Calvin Protestant Church is the Dutch Reformed Church with apartheid in reverse. It is possible that Whites would be welcomed into membership, and Whites are welcome to attend services and are given status in accord with their position in White Churches, but this group has split from the White Dutch Reformed Church on the basis of White leadership, and seems determined to carry on apart from such control. It poses somewhat of a threat to the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendeling Kerk, the Coloured Church of the Dutch Reformed Church from which it constantly draws members. Its future, with its emphasis on evangelism and church growth, seems quite secure.

The Rev. Dr I.D. Morkel, is the pastor of the mother Church, but owing to deteriorating health and the press of overall administrative responsibilities he leans heavily these days upon his assistant pastor, and it was this assistant, the Rev. Draai, who led the service and preached on the day of the visit here described. The church building is large and roughly cruciform in shape, with a capacity of about 800. The pulpit stands high against the forward wall, and is reached by a door from the consistory which lies behind it. A large balcony extends across the back of the sanctuary, with the organ situated in the centre with banked pews on either side. The choir occupies the pews nearest to the organ. The plant also includes a large hall behind the consistory and a smaller building adjacent to the sanctuary, this latter a combined classroom for the Bible Institute and a book store. A sizeable tarred parking lot completes the complex.

The church is located in Kewtown, one of the poorer sections of the Cape Flats, across the street from some rather dingy and depressing flats. Although there were some well-dressed men and women in the service, the overall impression is that this congregation draws from the lower income group. The presence of a considerable number of late-model motor cars in the parking lot indicates that at least some of the members have a good

income, but I note that most of these are owned by members of the council, the leaders of the church. Apart from the young people in the choir, the congregation is for the most part adult with a sprinkling of children and a few babes in arms. By and large, the impression is that of a rather sombre group, with few bright colours or stylish clothes to be seen, and with a minimum of animation, either in expression or bodily movement. The audience, be they young or old, listen very attentively to all that is said, and even the children are very well-behaved, or rather are very much under the careful control of adults.

On this particular morning I arrived about a half an hour before the time, for the service, having visited before, and knowing the customs of all the Calvin Church congregations. Had I gone directly into the sanctuary as I had done on a previous occasion I would have been called out into the consistory, and have been administered a gentle rebuke for not coming back "where I belonged". Upon entering the consistory, which lies just behind the wall at the pulpit end of the sanctuary and is in fact a good-sized hall, I was welcomed by those who had arrived before me and was ushered to the side of the room reserved for elders, across from the deacons' side. I was wearing a black suit and white shirt with white tie which is required garb for elders and deacons. The pastor was attired in the wing collar and tail coat which is the uniform of his position. As the men gathered, each took his chair on the correct side, and about 20 minutes before time for the service, someone started a hymn from the Calvin Church hymnal. After prayer the pastor read the notices for the coming week, and asked for questions and additions. We then stood silent in prayer until the ringing of the bell and the notes of the organ signalled the commencement of the service, which was exactly on the hour, to the minute. The pastor ascended the stairs in the consistory to enter the pulpit through the door at its back, and the elders and deacons entered each by their own door on either side, to sit in their reserved pews which

are banked up facing the pulpit. The elders sit to the right hand of the pastor as he faces the congregation, and the deacons to his left hand.

The sanctuary was about three quarters full, indicating an attendance of plus/minus 600 people. Two choirs were on the balcony, one youth and one adult, on either side of the organ. The order of the service was more or less standard. I was asked to offer the long or pastoral prayer, which I did in English, all the remainder of the service with the exception of two hymns being carried on in Afrikaans. Following the opening of the service and a song from the youth choir, the pastor called upon the elders and deacons who had been appointed during the past week to come forward, and 28 men gathered in front of the pulpit. The pastor then read what seemed to be a rather lengthy service of installation to the assembled men, all of whom were attired in the correct garb for their positions, after which each man was called upon to make a personal affirmation of his call and willingness to serve in the capacity to which he had been appointed. The pastor then descended from the pulpit to greet each man with a personal handshake, after which they took their places in the designated pews with the council members already seated there and the pastor returned to the pulpit.

The senior choir sang, an excellent choral rendering in four part harmony, after which the Rev. Draai delivered a 25 minute sermon. The message had obviously been well-prepared, having been written out in manuscript form, and read with considerable understanding and audience contact, giving evidence of much practice in such presentation. Basically it was an exhortation to faithful service, directed specifically to those who had been installed, but including also the members of the congregation in a quite effective fashion. By and large it made its impact through carefully reasoned argument backed by Scripture rather than by exhortation and appeal. The Rev. Draai speaks with great sincerity, and the rapt attention he received from

the congregation as well as from the Council men indicated that he was appreciated and what he said was being given careful consideration.

After the closing hymn and benediction, the pastor, elders and deacons retired to the consistory as the congregation left the sanctuary. Back in the consistory the men were led in prayer by one of the elders, then joined in singing another hymn, following which the pastor led around the circle greeting each man individually and shaking hands. He was followed by those whom he had already greeted, so that everyone had the opportunity of greeting everyone else.

Several impressions were dominant. One of the strongest was that there was almost a complete lack of contact between the clergy and leadership and the persons attending the service. Since the leaders had gathered so early, they had had no fellowship with the members of the congregation prior to the service, and by the time we came from the consistory at the completion of the service everyone had departed. Actually, only the four deacons who served at the doors had any contact at all with those who attended the Church that morning. The division between clergy and laity seemed to be further emphasized by the almost complete lack of any sharing in the service on the part of the congregation. They had the opportunity of joining in the singing of two hymns and of contributing to the offering, but other than that they were only observers of what took place up front, and took no active part whatsoever, and with the isolation of the leadership had no opportunity even to identify closely with those who did have an active role to play.

Also evident was a rigid formality, with everything done by inflexible custom, everyone knowing just what was going to take place and his role to play in it, with no place given for any variety. Obviously those attending find this type of service with its complete predictability to be to their

satisfaction, but one could not help comparing it with the extremely informal and non-structured services we had witnessed and shared with the Participant Type group. And this difference could not be put to a difference in socio-economic level, for Kewtown, although not quite at the level of Elsie's River is yet a financially depressed area. What was seen here was a worship service in which those who attended were content to observe the leadership in the church of their choice carrying on what amounted to the prescribed ritual of a linking service that assured them that this was an acceptable church that could represent them before the presence of God.

One was left with a sense of regard for the leaders of the church, and the conviction that one could return in one, ten or twenty years in the future and find the work still going on with the same men or their sons dressed in the same garb, singing the same hymns, using the same book of ritual, and preaching the same type of well-reasoned and effectively-presented sermon. One is left with a sense of permanence, of the very rightness of all that is done because of its inevitability. The degree to which this subjective response on the part of the observer is shared by the regular congregation is difficult to determine, but the records show a minimal turnover of membership, and a high rate of family continuity both in the congregation as a whole and in the leadership.

The following week I visited the same church in the evening service and found everything almost as in the morning, with the exception that only the senior choir sang, and that one of the elders led in several choruses prior to the commencement of the service proper. The congregation was very small, perhaps not more than 150 in number, and this including a large group of young people sitting in a block in the centre of the sanctuary, of whom the vast majority were young women. The message was more evangelistic in nature, and ended with an appeal for commitment to Christ, with three people responding to the appeal. The ending was exactly the same as it had been

in the morning. One was led to wonder if the addition of the chorus singing was the reason for the attendance of the young people, and if this practice might be extended one day to the morning also.

University of Cape Town

Notes on Chapter IV

1. Pope, Lister, 1942; page 122

In what has almost become a classic description of the advancement of a sect into a church, Millhands and Preachers, Pope describes various facets in the process of transition. Many of these can be seen in the description of the Participant Church for the Emotionally Oriented. This transition is:

1. From membership composed chiefly of the property-less to membership composed of property owners.
2. From economic poverty to economic wealth, especially in the value of church property and the salary paid to ministers.
3. From the cultural periphery toward the cultural centre of the community.
4. From renunciation of prevailing culture and social organization to affirmation of prevailing culture and social organization.
5. From self-centred (or personal) religion to culture-centred religion, from "experience" to a social institution.
6. From non-cooperation or positive ridicule toward established religious institutions to cooperation with the established churches.
7. From suspicion of rival sects to pity or disdain for all sects.
8. From a moral community excluding unworthy members to a social institution embracing all who are socially compatible within it.
9. From unspecialized, unprofessionalized, part-time minister to a specialized, professional, full-time ministry.
10. From a psychology of persecution to a psychology of success and dominance.
11. From voluntary, confessional bases of membership to ritual or social prerequisites only.
12. From principal concern with adult membership to equal concern for children of members.
13. From emphasis on evangelism and conversion to emphasis on religious education.
14. From stress on a future in the next world to primary interest in a future in this world, from emphasis on death to emphasis on a successful earthly life.
15. From adherence to strict Biblical standards to acceptance of general cultural standards as a practical definition of religious obligation.
16. From a high degree of congregational participation in the services and administration to delegation of responsibility to a comparatively small percentage of the membership.
17. From fervour in worship services to restraint.
18. From a comparatively large number of special religious services to a program of regular

services at stated intervals.

19. From reliance on spontaneous "leadings of the Spirit" in religious services to a fixed order of worship.
20. From the use of hymns resembling contemporary folk music to the use of more stately hymns coming out of more remote liturgical tradition.
21. From emphasis on religion in the home to delegation of responsibility for religion to church officials and organizations.

2. Davies, H., 1954; pages 9, 10

The activities involved in the service as described coincide to a considerable degree with Davies' conclusions, as follows:

"The perfectionist sects, in particular, seem to insist that an emotional reaction is the only proof that the individual soul has made direct contact with God. Christianity for them becomes a religion of feeling. For this reason, they particularly covet 'blessings' - gifts and outpourings of the Holy Spirit, charismata. ... In consequence, they prefer a simpler, spontaneous, highly-charged emotional service to the use of any liturgy. Their hymns are sung to urgent, staccato rhythms and tunes that are as easily memorized as the simple words, with their repeated choruses. The prayers are highly personal and extemporaneous, and they are often punctuated by fervent cries of "Hallelujah" and "Amen". The preaching is also extemporaneous and frequently rhetorical in character, with passionate denunciations of the worldly, tender appeals to accept Christ as Saviour, horrific accounts of hell or the more-likely-to-be-realized eschatology of the atomic bomb, and simple testimonies to the protecting power of God. The appeal is rarely to the reason, almost always to the emotions."

3. Mehl, Roger, 1970; page 238

"Sectarian worship is particularly remarkable for the warm atmosphere of emotion and fellowship in which it unfolds, and for the enthusiasm that it engenders; long and often repetitious chants, the very vigorous haranguing of the congregation by the preacher, long sermons overloaded with superlatives and exclamations, calls to repentance, which are followed by an immediate response on the part of some members of the group, whose penitence then spreads contagiously among the rest."

4. Simpson and Yinger, 1953; page 530

"Apparently some of the emotional needs of disadvantaged people can be met as well or better in small churches where 'consciousness of kind' is high, and where opportunities for 'self expression and social recognition' are abundant, than in churches which have large memberships drawn from a wider social range."

5. Niebuhr, H. Richard, 1957; pages 77-105

In his chapter on "The Churches of the Middle Class", Niebuhr describes just such a group as the Docks Mission.

"Hence the religion of these groups is likely to be rather intensely personal in character. The problem of personal salvation is far more urgent for them than is the problem of social redemption. In middle-class symbolism, conceptions of heaven in which individual felicity is guaranteed are much more important than the millennial hope of the poor man's faith - a difference, which, of course, is also partly due to the greater satisfaction of the middle-class with the temporal order in which it enjoys a considerable number of pleasant advantages. ... Life is not regarded as a time of enjoyment and contemplation but as the sphere of labour. The values of religion are regarded less as a divine, free gift than as the end of striving; the method of religion is held to be the method of constant activity. Sin is not so much a state of soul as a deed or a characteristic; it is not so much the evil with which the whole social life and structure is infected as it is the personal failure of the individual... It is very necessary therefore, that religion establish a code of right conduct; a general spirit of well-doing is insufficient or irrelevant. Such righteousness, moreover, is an individual matter."

6. Stark, Werner, 1966; pages 170, 171

Stark suggests that in religious practice, activism provides assurance of salvation, e.g. "The fact that I am engaged in all of this activity must indicate that I am truly saved." The strict Calvinist anchors his conviction of salvation in his belief that he has been pre-destined and is eternally kept, while other non-Calvinist bodies need some visible signs that they are in the faith. The extent to which this hypothesis explains the dedication to service on the part of the members of Docks Mission rather than a sincere desire to serve God in appreciation for the salvation they have already received is difficult to ascertain, and may not be known even to each individual. Stark suggests that Wesley used his well-known intense activity as the means of the assurance of his salvation, having left the Calvinistic Church of England.

7. Duncan, Bruce R., 1978; pages 9-11, 57

The New Apostolic Church: Truth or Error?

8. Davies, Horton, 1954; page 12

In searching for the reasons for the appearance of sects, Davies asserts: "If the churches, by their racial or class prejudices have become enclaves of arrogance or complacency, then they must bear the blame for the alienation of the poor and disinherited." As indicated in Chart B, Chapter 8, 10% of the Independent Churches

found in the Cape Flats and upon whose experiences this thesis is based, broke away from their parent groups because of racial reasons, either Apartheid or because of White domination. It would appear that Davies is describing just such a situation.

9. Lind, Andrew W. (ed), 1954

In a paper, "Race Relations in West and Central Africa", read by Georges Balandier at the Conference on Race Relations in World Perspective at Honolulu, the Independent Churches are described as: Negro churches, developed from the missionary-oriented groups, that have developed their own "resistance" type hymns, have elevated Simon Kimbangu, organizer of the first churches to the status of "The Saviour and King of Black Men", and have pressed toward religious emancipation and an accompanying political emancipation. This is at variance from the Calvin Church, which continues to use not only the hymns but also the order of service from the Whites-only Dutch Reformed Church from which it has divided.

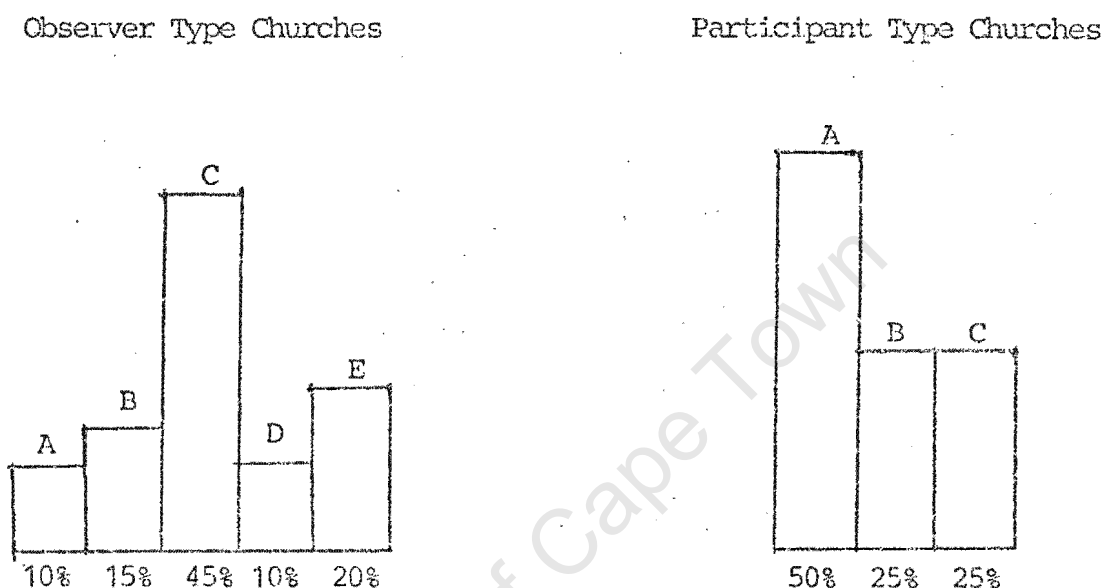
Addendum to Chapter IV

A Graphic Presentation of the statistical differences between
the Observer Type and the Participant Type Independent
Churches

Although the final grouping and classification of these groups has been four-fold, including as it does separate divisions for the emotionally and intellectually oriented within each of the major classifications, I have not included these sub-groupings on these bar graphs. The reason is that the Observer Type Church for the emotionally oriented is represented in the Cape Flats by only the Reformed Old Apostolic Church and the Participant Type Church for the intellectually oriented by the Docks Mission. In view of the limited representation of these two groups among the total number of Independent Churches, any attempt to further divide the graphs into four rather than two groups would not be significant.

Chart A

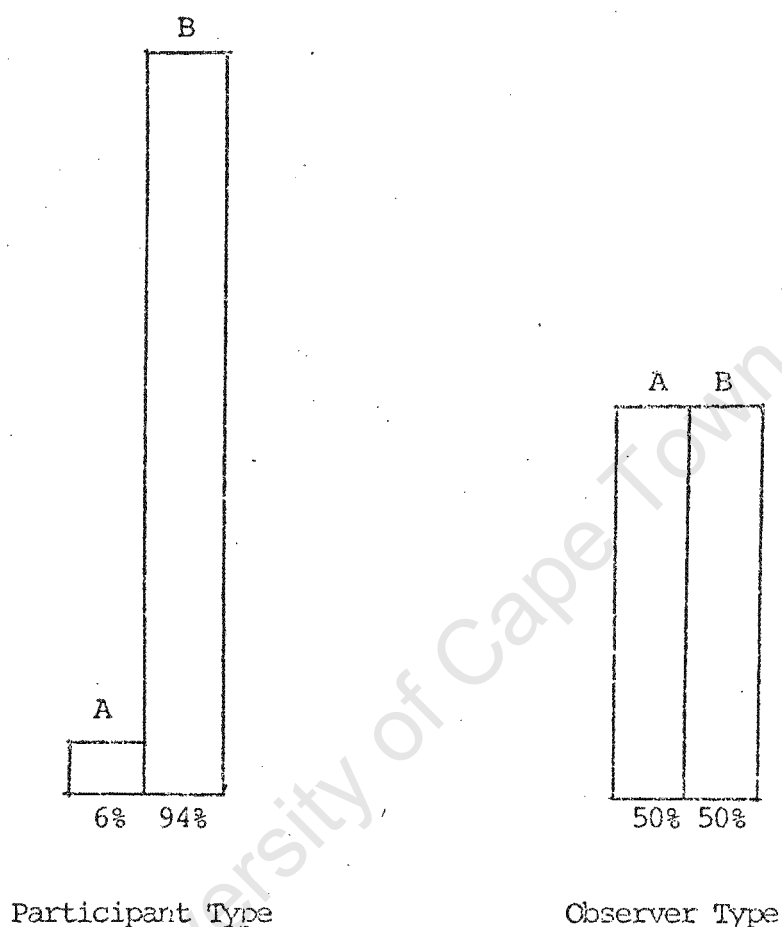
A comparison of property owned between the two types of churches



Note: For the purpose of the graph, either a church stand or a church building on a stand is counted as one piece of property. The difference between the two groups is immediately obvious. Participant Types average 1,3 properties per group, while Observer Type average 4,3 properties per group.

Chart B

A comparison of trained pastors presently serving in the two types of churches



A. Trained pastors - includes any kind of formal training, correspondence courses as well as full-time residential training.

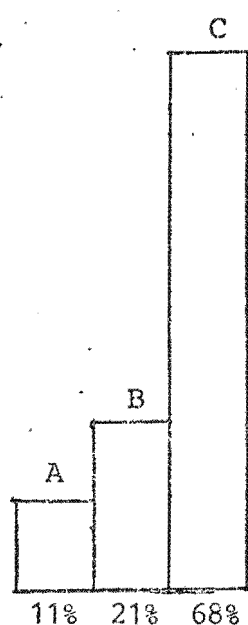
B. Untrained pastors.

Note: The very obvious difference seen between the two indicates the importance of training to the Observer Type groups and its relative lack of importance to the Participant Type.

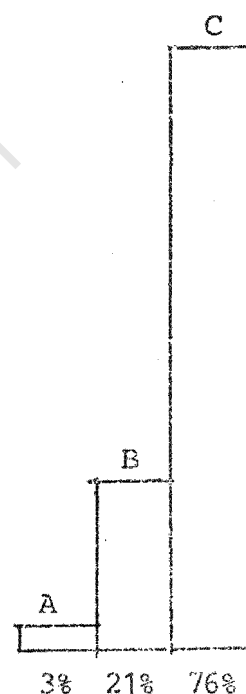
Chart C

Differences in economic level between members of Observer Type and Participant Type Churches as indicated by type of employment

Observer Type Churches



Participant Type Churches



- A. Professional
- B. Skilled Worker
- C. Unskilled Worker

Note: The similarity in the percentage of skilled workers reflects the usual employment of the Coloured people. The significant difference is in the numbers engaged in the professions, in which the Observer-Type outnumber the Participant by almost four to one.

CHAPTER V

THE DYNAMICS OF MOVEMENT WITHIN THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

Since the Independent Churches arise for the most part from the movement of individuals away from their original church affiliation into another group, it is desirable insofar as possible to chart the likely direction these movements will take. This can best be done by means of reference to the segment graph upon which we have further divided the Participant and Observer Types into groups for the emotionally or intellectually oriented. Several general movements can be so charted:

An individual who has grown up in an Observer Type group and who has suffered a situation of anomie will most likely be influenced toward a Participant Type group, and the questionnaire put to members of this type of Independent Church indicates that the great majority of their members who had moved in from the outlying farms had in fact come from Observer Type groups. It seems that the individual had been perfectly adjusted in a familiar home situation, and had found his need met in this type of church group. However, the move into the city which carried with it new experiences, a disruption of the family system, fears and frustrations in the attempt to find employment and housing and the sense of being on the outside has caused the individual to seek a religious outlet which will more adequately meet the needs of the new situation. He now needs to experience God personally, to know that He is available and active, and above all needs the confirmation that his situation is not unique and that others have in the same situation experienced the intervention of the Divine into their needful situation. Probably, because he has just come from the farm and has no particular skill, he cannot find employment, or must accept the most menial and non-fulfilling type of work. For such an individual, the

opportunity for self-expression and sharing offered by a Participant Type Church will far outweigh the deterrent of sitting on a box in a dim and draughty garage, as compared to sitting in a comfortable pew in an attractive building and listening to someone else's carefully prepared sermon.

This type of movement from the Observer to the Participant Type of group although it is very common in the Independent Churches covered in the study, can be paralleled by movements to be observed in organizations more generally known. Further, the form these movements take serves to validate some of the underlying premises of the segment graph. Such a movement, a shift of status on the part of individuals from observer to participant is to be seen in the so-called "renewal movement", specifically in its widespread manifestations in the Church of the Province. As we have pointed out, the Church of the Province is a classic example of an Observer Type Church for the emotionally oriented individual. The building itself, the garb of the clergy, the sensory stimulation accompanying the sights, the sounds of the organ, the scent of the incense all reach to the emotions of the individual, reinforcing at every service the conviction that this is the organization best suited to represent the worshipper before God, while providing in the process the sensual pleasure and satisfaction needed in the act of worship. It is in precisely this group that the renewal movement has found a fertile soil for the seeds of change. In one Church of the Province after another one witnesses the de-emphasis on the priest as the symbol of the Church's ability to represent the individual before an awesome, distant and transcendent God. He turns to face the audience. The altar is moved to a position between priest and people, and now he worships with them rather than offering their worship to God. The individuals increasingly participate in the worship, by touching one another, by raising arms and clapping hands, by linked arms and bodies swaying to and fro, by singing and even by the type of abandoned dancing so typical of the Participant Type Church for the emotionally oriented.

