

**THE FORMATION
AND FUNCTIONING
OF
RACIALLY-MIXED
CONGREGATIONS**

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Declaration

I the undersigned hereby declared that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.



Dawid Venter

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ABSTRACT

This is an empirical, qualitative study of racially-mixed urban churches (congregations) as social institutions, which includes a practical-theological perspective. Research was motivated by the rareness of mixed congregations, compared to the profusion of homogenous congregations. My purpose was to uncover social factors which support the formation, maintenance, and functioning of mixed congregations. A New Testament section is included because of the normative value that these texts hold for contemporary Christians and church structures.

My theoretical base is informed by history, theology, biblical studies, sociology, and anthropology. The development of relevant aspects in these fields are sketched. Special attention is given to assimilation, pluralism, and multi-culturalism as forms of inter-ethnic interaction based on structure and culture. My methodological base incorporates congregational studies and social-scientific literary analysis. The historical development of both is sketched by means of an overview of relevant literature. The general qualitative analytical social and literary techniques that I apply are indicated, including participant-observation, semi-structured interviews, structured questionnaires, and document-analysis.

A social history of South African congregations shows that the ideal of mixed congregations existed since the start, but was gradually repressed by several factors. Some studies of mixed congregations are discussed, and various mixed US and South African congregations are outlined. Three contemporary Johannesburg congregations are introduced, including Johweto, an independent charismatic church in the black city of Soweto; St. Francis Xavier, a Roman Catholic church on the borders of coloured and white suburbs in western Johannesburg; and Central Methodist Mission, an inner-city Protestant church. The Johannesburg congregations are idiographically and empirically analysed in terms of their context, identity, process, and programme. Social factors contributing to their ethnic mix are indicated.

The insights from the contemporary research are applied to early Christian congregations in a social-scientific reconstruction of the social world of appropriate New Testament texts. The purpose is to discover the role of ethnicity in their composition and functioning, and to show whether ethnically-mixed congregations were normative. I suggest a theory concerning the effects of ethno-cultural factors on the structures and functioning of Pauline congregations between AD 30 and 70.

I conclude with a summary of the theoretical and practical implications of the study's results, and an evaluation of goals and methods. Practical strategies are suggested for dealing with commonly indicated difficulties in the formation of mixed congregations. A theory of the influence of social factors on formation is supplied, and a dynamic model of formation constructed. I posit three types of mixed churches according to the processes by which they are formed: contextual, inclusive, or intentional. These are evaluated as formation strategies, and a two-tiered typology in terms of internal structure is also proposed. The types are illustrated with reference to congregations from the US and South Africa. Segregated and integrated congregations are evaluated in theological, social and political terms and I indicate why mixed congregations are preferable. An overall theory of the formation and functioning of mixed congregations is put forward. Assimilation is seen as a contributive cause, but modified where counter-status quo and multi-cultural strategies are employed.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie is 'n empiriese en kwalitatiewe studie van ras- en etnies-gemengde kerke (gemeentes) as sosiale instellings, wat prakties-teologiese perspektiewe insluit. Navorsing is gemotiveer deur die skaarsheid van gemengde gemeentes, in vergelyking met die groot aantal gemeentes waartoe slegs een rasgroep behoort. My doelwit was om sosiale faktore te ontdek wat bydra tot die vorming, instandhouding, en funksionering van gemengde gemeentes. 'n Nuwe Testamentiese afdeling is ingesluit weens die normatiewe waarde van hierdie vroeg-Christelike tekste vir hedendaagse Christene en kerke-strukture.

Die teoretiese begronding van die studie word toegelig deur die geskiedenis, teologie, bybelkunde, sosiologie, en antropologie. Ek skets die ontwikkeling van relevante aspekte binne hierdie velde. Spesiale aandag word geskenk aan assimilasië, pluralisme, en multikulturalisme as vorme van inter-etniese interaksie rondom struktuur en kultuur. My metodologiese grondslag word gevorm deur gemeentestudie en sosiaal-wetenskaplike letterkundige analise. Die historiese ontwikkeling van beide hierdie gebiede word geskets deur middel van 'n oorsig van relevante literatuur. Die oorkoepelende kwalitatiewe analitiese tegnieke wat ek aanwend word aangedui, insluitend deelnemende-waarneming, semi-gestruktureerde

vraelyste, gestruktureerde vraelyste, en dokumentontleding.