A full explanation of what has taken place is difficult, for it is the result of several forces at work, but the movement does illustrate the classification we have advanced, and can to a degree be explained in terms of these divisions. The members of the Church of the Province are basically an emotionally oriented people. In their worship of God they have fulfilled their emotional need vicariously as it were, without physical involvement. They have passively appreciated the act of worship in which they have been presented to and related with the object of that worship. Now two things have taken place. Firstly, there is some evidence that their confidence in the ability of their church to represent them adequately to God has been shaken. In South Africa certainly, political situations have arisen and it has appeared that their church has not been able to take any observably effective action to move toward solutions of problems. Its warnings and threats have been ignored or brushed aside by those in positions of power, and this perceived condition of powerlessness cannot have gone unnoticed by those who have depended upon that church to care for their eternal destiny. No longer does the Archbishop of Canterbury make and break sovereigns, no longer does his word elicit instant obedience from his priests in a world-wide communion of Anglicans in an empire upon which the sun never sets. Rather the local church is seen as just another religious body, competing for a place in the sun with many other such, and the priest as a "good Joe" who, while being in some senses set apart, yet suffers much the same disabilities as do the rest of the poor mortals that go to make up the church. If my friends and neighbours have an active part in their churches in establishing a relationship with God and making their peace with him, then perhaps I should stir myself in the same direction. In a sense, this is a movement toward what can be described as a "Do-it-yourself" religion, in which the members become personally and actively involved in their linking with God.

Secondly, there seems to be generally an increasing emphasis upon bodily movement and full physical participation in anything one does. Dancing has always been with us, but the seemingly endless gyrations of the Disco are evidence of a new emphasis on "letting go", "doing your thing", and in the casting off of all inhibitions. This of course appeals to the emotionally oriented individual. It would appear that the desire to move with the sensual experience of the high church worship service has always been present to a lesser or greater degree, but it has required this new permissiveness and even encouragement upon physical manifestations of inward feelings to free the worshippers for this kind of participation. And so the renewal movement has stirred those individuals whose emotional involvement in worship has been for the most part a passive observer role and freed them up to become active participants. Not surprisingly, in light of our explanation of the usual signs of relationship common in the Participant Type groups, there is increased interest in adult believer baptism by immersion on the part of those involved in this renewal movement, and only time will show just how far the Church of the Province will move in order to retain the membership of these individuals whose "renewal" has cast them into the status of participants. The difference between this movement and that in the Independent Churches is that here the charismatic phenomenon serves in part to revalidate the church as a divine institution as well as representing a move from observer to participant style.

An interesting corollary to this movement by emotionally oriented individuals within an Observer Type Church toward a participant type worship and thereby into a Participant Type Church program, is to be found in the case of the effect of the same renewal movement in a Participant-Type Church for the intellectually oriented, namely the South African Baptist Union. For many years, since its establishment in South Africa in fact, the S.A. Baptists have been a very stable and unified group. They have not reacted against the church to the same

degree as have the Christian Brethren, a similar type organization since they have church buildings, give their ministers the title of Reverend, and emphasize higher education for their clergy. Other than this, they are a very standard Participant Type for the intellectually oriented, with the expected emphasis on right behaviour as evidence of the individual linking with God and faithful service rendered in the sharing of that faith with the unsaved. However, in the course of the past several years a new and disturbing factor has arisen in the S.A. Baptist Union. This has been the appearance of an emotionally-based worship service, with all the characteristics of a Participant Type Church for the emotionally oriented. The movement began in Hatfield Baptist Church in Pretoria which in 1970 had about 200 members. By 1981 it had 1560 members, 12 ministers, and almost 20 satellite groups scattered throughout South Africa, some as far away as the Western Cape. In their doctrine and in their practice they are indistinguishable from any standard Pentecostal group. The question which is facing the Executive of the S.A. Baptists, and to a degree the Conference, since the Baptists are a Congregational group, is whether in our terms the church is sufficiently flexible in its polity to encompass within its fellowship both emotionally oriented and intellectually oriented individuals and worship systems even though both are participant type. Again time will show the relative importance of the emotional vs intellectual orientation of the individual worshipper vis-à-vis his commitment to a particular type of church. This is of course the exact opposite of the dilemma faced by the Church of the Province in its desire to include those who are of the same emotional orientation but are in effect changing the observer role for that of participant.

The distinction between participant and observer refers primarily to doctrine, i.e. to how the individual sees himself as linked to God. It should not change with socio-economic circumstances but of course it does, because, for example, of anomie at the lower end and perhaps for respect for dignity and

order at the higher end of the economic spectrum.

The distinction between emotional and intellectual refers primarily to the psychological type and should be relatively stable although it too may change with personal circumstances. If Carl Jung is to be believed, one might expect compensation, even pendulum-like swings between satisfaction of emotional and intellectual needs in the process of overcoming the polarity, but it does seem that generally speaking once one's expectation concerning the locus of religious experience is formed, whether predominantly in the emotional or intellectual sphere or some blend of the two, one continues to seek it there. That is to say, we would expect the psychological type to be more stable than the doctrinal type and therefore presume that a member of an Observer Type Church for the emotionally oriented would tend to gravitate toward a Participant Type Church for the emotionally oriented, and a member of an Observer Type for the intellectually oriented would tend towards a Participant Type for the intellectually oriented. This presumes that each person is in an emotionally or intellectually oriented type of organization from choice and that the choice was based wholly upon his particular emotional orientation. In the nature of the case, the accidents of birth and the subsequent feeling of family responsibility coupled with an inertia that tends to keep one from changing one's church membership means that many adults will be members of but not actively involved in groups that do not really fit their particular emotional or intellectual make-up. Thus it is not uncommon to find individuals who are members of an Observer Type Church for the emotionally oriented who upon leaving that group find a very congenial church home with a Participant Type Church for the intellectually oriented, and we must assume that other things being equal the individual has gravitated to the type of group that fits his own particular blend of the emotional and intellectual, to say nothing of his own understanding of the process by which he is linked to the object of his worship.

At the beginning of this chapter it was pointed out that under a condition of anomie an individual who grew up in an Observer Type Church would most likely move into a Participant Type group. As might be expected, if the situation of anomie is reduced, e.g. with an improved socio-economic situation, the flow moves from the Participant Type to the Observer Type, although generally speaking the movement is more pronounced from the emotionally oriented groups than from the intellectually oriented. It was this movement, as pointed out in an earlier chapter, which gave the original hint that the Pentecostal/Non-Pentecostal classification was not valid. This inequality in movement can be explained by the fact that the emotionally oriented individual in the Participant Type is less committed to a particular organization or group of people than is the case with the intellectually oriented individual who finds his greater participation in extra-church service a deterrent to too-easy movement from his Participant to an Observer Type body. Although exceptions certainly do exist, with better income and the opportunity to rise on the socio-economic ladder, many emotionally oriented participants tend to leave this type of group and move into another classification, with their individual emotional or intellectual orientation determining into which of the Observer Type groups they will gravitate.

It must be recognized that even though the two types of organizations, the Participant and Observer, do exist in their pure forms and this is made abundantly clear in the linking process appealed to, many times entire groups at one end of the spectrum will move toward the other end, or adopt practices of the other group for the purposes of increasing their attraction to the masses or perhaps even their own self-image. For instance, a group that baptizes infants because their church has always done so may come, as the result of fellowship or sharing with Participant Type groups, to emphasize an individual commitment of faith in Jesus Christ. In this case, the act of baptism may still be carried out, for

to change from this practice to that of believer baptism would offend not only the church as a whole, but more specifically the older members of the extended families in the church. However, now the baptism will be re-interpreted as an act of dedication on the part of the parents, and/or a promise on the part of the church to care for the young child during the formative years.

At the other end of the spectrum is the example of individuals in our participant emotional sample who stress a direct linking experience, yet in their desire to be one with and perhaps to compete on the market place with more "accepted" groups find it expedient to erect permanent buildings of some ornateness, train their pastors, ordain them and dress them in vestments, and perhaps bestow upon them the titles usually associated with the Observer Type groups, e.g. Reverend, Bishop, etc.

Before going on to a more intensive survey of the attitudes and activities of the Independent Churches, some attention must be given to the percentages of the Independent Churches represented in each of our types. To begin with, however, it is necessary to establish something of a control by a general overview of the distribution of types represented in the Established Churches in the Cape Flats. Unfortunately, no exact statistics as to the numbers of groups, or of the approximate number of individuals affiliated with each of the groups is available, so we are thrown back of necessity upon rather subjective estimates.

Of the four groupings mentioned, three would seem to make up the bulk of the church membership in the Cape Flats. The Participant Type for the Emotionally Oriented is well represented in the many Pentecostal groups found in every area. There are the Assemblies of God, the Full Gospel Church, the Apostolic Faith Mission, the Nazarene and several others. Generally speaking, they seem to draw the bulk of their

membership from the lower and mid-lower socio-economic grouping, but as mentioned they have representative congregations among all of the people. All of the denominations in this group have their own training institutions, and are upgrading their ministerial staffs more and more as the graduates from these colleges move out in to the ministry.

The Observer Type for the emotionally oriented is found throughout in the Church of the Province of South Africa, and to a lesser degree, the Church of England in South Africa. The Church of the Province is found in all areas, among all socio-economic groups, and carries on a very visible ministry among the people. Their pastorate is for the most part well-trained, and they make a significant contribution in the areas of social as well as spiritual needs.

The Observer Type for the intellectually oriented is also very well represented in the Cape Flats. The Dutch Reformed Mission Church is the largest representative of this group, which also includes the Presbyterian, Congregational, Lutheran and Methodist denominations. For the most part these groups are Afrikaans speaking, and their ministry covers most of the socio-economic spectrum.

The Participant Type for the intellectually oriented is found in the Christian Brethren, the Baptist and the City Mission Churches, although these latter two tend in some of their individual congregations to lean toward the emotionally oriented. For the most part the Christian Brethren minister to the upper levels in the socio-economic spectrum and the City Mission to the lower, while the Baptists are found among the middle and lower level groups. Of the four major divisions, there are apparently fewer representatives of the Cape Flats community in this last division than in any of the other three. However, all four are to be found in considerable numbers across the entire community.

However, when we analyze the groupings within the Independent Churches with which we are concerned, a rather different picture emerges. Of the 50 groups with which the survey has been concerned, thirty are to be classified in the Participant Type for the emotionally oriented, eighteen are the Observer Type for the intellectually oriented, one is the Observer Type for the emotionally oriented and one the Participant Type for the intellectually oriented. Certainly the large number of groups catering for the Participant Type for the emotionally oriented is not unexpected, considering the large number of members of this same type in the Established Churches, that is, the Pentecostal groups. Also, the fact that over one-third of the groups cater for the Observer Type for the intellectually oriented fits the general pattern of the denominations with the large number of members to be found in the Dutch Reformed and other similar groups. What is unexpected is the almost total lack of any representation in the other two divisions.

We have already mentioned several reasons for the lack of Observer Type Churches for the emotionally oriented among the Independent Churches in the Cape Flats, namely the difficulty of small, grass roots independent organizations erecting the imposing buildings and carrying on the complicated ritual which meets the emotional needs of this type of individual. We also pointed out that the Apostolic Succession that is so important a contributing factor in validating this type of church as the rightful go-between or linking medium between man and God is impossible for such a small independent group that appears, as it were, from nowhere. The one such group that is to be found among the Independent Churches, the Reformed Old Apostolic Church, obtains this sense of apostolic succession from their Chief Apostle in Germany, the self-styled successor to the original Twelve. Since they claim to have restored his pure standards of worship and methods of church work, he provides them with the needed link which permits them to be observers of their church at work on their behalf. No other Independent Church has such a direct or even claimed direct contact with

the first century church, and so such an Observer Type relationship is not possible for them.

The question must then be asked, what happened to the members of such Established Churches when they moved out into the Cape Flats and engaged in the practice of founding Independent Churches? The answer is two-fold. For many members of the Observer Type for the emotionally oriented individual, as has been pointed out, the move was to a Participant Type, and this shift is seen in the records of the groups from which many Independent Church members come. As has been described earlier in this chapter, using the Church of the Province as a model, many from this type of group have lost confidence in their church to link them to God or even to represent them here, and so have moved into a Participant Type group.

In the second place, as has been pointed out, the Church of the Province which ministers to a very broad spectrum of the socio-economic spread in the Cape Flats, has room within it for a considerable latitude in the worship services. This has resulted in the fact, which will be mentioned later in a different context, that some of the Church of the Province groups in the Cape Flats have almost become Independent Churches, as the members and adherents have from within as it were transformed them into Participant Type groups in their search for a more meaningful relationship with God. Thus the inability of the people of the Cape Flats to erect buildings and carry on adequate programs for an Observer Type Church for the emotionally oriented as independent groups, has not prevented them from changing the basic orientation of their Observer Type church into a Participant Type.

In the case of the Participant Type for the intellectually oriented, some further explanation must be found. While this type of group is not the largest among the Established Denominations being represented, as reported, by the

Christian Brethren, the City Mission and the Baptists, it yet makes up a significant percentage of the church-going public, and probably represents a large share of those who take their faith very seriously and for whom their relationship with God and their work in the church are of first importance. Among the Independent Churches, this type is represented only in the Docks Mission in its several branches.

The question that must be answered is, "Why is a type of church that is so widely present in the community as a whole found in only one branch of fifty in the Independent Churches?" The answer we think is two-fold, reflecting both the orientation of the members, and the organization of the groups involved. In the first place, the members of these churches, when moved out into the Cape Flats, did not find that their relationship to God was in any real sense shaken. Since they are intellectually oriented, for the most part their religion is based upon a knowledge of the Bible and they have been taught from early years to know the system of belief of their group and to hold to it as the 'faith once and for all delivered'. Carrying as it were their faith with them rather than having it in a communal behaviour pattern, they were better equipped to weather the storm of confusion and anomie that accompanied their expulsion into the Cape Flats, and for the most part simply carried on in their own groups, or if there was not such a group there they simply organized such. I have seen this take place in the City Mission, when a few members finding themselves in a new area where their church has no branch, begin meeting together and invite their friends and new neighbours in, and in a short time a new branch of the City Mission has been formed. In a sense this is comparable to the formation of an Independent Church, but it is done in the name of and as part of their existing denomination, under its guide lines, and moves immediately under its direction. This same process takes place with the Christian Brethren and the Baptists. Rather than a member of a Participant Type for the intellectually oriented established church hiving off to start

his own group or even joining an independent group, he simply plants a seed of his denomination and labours to bring it to maturity.

The second reason for this type of Church being so scarce among the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats is to be found in the organization of this type in the Established Denominations. We are speaking here of bodies that are mostly congregational in nature, that is, the power for the most part is in the hands of the local body. This is carried to the greatest degree in the Christian Brethren, and to a somewhat lesser degree in the City Mission and the Baptists. Whereas in the other types of churches there is considerable direction from the top, these groups are controlled by the members themselves. Thus, when they rejected the authority of the state, of political leaders, and even of their own local leaders in their disadvantaged conditions in the Cape Flats, this did not include a reaction against the leadership of their church, because they were themselves the leaders. This assumption gains support from something that took place in the Baptist Churches of the Cape Flats some ten years ago. Historically, the Baptist Union of South Africa has been White-controlled, and whereas this seemed to be acceptable for many years, in recent times a reaction against this system arose in the Coloured Baptist Churches. This took place during the years when the formation of the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats was at its highest peak. This reaction took the form of the establishment of the Baptist Alliance, an organization of the Coloured Baptist Churches of the Cape Flats and later all of South Africa, that set them apart from and independent of the Baptist Union of South Africa.¹ This movement can only be described as the formation of a new Independent Church, and had the breach not been healed by the inclusion of the leadership of the Alliance within the Baptist Union, it surely would have continued to this day. However, it fell away as rapidly as it had appeared, and remains but a memory. The organizational reason for the formation of this new Independent

Church was removed, and the group disappeared.

These two factors that militated against the formation of Independent Participant Type Churches for the intellectually oriented have seemingly prevented the appearance of all but the Docks Mission. Thus the question must be asked as to why the Docks Mission was founded and has become a thriving work in spite of these factors. Perhaps one reason is that the Docks Mission, while obviously an Independent Church organizationally, is yet in all other counts one with the established denominations of Cape Town. They have not isolated themselves, either as members in the places where they work nor as a group. The pulpits of the Docks Mission Churches are open to ministers from all denominations as they are invited to preach either in regular services or in evangelistic campaigns. It is very common to find some important overseas visitor speaking for one or several meetings at the mother church of the Docks Mission in Belgravia Road, Athlone. "The Carpenters", a singing group from the Docks Mission, is in demand in many denominations in the Cape, and the Docks Mission massed choir has provided the music for the city-wide "Keswick Convention" on two occasions recently.

Perhaps another reason for the existence of the Docks Mission is to be found in the founder and leader, Pastor Crowe. He does not act like the leader of an Independent Church. He is well known in the broader church circles in Cape Town, and is an active member of the Cape Town Evangelical Christian Council, within which he serves on important sub-committees. One could say that the Docks Mission because it does not flaunt its independent standing, is fully accepted as a denomination, and as such is not a true exception to the principle that there is no place for an independent Participant Type Church for the intellectually oriented.

Having now located the Independent Churches in terms of our system of classification and illustrated the four possible

types of examples taken from the Cape Flats, it is now necessary to enquire more in depth as to just what the members of these groups believe, how they view themselves and how they actually carry on their work. In the following eight chapters we will discuss several themes, drawing the material presented from the answers given on the questionnaires as well as from personal observation and experience. To some degree, what has gone before has been general and in places a little speculative in nature, but in these chapters we will be dealing with the churches and the individuals involved in them on the basis of their answers to specific questions and the ways in which they move to meet particular situations. It is hoped by this means to cast into clear relief the particular ethos unique to this group of people in their worship experience, and the way in which their view of God affects their lives beyond as well as within their churches. There did not seem to be any particular order in which these themes could be presented, so we have progressed generally from the leadership of the churches through their modes of worship and conduct through their self-evaluation to the attempt made by several leaders to join these groups into a meaningful relationship, the Independent Church Ring.

Note on Chapter V

1. Lind, Andrew W. (ed) 1954

In a paper read at the Conference on Race Relations in World Perspective at Honolulu, "Race Relations in South Africa", Absalom Vilikazi of Hartford Theological Seminary describes such a movement for self-determination among the Bantu:

"The development of the 'Separatist Churches' among the Bantu stems from the fact that in their contact with the White Churches, be they missionary or national, they have always been inferior. In their separated groups they can exercise self-determination."

CHAPTER VI

LEADERSHIP OF THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

Any study of the Independent Churches focuses in some depth on the men who founded and pastor them (even though this necessarily involves some repetition) for the existence and continuation of these groups depends upon these men. While there were considerable differences to be noted among the men who lead the 50 churches that made up the heart of the study, yet there were also many similarities and I will for the most part be considering these.

It is always dangerous to attempt to explain an individual's motives, especially when related to something so complex as the formation of a new church group, however, there are certain assumptions that we seem justified in making. It goes without saying that the men who found and carry on groups of this nature have a strong desire to exercise leadership, and have at least some of the necessary qualifications of leaders. This being the case, why have these men chosen to exercise their ability and drive in this particular direction, for it goes without saying that simply the possession of leadership ability does not presuppose that the individual with this ability will begin a new church. Perhaps the fact that the great majority of Independent Churches appear among those of the lower socio-economic level gives some direction at this point. For the most part, a Coloured man, disadvantaged as he is by birth from the area of leadership in the political realm, has little opportunity to use effectively any drive or ability he might have in that direction. This disability is furthered if, through inadequate education or training, he finds himself with a job that provides him with little or no opportunity of exercising any creativity or leadership. He can join one of the larger established churches, but both his lack of training and his low position on the social ladder will serve to close the door of meaningful leadership against him.

Frustrated then in his natural drives in these directions, he is very likely to turn to the Independent Church as the simplest way to find an institution in which he can make use of his natural inclinations and talents.

This does not claim that every Independent Church was founded by a man simply for the purpose of providing an outlet for his drive to exercise leadership, but the facts would seem to indicate that this motive must have existed and still exists in a considerable majority of the cases. However, no matter how important the leader was in the origin and operation of the church, one quickly notes a considerable difference in the visibility and function of the different leaders in their organizations. In some cases, the personality of the leader has been stamped upon his church to the degree that it appears to be largely an extension of his own character, and reflects his ideals and plans and those of no one else. In other instances, the church has an existence of its own, and the leader fulfils his function within the limits set by past custom and in some cases carefully prepared by-laws, statements of faith and constitutions. To some degree, this difference reflects the difference between the situation when the pastor is the one who founded the work and the case in which the work has been going for many years and the present pastor had no personal contact with the founder. It also corresponds rather closely to the division between the Participant and the Observer Type Churches.

In the Participant Type, the work centres generally around the founder or the one upon whom his mantle has fallen.¹ The board of Elders or Deacons or the Official board, if there be one, has relatively little to do, there being a minimum amount of business to come before them. Often they appear more concerned with being on the board than acting on the board, for a position carrying the privilege of sitting in the front and having a share in the service not given to others is especially attractive to those for whom participation is the major goal of a worship service. Decisions are made, for the most part, by

the leader, and any board member who does not agree with such decisions is simply eased out of office. Several founders of Independent Churches got their start as elders working under another Independent Church leader and in the passage of time became disgruntled with the way in which the leader handled finances or treated people or ran the work, and set out to establish their own work. On more than one occasion leaders of Independent Churches have confided that they feared Brother So-and-So was getting ready to leave and start his own church, and they were finding it difficult to get along with him since he appeared to be looking for reasons to be offended.

It is essential to differentiate between the position of the leader in the Participant Type Church insofar as he has founded or directed the work and his function in the services.

Although there are some notable exceptions, for the most part the true leader in these groups presents a rather low-key image in the worship service. To some extent he operates publically as an enabler or a catalyst, one who organizes a place to meet, obtains the music and leads generally in a meeting that is ninety-percent given over to the people present, and only ten-percent handled by himself. In many such groups the most visible and often most sought-after office is that of evangelist. The person filling this office may be an older man, but for the most part evangelists are young men who are called upon to preach or exhort in the services carried on by the group.^{2,3} The major qualification for an evangelist seems to be the ability to spew out a steady stream of words, preferably with a loud and penetrating voice, and with much conviction and many violent gestures. The latter almost always includes pounding a Bible or waving it at arms length to drive a point home. Content is of secondary importance to conviction in these messages. These young men seem to move about in search of ever-greener pastures, and the same individual has been observed in several different groups over a period of time. They are really pastors-in-training, and when a branch is opened or meetings are to be

held in a new area an evangelist is usually sent to carry on when the leader cannot be present. It appears that the average Independent Church leader is careful not to allow them too much authority lest they begin to compete with him for the place of leadership. Their constant fear of a breakaway is often based upon solid historical precedent, for a fair number of the pastors record that they themselves were evangelists, working with Pastor _____, and some admit to having left that church with a small following from which his present group has been built up. One pastor, aware of the validity of this accusation on the part of many, assured me and offered proof that when he left his former church to found a new one he had "no one but my wife and four children to begin with".

One Independent Church pastor had an interesting way of weeding out, or perhaps of training his evangelists. At the morning service, after the usual lengthy preliminaries involving much singing and testifying, the pastor called a halt and read a Scripture lesson. He then immediately pointed to one of the five evangelists sitting on the front row saying, "Brother _____ will now bring the message". Subsequent enquiry established that none of the men had known what the Scripture lesson would be or who would be called upon to preach. On that particular occasion the man chosen went on at a great rate for about 25 minutes, and the pastor confided to me later that it was obvious that this man "had the Spirit". The ability of such individuals to speak glibly in this impromptu fashion is usually attributed to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and therefore evidence of the Divine call and enablement. However, the content is drastically limited, consisting generally of clichés, and apart from this is neither particularly Scriptural nor edifying.

The conviction that a person speaks what the Holy Spirit gives him is almost universally a matter of faith in the Participant Type groups. I have been rebuked from the pulpit by pastors

who introduce their 'sermon' with the announcement that:

"I did not have to go to a Bible College to find this message. I did not have to spend hours in the study of the works of men or in preparation in order to be able to preach this sermon. I received this message direct from God through the Holy Spirit." This type of statement is usually accompanied by a not-too-covert glance toward me, since I am known to the congregation to be the principal of a Bible College. On one occasion when an evangelist had completed his presentation, the pastor turned to me and proclaimed in a loud, carrying voice: "Now that is the kind of a message the Spirit gives, none of your Bible School teaching from books there."

Somewhat allied to this dependence upon the Holy Spirit to give a message and the ability to speak rapidly in an impromptu fashion as evidence of the presence of that Spirit is the rather common claim of some of the leaders to be recipients of visions or special revelations of God. One man claimed that the name of his new group had been given to him in a vision. Another said that God had called upon him to lead out (steal) the church he was pastoring in another group and make it into a new Independent Church. Another claims divine enablement in choosing evangelists, and when someone asks why he was passed over when another was chosen the questioner is informed that he is not to question the direct command of God as to whom is to be picked. Perhaps these personal "revelations" are used as a means of validation to make up for a feeling of inferiority. What was surprising to the writer was the fact that he never observed the "interpretation of tongues" being used by any of the leaders as such a validation. It is quite common within the established charismatic or pentecostal type churches for someone, under the pressure of high emotion, often during chorus singing or prayer, to burst out in glossolalia which is considered to be a message from God given in an unknown tongue. Then there is a brief period of waiting until the ability to interpret that tongue is given to someone, and that individual then brings

the interpretation, usually once again a repetition of clichés, which are however considered by the faithful to be the message of God directed specifically to them. The writer has observed this in the denominational churches, and often the one who provides the interpretation is the pastor, and his ability alone in the congregation to interpret the message of God adds to his spiritual status. However, this was never observed in the Independent Churches, which was not what would have been expected. One can only suggest that these pastors have had insufficient contact with the main line denominations to witness this rather effective method of validation.

As has been pointed out above, even though the Participant Type pastor has founded and directs the work more or less at will, he for the most part adopts a rather low profile in the meetings themselves. There are some notable exceptions to this general rule in which the pastor holds complete sway over his people in every phase of the meeting, choosing who may speak, beginning or ending the singing of choruses, and impressing his will on every part of the program. I recall one such group in which a rather extensive orchestra was accompanying the chorus singing. At first it was a source of considerable wonder that the several members of the orchestra were all stopping at exactly the same time, that is, at the end of the chorus after having sung anywhere from ten to twenty repetitions. After a considerable time I detected that the pastor, who was pounding his foot on the floor in time to the music, was giving a double stamp of his heel about three measures before the time when they were expected to stop, and thus was exercising control very effectively and yet surreptitiously. This sort of control, however, is the exception rather than the rule.

Actually, the low profile of the pastor/leader does not seem to represent any deterrent to a person's joining such a Participant Type group, but might actually be an added

attraction. The fact is, such a pastor poses no competition to a potential member's own contributions to the service in the form of testimonies, and further such a pastor is not likely to draw the large crowds that might force the individual member from the limelight. It follows from this fact that the wise leader of an Independent Church of this type is one who gives free rein to all who desire to participate, acting as a referee, enabler or a co-participant rather than as director or preacher.

In the course of the survey it was observed that a small Participant Type Church, which had been getting along rather well with a non-trained and rather retiring pastor, amalgamated with another group of the Observer Type. The Observer Type had a well-trained, by their rather limited standards, regular pastor. He promptly proceeded to "organize" the new body with a regular order of service that gave limited time for a few chosen testimonies, one or at the most two special musical numbers, which of course had to be vetted ahead of time, and with the bulk of the service given over to what seemed to me to be a rather well-prepared and adequately-presented message. He soon found himself with a rebellion on his hands, and a quite considerable group broke away and proceeded to meet in a small hall with their former participation practices again in evidence. They refused to be forced into the status of membership in an Observer Type Church, or to be limited in the free exercise of their rights to speak and sing when and as they felt led to do, and so reverted to their preferred Participant Type activities.

Perhaps the danger of the pastor usurping the time which the individual members feel is theirs for their own participation explains the fact that only a very small percentage of the pastors of the Participant Type Churches have any training. It was my opinion initially that this dearth of training was the result of the lack of opportunities or perhaps the lack of information as to the availability of such training.

However, this opinion soon proved to be false, for even though the Bible Institute with which I am associated was able to provide training and was willing to meet the needs of the pastors and their workers in any way possible, there was literally no interest whatever on the part of the pastors of the Participant Type groups in obtaining such training either for themselves or for their evangelists. On the other hand, the pastors in the Observer Type Churches were quite interested in the program offered, and in some cases members of their congregations took an obvious interest in finding out what could be done to obtain training for their pastor. Whereas a trained worker is a threat to the membership of the Participant Type Church, he is an asset to the membership of an Observer Type Church, for he will be able to attract additional members who will increase the size of the group and the number of workers.

This priority placed upon adequate training for leadership in the Observer Type Church has resulted in some cases in the group having their own training program. In view of the fact that there are several Bible Institutes carrying on both full and part-time classes in the area, representing as they do various theological and practical emphases, it is surprising that a small independent group would feel it necessary to expend the funds and time required for the setting up such a program for a very limited potential student body. One suspects that the groups consider the possession of their own training centre a cause for pride and evidence of success, and further it appears that some at least are fearful that their particular doctrinal slant will not be adequately presented by anyone else. One student who came to the Bible Institute from such an Independent Church confided during his third year that his pastor had warned him before his first day: "Now when they teach you what the Bible says, or how to teach, or how to lead music you listen real well and learn all you can, but when Mr Aeschliman begins to teach you that doctrine stuff you just shut your ears and don't listen. I don't want you learning

any doctrine, it's dangerous."

However, even on the part of the Observer Type Churches there is often an unwillingness to train too many workers. In one such church the bishop refused to allow one of his young men to come to the Bible Institute. When queried as to his reason, he confided to me that it was not because he had anything against me personally, or because he did not feel the young man was worthy of training, it was just that he would not permit the training of any young man until a new branch had opened up or an older pastor had passed on, making a place for a new man. His reasoning was that: "If you train a man and there is no church for him to step into then he probably will split one of your existing groups in order to get a following so he can lead some people out and get his own work." An examination of the origins of this leader's work revealed that this was the method he had used to establish himself many years before, and he was ensuring that no one was going to have the opportunity of serving him as he had served his own pastor.

In the Observer Type groups, the Church Board, Elders, Deacons or whatever have a quite important place in the planning and control of the work of the church. Part of this importance undoubtedly stems from the possession of the plant and the necessity of paying for additions, of caring for the pastor's salary and planning for the future. The pastor is aware that he cannot on his own carry on once he has buildings and a regular program going, and the Board is also aware of this, and so make their presence felt in the decision-making process. During the course of preparing the questionnaire, there was never any problem in getting an interview with the leader in a Participant Type Church, he simply took care of the interview on his own. However, in several instances the pastor of an Observer Type Church was not permitted by his board to meet with me and respond to my queries unless they were represented, either by two or three chosen members or else by the entire board. In one case, after I had gone through the questionnaire

in such a fashion with the entire board present, I received an official letter from the board requesting a change in one of the answers given by the pastor. It seemed apparent that they had met subsequently and decided that his response had not reflected their official opinion. This could not have occurred in a Participant Type group, but obviously in the Observer Type group there is considerable evidence of a team effort rather than simply a one-man-band, even though the pastor may be the founder or the one who has followed the founder.

One of the regular functions of a leader, and this applies almost exclusively to the Participant Type group, is that of praying for the sick or for those who have particular problems. Although this takes place in virtually every service, one is aware of a considerable dissimilarity in practice in these churches from that in the Independent African Churches as described by Sundkler or West. In these African Groups, the office of healer or Sangoma is very important. This position is filled by a particular person who has been trained or prepared for the position, and the ability or reputed ability of the healer has much to do with the attraction that the group has for the general public in bringing them into its meetings or into regular membership. This Sangoma will pray for those who desire physical healing, will assist in finding employment, aid in the attraction or choosing of a husband or wife or helping in finding a philandering mate or just as practically assist in finding a house to live in. As West points out, this Healer is a direct development of the Witchdoctor who fills such an important position in the primitive African religious system.

In the case of the Coloured Church however, there is no such history of a Witchdoctor, and no one is assumed to have any more power in this respect than anyone else. The advent of the "healer" with his big tent, blasting P.A. system, flashy car and high powered public relations secretary did not originate from the Coloured people but rather from the White

community. In the Participant Type Church the pastor seems to fill this function, assisted by others of the leadership. Usually a service ends with a rather general invitation for those present to come forward and have their needs met at the altar. Then, while a chorus is repeated over and over, those desiring prayer come forward and prostrate themselves on knees and elbows, and the leader then kneels beside the supplicant to hear what the need is. If more than one person comes at a time, which is usually the case, then other men step forward to assist the pastor. Usually these individuals are men who sit on the platform or at the front as 'elders' or at times even someone from the orchestra will step out. It is sometimes difficult to ascertain how one is chosen for this service, but when I am visiting in such a group and have been asked to come to the platform either to "greet" or to be introduced or to lead in prayer or to preach, then I am usually invited to assist. It is perhaps significant that more likely than not the young evangelists are not asked to pray for those who have come forward, the privilege or responsibility being limited to the older men who appear to have more spiritual status.

Perhaps the fact that the evangelist does not generally perform this spiritual ministry points up the fact that he is really in training, and has not yet arrived at the place where he can be entrusted with such an important function. If this is the correct interpretation of the situation existing, then it is interesting that the prerequisite experience for preaching the Word of God and exhorting the people is of lesser import than that for praying for people's needs. Perhaps what is being indicated is that preaching is really nothing more than the giving of a testimony, and everyone does that. If this be so, then one should not be surprised that there is really so little Scriptural content and teaching in the sermon, for it is not expected and therefore is not missed. The grave danger one is made aware of is that a generation is living and growing up without significant input

from the Biblical tradition in any organized fashion.

The needs which bring people to the front for prayer may range all the way from a desire for salvation or the filling of the spirit through physical healing and the need for a job or a house to the desire for a husband or wife or for a child to be given to a family. Literally nothing is too insignificant as the object for intercessory prayer, and one is often confronted by very young children who come with what appear to be quite petty needs, but which obviously represent real problems to them. Incidentally, I always experience extreme difficulty in understanding just what is needed or desired, taking into consideration the strumming of several guitars and perhaps the rattling of a drum or two, the repetitive singing of the chorus, and the somewhat soft voice of the supplicant.

An interesting comparison can be drawn between educational levels as found in the leadership of the Participant Type and those in the Observer Type groups. We will look firstly at the education of the founder of the church then at the requirements for pastors who lead now or who are to lead in the future.

The educational level of the founders of the Participant Type groups averaged at Standard 5.75, while the level of the founders of the Observer Type groups averaged at Standard 7.2. While this difference may not seem to be especially significant, it does represent a consistently higher level for the founders of the Observer Type groups. Much more significant is the fact that only 3% (1 of 30) of the founders of the Participant Type groups had Bible College training of some nature as compared with the fact that 50% (10 of 20) of the founders of the Observer Type groups had anywhere from one year of Bible College to a doctorate in theology.

With these statistics before us, it should not be surprising that there is a great difference between the requirements for pastors for the two divisions. It can be noted that in the

case of the Participant Type groups, not one holds higher requirements for pastors than the level attained by the founder, and in most cases the requirements are lower in that they are not stated in terms either of educational attainment or specialized Biblical or pastoral training but simply the need for "ability", admittedly a subjective type of evaluation. On the other hand, in the case of the 20 Observer Type groups, only 10% had lower requirements for their pastors while the other 90% held equal or higher requirements, as compared to the educational attainment of their founder, illustrating their desire to up-grade their pastorate from what it was in the beginning.

A comparison of the specific requirements is quite revealing. In the case of the Participant Type groups, one group requires only the ability to read and write, 80% have no educational requirements at all, and those who have such requirements average only Standard 6.4. As regards Bible College training, 6% require some form of specialized training, the other 94% having no requirements whatever for such preparation. In the case of the Observer Type groups, one requires only literacy, 12.5% have no educational requirements whatever, and the average for the remainder is Standard 9.1. As regards Bible College training, 47% require at least some, while 53% have no requirements.

It appears that these statistics illustrate the relative importance of education and specialized training, in the Participant Type groups in which they are seen to be of little or no importance, and in the Observer Type groups in which they are quite important in the eyes of the membership.

A majority of the 50 Independent Churches upon which this survey was based are still pastored by the man who began them, and in these cases it was possible to ask of them directly their reasons for coming out and starting their own churches. The reasons given make very interesting reading. The founder

of Calvary Pentecostal Mission had been a long-time elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church when he broke away to begin his new group. He says that they did not agree with his evangelistic methods, and that furthermore an angel revealed to him that Saturday and Sunday are equally holy, and both should be kept as such. When his home church would not cooperate in this new practice he had to leave and take part of the congregation with him.

The Crusade Mission was started among the people in the so-called "pondokkies", the wood and iron or often cardboard and tar paper hovels inhabited by the poorest of the poor in Elsie's River. Their practices are no different from the Assemblies of God, an established denomination which has a very adequate building in the area. The founder, Mr B.S. Louwe, claimed that he began his new group because: "our people would not be welcome in that beautiful building, dressed as they are, and the pastor and his elders would not dirty their clothes to come to us." Whether strictly true or not, the statement was heard from other individuals in the course of taking the survey.

This same Crusade Mission is the end result of a process of division and Independent Church founding which illustrates some of the more common events which led up to and resulted from such divisions. The process began with the Christian Mission which was founded in 1956 by a Rev. Thom, a European who was a member of the Apostolic Faith Mission. He left them for undisclosed reasons, was ordained by a group in America not known to present-day members of his church, and started the Christian Mission. His doctrines are the same as the Apostolic Faith Mission except that he practices single immersion rather than triune immersion as does the Apostolic Faith Mission. He was assisted in his program of founding by a Mr Williams and a Mr Pienaar. In 1970 Mr Williams and Mr Pienaar separated from the Christian Mission for undisclosed reasons, and founded the Holy Soul Crusade. The Rev. Williams,

who received his ordination from an alleged ordain-for-pay prelate, has Standard II education and no Bible training whatsoever. Mr Louwe was a worker with the Holy Soul Crusade but separated from them in 1973 because he could not agree with the proviso that the son of the founder was to become leader at the death of the founder. Money matters were also hinted at.

Thus the line of succession was from the Apostolic Faith Mission to the Christian Mission in 1956 to the Holy Soul Crusade in 1970 to the Crusade Mission in 1973. The development of the names is quite obvious, with the Crusade Mission having taken part of its name from all three of its predecessors. Perhaps some of the confusion that surrounds these divisions and re-divisions can be seen in a quotation from my notes as written down after the interviews with Rev. Willaims:

"I feel this is one of the weaker types of Independent Churches. The Rev. Williams' main claim to fame is that he is a converted Moslem, and that he is an "athletic preacher". That is, he leaps from the platform to an empty pew to the aisle to the platform all without any break in his flow of words. He is ignorant of Christian doctrine, and of basic Church work.

There is something hidden in the situation, for when I first met the Rev. Williams he was meeting in the home of one Mr Louwe and the group seems to have been the Crusade Mission. However when I went back to do the questionnaire he was no longer there, but was at the IOOTT Hall with the Holy Soul Crusade. Mr Louwe claims that the Crusade Mission came out of the Holy Soul Crusade some years ago and this movement came about through himself (Mr Louwe). He said the Rev. Williams was with him for a time but left again. Very Strange!"

The Pinkster Beweging Sending Kerk was started by a man who had a vision that led him to practice footwashing. The other members of the church where he worshipped ridiculed him and the pastor forbade him to practice it, so he had to take those who had seen the light and set out with them to start the true footwashing church.

The founder of the Sherwood Park Pentecostal Assembly had been

an elder of the Assemblies of God for thirteen years. He somehow came in contact with the Full Gospel Church of God in the United States. They ordained him in absentia, and with the financial assistance they gave him he was able to branch out and begin his own church.

The Alpha Church was founded by a man who was expelled from the Ephesian Gospel Mission, so started his own church, the First Church. The Acts Mission traces itself back to St Phillips Congregational Church. It seems a group in St Phillips had become charismatic and feeling out of place in the more staid atmosphere of St Phillips, itself an Independent Church, had become associated with a certain Rev. C.J. Slingers, an evangelist in Bishop Lavis Township. They had under his leadership organized the Missionaries for Christ, and later on the Rev. Slingers, who by then had styled himself as a Bishop, ordained one of their number, a Rev. J.M. Layman. After two years with the Missionaries for Christ, the original group from St Phillips withdrew and organized the Acts Mission. Although they give their charismatic leanings as the reason for their departure from St Phillips, no reason is given for the more recent departure from the Missionaries for Christ. While the Acts Mission seems to be thriving in the Cape Flats, the Missionaries for Christ has almost disappeared as an effective church group.⁴

I noted in a previous section the origins of the Algemene Sendelinge Kerk which broke away from the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Eight years after that split, Paul Afrika led a group out because the pastor of the Algemene Sendelinge Kerk it was said, was drinking. This Paul Afrika was ordained by Bishop Slingers of the Missionaries for Christ, and became founder and pastor of the Kleurlings Verenigde Kerk. Eight years later Mr Tom Lott, an elder in that Church left with some followers and finally joined them to the Griqwa Kerk, another Independent Church. The Algemene Sendelinge Kerk

suffered a further split a few years after the departure of the Rev. Afrika and his group when another group left under the leadership of a deacon, a Mr Williams.

The Christelike Verenigde Kerk was begun in 1921 by a Rev. Hannie who left the Methodist Church to begin a new work. He left with one other young man, but they divided on the question of a name. The other man took the name of Christelike Evangelie Sending Kerk. His group is now extinct. The Kolossense Sending Pinkster Kerk was formed by the Rev. Scheepers when he took a group out of the Nama Kerk on the issue of the use of funds. Since its origins, the Kolossense Kerk has had three breakaways, the New Apostolic Church in Zion, the Verenigde Visserman Kerk van Christus, and the Galatian Sending Pinkster Kerk.

A Pastor Kepky had worked with the Pinkster Protestante Kerk for fourteen years. However, they would not allow women to preach, so he left with a group of women and started the Emmanuel Protestant Church. He later left this group under the urging of a White man who claims to have seen a vision of a church with the name New Testament Church in stone over the door and Pastor Kepky standing in the door. This man confided to me that he had been wishing to break into the Coloured Church work for some time. Pastor Kepky has now started The New Testament Church, supported and directed by this man. The Rev. D. Isaacs was ordained by the United Pentecostal Church and acted as one of their pastors for seven years. When he desired to take Bantu into his church they refused, so he broke away and started the Pentecostal Church of Christ.

The Rev. Lewis had worked with the pastor of the Pentecostal Mission Church for eleven years but broke away because of controversy over who signed cheques, and started the Pentecostal Gospel Church. One is struck here, as in the majority of such cases, by the similarity of the name of the new group to the name of the group from which they have come

out. The founder of the Pinkster Beweging Sending Kerk was first a member of the Christian Mission. He was put out when he was re-baptized and pastored for a time for the Mission for Christ Church, finally leaving them for undisclosed reasons to begin his own group.

The spiritual odyssey of several of these founders reflects the wanderings of those who seek always for something better but seem to lack the ability to develop it.⁵ In conversation they are always quick to justify their constant shifting as either the result of circumstances beyond their control or of the "direct leading of the Holy Spirit". The Rev. D. Williams had been a deacon in the Algemene Sendeling Kerk in Elsie's River. He left them and joined the Kleurlings Sendeling Kerk in Steenberg, in which he was ordained by the pastor of the Independent Dutch Mission (unable to give reason for this seeming anomaly). He left them and formed the Independent Coloured Mission Church, (same name as former group except in English with the addition of Independent), but this church "failed". He then formed the Coloured Methodist Church. This similarity of names can also be seen in the case of the Rev. B. Blaauw who broke away from the Apostolic Faith Mission and in cooperation with a certain Ngongomana, a Xhosa, founded the New African Bantu Holy Apostolic Faith Mission Church of South Africa. The Rev. Blaauw later withdrew and founded the Gospel Fellowship Holy Apostolic Faith Mission Church of South Africa.

The Rev. F. Jones began his service as a deacon in the United Congregational Church in Wynberg in 1940. He subsequently joined the Church of God in Witteboome, then moved to St Phillips Congregational Church in Wynberg where he was a local preacher. He left them to work with the United Ones in Jesus Mission Church of S.A. in Vredenberg where he was ordained by the Rt Rev. Abrams in 1952. He left to found the Macedonian Pentecostal Baptist Mission Church of S.A. in 1953. In 1975 he was elevated to the Bishopric by the Rt Rev. Abrams.

Incidentally, a significant number of founders of Independent Churches have come through St Phillips Congregational Church in Wynberg. The pastor here was a good preacher and teacher and gave young men the opportunity of serving but kept all control to himself, with the result that after a period of working with him they left to begin their own groups or to join other existing groups.

The Rev. J.C. Seekoie was pastor of the Missionaries for Christ Church in Ravensmead for nine years. He came out, "for no particular reason", and the entire congregation came with him, and founded Die Sending vir Christus Kerk. Note, the same name, simply translated into Afrikaans. He had been ordained by Bishop Slingers of the Mission for Christ Church, but with his leaving the ordination had been withdrawn when he stole the congregation. He was subsequently ordained, "for a price" as he put it, by Bishop Alfred Smith of the United Mission Church.

Perhaps the most independent man of all is a Pastor Scholtz who was originally in the Rhenish Church, then in the Kleurlings Verenigde Kerk, then left them to work with the United Ones in Jesus Church, subsequently withdrawing to begin his own work, which he insists has "no name, for this is one of the errors of these last days". For purposes of identification, his group is known as the Vrystanders (independents) by the other groups.

In interview after interview the story was the same, a pastor had led a group out of his church, or some members had risen up in opposition to the pastor and had chosen one of their number to lead them out, or a church had split down the middle with the formation of two new groups where there had formerly been only one. In all the fifty groups interviewed, there were two exceptions to this otherwise inflexible pattern. The Christian United Church, no connection with the Christelike Verenigde Kerk, numbers among its divisions both the Eenheids Volkskerk

and the Protestant United Mission Church. Both of these groups had been taken out by men who had worked with and been ordained in the Christian United Church, namely the Revs. Lott and Stroebel. The Rev. Lott had originally, as mentioned, been an elder in the Kleurlings Verenigde Kerk.

When we first interviewed these men, both expressed the desire to unite with some other group, since both found it difficult to carry on with their small congregations. About a year later they got together and led their congregations into a merger, dropping both names and becoming the Omega Bethel Church. It was my privilege to be present at the uniting ceremony, and to participate to a small extent. I had talked with both pastors prior to the union, and both had expressed to me privately that they were the senior pastor and the other man was junior. I wrote in my notes at that time that this was a union that would last only until a question of import was answered differently by the two men and then there would be another breakaway. However, the Omega Bethel Church has been in operation for almost five years now, and although not large is going on well. The other exception, the Herstigte Protestante Sendeling Kerk will be discussed in the chapter on the Independent Church Ring.

It must be stressed that these are the exceptions to the rule. One of the questions asked in the survey was, "What, if any, new groups have been formed from splits away from your Church?" In the instances when the answer was "None", it was as often as not "None yet", indicating the expectation that as this group had been formed from a split, they could expect nothing much different for themselves.

One of the questions put to the Independent Churches had to do with the enforcement of discipline. The question was two-fold, do you have provision for disciplining your members, and do you have provision for disciplining your pastor? The answers were almost identical for the two different types of churches. Only

one Participant Type group and only one Observer Type Church had no provision for the discipline of either pastor or member. All of them felt that some type of discipline should be imposed upon those who engaged in open sin, and the only difference for the most part between the disciplining of a member and the pastor was the individual responsible for the function. In almost all groups, the burden of giving judgment and determining punishment of a member fell upon the pastor. At the same time, the pastor could only be disciplined by the Official Board in the case of churches with a representative type or congregational type government, or by the bishop in the case of those with an episcopal type government.

Some differences were evident in the length of time which the sinning member should be suspended, although in most cases the suspension was the same, namely the individual was not permitted to take communion, to lead services or give testimony, or to lead in public prayer. Several groups required the individual to attend all services during the time of his suspension. Of those who specified times of suspension, seven held to three months, seven held to six months, two held to one year, and one required two years suspension. In the course of conversation about this subject, the feeling came across that these were ideal standards, and probably would not be enforced too rigidly. Those who did not give a specific length of time for the suspension simply suggested that there would be a length determined by the type of offense and by the repentant attitude of the individual being dealt with. One of the pastors who said that they did not discipline members who offended against the standards of the church pointed out that one could not do so, for if you attempted to discipline a member he or she simply moved to another church and you had lost a member and nothing had been accomplished. One could admire his honesty, and I suspect that in many of the other groups his standards would more likely prevail than those to which they gave lip service.

Two of those responding to the questionnaires made added

provisions to their statements concerning discipline. One church has the regulation that if a sinning member repents he is forgiven, for "two times". If he sins the third time he is cut off for three months, then restored if he indicates repentance and a desire to do better. However, if he sins again after this, he is put out, and cannot be restored. Another church is more direct than most in that the sinning member is censured before the congregation by the pastor. If there is no change, he is put off for three months, and if "the sin re-occurs" he is dismissed. I was present at a service of this group when a young girl, perhaps 15 or 16 years of age, received this treatment. She had apparently lied to the family with whom she was staying concerning her whereabouts on a certain day, and they had told this to the pastor. He called her up to stand before the congregation and upbraided her in what seemed to me to be a merciless manner. Only after she broke down and wept did he permit her to return to her seat with the stern warning that if she did not mend her ways then he would have to put her out. It must be pointed out that this was a unique instance, and I believe that in most cases the application of discipline to sinning members is more a threat than a reality.

Notes on Chapter VI

1. Birnbaum, Norman and Lenzer, Gertrude, 1969; page 320
 In discussing the leadership of the sects, Birnbaum and Lenzer contrast the charisma of office which adheres to the leader in the established church, and is indicated by titles, by clerical garb and by position in the hierarchy of the church, and the personal charisma of the sect leader.
 "In contrast to the hierarchy, the sect opposes the charisma of office. The individual can exercise hieracracic powers only by virtue of his personal charisma, just as he can become a member only by virtue of a publicly established qualification, the most unambiguous is the 'rebaptism' of the Baptists."
2. Birnbaum, Norman and Lenzer, Gertrude, 1969; page 321
 Apparently this use of untrained and unordained men for the preaching responsibility is common in the sectarian world. The above authors state:
 "In contrast to all consistent churches, all rigorous sects adhere to the principle of lay preaching and of every member priesthood, even if they establish regular offices for economic and pedagogic reasons."
3. Stark, Werner, 1966; page 120
 Stark points out that the use of lay-preachers follows from the fact that everyone has the same spirit, therefore no one has the right to put him or herself above anyone else. This is supported by the fact that Participant Type Independent Churches, where the individual is directly linked to God, all use lay preachers, and make no distinction as far as the place of preaching between a lowliest member and a visiting "bishop". However, in the Observer Type Independent Churches where salvation is not so much a matter of having the Spirit as being adequately related to the ecclesiastical body that is related to the Divine, only those properly educated, or officially ordained are allowed the pulpit.
4. Lee, Robert, and Marty, Martin E. (eds) 1964; pages 24-36
 Description of the way in which sects originally break away from churches, then having become a church-type themselves with the passage of time become the source of yet new sects. "Once it has made the transition from sect to church, the religious group then becomes the breeding ground for new sects which proceed anew through the same process."
5. Mehl, Roger, 1970; page 227
 Mehl, in speaking about the agitated history of most sects and the founders of sects states: "The number of the elect is necessarily limited. A pure one always finds a purer one who purges him. Such seems to be the law of the sect; and this explains the many crises, the numerous purges, and often even schisms. Many important members of a sect, sometimes the founders, came from another sect and sometimes even passed through several sects."

CHAPTER VII

THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES AND THE SACRAMENTS

Three areas of thought and practice were explored in the questionnaire, those having to do with the practice of the Lord's Supper, of Christian Baptism, and of Infant Dedication. Although careful records were kept, it soon became obvious that there was no significant difference between the Observer and the Participant Type groups in these practices, except in the predictable fact that the Observer Type practiced infant baptism by sprinkling and the Participant Type practiced believer baptism by immersion and infant dedication. Some interesting conclusions can be drawn however from the way in which these sacraments were administered.

The communion service is perhaps the most important of the three services being explored. This is partly because it takes place much more often than either baptism or infant dedication, and because it is the one service in which everyone is involved. It was obvious in discussing the communion service with the pastors and boards that they laid considerable stress on their particular form of service, and usually went to more pains to be certain that I had all the facts correct than in the case of either baptism or infant dedication. The communion service could be served by the bishop only in two groups, by an ordained minister only in just half of the groups, 25, and by elders if the pastor was not available in 19 groups. In one group, anyone was permitted to serve communion. This pastor had grown up in a Christian Brethren assembly, and although he ran a very tight ship in which he was self-appointed bishop and the final answer yet he was very permissive in the matter of the service of the Lord's table. This particular leader's Brethren training was seen also in the fact that he was one of the only two who had closed communion. The other exception to the general rule was the Reformed Old Apostolic Church, whose

leaders informed me that I would not be welcome to their communion service, since it was for "believers only". The other 48 groups all practice open communion.

There was considerable variety as to the frequency of the service. Seven hold it weekly, with one pastor giving the proviso, "if time permits". In several visits to his assembly time never permitted. I was never able to determine if he did not hold it because there was no time or because I, an outsider was present. Two groups hold it bi-weekly, but the great majority, thirty of the fifty, serve it monthly. Six serve it quarterly, and five admitted to doing so irregularly. When pressed for the reason for the irregular practice of such an important rite, the usual reply was to the effect that the people were not always ready, or the elements not always available. No correlation existed between the frequency of the service and the type of church.

The elements served revealed an almost-exact division between those who served bread and grape juice and those who served bread and communion wine. Some specified unleavened bread, but when pressed for the source of this commodity said they used biscuits which they had heard were really unleavened. Several pastors expressed relief at the availability of communion wine, since it meant they would not have to purchase regular wine. Several others expressed similar relief at the availability of bottled grape juice for the same reason. It was interesting that on three occasions I noted that regular wine was being served by groups that had indicated they used communion wine. Perhaps availability was not as high as they had indicated.

There was considerable variety in the ways in which the service was carried out, including standing at the front, kneeling at the front, standing in the pews and sitting in the pews, with some other less ordinary variations which will be listed below. Forty-two groups use the common cup, which is

either given individually to the communicants by the leader or passed from hand to hand in the pew, and eight use the little communion cups which are given out to the members seated in the pews. These eight groups are all of considerable size, explaining I believe the need to move from the common cup which seems to be the preferred method to the individual cups. As has been mentioned previously, the Docks Mission in their mother church in Belgravia have really outgrown the common cup, but rather than move to the individual cups have simply utilized two common cups, one for each side of the church, thus speeding up the service considerably.

Several of the groups interviewed laid considerable emphasis on some particular variation in the usual communion service, which they claimed made their service unique and constituted a distinctive for their church. Two groups precede the service by foot washing, and both were somewhat offended when informed that this particular rite had been practiced by individual congregations and whole denominations prior to the communion over a period of many centuries. The Independent Lutheran Church serves the elements to the communicants as they kneel at the altar, with the elements being put to the mouth by the officiating priest. There is of course historical precedent for this in this denomination. One Participant Type Church made much of the fact that each member broke his own bread as the loaf was passed around. The pastor was unable to explain the Biblical significance of this particular act, but said the Lord had revealed this method in a vision and that it was to be the distinctive for his church. He was somewhat offended when I pointed out that this has been done for many years by the Christian Brethren as well as several other Independent Churches. The Coloured Methodist Church serves the communion to the members seated around a table. Again this was advanced as a divinely revealed distinctive. The service of necessity is somewhat lengthy, but is intended to picture the situation in the

upper room, and I must admit that it is quite impressive, with the server simply repeating the words of Jesus in the rite. The Ephesian Gospel Mission always stands to partake, "out of respect for the Lord".

In the matter of the administration of Christian Baptism, there were areas of general agreement, but various individual variations and hedgings around the basic ritual. Baptism was administered in almost every case, by the same individuals who could serve communion. In one church it could be done only by the bishop, in twenty-five by the pastor only, and in seventeen by an elder if the pastor was not available. In one church the evangelist was permitted to baptize. Thirty groups, all the Participant Type Churches require immersion. Seventeen of the Observer Type Churches required sprinkling, two require pouring, and one accepts any form. The variations would seem to reflect the experience of the founder of the church, for most can be traced to more or less accepted practices within the Christian Church. One group practices triune immersion, face forward, while another practices triune immersion also but backward with the face up. One church requires immersion in a flowing river, and the pastor confided to me that this had often presented difficulties in getting access to a suitable venue. In one church the candidate must confess all sins he can remember to the elders before the ordinance. I questioned the reason for this, and it was hinted that any sins not confessed would probably not be forgiven in the waters of baptism. One could be excused for wondering just how good the individual's memory would be in such a situation.

Most groups require some form of instruction prior to the administration of the rite, but one tends to be a bit skeptical about one program mentioned of five months instruction before the individual can be baptized. A few are willing to baptize anyone who requests it, some require a session with the pastor before permission is given, and a few

of those baptizing infants require the parents to have several sessions with the pastor on the significance of the service and the requirements inherent in it for them. One group requires the candidate to wait four months from the time of request until the service in order that they may observe his life over that period of time.

The question of the baptism of children of non-members or those born out of wedlock is a vexing one that was solved in various ways. The Calvin Church will baptize only the children of members or of members of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church. This corresponds with their willingness to accept members by letters of transfer from that group only. One church will baptize children of non-members if a member in good standing will stand up with them. Another group will baptize the child of an unwed mother, but she is not to attend. The child is to be brought by a member in good standing. However, these limitations are the exception. In most cases, infants will be baptized for anyone, simply upon their being brought to the service. There seems to be a general agreement that the child has a right to receive the benefits of Christian baptism, and why would the church wish to deny the child that privilege? When pressed as to the theology behind this assumption, none of the pastors or boards would give assent to a doctrine of baptismal regeneration of the child, but all felt that they would be doing wrong to withhold baptism if the child were presented.

Twenty-nine of the Participant Type Churches practice infant dedication. Generally speaking, this seems to take the place of the infant baptism of the Observer Type groups, and one suspects alleviates any fears the parents may have that they are depriving their child by not baptizing it now that they have left their former Observer Type group and are involved with a Participant one that practices believer baptism. Sixteen of these churches will permit dedication by the pastor only, while eleven allow the elder to officiate in the

absence of the pastor. Twenty-five of the churches will perform the service for anyone, reflecting the same attitude as held toward infant baptism, while four will do it for their members only. The variations of practice in the case of infant dedication are somewhat similar to those used in infant baptism, since the problems faced are much the same. One group will dedicate the child of a non-member only if the family is sponsored by a member. Another church will only dedicate the child if the mother is a member. The father apparently is not considered in the decision made relative to the child. Another church will dedicate any children brought, but in the case of the children of non-members they do not receive certificates of dedication such as are provided to the children of members. The question of how to handle the dedication of illegitimate children was faced by several groups. One group will dedicate an illegitimate child, but only in the vestry, not in the sanctuary. Another will do so only if the illegitimate child is brought by god-parents who are members in good standing. Again these are the exceptions, and in most churches a service of dedication will be performed for any child brought, regardless of by whom.

As was suggested early in this chapter, the Independent Churches take the sacraments quite seriously. In most cases, they are at a loss to give Scriptural justification for the particular rituals they utilize or the requirements with which they hedge those services. However, this does not prevent them from holding strong convictions in these matters, and the fact that the convictions sometimes seem to allow rather broad powers of discretion to the clergy does not detract from the strength with which they are held. It would appear that in most cases their convictions as to the rightness or wrongness of certain forms have been "caught" rather than "taught". That is, they are repeating in their new Independent Church the forms and rituals with which they grew up or which they have observed elsewhere without

subjecting these forms to intellectual tests for validity and consistency. Of course in this they are no different than many members, and indeed leaders of Established Churches, who do the same with less justification.

What is certain is that the variety of practices and requirements are all attempts to relate the group to the social context in which it finds itself, in a manner significant to the members and/or leader. The single parent family, probably living with the mother's parents, is an all-~~too~~-common feature of this situation, and accounts for many of the responses discussed above.

CHAPTER VIII

HOW THEIR MEMBERS PERCEIVE THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

In searching for the forces at work in the appearance and continuation of the Independent Churches, it is helpful to enquire as to the way in which the members of these groups regard their churches as compared with the established denominations from which most of them come. Here we find two basic reactions, corresponding generally to the two types of Independent Churches we have identified.

In the Participant Type groups, which by and large are the churches of the lower socio-economic level among the Coloured people, reference is often made to the "denominations" or "official churches" with some degree of scorn or disapproval. Not infrequently the individual making the reference is one who grew up in the group named, and his relationship with it was not of the best. However, since his association with this new group he has reaped many benefits, and thus feels justified in rejecting everything about the established church. This same type of negative reaction is often witnessed on the part of the leadership, and is evidence one feels for the purpose of justifying the man's departure from or his drawing people away from such group. Apparently the leadership and members of the Participant Type often see themselves in competition with or opposition to the more established churches and denominations.

In the Observer Type, this negative reaction is rarely encountered. There is the usual amount of often thinly-veiled competition, but this is as likely to be directed against another Independent Church as against one of the denominations. The reason for this different attitude on the part of the Observer Type group seems to originate in the fact that these people see and identify themselves as yet another church or denomination, in no sense inferior to the more historically

rooted groups. They are not basically anti anyone, as is so often the case with the Participant Type groups. The energy and dedication required for carrying on an effective program in one of the more established Observer Type Churches is such that little is left over for competing with the established denominations. Further, in the midst of working their own program they have a sense of sympathy for and understanding with the established churchman who is doing exactly the same thing. A third factor which has come into existence rather recently is the meeting and working together on several levels between the members of the Observer Type groups and the established denominations. This has taken place for the most part in the parachurch organizations such as the Youth for Christ, Campus Crusade, South African National Sunday School Association, Scripture Union, Keswick Convention, etc. It is rare that any members of Participant Type groups are engaged in such fellowship, but this is becoming increasingly common on the part of the Observer Type, and bodes well for the future of these organizations.

An exception to this general rule might be found in the Calvin Church. This church, which is definitely an Observer Type, was formed in the breakaway for political purposes from the Dutch Reformed Church, and the bitterness which accompanied that original division has not been erased, nor does it seem to have been the desire of many to see it die. It would seem that on the part of the leaders, the reminder of the difference between the non-apartheid Calvin Church and the apartheid-fostering Dutch Reformed Church is almost a matter of policy, a self-defensive mechanism one might suggest, in view of the close participation of their people with members of the older church in education, industry, community projects, etc. It is highly likely that this attitude of opposition to the Dutch Reformed will die away with the demise of the elder statesmen who were the architects of the division in the first place and what appears to be a softening in the attitudes of some White South Africans toward fellowship with other racial groups.

An indication of how the members of the Independent Churches view their groups in relation to the established denominations may be found in their willingness or lack of such to accept members from other denominations by letter of transfer. The question put to these groups was "Do you accept members by letter of transfer from other churches? If so, from which churches?" The answers received were as expected from the conclusions already drawn from the differences between the Participant and the Observer Type groups. As has been mentioned, the former groups see themselves in competition with or actually in opposition to the established churches and denominations. This is reflected in the fact that roughly one-fourth of them would not receive members by letter of transfer from any other church, and of the three fourths that responded that they would receive such members, most of them added an "if" to their statement. For instance, three of them said they would receive members by letter from Pentecostal groups only. Two of them who hold to the Christ-based unitarianism, the so-called 'Jesus only' groups, said that they would receive from their own group or from other groups only if they were able to rebaptize them in the name of 'Jesus only'. Another group said they would receive members by letter from Protestant Churches only, and another said from groups that immerse only. Another said they would accept letters from any church except the New Apostolic Church and the Roman Catholics.

The Observer Type groups were considerably more open in this regard. Only one-eighth of them had limitations on whom they would receive. One of these, the Calvin Church, replied that they would receive letters of transfer from the Dutch Reformed Mission Church only, and another that they would receive letters from any group except the New Apostolic Church and the Pentecostals. On the whole they saw themselves as one with other denominations, and expressed considerable willingness to comply with whatever the usual practices were. This was often obvious when in response to the question being put they asked what was meant by accepting letters of transfer. When informed

that this was a common practice among churches of the same denomination most of this type of group agreed that they would be willing to do so if the request were made.

A second factor to be considered in the way in which the members of the Independent Churches view their churches other than that of how they view themselves in relation to the established denominations, is how they view their own membership in or relationship to their own church. To some degree, this attitude has to do with the means by which or the reasons for which they have associated themselves with their particular group.

In the case of the Observer Type churches, more often than not the individual has joined the group not because they are against anything, but rather for the same reasons that people join the established denominations. Many have grown up in the groups in question, having been baptized into them brought by parents who themselves have been long-time members. Others have married into the group, or have followed friends or business associates there and have found attitudes and activities that were attractive to them. Perhaps the individual has been ministered to in some way by members of the church in an economic, social or spiritual fashion, and so has been attracted into the fellowship.

Having thus found in the Independent Church the kind of relationships to people or to God that they have sought or which meets their needs, they now recognize a sense of responsibility to this church and are willing to contribute financially, participate in activities, and to join themselves and their families as regular members to the group. Coming as they do from what is generally the middle or higher economic level of the group we are considering, they are accustomed to paying their own way and also to contributing toward the institutions which serve them, e.g. the schools, medical facilities, retirement programs, etc., and so are aware that if

they are to be served by a well-planned service in an adequate building then money must be provided and there must be also the training and support of responsible leadership if the program is to continue and grow. Of course this requirement for regular attendance and personal and financial participation in the ongoing program of the church serves to some degree at least as a limiting factor in weeding out those from the lower socio-economic level as possible members of this type of organization.

In the case of the Participant Type group, the individual tends to view his church not so much as an organization to which he has a responsibility as a fellowship in which he finds the opportunity to meet his own needs or to have them met by others. This individual is often looking for an outlet for his frustrations and a sounding board for his ideas, but is generally not personally dedicated to the centrality of faith and religious practice in his own personal life. This can be substantiated by the rapid turn-over of membership in these organizations and also in the dearth of an effective and well-supported program of giving which would provide for useful buildings, a meaningful Sunday School program for the children, a youth program for the teenagers and worthwhile outreach into the immediate vicinity as well as further afield. All these latter require personal dedication and a willingness to sacrifice personal desires for the growth of the church, and as such, with some exceptions, are often lacking in the Participant Type Church. In fact, in many of these Participant Type groups, especially those with no building which is to say the vast majority, there is no membership list kept, and the pastor will only speak of those who attend his services, and his membership number is only an estimate.

Some of the membership figures given would be laughable were they not in some sense pitiful, representing as they do an ideal, a striving after worth and status on the part of those

who gave them. These claims, albeit by leaders, reflect attitudes interesting in themselves. For example, one rather long-established group which as yet has no building yet claims to have sixteen branch works going with a total of 32 000 members, but a membership of 130 in the home church. On several visits I never saw more than fifteen or twenty of those members. The pastor works at a full-time trade, and has no visible means of travel and yet claims to have branches as far away as Oudtshoorn. Another group, with an attendance of about twenty-five, lists twelve evangelists on its roster. Another pastor, who has ordained himself bishop, provides, for a fee, ordination certificates for Bantu pastors. He lists these men as his workers and their churches as branches of his. However, the connection is more imagined than real for he speaks no Bantu languages. He admitted that these "branches" were very slow in paying their dues to their bishop! One suspects that the profit motive may well enter into some of this drive to expand for it is a well known fact that some founders of Independent Churches have become very wealthy as the result. From time to time one reads accounts in the Cape Flats newspaper of bishop so-and-so who drives an expensive car and lives in a beautiful home, all provided by his appreciative members. Such are exceedingly rare in the Cape Flats, being more common among the Bantu, but the ideal is there for some to aspire to. Actually the only Church into which I was not welcomed and with which I was refused the opportunity of doing the survey is one in Ravensmead where the pastor arrives in a chauffeur-driven Mercedes and over which he exercises the most complete control. He informed me very directly that he could see no gain in giving me an interview or allowing me to fill out a questionnaire, and let me know that there was therefore no reason for me to attend any further services.

While the majority of the Observer Type Churches have buildings, more or less adequate to the needs, the situation is almost exactly reversed in the case of the Participant Type groups (Chart A, page 116). In the case of the former, 90% have some property, and 20% have five or more buildings in their group.

Only 50% of the Participant Type groups have any property at all, and in two-thirds of the cases this consists of a stand only with a building somewhere in the future. The ownership of property is an important factor in the eyes of the Cape Flats community when it comes to evaluating the worth or success of a church group. Thus, for their own self-esteem and position in the eyes of the community they must either have a building or be planning one. When asked concerning their plans for the future the groups with little or no real property without fail mentioned their desire or plans to obtain a site and erect their first of several new buildings. However, in view of the extreme poverty of the majority of the people attending the Participant Type groups, any attempt to involve them in regular giving to finance the erection and operation of such a plant would probably drive them away because of the threat it posed to their own financial security, but the existence of the dream would serve to attract such, for it provided at least an illusion of worth and security while costing nothing in the way of direct financial obligation.

It is possible for groups to find meeting places other than their own buildings and still not lose too much status in the eyes of the community, for the movement of the majority of the residents of the Cape Flats out into new residential areas has meant that everyone, be they established denomination or Independent Church has had to find alternate places for meeting during the transition period. Thus groups meet in homes, school halls, libraries, garages, etc., and this is acceptable. However, as the churches obtain property and erect buildings, those groups still meeting in temporary quarters come under increasing pressure to justify their lack of real property, and the dream makes up for the lack of substance.

In many of the Participant Type groups, especially those with no buildings, there seems to be a general expectancy that people will come and go, and thus a membership roll will not serve any useful function. Many of these groups have no form

for accepting members into fellowship, although most will baptize converts, or in fact any visitor who desires the rite performed. In the majority of cases, these groups will accept into fellowship individuals from any group, even those rejected by the Christian community as a whole because of questionable doctrine, such as the New Apostolic Church or the Jehovah's Witnesses. The general concept seems to be that they are providing a service or an opportunity for participation, and if people come along and share then that is fine, but one really cannot require them to put their names down or promise to continue to attend.

It appears that this type of group attracts those who do not wish to accept responsibility for an on-going program that might involve them financially or require them to act on committees or to perform regular tasks in the work of the organizations. As such, they are particularly attractive to the individual who can take his church or leave it, who looks upon it as something to share in when there is nothing more attractive to do, and who does not wish to be pressed to fulfill certain obligations connected to it.

Involved also in this survey of the way in which the groups perceive themselves is the matter of their overall program. The pastors and people of these groups are well aware of the standards by which the average established church tends to judge itself, and in their need for status and self-acceptance give lip service to these same standards. This involves not only the building as we have seen, but the provision made for the various age groups in the fellowship. With one exception, all of the fifty churches surveyed said that they carried on a Sunday School program, had a youth work and a women's work, and some spoke of programs for outreach into the near and far community. In the case of almost all the Observer Type groups, such programs were actually in operation, with varying degrees of success. However, with but one or two obvious exceptions, in the Participant Type groups no such program was ever seen in

operation, or it was so poorly-organized and operated as to be almost useless. For instance, one Participant Type church carries on a Sunday School, but this merely means that they gather all the children and young people into one large class which meets for a session of singing choruses, a Bible story given by one of the older women in the church, a collection taken and dismissal after the singing of a few more choruses. There are no materials for the children, no attempt at graded teaching, and little understanding of the learning process evidenced by the instructor. So far as we could observe, a youth program meant a gathering of the teenagers under the direction of the elders of the church for a chorus singing time, a strong word of exhortation and a benediction. The level of interest evidenced by the youth was almost total apathy toward the program.

We did not have the opportunity of observing the 'Mothers gathering' in any of these groups, but we have no reason to believe that it was any better-prepared or structured than the Sunday School and the youth program. For most of the Participant Type groups, a single 2-4 hour Sunday service makes up the sum total of their weekly religious activity.

CHAPTER IX

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

The position of women in the Coloured Churches as a whole, that is, including the denominational groups as well as the Independent groups, varies considerably from the one extreme in which women play no part whatsoever other than being present at the meetings to the other farthest extreme in which women can hold any office and carry out any function, and can even be ordained. In the case of the Independent Churches, the roles open to women tend more toward the limited activity side, but with some rather obvious variations between the Participant Type and the Observer Type, a situation somewhat different from that described by O'Dea.¹

In the Participant Type Church, women are always in the majority, in some cases the vast majority. It is not at all uncommon for those in attendance at a meeting of one of the smaller groups to be women with just two or three exceptions, the only men being those providing the music or those sitting as elders in the front. However, even under these circumstances, no women were ever seen taking part in the orchestra or even playing a piano when such was available. In one case a woman with an exceptionally loud and piercing voice led out in the chorus singing, choosing the next song and setting the pitch, but this was so atypical as to attract definite notice. In these Participant Type groups the women take a very active part in the testifying, dancing and singing, but in no case do they assume any leadership.

I recall a meeting in a garage in Ravensmead attended by seven women aged between 20 and 60 where the only other man present was the founder and pastor who played the guitar and led the service. It was he who opened the meeting by beginning the first chorus, but from then on all the participation was on the part of the women. In what appeared to be a well-practiced

order, from the eldest to the youngest, each took her turn to stand and testify at length, and each testimony was climaxed by a "song that has come to mean much to me", in which everyone present joined and which was repeated over and over until everyone settled down and the next assumed the centre of the stage. By the time all had testified and sung about two hours had passed, and the leader welcomed me, announced the meeting to be held a week hence, urging the ladies to bring their friends, passed the collection plate around, subsequently emptying the rather skimpy contents in his pocket, and closed in a long impassioned prayer in which he called down God's blessings on the faithful ones who had come that night. He then asked for any who desired to have special prayer to come forward, and during the next fifteen minutes he and I prayed individually with each of the seven women. I was asked to pronounce the benediction, following which the congregation pressed around to greet and thank us men for the wonderful service (?).

In one group observed several times, the wife of the leader wielded considerable power, and it seemed obvious that she was the stronger of the two, but she did so from behind the scenes, never openly in public. For all that, the women are very visible even when considerable numbers of men are present, being the most ready to testify, usually the first to come forward for the healing services and the laying on of hands. It is not uncommon for every woman in the congregation to spend some time kneeling and being prayed for at the close of the service. In addition, when the time comes for dancing, it is often the women who are the first to step out into the aisles, and surprisingly it is the older and often more heavily built women who are the most eager to join in the dance and who are the most enthusiastic in throwing their bodies around. In the few instances in which worshippers were observed rolling on the floor or jerking in frenzy or literally foaming at the mouth, these were all women. This is not to say that men would not do so, for it may well have been that they felt inhibited

by the presence of a stranger or by the preponderance of active women.

In the Observer Type group, it is not uncommon for women to be in the majority, although this is perhaps the case in less than half the groups visited. However, although they may be in the majority, they are still very much in the background. They will sing in the choir, and on occasion may be members of a small singing group, but other than this they simply keep silent in the service other than joining in the hymns. Only very rarely will a woman speak in a public meeting, and perhaps give a testimony if called upon to do so. They never pray in public and rarely even give announcements, or notices as they are called. They obviously have roles to fill in the Women's Association, and they make up the backbone of the Sunday School staff, but as far as the public service is concerned, they are to be seen and not heard.

Note on Chapter IX

1. O'Dea, 1966; page 59

Refers to Weber, The Sociology of Religion, 97, 104, 107
 "Non-privileged and low-privileged classes on the contrary, show a tendency to evolve and embrace religions of salvation, to accept a rational world view incorporating an ethic of compensation, and to allot a degree of equality to women in religious participation."
 Surprisingly, women in the Independent Churches tend to have less leadership opportunities open to them than in the Established Churches. Probably this can be explained by the fact that opportunities for women on an equal level with men represent a very recent innovation in the Coloured community. Thus, the Independent Churches, which tend to look back to the past, almost automatically look upon this new independence for women as part of the present evil world, and as such reject it.

CHAPTER X

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT HELD BY THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

Section IV in the questionnaire had to do for the most part with the doctrinal views of the churches interviewed, and included in this section were questions having to do with standards of conduct held for members and pastors. The responses as to what activities were permitted and what activities were not permitted were as presented below. The basis of response was that an individual would be disciplined for engaging in a non-permitted activity. No attempt was made in the interview to differentiate between the activities allowed of pastors and of the regular member, but in some cases the information was volunteered indicating such a difference did in fact exist. An evaluation of these differences will be made in the concluding portion of this chapter.

	<u>Permitted</u>	<u>Not Permitted</u>
Smoking	9	39
Drinking	4	44
Dancing	6	42
Gambling	1	43
Theatre	4	40
Bioscope	11	36
Television	34	11
Organized Sport	18	29
Immorality	0	50

The fact that some of the responses do not add up to the same total results from the inability of some groups to give a solid answer as to what their standards were. Only on the issue of immorality did all groups have a ready answer, while on such activities as gambling and theatre there was considerable hesitation as to whether a firm standard did in fact

exist. The high percentage not permitting smoking, drinking and dancing indicates a radical departure from the standards of the Coloured community as a whole. Drinking to excess is a problem faced by the general community, and the great majority of the Independent Churches will have nothing to do with it, in fact are prepared to discipline any who take part in drinking, to say nothing of drinking to excess. The different standards held for attendance at a theatre and attendance at a bioscope were difficult to account for, and several groups who made this distinction were questioned as to why it was permitted to attend bioscope but forbidden to attend the theatre. In no case were the pastors or church boards able to give a reason for this seeming anomaly, and usually responded with the statement that "Everyone knows that Christians don't go to the theatre". In the case of a quite considerable number of those who permitted attendance at the bioscope the provision was made that the show must be something worth while. The same limitation was placed on watching television by several who apparently did not feel comfortable about placing this in the permitted division.¹

The participation in organized sport apparently is the object of much questioning. Very few of the responses to this question were made without some explanation or limitation. Many who said that participation was permitted added the provision that it must be under strict control of the leaders of the church, and must not in any way affect the individual's service to or attendance at the church. There is an organization operating in the Cape Flats known as the Inter-denominational Fellowship of Christian Athletes, commonly referred to as the "Church League". Several of the groups indicated that participation in sports with this group was considered to be perfectly acceptable, but membership in the sporting clubs or associations of the Cape Flats was not. The reason given for this was that such membership always involved the young person in after-game parties, club dances, etc., and it was the activities that took place in these social get-

togethers, which are apparently obligatory for the members, that made the participation in the clubs unacceptable. Sport as such was not considered to be in any sense harmful.

In several groups, there was an obvious dichotomy between that which was felt to be allowable and that which was actually permitted. One group said that smoking was not recommended, but added that men were not put off the church council for doing so. The pastor confided to me that if he were to enforce this standard, he would lose some of his best workers from the council. This same spirit of expediency seems to be reflected in the case of the church that had liberalized their standards in the issue of dancing five years ago. The reason for now permitting that which was formerly forbidden is that they can get more people to support the church if they say nothing against dancing. It is not permitted at official church functions, however. Two congregations, with no particular connection, have somewhat the same approach to the standards. In both cases the pastor claimed to be strongly against all the questioned activities, and it appeared that he preached and taught against them, but he admitted that his people engaged in all of them and he was able to obtain the cooperation of his board in administering discipline only in the case of unquestioned immorality. Obviously these were cases in which the pastor held more rigid standards than did the rank and file of the people. It seems obvious also that the pastors did not have the moral power to bring their people along with them to more rigid standards of separation.²

In the case of two other congregations, it appears that differing standards are held for leaders and for the laity. In one case drinking is not permitted to pastor and officers, but there are no limitations in this activity for the rest of the congregation. In the other congregation, the pastor is expected to abstain from all the suggested activities, and if he engages in any he is talked to by the bishop, while the

congregation is expected to abstain only from immorality. It was pointed out that the pastor would be disciplined in the case of immorality, suggesting that if he did not respond to being "talked to" the matter was dropped and he was tacitly permitted to continue in his chosen way.

The question was asked as to whether there had been changes in the standards of permitted conduct since the founding of the church and if so, in what direction the changes were. Thirty-one groups claimed to have made no change since founding. I asked several of these if they had not in actual fact changed their attitudes toward television since its first appearance, and in most cases received the grudging admission that whereas they had at first banned it entirely, now that their people were able to afford sets they had to permit looking at it or lose members. Of the nine congregations that claimed to have changed their standards since founding, six reported to have become more liberal in permitting certain activities that had originally been refused, and three claimed to have become more rigid. I enquired more carefully into the reasons for this apparent movement against the prevailing tide, and in every case found that a new pastor with a different background had come in with the attempt to put the church on a more secure moral standing. It became obvious under further questioning that the pastors were undergoing much opposition, and I suspect that not too much was being accomplished. Lest one suppose that all three were opting for impossibly high standards, one of the groups permitted smoking, drinking, sport, television and the bioscope. Dancing was to be engaged in only in permitted venues. The pastor of this group indicated that during the past five years the church has moved toward a stronger teaching on separation than formerly. In view of what is presently permitted, one is led to wonder what the former standards actually were. In the section on self-evaluation, this pastor felt that their greatest strength was in the area of practical Christian living on the part of the members.

Notes on Chapter X

1. Davies, Horton, 1954; page 8

These findings reinforce the statement by Davies concerning the usual ethical positions held by the sects. "Sectarianism has its own distinctive code of ethics, as we have hinted already, and this is a corollary of its worldly estate. It is a legalistic, rigid, Puritan black-and-white morality which divides men and women all too easily into world-affirming goats and world-denouncing sheep, or, in other words, into children of darkness and children of light. The vices are merely the practices of the opulent. Hence the sectarians ban such worldly amusements as dancing, cinema and theatre-going, the use of tobacco and of alcoholic drinks. They despise all ostentation and all literature, art and music that is not propaganda, for their particular tenets, as wholly mundane. On the positive side, austerity of life, self-denial in things naturally desired, abstinence and mortification of the flesh, are the moral foundations of their code.

2. Mehl, Roger, 1970; page 227

"By these various precautions, the sect attempts to achieve a community of the pure or the perfect; thus the sect is the heir of gnostic traditions... It often happens from this that the sect has an agitated history; in the domain of perfection and absolute purity, the suspicion of impurity is easily born." The tendency toward liberalizing the ethical standards required seems at odds with this evaluation of Mehl's. Perhaps it marks the movement of the Independent Churches from the sect toward the church side of practice.

CHAPTER XI

FUTURE PLANS OF THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

When queried as to their plans for the future, both immediate and in the long term, most of the groups engaged in some free style projections that bore little resemblance to solid planning. For instance, thirty-eight of the churches have plans for either the purchase of church plots and the erection of church buildings or the purchase of buildings from other groups that are failing. In addition, three plan to erect a pastorie and one is looking to the designing and erection of a youth centre. In two of the three cases, the thought of erecting a pastorie was presented by the pastor, and the surprised and not entirely pleased looks on the faces of his official board members seemed to suggest that this was a new idea for them. In every case when a church gave as their future plan the addition of sites or buildings, questions were raised as to the funds required for the project. In a minority of cases, perhaps a half dozen of the forty-two, some funds were on hand, and a program of fund-raising was either planned or was in operation. These churches already had put up buildings, and obviously knew what was involved.

However, in the great majority of groups, there was no real concept of what was required for the planning and erection of either a church building or even a pastorie. Most of them have no church sites, and no idea of how such are obtained. Few of them have any idea of the amount of money required to put up a building, and when a minimum price was suggested and this was related to their attendance the response was usually a shocked silence. In several cases, noting the interest I was taking in their church, in their building program and their plans for raising funds, it appeared the assumption was made that I was a person of means who was simply looking for a place to put some extra money, and I found myself the target of a rather obvious and spontaneous fund-raising effort. When I did not respond in

the manner required, I sometimes found that the attitude of helpful cooperation which I had enjoyed until that time cooled somewhat.

Four of the churches interviewed had no plans whatever for the future. For them, the ideal had been reached, and they intended simply to continue as they were. What was interesting was that two of the churches making this response were quite large and rather successful and the other two could scarcely have been less successful. Seven groups were concerned for the number and quality of workers. Three of these were interested in finding more workers, either within their groups or perhaps from similar churches of the community. Two were looking forward to instituting pastoral training programmes to upgrade the level of service rendered by their pastors. I grasped the opportunity of presenting the program of pastoral training provided by our Bible College, but to no avail. No pastors-in-training ever came from these groups. Two of these expressed the desire to get more of the youth involved in the leadership of the church. This could be related to the felt weakness of several of these groups that they were not able to hold their youth, and were losing them before they came to maturity and made some worthwhile contribution to the work.

Three of the groups were concerned about the small size of their congregations, and stated that they were going to have a membership drive, enlarge the congregation, expand. However, they didn't know where they were going to expand, had no positive plan for enlarging the congregation, and were woefully ill-informed as to what constituted a membership drive. One pastor plans to write a constitution, since his group has nothing on paper to indicate its direction or its organization.

Unique among all was the pastor who said his plan was to wind the work down over a period of several years. This church was located in what had formerly been a racially mixed area, and had for many years been a very strong church. The founder had

kept a strong hand on its growth and direction, and because of the stability of his program and the willingness to allow the membership to participate in the services had witnessed considerable church growth since its inception. However, he had always kept the final power in his own hands, and over the years a considerable number of young men had grown up in the church, had received their training and had obtained considerable experience in preaching and teaching, but had finally left because the place at the top had continued to retain the final word. In most cases this pastor had kept contact with these men as they had gone out, and was able to provide me with the names and locations of several who might be considered to be his 'graduates'. The majority I contacted had either joined themselves to existing Independent Churches and had risen because of their better-than-the-average training to positions of leadership and authority, or had started their own churches either by splitting an existing group or by starting from scratch as it were with a few friends in a cottage meeting.

The area in which the church was located had been declared White, and most of the Coloured people had moved away. A few still came back for the Sunday services, but the pastor confided to me that those who did travel back usually came for one Sunday service only and either attended a mid-week meeting in their residential areas or simply had no other outlet. He saw this as less than ideal, and so was planning to bring the church to an end, either during that year or in another year. He has since accomplished this aim, and the building has been demolished to be replaced by housing. He at least had set an obtainable goal and had gone on to live up to it.

In this same context of future plans, the question was asked as to any thought of uniting with any other church. Twenty-eight said they had no such plans, and as the question was enlarged upon it appeared that this was in fact so. Either they felt that they had nothing to gain by amalgamating with another group

or in some cases felt in fact that they might have something to lose. As we have mentioned, there is an optimum size for a Participant Type Church for the emotionally oriented, and a union with another such church would probably simply push the total membership over this optimum size and lead to withdrawals or perhaps to a split.

Of the eleven who said they had some plans to unite with another group, one stated very honestly I thought that he wanted to unite with some other churches who had good church buildings. It must be mentioned that this pastor was in fact meeting in a tar paper shack, and had no possibilities of obtaining either a church site or the money to purchase it and erect a building on it. Another church said they would like to unite in the next year or so, "With anyone who will join up with us". Under questioning their pastor admitted that he got tired of preaching Sunday after Sunday to the same small number of people, and he thought a union of churches might give him some new members and perhaps a chance to increase in size. Rather unique among these groups was the case of the Coloured Methodist Church. The pastor confided to me at a private meeting apart from his church board, that he would like to join back with the Algemene Sendeling Kerk from which he had come out many years before. When queried at length as to his reasons, he admitted that he had not anticipated either the volume of work or the extent of the problems to be faced in carrying on a work on his own. He felt that if he were able to take this congregation back into the church where he had received his experience they would be willing to welcome him back and even give him a pastorate in the denomination. In all the churches interviewed, this was the only one from which there was any suggestion that either the pastor or the people would like to restore fellowship and return to the original congregation of which they had formerly been members. As of the present, this has not taken place, and the chance of it doing so seems quite remote, at least in the near future and with the present leadership of the groups involved.

In response to the question as to whether they anticipated any change in the future in regard to patterns of service, membership or basic policies, twenty-nine churches foresaw no changes whatsoever, and nine believed that they would be making some changes. Two were looking forward to some administrative changes which would involve more centralization of authority in the hands of the pastor, and one plans to make higher requirements for pastors. Another group expects to emphasize the separated life to a greater degree in the future, in view of the very low level of spirituality on the part of the people. Two of the groups responding are thinking very seriously of possible union, and this was reflected in their responses to this question. One expects to change their very formal worship service to a less formal one if they can get some group to unite with them. They have come out of a very formal church, and have continued with the very ritualistic service, but are aware that this type of service is not practiced by most of the Independent Churches and is at best not very attractive to most of the people who have not been raised with this type of service. The other church plans to change its name when it finds a group with which to unite.

CHAPTER XII

SELF-EVALUATION OF THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE
INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

The responses to the questions as to self-evaluation revealed the widest diversity of ideas and opinions of any item on the entire questionnaire. In fact 20% was the highest percentage of agreement on any statement, and for the most part there was little unanimity. Twenty-three different responses were given to the questions as to the greatest strength of the church and eighteen different responses to the question as to the greatest weakness. One church could think of neither any strengths nor any weaknesses, two hadn't considered if they had any strengths and six claimed to have no weaknesses at all.

Ten listed the unity of the believers as their greatest strength, and four more put down the loyalty of members, a somewhat similar concept. One felt that their good attendance record was their greatest strength. The interesting fact is that five groups listed the failure of the members to co-operate as their greatest weakness, three the lack of regular attendance, and one not enough love in the church. There seems among these twenty-four to be agreement at least concerning what should be the greatest strength, that is love or loyalty manifested in regular attendance, or a sense of strength and security among both leaders and members.

In regards to spiritual matters, the following are listed as areas of greatest strength by some: ability of people to live a Christian life, five; desire of members to grow spiritually, one; prayer life of the church, two; faith in God, two; constancy in doctrine, three; and spiritual and moral standards, two. On the other hand, the following are listed as areas of greatest weakness by others: weak prayer life, four; low standards among members, one; spiritual coldness, one; worldliness among the young women, one; and ignorance of the

scripture on the part of the members, two. It is interesting that one of the pastors who sees this as the greatest weakness of his people is himself only a Standard VII, and has no formal Bible training other than a Bible correspondence which he took with the Seventh Day Adventists. The unity in this diversity might be seen as the striving for an identifiable life style, a distinctive unifying experience rather than a unity in belief.

There is a third area in which both strengths and weaknesses are claimed, namely that of the work carried on. Listed as strengths are: a good evangelization program, two; faithful service of older members, two; monthly home visitation, one; good singing, good preaching by the pastor, one; the fact they work among their own people, one; teaching of the gospel, one; high standards for the training of the pastor, one; number of branches, one; and system of self-government, one. This last was a comment made by a group that broke away from a church that exercised direct control over all the activities of the local churches. Conversely, listed as weaknesses are: non-trained pastors, one; lack of Sunday school, one; failure of the officers to cooperate, one; difficulty of members to get to services, one; inability to attract youth into the church, five. These groups felt that they had adequate contacts with the young people in the Sunday school program, but when the children came to teenage and older they simply did not seem to feel any attraction to or responsibility for the work of their church. In this same area, the one greatest weakness listed by the most groups, nine in all, was a lack of money. From what was said in conversation, I would hazard a guess that many more would have made this same statement were it not felt that to say so was rather unspiritual.

Another area had to do with the Holy Spirit. One group listed as their greatest strength the fact that they "still have the Holy Spirit and therefore can prophesy, when so many

Pentecostals have lost it". One other group also listed as a strength the fact that they believe in the Holy Spirit. Here we have a clear belief distinctive. It is noticeable that strongly held and therefore potentially divisive doctrinal distinctives are almost totally absent from these churches.

Felt organizational weaknesses were understandable in these churches. One man, a self-appointed bishop, listed as the greatest weakness in his church the fact that they had so little regard for the bishop and often opposed his pronouncements. One pastor listed the fact that their greatest weakness is their over-severe punishment of a sinning pastor. This is the group mentioned earlier who puts a pastor off for three years if he falls into sin. I questioned the reason for the pastor looking upon this as a weakness, and was informed by him that although he himself had never been the object of discipline yet the fact that his group held to such an unreasonably severe punishment had served to frighten away potential pastors. He confided to me that he had contacted several young men who were interested in joining his church as evangelists with a view to becoming eventual pastors, but when they heard just how severely they might be punished if they slipped into immorality or some similar sin, they just were not interested in pursuing the matter any further.

One church took the fact of their greatest weakness more into the realm of their greatest problem, and although I tried to get them to look rather to an inherent weakness they were insistent that this was their greatest weakness. In a sense the problem is a weakness, since its existence is the result of an organizational weakness. The situation in this group stems from the fact that the founder of the Independent Church is still living. However, he is now quite old, and so the church has made him an honorary pastor, and the work is effectively in the hands of two other men who have been trained in a local church training institute and are now the only two pastors with this group. In spite of the fact that

the founder personally chose these men, and himself ordained them into the ministry, he is now unable to see them exercising effective leadership in "his" church. He is still able to get around quite well and so attends all business meetings, and apparently cannot be restrained from "advising" on all matters that come up for discussion and decision. I have talked with him on several occasions, and he feels that only he is standing true to the traditional standards of the church which he originated, and is beginning to question his wisdom in turning the leadership over to these two young men, and even vesting them with some of his authority by ordaining them. They on their part are very definite that unless they can restrain him, the church is going to deteriorate further, and rather than accepting any responsibility for reverses, which he considers to be the result of their attempts to change things, they say he is at fault because he is making a division between his cronies from the early days of the work and the new members coming in.

It is difficult to see how this problem is going to be resolved other than by the incapacitation or death of the founder, but the weakness lies in an organizational system which has no built-in preventatives for such a situation. In less well-organized groups, or in a group with pastors not having such strong loyalty to the church, this situation would have resulted in a split or splits long ago, but so far the unity of the groups has been retained.

CHAPTER XIII

THE INDEPENDENT CHURCH RING

Early in the study of the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats, I became aware of the problems faced by men wishing to be ordained for the purpose of founding a new work or carrying on a growing one. In order to discover from whence such ordination was being obtained, I included a question on the survey as to the origin of the ordination of the pastor. In most cases this ordination was obtained from any one of several self-styled Bishops, usually on the basis of a fee or "gift". However, several groups indicated that their men were ordained by "The Ring". Initially, considerable difficulty was experienced in attempting to identify this organization, but with the passage of time and as the result of a growing friendship with the Rev. P.J. February, Jr., of the Independent Dutch Mission, I learned more about this attempt on the part of several of the Independent Churches to set up a unifying organization which could operate as a denomination or perhaps more accurately a super-denominational body for them.

Finally, through the strenuous efforts of the Rev. February and a Rev. Jinka I was given access to the minute books for the organization, going back to its founding in 1941. The Rev. February passed away only a very few months after I had obtained the books and I am grateful for his efforts which made available to me this rather important history which in a sense reflects the strivings, the ambitions, and the trials of the Independent Coloured Churches of the Cape Flats.

It appears from the records of early meetings that the Ring was from the beginning the brain child of the Rev. P.J. February, Jr., son of the Rev. P.J. February, founder in 1902 of the Independent Dutch Mission. For the first fifteen years of the Ring's existence, the Rev. February was Chairman, and during the remainder of its time he always served either as

Treasurer or Moderator. The organizational meeting for the Ring was held in his church on the 22nd February 1941, which was known from that time as its official birthday. The churches which took part in that initial meeting were the Independent Dutch Mission, the Evangelie Stewers Sending Kerk, and the Algemene Beskerming Unie Kerk. They were joined in a very few years by the Namaqua Methodist Church, the Christelike Verenigde Kerk, the Algemene Sendeling Kerk, and after ten years by the Independent Lutheran Church. From time to time other churches approached the Ring, or visited its Conferences, but these make up the total number of churches actually in the Ring. Several of these have branches, all of which were included in the Ring through their parent body. One of the founding members, the Algemene Beskerming Unie Kerk, has since disappeared.

Over the years of its existence, a total of 28 pastors were mentioned in the minute book. Some of these held office only briefly or appeared before one or more of the various meetings, while others were more actively involved. We have mentioned the Rev. February and his work during the entire history of the Ring. During the latter years of its existence, the chairmanship was held by a Rev. Jinka or a Rev. Gourrah, during which time they were members of the Beskermers Kerk, then the Stewers Kerk, and finally co-founders of a new group. In this same period, the Rev. van den Hever of the Namaqua Methodist Church was very active in various leadership positions. It seems that these same men controlled the offices over most of the 38 years of the Ring's existence.

In the official records there are few statements made as to the purpose for bringing the Ring into being, but as the organization developed these aims were revealed in their activities and expressed concerns. The only stated purpose was to make it possible for the Independent Churches to work together, reflecting perhaps a feeling that individually they were vulnerable to outside pressures, or the desire to compare more

favourably with the large denominational groups. Several of the actions taken reflect a desire to help one another, such as contributions made for a sick brother, loans made to various member bodies for the purchase of property or to erect a building, and a plan to provide pulpit supply for pastors during their holiday periods. Their vision was not limited to Kensington and the Ravensmead/Elsies River area, since one of their official pronouncements included the fact that: "This Conference sees all of Southern Africa as being within its jurisdiction". When compared to the size of the organization, the statement might be considered somewhat grandiose, but it does reflect the way in which the members saw the Ring.

The term used in the minutes was invariably "The Ring", but this was simply shorthand for the official name. At the first Conference, after considerable discussion and putting off the final decision until later sessions, the official title chosen was "Algemene Kleurde Ring". However, this was not really acceptable, for two years later at the third Conference the name was changed to "Independente Algemene Gekleurde Ring van Suid Afrika". Then at the sixth Conference this was further changed to "Independente Stewers Sending Kerk Ring van Suid Afrika". One sees here perhaps something from the Independent Dutch Mission and the Evangelie Stewers Kerk, both founding congregations of the Ring. However, as has been mentioned, the full title appears only in the minutes when first chosen, and for the rest of the time the pastors themselves refer to the body by simply the Ring. Actually, the ministers not associated with the group often referred to it in discussion as the "Coloured Church League" or simply the "Church League".

The organization of the Ring appears to have been somewhat complex, bearing in mind the number of church bodies involved. However, the founders were obviously starting as they intended going on, and the organization must be judged from that

perspective. All of the founding churches had their origins in the Dutch Reformed Church, and as would be expected, their organizational chart reflects this. They made provision firstly for an Annual Conference, which appears to have been made up of anyone who wished to attend. At one time they were preparing for 1 000 for the week-end conference, even though not nearly so many eventually turned up. It is difficult to determine from the minutes just who could speak at the Conference and who could vote, for often the number of votes cast was far less than the total number present. One suspects that delegates from each cooperating church were permitted to vote, but the minutes did not include any accepted list of delegates.

At the Annual Conference several officers were elected. These included the usual Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Vice Secretary, Treasurer and Trustee. These all seemed to hold annual offices and were active not only during the Annual Conference but also during the course of the year between conferences. Also elected were a Marshall and an Assistant-Marshall, apparently for the purpose of keeping order, as reflected in some incidents recorded in the minutes. Also chosen were a Konsulent, an Aktuaris, and a Moderator, reflecting their experience with the Dutch Reformed Church. It is difficult to see how these offices were utilized in the Ring organization in the same way they were in the Dutch Reformed Church, and other than the record of men being elected to the offices no further mention was made of their activities. An auditor was elected annually, but no report of his work ever appeared in the official minutes.

The so-called Ring met monthly between Annual Conference sessions. No direct information is given as to the composition of the Ring, or its activities, but one can deduce these from the minutes. It appears to have been made up of lay-men chosen by each participating group plus the executive officers of the Annual Conference. As such, it

seems to have had the overall responsibility for the development of the Ring itself and all cooperative efforts of the several churches making up the organization. In addition to these two bodies, much of the business was carried by four ministers and the Secretary who made up an Executive Board. The minutes of this Board are interspersed with the minutes of the Ring, and seem to carry the same authority. To add to the burden of meetings, a Hoër Raad was chosen from time to time. This was made up of one minister from each cooperating church, and again one finds the minutes of the meetings of this Board intermingled with the minutes of the three other bodies. In fact, it was not unknown for the Ring, the Executive and the Hoër Raad, all three to meet and issue minutes in any one month. One is moved to considerable respect for the individuals involved for their willingness to be active month after month, year after year, in this organization. During the first half of its existence there was on the average one meeting every sixty-three days, and during the second half one meeting every thirty-eight days, and most of these meetings involved the same men.

In their determination to reach their avowed goal of fostering cooperation among the various Coloured Independent Churches, the Ring worked out in various directions. An early project was the preparation of a "Preaching Plan". This was a program whereby the ministers of the cooperating churches traded pulpits on a regular basis. Over the years, the planning and preparation of this preaching plan seems to have taken up an inordinate share of the available time, indicating the high priority placed upon it. As time went by it seems to have enjoyed times of considerable success, but often churches would complain to the Ring that they had waited in vain for the pastor on the plan to appear, and since their own pastor was fulfilling his obligation in another pulpit they were left with no minister for that particular Sunday. At one time it was decided that pastors would preach twice in their own pulpit and twice away, but this was changed

to three times at home and once away. At times the preaching plan was looked upon as a way to bolster an anaemic treasury, and the directive went out that the offerings taken when a member of the Ring preached were to go to the Ring rather than to the local coffers. One can imagine that this did not endear the program either to the local pastor who saw his income and therefore his salary diminished by this amount, or to the local Church Board who had to meet their budget now on three Sundays' offerings rather than on four. Perhaps the necessity of exhorting the local pastors and churches to co-operate can be explained by the loss of income that followed their participation in this system of pulpit exchange.

However, the Preaching Plan was not by any means the only attempt to foster cooperation. Early in its existence the Ring appointed a committee to look into the choosing of a song book which could be used by all churches cooperating. By the end of its second year, Evangelie Gesange Boek had become standard, and forty years later is the only book used by these churches and by some that had been members of the Ring and had for some reason withdrawn. In their search for uniformity they decided that pastors and lay-representatives attending the monthly Ring meetings should wear the same coloured clothes. It was decided by the second year that all churches were to meet at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. and that the order of service was to be the same in all groups, although this latter would require some time to be worked out. Ministers were to wear the clerical collar and to be called Eerwaarde not Meneer. It was stipulated that if a Ring pastor officiated at a funeral he must wear the toga (robe), but if he was there just to pay his respects he should wear the clerical collar. Elders were to wear a tail coat and white tie, and deacons to wear the short coat and white tie. A note was added, in 1942, that a tail coat cost £15.

The content of the Sunday services was to be standardized as much as possible, The Minister was to give the notices in

the Church, rather than the Secretary. Men were to stand for prayer, women to sit, but since there was a difference in custom as regarded standing for the creed, departures from the norm would be permitted. Ministers were to go to the door to greet the congregation at the end of the service.

With the passage of time, greater emphasis was laid on the member congregations doing things together. It was decided that all meet together for communion on Good Friday, Ascension Day, and the Day of the Covenant. It was felt that this would require one system for communion, so this was planned. By ten years after its founding the Ring included a Mothers' Union, a Choir Union, a Sunday School Union, and a Youth Union. Plans were made for the formation of a Boys' Brigade and a Girls' Brigade, but no mention is made as to what was accomplished. The other unions appear in the minutes from time to time, either being commended for good work done or being rebuked for some failure. In 1954 it was suggested that all pastors for the Ring be trained in the same educational institution, and the Lutheran College in Pietermaritzburg offered its services in this capacity. The offer was accepted and the Ring also requested a correspondence course for pastors. An educational fund was established to provide the finances needed for such training, and mention is made in subsequent minutes of offerings given or projects undertaken to build up this fund. However, by 1970 no one had come forward to receive training, and even though the fund-raising efforts continued no mention was made of any one attending the college.

It appears that from the very beginning there were those involved in the Ring who looked upon it as a means for final amalgamation of the cooperating churches into one body. By 1948 it had been suggested membership cards be prepared to facilitate movements of members from one Ring church to another. In 1950 ministers were directed to schedule one month's vacation annually and were assured that the Konsulant would provide pulpit supply for them in their absence. At

the same conference, plans were presented for a common pension plan for all Ring pastors. On the 9th of September, 1951, a visit of Dr I.D. Morkel of the Calvin Protestant Church is recorded. Dr Morkel's work is discussed at some length elsewhere in this thesis, but at this point it must be noted that he had been trained by the Dutch Reformed Church, but because he was a man of Colour was not able to enter their pastorate. Just one year before this he had broken away to found the Calvin Church and had already made his mark as an effective leader. It appears obvious from the minutes that even though the Ring had been operating for ten years and its founding member churches had been in some cases in existence since just after the turn of the century, they anticipated some sort of link up with Dr Morkel. However, such was not to be, for the final decision was that, "We will not change our policies to go with another church, so will not go with Dr Morkel and the Calvinist Church". Since that decision the churches making up the Ring have by and large dropped back in membership and outreach or have made limited progress, while the Calvin Church has gone on growing in numbers and influence.

In 1954, as the result of controversy between several Ring members, it was suggested that the Ring break up and the pastors work in their own churches. However, this suggestion was rejected.

The next serious attempt at amalgamation was made in the 1972 Annual Conference where a committee was organized to present a constitution and by-laws for forming a United Church at the next Annual Conference, and some discussion was held as to a possible name. At the 1973 Conference the suggested constitution was presented and it was decided to circulate it to the congregations for their approval. The name, Herwonne Protestantse Sending Kerk was chosen. At the 1974 Conference the proposed Constitution was finally accepted, with the notation that its goals, organization, and doctrine were acceptable. It was further provided that while the churches in

the Ring were founding members of the Herwormde Protestante Sending Kerk, other members from Protestant churches might join. It does not appear that provision was made for other churches to come in as organizations but only as individual members, for it was specified that they must show baptism and membership cards, must come with letter of transfer, must be thoroughly investigated and must have (had?) nine months of catechism. At the close of that Conference there was an ominous note that the constitution should not be accepted because it was not in proper form.

Strangely enough, the amalgamation is never referred to again, and business goes on as usual, not only in the monthly meetings but also in subsequent Annual Conferences. The fact that the amalgamation issue has been quietly shelved or ignored can be seen in the fact that in the 1975 Conference the request is made by two member bodies, the Evangelie Stewers Sending Kerk in Ravensmead and the Algemene Beskerming Unie Kerk in Elsies River, to unite as the Herstigte Protestante Sendelinge Kerk. The two men involved are Pastors Gourrah and Jinka, both of whom are to figure very prominently in the Ring for the rest of its existence. However, this request involves a difficult decision, for the Stewers Kerk in Ravensmead is a branch of the original Stewers Kerk in Kensington, one of the founding bodies of the Ring. Further, Pastor Jinka had been one of their pastors. In spite of what appears to have been a direct steal of a congregation, and in fact the Rev. Gaffley in an interview refers to it as just that, the Ring goes along with the amalgamation, losing in the process, as might be expected, the presence and future support of the Rev. Gaffley and the Stewers Kerk.

An interesting comment on this amalgamation of these two groups is made in the 1976 Annual Conference, one year later, to the effect that the union of two churches into the Herstigte Protestante Sendelinge Kerk has not been to any advantage, so what purpose is there in talking about union.

In the annual Conference of 1978 it is suggested that the churches must work together spiritually, and perhaps the funds gathered for the Ring "should be given to the different churches ...". By this time only three churches and four pastors are actively involved, e.g. Independent Dutch Mission, the Namaqua Methodist Church and the new Herstigte Protestantse Sendinge Kerk, and the Revs. February, van den Hever, Gourrah and Jinka. The final division of funds is recorded.

Independent Dutch Mission R665,30; Herstigte Protestantse Sendinge Kerk R665,30 and Namaqua Methodist Church R615,32, the latter's lesser amount being explained by the fact that they still owed R50,00 on a loan made to them years before.

Although the Ring had not accomplished its purposes of becoming a factor in the church throughout Southern Africa, one can see positive accomplishments during the 37 years it remained in operation. During the height of its activities it oversaw the united program of perhaps as many as twenty congregations with a membership of several thousand. It certainly provided a training ground in organization for those who participated in its various conferences, boards, committees, etc. It exercised discipline on its members, notably pastors, although not even the lay members could escape the results of inept work, as when the secretary was informed by the chairman that he was "irresponsible" when he mislaid the minutes of the previous meeting. When Mr Jinka, then a member of the Strewers Kerk raised an objection against his minister he was told to speak first to his Church Board, and was directed to leave the meeting forthwith. This took place in 1942, but one can see here the tension which finally erupts when this same Mr Jinka, now the Rev. Jinka takes away a branch of this same church which he has been pastoring for this same minister and unites it to another church.

One notes with some amusement the occasion when the Rev. Scholtz, pastor of the Algemene Beskerming Unie Kerk, and one of the founding members of the Ring asks that the Strewers Kerk

be suspended for a period of time. His suggestion is put to a vote which he loses 9-4, and a further vote with the same margin directs him to leave the meeting. It is noted in the minutes that, "He leaves with love and peace". In the course of the fifth Annual Conference the Rev. Gaffley of the Strewers Kerk in referring to Mr Hartzenberg of the Algemene Sendeling Kerk of Hugenot whose ordination has been requested by his church says, "There are worse ministers than he". He is rebuked from the Chair, and leaves the meeting, apparently without love and peace! At a special meeting of the Ring held a week later he apologizes and is restored. It is interesting to note that the Ring at this subsequent meeting cannot agree on the ordination of Mr Hartzenberg.

The tension between the Algemene Beskerming Unie Kerk and the Strewers Kerk surfaces again two years later and the Annual Conference acts as mediator, with both being willing to accept the decision of Conference. At one time or another it seems that with one exception all the ministers involved originally in the Ring either resigned or were suspended. The exception is the Rev. February who appears again and again as the peace-maker and the man of wise counsel, working always for co-operation and brotherhood.

The place of the Evangelist in the organization of the Independent Churches has from the beginning of this study presented some questions. I had hoped that these records would cast light on the matter, but for the most part it appears that the confusion I felt was but a reflection of that experienced by the pastors themselves. Requests are made to have men ordained as evangelists, and the response is, "Why should they be ordained just to be evangelists?" However, they are registered by the Ring as a separate group from the Elders who are obviously laymen and the Pastors who are obviously clergymen. By 1970, owing to the shortage of ordained men and the difficulty of filling up the Preek Plan,

it is decided that evangelists can be used to fulfil the Preek Plan if no ministers are available, but they must speak from the desk not from the pulpit. However, by 1977 the Ring agrees to ordain two evangelists, providing certificates for them at R5 each. These ordained evangelists will be permitted to enter the pulpit and serve the holy communion if no ordained minister is present. This position is looked upon as temporary, and if they prove themselves then they can be ordained as pastors at the discretion of the Ring.

An interesting feature in the founding and development of the Ring is in the fact that all of the groups that became actively involved with it were Observer Type Churches. The records include the names of pastors from Participant Type groups who visited the conference or who even appeared before smaller committees of the Ring. Sometimes they did so in their personal capacity, but in other instances it appears likely that they did so as representatives of their church or group of churches. However, there is no record of any individual from one of these groups ever requesting affiliation with the Ring either as an individual, which was possible within the policies of the organization, or on behalf of his group. Obviously the presence of these pastors indicates their desire to identify with a larger grouping of their own people, but their failure to carry through and commit themselves to active involvement can be explained by the basic difference between Participant and Observer Type Churches.

As mentioned, the Ring was the brain-child of the Rev. February of the Independent Dutch Mission, a church that had been formed by workers and members from the Dutch Reformed Church. The Rev. February was joined in the organizational meeting by men from the Evangelie Stewers Sending Kerk, a group which also came out of the Dutch Reformed Church, and by representatives from the Algemene Beskerming Unie Kerk of unknown origins. As has been mentioned, the offices and officers provided for in the organizational plan of the Ring reflect this background.

The strong Observer Type stamp they placed on the organization, and through their thrust for unity on the very order of the worship services of cooperating bodies would tend to attract groups of a similar background and inhibit those from differing confessions. This is reflected in the fact that the bodies that joined them later, groups coming out of the African Methodist Episcopal, from the Methodist Church, and from the Lutheran Church, had all had their church experience in groups holding to similar organizational patterns and not too different patterns of worship.

It is equally obvious that this type of polity and worship would be completely foreign to the Participant Type groups. The requirements for deacons and elders, including even the garb they were to wear and their decorum in services, the rigidly structured order of worship, including the directions as to who was to stand and who to sit, what hymn book was to be used, and how the minister was to greet his congregation, all would run counter to the free style of worship that was enjoyed and practiced by the Participant Type groups. One can imagine that the feelings would be mutual, for nothing could be further from worship as practiced by the Observer Type group than the seeming unstructured chaos which at times characterizes the meetings of their freer brethren in the Participant Type. Perhaps here is the basis of the record of the many pastors who visited the meetings of the Ring but made no request to join and who never returned. Perhaps here is the basis of the decision of the Ring that if they became a single new Denomination then they would accept no other churches as a group, but only individuals would be permitted to join as persons. Perhaps they were erecting a barrier against some Participant Type group coming in and bringing its worship practices with it to the eventual detriment of the body as a whole.

In the realm of conjecture, we can suggest that such a program for union as represented in the Ring did not accord with the outlook of the Participant Type groups. For them, worship is a

more personal thing, requiring the minimum of people to whom one can testify and with whom one can give way to the leading of the Spirit. The service can be held today, and perhaps next week, but if not convenient then certainly not essential. If a pastor comes, well and good, if not, then we do not need a pastor. The idea of a preaching plan with provision made for the filling of every pulpit every Sunday would appear to them quite unnecessary. Certainly the difference made between the ordained and the unordained in the use of the pulpit and the permission to serve communion would not only be strange but even outright undesirable to such. Any attempt to draw two such different groups together would be a mixing of oil and water, a combination that would settle back to its original separate existence as soon as the impetus was taken away.

Perhaps the entire attitude toward the pastorate would be the strongest factor preventing such a unification of the two types. During many, many visits over the years to Observer Type groups, I cannot recall a time when even in the smallest group in the meanest of venues, the fact that I was an ordained pastor was not noted, recognized and provision made for me as such. It was not uncommon for such groups to be without a pastor, an ordained man from time to time, and I often visited when such a man was not there. Under such circumstances, the elder or deacon who was taking the meeting never entered the pulpit, be it ever so simple, but would always lead and even preach from a reading stand. However, it was absolutely essential that I as an ordained man occupy the pulpit. This was not the case only if I were preaching, for often in such a visit I would stress that I had come to fellowship in worship only and would not preach. However, they simply could not be content with my sitting even among the elders, I must occupy the pulpit during the entire service, and always must pronounce the benediction. More than once when I dropped in unexpectedly the elders would ask me to serve Holy Communion. If I agreed, then a hurried preparation of the elements was made so that the service could be held, for without an ordained man they could not celebrate it.

Nothing could be farther from the practice of the Participant Type. Although my presence was welcome, and I was often asked to preach, there was no great emphasis placed on the use of the pulpit, when there was one. The practice of everyone testifying, leading songs and singing more or less erased, for practical purposes, the clergy/laity distinction. I recall a particular instance in which I was called by the pastor of a Participant Type group and asked to preach for him the coming Sunday since he was to be out of town. The service was to be held at quite an early hour, and although I had another service at 11 I felt there would be no problem with time, so I agreed to go. I arrived before the service commenced, and was met by the man who was to lead the meeting. I received the distinct impression that he was not too happy to have me there, apparently because he would have preferred to give the message himself. I informed him that I would have to leave by 10.30 at the latest, and asked that I be put on no later than 10. The service was to begin at 8, but in actual fact got going about 8.20. The usual lengthy preliminaries took place, and as time wore on I became conscious of the fact that the leader was doing nothing to bring things to a close by 10, but rather seemed to be keeping them going and dragging things out. The upshot was that as he was leading in yet another chorus at 10.10, I simply got up and walked out. This was an isolated instance, but it reflects an attitude toward the pastor that would never have taken place in an Observer Type group, and as such underlines the impossibility of even a tentative union between the two groups. Yet the contacts made indicate a desire to express the wider unity felt among the coloured peoples, and from the Observer Type churches anyway the outreach to other Christians regardless of colour indicates that for the most part we are not dealing here with sects as that term is used by Wilson, for example.

Although the last recorded meeting of the Ring took place in 1978, there was some talk in 1982 of commencing its work again. With the recent demise of the Rev. February and the serious

illness of the Rev. van den Hever, it will be interesting to see who provides the leadership, in addition to the Revs. Jinka and Gourrah. One also wonders the direction which will be taken by such a revitalized Ring, if in fact a new start is made in view of the more political environment such as presently obtains in the Cape Flats. Leadership will have to be taken by the younger men, and the programs adopted and policies followed will give significant insight into how deeply the political situation has affected the religious affiliations of the people.

Note on Chapter XIII

1. O'Dea, 1966; page 91

This author indicates that in the early days of the emergence of a new religious group, there is little organization, no professionalism, but a simplistic proclamation that meets complex needs. He suggests that as time passes the new group becomes increasingly organized and a professional clergy emerges, with it a complex set of expectations, responsibilities, standards, both confusing the issues for the simple members and cutting them off from meaningful participation. To a degree this is what is being seen in this exceedingly complete and complex organizational chart in the Ring. However, one must recognize that even though the organization being set up here was far in excess of the needs of the people, it had its roots in the very advanced church group, the Dutch Reformed Church, from which these Independent Churches had come.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF DISTRICT SIX IN THE APPEARANCE
OF THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

In the early days of settlement of first the Dutch then later the other European groups in the Cape, the first houses were in close proximity to the harbour, for this was the area in which the business was transacted, and the erection of the fort provided security against the real or fancied dangers posed by the Bushmen and Hottentots who were found in the area by the first settlers. However, as time went on the first free burghers moved away from the docks area into the more attractive farmland to be found on the eastern slopes of the mountain, from the area that is now Mowbray all the way south to Constantia. South of the docks, lying against the slopes of Devils Peak was an area not particularly to be desired for housing since it was buffeted by the South East wind that raced down Table Mountain and was made up principally of rocky soil that made building difficult and gardens an impossibility.

This area, called District Six after the police station on its border, became the housing location for the Mixed peoples of Cape Town, specifically the Coloured, but also the Cape Malay, the Indian, the Oriental, etc. The housing was erected for the most part by Whites, or in some cases by wealthy Malay business men, and as time went on shops and bioscopes appeared as did the churches. Here were to be found the Coloured mother churches of the major denominations: the Moravian, the Lutheran, the Anglican, the African Methodist Episcopal, and the mosques and the temples of Islam and Hinduism. As time went on, District Six became more and more a slum. It had an undeniable life and charm of its own. The very diversity of the peoples living there, its proximity to the docks providing shore-going amenities to the sailors of many nations, and the free and easy-going life style of its people made it a great attraction to visitors not only from the city of Cape Town

which lay at its feet but also from foreign countries as well.

However, since there was little home ownership on the part of those who lived there, the area became more and more crowded, with entire families reduced to living in one room, and large houses simply bursting at the seams with twenty or thirty people of all levels of relationship living in one teeming crowd. The buildings became utterly decrepit, with the owners more concerned to collect rent than renovate their properties.² The crowding and the run-down conditions led to the appearance of the gangs, both the informal groups of scavengers on street corners and the closely organized and well-known gangs that made their business in drink, vice, and even murder if the price were right. For all its shortcomings and lacks, it is remembered with affection by most of those who knew it, for tens of thousands of people knew no other type of life, and made shift to make the best of what they had. By any external standard they were deprived, in modern sociological jargon, disadvantaged, but since they did not see themselves as disadvantaged they did not develop the attitudes nor engage in the activities which characterize the individual who sees himself as labouring under a less advantageous position as compared to someone else. The churches were there, and were well-known and afforded a modicum of respect, although it is doubtful if more than a minority of the people were at all actively engaged in their work.

Then with the implementation of the Group Areas Act, the entire District Six was declared White, and the government embarked upon a process of forced removals, and within a few years District Six existed only in the songs, the folklore, the paintings and the memories of its erstwhile inhabitants. It was bulldozed flat and prepared for its White inhabitants, for its location overlooking the modern harbour and immediately adjacent to the Cape Town City centre made it in this day and age a choice residential area. The Coloured

people whose presence there had gone back for many generations were settled out in the Cape Flats, their community ties ruptured, their pattern of life destroyed, and their minds embittered against those responsible for this outrage. As could be predicted by any sociologist, this breakdown of a traditional community system that had developed and stabilized over decades of time brought in its wake endless misery for those involved; economic, social, cultural, and spiritual.

For the purpose of this thesis I am interested in the phenomenon of District Six because it poses some very difficult questions. Insofar as I have been able to determine, no Independent Churches originated in District Six, or if any did begin they did not last long enough to develop into an established church or long enough to be remembered by the many individuals surveyed in the course of preparing this thesis. However, and this is the crux of the matter, among the people who were moved from District Six out into Elsies River and Ravensmead were those who immediately began to organize themselves into Independent Churches, and it is in precisely those two areas that over two-thirds of all these groups originated. The obvious question is, what was there in District Six which met the needs of the people which could only be met in Elsies River by the formation of and co-operation with the Independent Churches? It must be pointed out that when the people came to Elsies River they found the Established Churches already there. The Anglican Church was there, the A.M.E., the Moravian; not so long established as in District Six, nor so grand perhaps, but they were there and ready and willing to accept the influx of new people and to minister to them. Why did not the people move into these churches in their new area but instead began to gather in homes, in garages, in halls, and even at times under trees in an unprecedented, as far as we can tell, local church founding movement?

This question, when put to the people of the community, usually drew a blank look and the obvious rejoinder that it had never been considered. One off-the-cuff suggestion was that the people felt that the Established Churches had not done enough to defend them against the government and its policies of removal, and so the people were rejecting such and were now establishing their own groups.³ Another suggestion was that the difficulties of travel in Elsie's River made travel to the local churches inconvenient, and it was easier to go to the group around the corner, regardless of what it might be. This may well have been the case, but certainly these reasons cannot account for the magnitude of the reaction in the formation of entirely new groups, not least because the life of the mother churches in District Six hung on, even thrived, long after most of the houses around them had been demolished as the people who were able to travelled back for Sunday services where their roots lay.

Economically, there does not seem to be all that much to choose between Elsie's River and District Six, but deprivation must be felt before it produces its fruits. As I have suggested, the people of District Six did not feel deprived, and it was only when the humiliation of the loss of their vote was coupled with the loss of their homes that they realized the extent to which they had been barred from the privileges afforded to the others of the South African society, and began to react in a fashion to be expected of consciously deprived people.

Political situations undoubtedly contributed to the feelings of the people, and the bases of the appearance of the Independent Churches must be sought there also. Coincident with the legislation that set up the Group Areas removals was that which took from the Coloured people their position on the common voters roll, effectively depriving them of the vote and of the possibility of any of their number representing their interests in the local governing bodies. Thus

they were the victims of a double blow. They became voiceless at the same time they became stateless. No figures have been available as to the percentage of the inhabitants of District Six who actually voted, and most estimates place it very low, but the fact remains that they had the vote, and they had a traditional home, and both were lost to them. Since the vote was lost they had no effective way of protesting the loss of their home.

The anger and resentment against those in authority flowing from this situation have not abated more than ten years later. Undoubtedly this rejection of authority was carried over in their rejection of the authority of the Traditional Churches, and the leadership they encountered there. They obviously felt the need for doing something, for personal involvement, and certainly both these needs were met, along with the need to worship and serve God in the formation of the Independent Churches. What they could not do politically (determine their own destiny and shape their own lives) they could do in their own home-grown church groups and a man who had perhaps dreamed one day of standing in the Cape Town City Council, a dream now shattered, could begin to exercise his leadership skills in drawing a group of people around himself and becoming their pastor.

One thing is certain, there was a stability, a certainty about their lives in District Six, and this stability was shattered by the removal. Perhaps the very existence of the churches in District Six had contributed to that security, and even though the average inhabitant had not been deeply committed to a particular church or to what it represented, he did identify with them to the extent that he did not feel the need of any other religious body, certainly he did not feel the need with sufficient intensity to become involved in starting his own group. However, with the loss of that secure situation, his experience of anomie drove him to search for new foundations. Even though he might not have been all that active in the church heretofore, he now saw it

as a source of certainty and community, a reminder if you will of the life in District Six now forever lost to him. Coupled with a natural resentment against the organized church which had not been able to prevent the loss of his rights, this need for a church of his own led inevitably to the cooperation with a new group, even the formation of his own group. One could suggest that the average person while living in District Six recognized and perhaps to some degree supported the church, not because it was of itself significant to him, but because it was part of District Six.

Professor Cumpsty likens the situation there to the peasant catholic village typical of southern Europe in which the church pervades the life of the village rather than that people attend the church frequently and en masse. Certainly there is evidence that District Six had a strong community lore. One nurse who completed part of her training in the maternity hospital established in that area testified that no individual would have dared molest a nurse in uniform going or coming at any hour of day or night for fear of what the community would have done to him. Whatever value is to be placed on such individual opinions it remains certain that inhabitants of District Six for the most part had a strong sense of belonging to a community of which the church formed a part. With the removal they felt the need for that same security and meaning. Some tried to retain it for a while by returning to the churches of their roots, others having no strong responsibility to any one group felt free to go anywhere and Independent Churches were born.

Notes on Chapter XIV

1. Venter, A., 1974; page 68
"Gradually, as the European sector became more affluent, the Whites moved further up the slopes of Table Mountain or around the foothills towards Claremont, Rondebosch and Wynberg."
2. Venter, A., 1974; page 69
"The owners of many of the buildings, almost sensing an impending change - allowed their buildings to stand unattended and unrepaired. All that the majority were interested in was the rent which they collected with routine promptness each Friday of the week."
3. Pope, Liston, 1942; page 140
"The sect, in summary, represents a reaction, cloaked at first in purely religious guise, against both religious and economic institutions. Overtly it is a protest against the failure of religious institutions to come to grips with the needs of marginal groups, existing unnoticed on the fringes of cultural and social organizations."

CHAPTER XV

GENERAL REASONS FOR THE APPEARANCE OF THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

The primary purpose of this project has been to investigate the extent and nature of the Independent Church movement among the Coloured people of the Cape Flats, that being of necessity the first task. However, some attempt must be made to discover the reasons behind their appearance, although this should be the subject of a further study, the ground work now having been completed. Generally, what has gone before has been descriptive in nature. I now enter upon the realm of speculation, and what is offered must be more in the nature of suggestions for future studies than final conclusions.

I have used the phrase "the disadvantaged" or "disinherited",¹ or "dispossessed",² to describe those who exist under conditions in which they are barred from the benefits that come to the remainder of the members of their particular society. This condition may be financial in nature, as they are prevented from receiving the average national wage for their labour. It may be political in that they are not permitted to exercise a meaningful share in the government under which they live. It may be social in that they are placed in a despised or delimited social group.

However, this condition of being "disadvantaged" must be recognized by the individuals themselves before it produces observable results in the lives of the people. That is to say, it is not enough that a part of society be prevented from sharing in the benefits of technology or from the financial rewards given to others for their labour in their society for them to be consciously "disadvantaged". They must also see themselves as such, for only then will they react in an appropriate fashion. It must also be recognized that there are individuals and even groups in any society who see themselves to be "disadvantaged" when in reality by comparison with the

average in that society they are really not. However, so long as they see themselves in this way, they will make the moves, experience the feelings and frustrations, and react in ways that are predictable for that particular segment of society.³

What is also interesting here is the fact that the compensating actions of the "disadvantaged" may not always be immediately evident as, or indeed be, a means for changing their "disadvantaged" situation.

The individual making the moves has not always consciously intended them to be for the purpose of changing his situation, but the fact that they have been made in compensation for the "felt disadvantage" can often be seen. For example, a group of people who have been economically exploited by unscrupulous bosses who have not paid them fairly on the basis of the value of their labour in terms of the finished product might move to organize themselves so as to engage in collective bargaining. This would be a case in which the action taken was a direct attempt to change the "disadvantaged" situation. However, it appears that to a considerable degree, the appearance of the Independent Churches are compensatory in nature, although the individuals most directly involved are not aware of this cause/effect relationship, or at least none of them put this into words in the course of interviews. Thus, it is necessary to interpret indirect data rather than to rely on direct answers given to specific questions.

It seems obvious that there is no single reason for the appearance of the Independent Churches. That is to say, no single cause was operative in the formation of all the groups, and further that only rarely can one single cause be pinpointed as the sole reason for the appearance of any one church. There are multiple causes at work here, and it is doubtful if even those most active in the formation of new groups have verbalized or recognized the influences acting on them. There

is, of course, the very general factor operative in so many Independents consciously or otherwise, of resenting dependence upon another for one's religion, especially if the other is seen as oppressor. More specifically, there are political forces directly and overtly involved in the appearance of some of the groups. In the case of several, notably the Calvin Church, the primary and seemingly overriding motive for the withdrawal of the founder, Dr Morkel, from the Dutch Reformed Church and his organization of a new church based on almost identical principles and operating under identical polity was political in nature, namely his rejection of the Nationalist policy which was being practiced even in the church. However, one cannot rule out personal considerations on the part of the founder, nor social and economic motives on the part of the many thousands who followed him out of the established church and into the new independent group.

In some cases, economic reasons may well have provided the motive for the formation of the new group. I have given examples of instances in which the established denominations, or even an older Independent Church has moved up the economic scale as its members have obtained better jobs with increased salaries, and these have been reflected in the clothing worn, the transportation used, the houses into which they have moved. The result has been that members who have not been so fortunate economically have not felt welcome or at home with these more affluent members of the church, and have been forced either to seek a church home in another group of their own economic level or to begin yet another Independent Church which would be made up of those among whom they felt comfortable.

Organizational reasons have lain behind the formation of other churches. As groups have advanced from untrained to trained leadership they have ordinarily moved toward a more structured program and away from what is described by some as "the leading of the Spirit". Even though this move may meet with the approval of the majority of the congregation who feel that this

establishes them as a church to be reckoned with, there will usually be those who look upon such control by the pastor as a threat to their independence of action and it is not unusual for some of the 'old guard' to withdraw and go back to the familiar form of service.

Probably very few members of the Independent Churches would admit to social stratification reasons based even perhaps on degree of colour as the motive behind the organization of a new group, but it may be an underlying cause in the cases mentioned which are generally ascribed to economic or organizational reasons. In cases in which the church has moved to other areas as the result of reclassification by the Group Areas Board, the social strata now surrounding it may be such as to inhibit attendance by some members who will then organize a new group in which they will feel more at home. It should be stressed that this works in either direction, either up or down the socio-economic ladder. The people of the Cape Flats, in common with people anywhere, are more comfortable worshipping with their 'own kind' of people and will absent themselves from services if a church with such is not available to them, or if they have leadership abilities they will seek to organize a new group or gather such together into a new relationship within the existing group.

Regardless of the causes for their formation, the vast diversity of the Independent Churches indicates the variety of human interests, experiences and expectations. One can trace within the groups examined the full spectrum of types. On the one hand, the open church, such as those associated with the Independent Church Ring who have no hesitation in affirming each other to be equally valid and acceptable expressions of man's wish to belong to God. Their exchanges of pulpit, their willingness to share in services of ordination as well as baptism and the Lord's Supper, all indicate their open nature.^{4,5,6} On the other extreme are to be found those, in the minority to be sure, who see themselves as the only true expression of man's relationship to God, and as such condemn

out of hand all other groups, most especially that from which they have come out. Perhaps the most extreme example of this attitude would be found in the Reformed Old Apostolic Church, but similar convictions can be traced in the four groups that hold to a Christ-centred universalism, namely the so-called "Jesus Only" groups. One can perhaps draw the conclusion that the Independent Churches that hold to the historic Christian doctrine generally tend to be accepting of each other in spite of differences in emphasis, polity and in peripheral beliefs. On the other hand, in those groups that have departed from these beliefs, there is an almost automatic rejection of everyone else, as would be expected, but the question remains as to why these highly exclusive groups attract significant numbers of adherents. Perhaps one of the more subtle causes in the formation of the Independent Churches is reflected in the way in which they meet the individual's need for a sense of importance and significance. In the larger established church or denomination it is very easy for a person to be overlooked, to be ignored, in the numbers of those who attend and participate. However, in the formation of a new Independent Church such a person is significant, if only because they fill a seat and thus add to the appearance of growth and stability. The individual recognizes this, and is given a personal sense of worth which compensates for the smallness of the group and the lack of physical amenities left behind in the move from a better-endowed and established church.

However, this principle must be applied with some care, since the smaller group can constitute a threat to the individual with a very low self-image, presenting as it does the possibility of being called upon to participate in one fashion or another. For such, the anonymity of the larger group into which they can merge unnoticed presents the greater attraction and thus is more likely to meet their personal needs and preference. This same spectrum, from visibility to anonymity is clearly also at work in the choice between membership of Participant and Observer Type Independent Churches.

A more subtle force at work in the formation of the independent groups can best be categorized as psychological and is evidenced in the mind set and attitude engendered by the anomie that has resulted in much of the Coloured community as the result of government policies enforced by the Group Areas Board. With the exception of Athlone and its surrounding suburbs, where there has been no suggestion of removals or re-classification of living areas, much of the Cape Flats has existed in an atmosphere characterized by uncertainty brought on by the possibility of resettlement into some other area. It is certainly significant that Athlone itself has seen the formation of only two or three of the independent groups, while the relatively less popular areas of Elsie's River and Ravensmead which have been the principal resettlement areas have been the spawning ground of the vast majority. Lest this be taken as an indication that the shift in location and resultant change in neighbours is the causative factor, there is no evidence of any new independent groups in either Mitchell's Plain or Atlantis, both of which are middle and upper-middle class housing areas. However, in the movements into these areas, the individuals involved have moved voluntarily, and for the most part the move has been viewed as a move upward into better living conditions.

To return to my premise that the uncertainty that followed the policy of reclassifying areas has been causative in Independent Church formation, I reiterate that it is in precisely those areas to which people have been moved that we have witnessed the appearance of most of the independent groups. Further, although the percentage of immigration into the Cape Flats from the farms of the outlying areas has not been all that significant, the most of those who have moved in have settled in Elsie's River and Ravensmead, and as such they represent also those who have traded the certainty of a settled way of life for the uncertainty of a city suburb of the lower economic level.

In the chapter in which the move from District Six was discussed, mention was made of the fact that although many people in the District did not regularly attend church, yet the very existence of the church was a source of security to them. This fact was further underscored by the observed fact that many who had perhaps principally used the church more as a symbol than a significant activity in their way of life, when they had to move away into Ravensmead or Elsies River suddenly became more regular in attendance at the church back in District Six, and more concerned to participate in the activities and leadership of that church. I witnessed this phenomena in regard to "Mother Bethel", the central and home church of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. When I first moved to Cape Town the exodus from District Six had not yet commenced, and in the course of several visits to Bethel I witnessed rather limited interest on the part of the membership. For a year I held one of our extension school courses in the church, so had ample opportunity to observe it. When any special function was held, whether it was a funeral, a wedding, a confirmation ceremony, or the visit of an overseas guest, then the facilities were normally strained to the utmost.

However, when the people began to move out, and when it became obvious that Bethel would have to be razed, there was a flood of interest evidenced in the services and the building itself. We personally knew families who when living almost next door to the building had been rather nominal members, who after they were moved out into an outlying district, never missed a Sunday service. Even more, although there was an A.M.E. Church in the area to which they moved, they drove right by it on their way to "their" church. It is also significant that when Bethel was finally closed, this family continued their work in their local church with more dedication and enthusiasm than they had ever shown when living next door to "Mother Bethel".

Interestingly enough, this revived interest in fellowship with

and participation in the church as the result of the anomie that resulted from the overall situation in the Coloured areas was evident in the established denominations also. Professor J.S. Cumpsty tells of instances in which such groups out in the Flats were practically evolved into Independent Churches within Established shells by the pressures of their members who desired the kind of personal involvement that such a group provided. There seems little doubt that this state of mind, this attitude of searching for security, meaning and significance, had much to do with the appearance of Independent Churches able to provide a means of meeting this security and fellowship need.

It has become obvious in the course of this study, that the reasons are only rarely doctrinal in nature.⁷ Under questioning, the two doctrinal reasons given for joining a new independent group have been those of the mode and subjects of baptism and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The question of believer baptism by immersion as being superior to infant baptism by sprinkling cannot however be decisive, since many who come to the Independent Churches from the paedo-Baptist groups could, had this been a vital doctrinal problem, have sought baptism by and membership in any one of several established groups who practice believer baptism by immersion, and have thus retained the benefits of membership in a church equipped to minister to the entire needs of the individual and family. Further, a goodly number of the individuals moving into these Independent Churches have come from groups who practice believer baptism by immersion, so this particular problem is of little or no importance to them.

Some would suggest that they have moved because the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was not given place of sufficient importance in the church from which they have moved, the suggestion being that the gifts of the Spirit were not practised nor taught. Again, if this in itself had been a central issue, one of great personal concern and conviction,

it would have been very simple for the individual involved to have become associated with any one of several established Pentecostal groups such as the Assemblies of God, the Apostoliese Geloof Sendeling Kerk, the Full Gospel Church of God or others, and thus have remained in a fully-fledged church body. It is also a fact that a considerable number of those entering Independent Churches have come from established groups that practice what they consider and proclaim to be the visible evidences of the presence of the Holy Spirit, be they established or existing independent bodies, and have entered into new and smaller groups.

The question as to their motives in moving into these new independent groups can be sharpened perhaps if one gives some consideration to the organizations from which many such persons have come and those to which they have now associated themselves. There are in the Coloured Townships many established churches catering to between 80 and 85% of the community that boast beautiful or at least very adequate buildings. Most of these carry on a very broad program, with active Sunday Schools, Youth groups, Women's Associations, etc. etc. These buildings are often comfortable, and the leadership either educated or experienced and in many cases both. The question we are striving to answer is: "Why would an individual who is associated with such a group, or who has the opportunity of being associated with such a group, turn away from it in order to enter as a member of or participant in a body in which the physical amenities are almost totally lacking, and in which the leadership is very amateur in the kindest evaluation and downright inept in terms of a more reasonable judgment?" It is not uncommon to find people sitting on backless trestles in a drafty garage, or wedged into primary school desks for two or three-hour long meetings. One would almost feel inclined to say, on the basis of the availability of adequate established churches, that there is no reason for these Independent Churches to exist at all, but nonetheless they do exist and have existed for well over a

half century in some cases, with the constant appearance of new ones as older ones disappeared. We must note that they have appeared from the grassroots of the community, and have not been foisted on that community from an outside source which might enjoy status or authority because of its 'outside' origin, and thus it is obvious that they have arisen as the result of and to meet felt needs within the community itself. We must therefore seek these needs among the people who make up the memberships of these independent groups and also attempt to evaluate the extent to which these needs are actually being met in this fashion.

It is safe to assume that very few members of the Coloured community have actually verbalized these needs or have consciously tailored the Independent Churches in the form in which we find them in order to meet recognized needs. Rather, these groups have appeared, one might almost say erupted, spontaneously, coming on the scene in different places and among different socio-economic and educational levels. Actually, the very diversity of these groups poses a challenge to the analyst in the attempt to discover any pervasive basic factors which best explain their appearance. It may seem gratuitous to assume that few members of the Coloured Community have actually put into words the need for such churches, but in the course of conversation and asking questions of the leaders and members of the Independent Churches we have found none who gave more than a very general reason for the formation and continuation of their particular group. The very existence of the group is undeniable proof that a cause of sufficient magnitude to explain their appearance and continuation does exist, in spite of the inability of those most closely involved to recognize or describe that cause.

If any one, overall conclusion can be drawn, it seems to be that the anomie which attaches itself to the social, economic and political status of the Coloured people of South Africa

constitutes the underlying force behind the appearance of these alternate religious groupings. By the laws of the land, these South African citizens are barred from any meaningful participation in the preparation and implementation of the legislation that most directly affects them. By the laws of the land they are limited to a lesser or greater degree as to the types of employment in which they can engage, and as to the remuneration they can expect for their labour. By the laws of the land they are barred from the society which represents to them the ultimate in advantage, both as to their residence among the peoples of that society and their social intercourse with them. That which makes this most frustrating is that these laws which force them into the status of 'disadvantaged' are not based upon any inherent abilities they may possess, or upon any accomplishments or lack of such that have resulted from their own efforts, but these laws are based upon something over which they have no power and which they can never change by their own efforts, namely the accident of birth which has locked them into a race of 'second class citizens'.

It is not beyond reason to say that the unfairness of this situation in which they find themselves affects every part of their lives and intrudes itself into every facet of their activities. No serious conversation takes place among them without racial overtones, no discussion of any part of their lives can be held without this unfortunate situation entering into all their calculations. It provides at one and the same time an incentive to 'try harder' and an excuse for failure. It is a ready-made cavern of self-pity into which the individual can retreat in times of stress and adversity, and provides the source of all the dreams of what might-have-been if the strictures of apartheid had not been drawn about them. It goes without saying that such an atmosphere will have its effect both consciously and unconsciously in the institutions of a people so limited. We are here suggesting that the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats are one of the visible fruits of the plant that is Apartheid, arising among the most disadvantaged of a disadvantaged group.

Notes on Chapter XV

1. Brothers, Joan, 1967; W. Herber, "Religion in a Secularized Society".

"The sect is essentially an 'outsider' group, it is largely composed of elements who see themselves 'disinherited', outside the culture, with no stake in it, with no participation in its values."

2. Budd, Susan, 1973; page 106

"The religions of the dispossessed marked by emotional release, fundamentalism and contempt for the unredeemed offer their members a refuge from the scorn and hardship that they experience in the world. In particular they appeal to the poor migrants in big cities, entering at the bottom of the wage market and living in disorganized neighbourhoods who seek the security they offer."

3. Budd, Susan, 1973; page 64

"The theory of relative deprivation advanced, e.g. that it is not how much we are deprived, economically, socially, politically, but how much we are deprived in relation to our expectations that engenders dissatisfaction with our lot. For this reason, the very lowest class does not often show the same signs of deprivation as the lower-middle for the lowest has few or no expectations. The rise of a new religion may be resorted to where those who feel deprived can see no way to remedy that felt deprivation and begin something new to assuage the feeling of deprivation."

4. Davies, Horton, 1954; pages 9, 10

"... Added to this conviction that they constitute the only true church of Christ, however small their numbers, is the bitter necessity to condemn all other Christians."

5. Scharf, Betty R., 1970; page 113

Scharf accepts that a denomination is recognized by its willingness to concede toleration to others, as well as demanding it for itself.

6. Stark, Werner, 1966; pages 152, 311

Stark suggests that sectarian doctrinal stance is an automatic negation of the beliefs of the dominant church, following the pattern of contra-culture.

On page 311 he states: "When the group admits it is not the exclusive possessor of the way of salvation, but is but one of the many groups with this knowledge, then it has become a denomination."

All writers on the church-sect division agree that one of the distinguishing characteristics of the sects is their claim to being the sole possessors of truth, and that the admission that others also have legitimate claim to knowledge of the means of salvation is the proof that they are not sects but churches. From this

it would appear that the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats are not, with the exceptions here noted, true sects, but are rather in their own eyes, and should be in the eyes of unbiased observers, churches and even denominations in the making.

7. McComas, 1912; page 75

"The sects seem to take their origin in differences of religious experience, rather than in differences of thought. Theology does not appear to be a very important cause of sect origin, it is nevertheless a very great deterrent of Church union."

One would think, however, that if a division needs legitimation, as a sectarian division almost by definition does, cognitive distinctions must soon appear even if they are rationalizations of a divisive experience.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER XVI

IN CONCLUSION

In concluding this study of the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats, I wish to locate my classifications in terms of a model suggested by Professor J.S. Cumpsty in a paper, "Proposed General Framework for Identifying and Locating Religious Experience", read at the fourth conference of the Association for the History of Religion (S.A.), University of Natal, June 1982. Professor Cumpsty, who acknowledges the contribution which this study made to the paper he presented, also drew upon Janet Hodgson's study of "Ma' Redebe, a Faith-healer in the Transkei" presented at the same conference, upon a study of the Bethesda Church being made by Gina Buijs, and a study of his own of religions change in Israel. He integrated what he discovered to be recurring patterns in these very different contexts into his proposed framework, and I now wish to draw on whatever explanatory power that framework might have for the data in this project, and perhaps also to suggest some further refinements to the framework itself.

Professor Cumpsty suggests that there are two basic aspects to the religious quest, namely to grasp the nature of the ultimately real, and then to belong to it. Professor Cumpsty proceeds from the assumption that religion is really about belonging, by which he means the individual's belonging to the ultimately real, or to that which in the Mosaic religions is God. In this study I have been not so much concerned with the nature of God or the ultimately real, but have been involved in evaluating the Independent Churches which have appeared, in part at least, as the means by which their members can establish a relationship of belonging to God. Professor Cumpsty identifies two logically different but somewhat similar in content models for the normative mode of belonging in Mosaic religions. These two models he identifies as Direct

or Indirect Linking. In this study, the churches of the Participant Type were overwhelmingly of the direct belonging mode, although an element of indirect belonging by attachment to a charismatic figure is to be discovered in some of them. Perhaps only the Reformed Old Apostolic Church has a sufficiently high ecclesiology to be described as being purely in the indirect mode, but this also manifests what Cumpsty called "reduced reality or substitute belonging" typical of sectarian religion. The rest of the Observer Type Churches in this study seem to manifest a mixed direct and indirect belonging mode, with little evidence of the closed down defensiveness of reduced reality belonging.

Professor Cumpsty indicates that the logic of a sense of Direct Cosmic Belonging requires (i) a knowledge of the ultimately real (God); (ii) belief in the act of God which established the means by which individuals might belong to him; (iii) a knowledge of the conditions of such individual belonging; (iv) assurance that one has and is fulfilling such conditions; and, (v) signs (blessings) to guarantee the validity of the whole. In this context the religious institution will be responsible for the proclamation or teaching of (i) through (iii); (iv) will be the subjective experience of the individual who has met the requirements of (iii), and (vi) will be, for example, the content of the testimonies given. We will now apply this model to the Participant Type of Independent Church, in both its manifestations, that is, for the emotionally oriented individual and for the intellectually oriented.

(i) Knowledge of the Ultimately real (God).

For the emotionally oriented individual this knowledge at the cognitive level is at best somewhat sketchy. It probably consists of some information picked up by teaching received as a child or perhaps in early adulthood in an established church or denomination. Of course, in the case of those whose

entire religious experience has been limited to an emotionally oriented, participant type group, cognitive knowledge may be almost entirely lacking. To a considerable degree this type of group has been founded by and is carried on by those who have received their grounding in other groups where such knowledge was consistently and effectively communicated. However, with the passage of time, the fund of objective knowledge decreases with each generation, and the slide into heterodoxy is almost inevitable. Whatever knowledge the individual may have in this context will be combined with the conviction that he is in touch with God in the person of the Spirit during the sessions of chorus singing and abandoned dancing which are carried on to "keep the Spirit warm". This latter is of course almost entirely affective, with the only cognitive input coming from the content of the songs sung or the testimonies of others of the group.

For the intellectually oriented individual, the knowledge of God will be the result of the teaching of the Bible in the believers' meeting and the ministry meetings, with somewhat less content communicated during the Sunday evening gospel service. Of course there is considerable teaching of the children in the Children's Church, and in the Sunday School. The leadership of such groups usually feels that this constitutes sufficient teaching. In the case of the Docks Mission, Pastor Crowe once replied to the writer's query as to the rather questionable content of a message that had just been delivered at one of their meetings by a visiting speaker with the statement: "We expect that our people have enough sound teaching that we can have just about anyone preach here and our folks will be able to separate the fish from the bones and leave the bones behind".

- (ii) Belief in the act of God which established the means by which individuals might belong to him.

The emotionally oriented individual believes basically in what can be termed as orthodox Christianity, that is, God worked through the incarnation and through the atoning death of Christ to provide the means by which their sins may be forgiven and they may be savingly related to Him. Generally the emotionally oriented individual is not theologically sophisticated to any degree, and will verbalize their conviction concerning this act of God in terms of John 3:16. However, they are unable to respond with any content to questions concerning the incarnation, or the way in which Christ's death could contribute to their own relationship to God.

The intellectually oriented individual will certainly have been well versed in right doctrine, i.e. that which is above presented as orthodox Christianity. However, unlike the emotionally oriented, this individual will be very sensitive to any departure from this dogma, such as by questioning the true divinity or true humanity of Christ in the incarnation or by mixing good works with saving faith in the application of the finished work of Christ.

- (iii) Knowledge of the conditions of such individual belonging.

The emotionally oriented individual would probably state the conditions as faith in Christ, but would practically, taking their cue from the testimonies which form such an important part of the services, link their faith to a continuation in an acceptable way of life which included separation from various worldly acts and ideas, as well as having been "filled by", "baptized in" or in some other sense possessed of the Holy Spirit.

The intellectually oriented individual would state the conditions very simply as "faith in the shed blood of

Christ". That is, belief that Christ's substitutionary death had provided the salvation which they could simply receive by faith, often described as 'trust' or 'belief'. They verbalize a strong commitment to salvation by faith only, a central teaching of the Protestant Reformation, and are quick to detect any deviation from this doctrine.

(iv) Assurance that one has and is fulfilling such conditions.

The emotionally oriented individuals would generally centre this assurance on their continued participation in the service of worship, and on the inner conviction that comes from the testimonies of others who have come in the same way. They seem to place considerable weight on the assurance that follows common experiences shared in the testimony services. An oft-repeated phrase, "What God has done for me, he can surely do for you", may reflect this emotionally based subjective assurance.

The intellectually oriented believer almost universally demands that "the gospel" be preached from their pulpits and in cottage services and in open air services regularly. In this context, the gospel is defined as a presentation of (ii) and (iii), with an invitation, also called 'altar call' to all those who have not met the conditions for individual belonging to do so at once, and in most of these groups every Sunday evening service must be a 'gospel service'. The reason given for this demand is in order that any unsaved hearer may not miss the opportunity of finding Christ. However, this argument sounds a bit hollow under circumstances when the entire audience, as in times of inclement weather, is made up of members in good standing who must by definition be converted people, or when there may be only one or two visitors whose spiritual condition is in doubt. Why keep preaching the need and means of salvation to those who

are already saved? It would seem that hearing these facts over and over serves to give assurance to the believers that since they came to God by this means, either recently or even many years before, the means have not changed, and they are still fulfilling the conditions and are still secure in their position.

- (v) Signs (blessings) to guarantee the validity of the whole. For the emotionally oriented individual, these signs or blessings are the major subject of the testimonies. These are often stated as unique answers to prayer on their own behalf, or on behalf of others, such as healings effected, employment provided, housing obtained. "God is still working", is an often-heard expression, and for the emotionally oriented individual these real or contrived signs provide the proof of the system with which they have chosen to cast their lot.
- For the intellectually oriented individual the signs or blessings are more subtle. They are for the most part subjective, namely the inner peace that comes from trusting or the conviction that God is working in their lives. They may also be objective, in which case they would involve victory over sin, or perhaps a combination of subjective and objective such as the power and ability to engage in meaningful Christian service, e.g. the broad scope of spiritual ministries carried out by Docks Mission. The members at Docks Mission would be the first to deny that these services have anything to do with obtaining their salvation, but one cannot escape the conviction that the very existence of such a broad spectrum of work being carried by the Mission serves to validate the organization in the eyes both of members and those who merely observe from without. Perhaps more subtle is the conviction occasionally hinted at that their general material success is in some way evidence of the blessing of God on them and on the group they represent.

I refer again to Professor Cumpsty's model, in the case of Indirect Cosmic Belonging, which corresponds to what I have described for these churches as indirect linking, eventuating in the Observer Type Church. He indicates that the logic of a sense of Indirect Cosmic Belonging requires (i) a knowledge of the ultimately real (God); (ii) a belief in the act of God which established the institution or "bridgehead" in the world; (iii) knowledge of the identifying feature of the institution; (iv) knowledge of the conditions on which the individual belongs to (enters and is maintained in relation with) the institution; (v) evidence that these conditions have been fulfilled; and (vi) signs (blessings) which guarantee the validity of the whole system.

In the case of the Observer Type Church, the individual is related to the ultimately real by relating to that which is already so related, which can be an elect nation, a church or even a charismatic individual. I have posited that the Observer Type worships specifically as an observer because it is his church that is related to the Divine, and he by his membership within that church is savingly related to or even part of the Divine. Therefore, he does not participate, he simply observes the signs or evidence that convinces and assures him again that he has chosen the correct organization to link him to God. As in the case of the Participant Type Church, I will apply Professor Cumpsty's model to both the emotionally and intellectually oriented type of member.

- (i) A knowledge of the ultimately real (God).

For the emotionally oriented individual, such knowledge comes through the formal instruction in the Sunday School and at confirmation and in addition through observation of the ritual being acted out in the church itself. In the case of the Reformed Old Apostolic Church, the member is required to have such knowledge before he or she can be 'sealed'.

For the intellectually oriented individual, this knowledge is also the object of much inculcation, with great emphasis being placed on correct doctrinal understanding of God. Since such groups, for example, the Calvin Church, generally stand in the Reformed tradition, the divine attributes are the subject of much teaching and preaching.

- (ii) Belief in the act of God which established the institution in the world.

In taking the Reformed Old Apostolic Church as an example of the emotionally oriented group, I am faced with somewhat of a dichotomy here. This group identifies the incarnation of God in Christ as the act of God by which Jesus became the Head of the Church and the Saviour of the world. However, they also place extreme emphasis upon his calling of twelve apostles, and they teach that this was to be an unchanging call, so that the possession of twelve apostles is the identifying feature which marks out and sets apart the divinely established institution, and to which I will return under (iii) below.

The intellectually oriented individual, such as a member of the Calvin Church believes that the incarnation of God in Christ was the literal bridge-head in which God became man and thus provided the essential link between the two, and that the church which Christ died to establish in time is today that institution in which Christ is rightly preached, from which the sacraments are practised, and to which the true Christian belongs.

- (iii) Knowledge of the identifying features of the Institution. In the case of the Reformed Old Apostolic Church which I have classified as Observer Type for the emotionally oriented, the possession of an 'apostle' who is the present-day spiritual descendent of the original

twelve.

For the intellectually oriented individual, these identifying features other than the general ones mentioned in (ii) above, must be seen in operation. In the case of the Calvin Church, the ritual through which the Elders and Deacons pass prior to and during the service itself, the clerical garb which sets them apart, not only from the lay membership but also from ministers of other organizations; the elevated pulpit, the seating accommodation of the deacons and elders, all serve to identify the Calvin Church as the institution to which one can belong and thereby be savingly related to God.

- (iv) Knowledge of the conditions on which the individual belongs to the institution.

As with most other indirect linking churches, the Reformed Old Apostolic requires infant baptism followed at the age of accountability by confirmation, and from thence the reception of the eucharist. The intellectually oriented group also requires infant baptism and confirmation, but in view of the strong evangelistic thrust of the Calvin Church one would expect a public statement of saving faith in Jesus Christ to be made either at confirmation or when being accepted into membership in the local church.

- (v) Evidence that these conditions have been fulfilled.

For the emotionally oriented group, these conditions are somewhat difficult to ascertain, but would most likely include teaching on the importance of the sacramental life, regular attendance at services with evidence of willingness to serve as required. In the case of the Reformed Old Apostolic Church, presence at the "sealing" service of new members would also be very important. There is some evidence in this group

that no particular ethical standards are considered to qualify one for membership in the group.

In the case of the Calvin Church, as a type of the intellectually oriented group, the evidence would be much the same, e.g. regular attendance at least at one Sunday service with attendance at a mid-week service being further evidence. The participation in the sacraments and regular giving would also be evidence, with a separated life providing further proof that the individual was adequately related to the church. In addition, in view of the insistence of the Calvin Church on the clear exposition of Scripture and the regular preaching of the gospel, the conversion experience would likely be the most important evidence.

- (vi) Signs (blessings) which guarantee the validity of the whole system.

For the emotionally oriented individual, taking the Reformed Old Apostolic as a type, there was considerable insistence on the part of the three priests with whom I had several interviews that their new group was growing by leaps and bounds. When they gave figures of the multiplication of branches they must have noticed some evidence of my incredulity on my face, for even though I said nothing they became quite defensive. It would appear that at least as far as they were concerned the multiplication of branches and membership would be the sign that their church was really the true church, and that the (non-reformed) Apostolic Church had departed from the true faith which they alone now represented.

In discussions with Dr Morkel, founder of the Calvin Church which is an intellectually oriented Observer Type group, two signs were appealed to again and again. One was the continuity of the Calvin Church with the Reformed Church at Geneva as formed by John

Calvin during the Protestant Reformation. The other was quite similar to the sign put forward by the Reformed Old Apostles, namely that of rapid growth. To Dr Morkel this evidence was strengthened by the fact that this growth was obtained in spite of the opposition and even physical attacks of the groups from which they came out. To him, the fact that they had not only survived under these circumstances but had even grown, often at the expense of those who derided and opposed them, was evidence that the Calvin Church had been established of God.

As has been pointed out, there is no traditional Emotional Type Observer Church among the Independent Churches of the Cape Flats. If such were the case, then I feel that its identification with the model of Professor Cumpsty would be somewhat different from that of the Reformed Old Apostolic Church which does not conform strictly to the type, but simply comes closest to this type of any surveyed. It certainly does not fit well into any of the other three groupings, so must be included here although somewhat atypical and clearly includes a measure of reduced reality belonging.

Whereas I have located the Independent Churches in terms of the first two of Cumpsty's models of belonging, I have not done so in relation to the third, simply because none of them appear to fit predominantly into this classification. Substitute or Reduced Reality Belonging is Professor Cumpsty's classification for the extremely limiting sectarian groups which always attract certain psychological types and others at times of crisis when they cannot remain open to the whole cosmos of experience, including all their fellow men.

It represents a withdrawal into a limited in-group which provides the support required to cope with what is seen as a hostile environment. It provides a retreat into a limited environment which is controlled by the requirements for

membership, requiring no value judgments on the part of members, and promising rewards for cooperation with the very clear and comprehensive modes of conduct provided for its members. Surprisingly enough, none of the Independent Churches really fit into this classification, even though there is limited evidence of it on the part of some.

In the attempt to explain this phenomenon, recourse was first made to the obvious answer that the personality characteristics of the Coloured people do not lend themselves to such an interpretation of reality, especially as it relates to the relationships with other people and to their convictions as to the essential nature of final truth. However, there are several examples of such organizations with a Reduced Reality type of outlook on life active among the Coloured people. For instance, the Jehovah's Witnesses hold firmly to this type of cosmic view, seeing themselves as the 144 000 chosen ones, with all the rest of mankind being outside the pale as it were. Further, perhaps the most rapid-growing sect among the Coloured people is the New Apostolic Church, which can be described as an almost textbook example of Reduced Reality Belonging.¹ It has been said that this particular sect, which originated in Germany in the 19th Century and has since spread to several countries, has enjoyed greater growth among the Coloured people of the Cape Flats than anywhere else it has been planted in the world. These two examples would seem to indicate that there is nothing in the Coloured personality that automatically prevents them from becoming involved in a Reduced Reality movement.

Mention has already been made of the only seemingly heterodox groups among the Independent Churches, the four that espouse a Christ-centred unitarianism (see Chart G, Chapter 2). As indicated then, the founders of these four groups all claimed that they had received this doctrine either by direct revelation or from their personal study of Scripture. However, the appearance of this heresy coincides with the visit of a certain little-known American healer/evangelist who proclaims

the same style of religion in the United States, and one is almost forced to the conclusion that they were influenced in this way of thinking either by hearing him speak or from reading his booklets and tracts or listening to his tapes, large quantities of which were made available to the Coloured community. Thus, although the groups meet our requirements for inclusion in this study, in that they originated in the Cape Flats and were started by Coloured people, yet this particular doctrinal deviation did not originate with them, any more than the two mentioned above. As I pointed out in my chapter on the way in which the Coloured people see themselves and their churches, the average Independent Church members look upon their group as one of many, not as one apart from the many. Generally speaking, the Observer Type groups seem to evidence a stronger commitment to their particular church than do the Participant Types, but none of them would claim that they are the sole custodians of the truth, and that all those outside their fellowship stand in error.

Thus, even though the Coloured people of the Cape Flats seem to be willing to accept such claims and to ally themselves with groups that make them, in all the cases observed the idea did not originate from the Cape Flats but was imported from outside. The question as to why such a reduced reality group has not originated among the people may be answered in two ways. First, it may well be that groups such as these have appeared, but have not thrived because they were not sufficiently well prepared and presented to capture the imagination and allegiance of the Coloured people as a whole. On the other hand, perhaps we are simply dealing with too small a sample, and over the passage of time one or more such groups will appear indigenously and will exercise tremendous drawing power specifically because it is a home product, as it were. It may well be, as was suggested initially, that the Coloured people with their accepting attitudes towards others, do not fit well into a pattern, even a theological one that requires them to affirm themselves while denying almost everyone else. One of the

phenomena we observed in the case of the Independent Church Ring was their very open-handed attitude toward any and all Coloured groups joining or even interested in joining with them. It appeared that doctrine was of lesser importance than fellowship and working together in a more inclusive organization.

Perhaps the willingness of the people of the Cape Flats to receive me as a researcher, one who was a member of another race group, specifically the race group that was identified with oppression in their thinking, is but an indication of what is basically a non-sectarian attitude that permeates all facets of their personalities. Suffice it to say that they are inherently hospitable and accepting, and it is difficult to see how these personality characteristics could go along with that retreat from the unity of all men which is such a basic part of the Substitute or Reduced Reality Belonging approach to life.

Perhaps too, the Reduced Reality response to an unacceptable life experience is, as Professor Cumpsty has said concerning the Jewish experience, a relatively short term solution.² In the long run man needs to integrate his experience, that is to belong cosmically, even at the cost of accepting or legitimating to himself the unacceptable quality of his life, perhaps including the development of wry humour at his own expense. It is possible that the antics of the "Coons", although repulsive to many of the Coloured community as projecting a caricature of their life-style, represent this type of humorous acceptance of that which is basically unacceptable. Although this acceptance of their lot has existed among the older members of the Coloured community; with the belief that this situation is no longer one that has to be "accepted" growing among the younger members may come an increase in the sectarian solution until a more genuinely cosmic one becomes possible.

Notes on Chapter XVI

1. Duncan, B.R., 1978
2. Cumpsty, J.S., 1983 (A)

University of Cape Town

A P P E N D I C E S

University of Cape Town

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INDEPENDENT CHURCHES LOCATED AND STUDIED DURING THE COURSE
OF THIS PROJECT

Participant Types for the Emotionally Oriented (PE)

Acts Mission	Grassy Park
Alpha Pentecostal Mission Church of South Africa	Elsies River
Apostle Church of Christ	Heideveld
Assembly of Christ Mission	Ravensmead
Athlone Assembly of God Mission	Athlone
Calvary Baptist Mission Church	Hanover Park
Christian Mission of South Africa	Athlone
Church of God, Pentecostal	Elsies River
Crusade Mission	Elsies River
Ephesian Gospel Mission	Ravensmead
Free Christian Fellowship	Ravensmead
Gospel Fellowship Holy Apostolic Faith Mission of S.A.	Elsies River
Holy Soul Crusade	Elsies River
<u>Kolossense Sending Pinkster Kerk van Suid Afrika</u>	Elsies River
Living Rock Fellowship	Athlone
Macedonian Pentecostal Baptist Mission Church of S.A.	Heideveld
Missionaries for Christ Church	Elsies River
New Testament Church	Elsies River
Pentecostal Church of Christ	Elsies River
Pentecostal Gospel Church	Athlone
Pentecostal Mission Church	Woodstock
<u>Pinkster Beweging Sending van Suid Afrika</u>	Elsies River
Redeemed Church of Christ	Belville South
<u>Die Sending vir Christus Kerk</u>	Ravensmead
Rehoboth Pentecostal Assembly	Welcome Estate
Sherwood Park Pentecostal Assembly	Sherwood Park
United Mission Church of South Africa	Elsies River
Universal Church of Christ	Elsies River
<u>Vrystanders</u>	Ravensmead

Participant Type for the Intellectually Oriented (PI)

Docks Mission Church

Athlone

Observer Type for the Intellectually Oriented (OI)

Algemene Sendelinge Kerk van Suid Afrika

Elsies River

Calvary Pentecostal Mission

Mannenberg

Calvin Protestant Church

Athlone

Christelike Vereenigde Kerk

Crawford

Christian Evangelist Mission Church of S.A.

Elsies River

Church of Christ Assembly (Gemeente van Christus
by Inkom)

Surrey Estate

Coloured Methodist Church

Elsies River

Evangelie Stewers Sending Kerk

Kensington

Herstigte Protestanse Sending Kerk

Elsies River

Independent Congregational Church of S.A.

Athlone

Independent Dutch Mission

Ravensmead

Independent Lutheran Church

Elsies River

Kleurlings Verenigde Kerk van Suid Afrika

Ravensmead

Namaqua Methodist Church

Kensington

Omega Bethel Church

Ravensmead

Pelgrim's Verenigde Kerk van Suid Afrika

Elsies River

Selfstandige Rynse Kerk

Elsies River

St Phillips Congregational Church

Wynberg

Volkskerk van Afrika

Athlone

Observer Type for the Emotionally Oriented (OE)

Reformed Old Apostolic Church

Elsies River

QUESTIONNAIRE USED TO STRUCTURE FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWS WITH
LEADERS AND MEMBERS OF THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES OF THE CAPE
FLATS

I. General Information

1. Name of church, location
2. Name of pastor or leader, address, telephone number
3. Branches if any, location
4. Adult membership; of local body, of branches
5. Services held - regular, special; language used
6. Property held; plots, buildings

II. Information as to Origins

1. When and by whom was your church founded
2. Circumstances of the founding of your church
3. Your founder: his training, experience, ordination
4. What distinctive in precept or practice has led to the continuation of your church?
5. Have there been any new churches formed from splits in your church? Which?

III. Information as to Organization

1. What is your church organization: bishop, congregational control, deacons, etc.?
2. What requirements do you hold for your pastor: education, experience, etc.?
3. Do you ordain your pastor? What are the requirements? By whom is he ordained?
4. Is your pastor full- or part-time?
5. Does your pastor use vestments in the service? Which?
6. What are the membership requirements in your church?
7. Do you accept members by letter from other churches? If so, from which?
8. Are you affiliated with any other church or with any interdenominational bodies? Which?
9. What provision do you have for the discipline of members? For the discipline of your pastor?
10. How are your finances raised? How are they handled?

IV. Information as to Doctrine

1. Does your church have a confessional or doctrinal statement?
2. What is your belief concerning: a) Christ; b) Salvation; c) the inspiration of the Bible; d) the Holy Spirit; e) the church?
3. Communion: Who administers? Who receives? How often? Elements used? How administered?
4. Baptism: Who administers? Form? Recipients? Preparation of recipients or parents?
5. Confirmation: Preparation and requirements?
6. Infant Dedication: By whom, for whom?

7. Does your pastor perform marriages? If so, for whom?
8. Which hymnal do you use? Do you use choruses, instruments in the service?
9. Does your leader practice tongues, healing, prophecy?
10. Do your members practice tongues, healing, prophecy?
11. What is your attitude toward smoking, drinking, dancing, gambling, the theatre, bioscope, T.V., sport, immorality?
12. Have there been any particular changes in the attitude of your church toward these activities since its founding?
13. What is your belief as to the future of the world, of the Church?

V. Information as to Membership

Of your adult membership:

1. What % transferred from other churches?
2. What % came from your evangelistic or revival meetings or from personal contact?
3. What % came from the families of your members?
4. What % engage in non-skilled labour?
5. What % engage in skilled labour?
6. What % are in the professions, e.g. teachers, doctors, nurses, lawyers?
7. What % were born in Cape Town?
8. What % were added in the past 5 years?
9. What % of the number of your present membership left your church in the past 5 years?

VI. Information as to your future

1. What are your plans for your church as to:
 - a) new buildings; b) membership; c) new training programs?
2. What are your plans as to uniting with other groups, either in full union or for purposes of fellowship? With which groups?
3. Do you expect any basic change in the near future to your:
 - a) Pattern of services
 - b) Membership
 - c) Policies

VII. Information as to Self-Evaluation

1. What do you feel is the greatest strength of your church?
2. What do you feel is the greatest weakness of your church?