'n Sosiale geskiedenis van Suid-Afrikaanse gemeentes dui aan dat die ideaal van gemengdheid van die begin gehuldig is, maar in die praktyk verdwyn het onder aanslag van sekere faktore. 'n Paar studies van gemengde gemeentes word bespreek, en bondige opsommings van verskeie gemengde gemeentes in die VSA en Suid-Afrika verskaf. Drie Johannesburgse gemeentes word bekendgestel, insluitend Johweto, 'n onafhanklike charismatiese kerk wat in die swart stad Soweto byeenkom; St Francis Xavier, 'n Rooms-Katolieke kerk op die grens van bruin en wit voorstede in westelike Johannesburg; en Central Methodist Mission, 'n Protestantse kerk in die middestad.

Die insigte van die kontemporêre navorsing word aangewend in 'n sosial-wetenskaplike rekonstruksie van die sosiale wêreld van toepaslike Nuwe Testament-tekste. Die doelwit is om die rol van etnisiteit in die ontstaan en funksionering van vroeë Christelike gemeentes te ontdek, en om aan te dui of etnies-gemengde gemeentes normatief was. Ek stel 'n teorie voor oor die gevolge van etnies-kulturele faktore vir Pauliniese gemeentes tussen 30 en 70 nC.

Ek sluit af met 'n opsomming van die teoretiese en praktiese implikasies van die navorsingsresultate, en 'n evaluasie van doelwitte en metodes. Praktiese antwoorde word aangedui op algemene vraagstukke rondom die vorming van gemengde gemeentes. 'n Teorie word voorgestel oor die invloede van sosiale faktore op die ontstaan van sulke kerke, en 'n dinamiese model van onstaansfaktore opgestel. Ek stel ook drie tipes gemengde kerke voor na aanleiding van die prosesse waardeur hulle gevorm word: kontekstueel, inklusief, of doelbewus. Die tipes word evalueer as ontstaans-strategieë, en 'n twee-vlak tipologie in terme van interne organisasie word voorgestel. Die tipes word bespreek met verwysing na voorbeelde van gemeentes in die VSA en Suid-Afrika. Homogene en gemengde gemeentes word evalueer in teologiese, sosiale, en politiese terme, en ek dui aan waarom gemengde gemeentes verkieslik is. 'n Oorkoepelende teorie oor die ontstaan en funksionering van gemengde gemeentes word ter tafel gebring. Assimilasie word gesien as bydraende faktor, wat aan bande gelê word tot die mate waartoe anti-status quo en multi-kulturele strategieë aangewend word binne 'n gemengde kerk.

CHAPTER ONE: THE INTERDISCIPLINARY NATURE OF THE STUDY, THEORETICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS AND RESEARCH GOALS

This study of racially-mixed urban congregations was motivated by the apparent rareness of these social institutions compared with the abundance of uniraical congregations. In 1993, as in 1988, integrated South African congregations are the "marked exception" (Villa-Vicencio 1988:79; Massie 1993:20).

The purpose of the study was to uncover some sociological factors supporting the formation, maintenance and functioning of racially-mixed local congregations. The methods I selected consisted of qualitative socio-analytical techniques, which were applied to three specific congregations to highlight context, identity, process, and programme. I also used participant-observation, semi-structured interviews, and a survey based on the 1984 version of Hartford Seminary's Parish Profile Inventory.

The central questions driving this study were (a) how contemporary urban racially-mixed congregations came to exist, and (b) how they function. Such congregations, which voluntarily go against much that is current in ecclesiastical and social trends, have not been intensively researched in South Africa. By definition, then, this is exploratory research, using sociological concepts, with a practical-theological focus. I decided to include a New Testament section because of the normative value that these texts have for the individual and corporate behaviour of contemporary Christians. I was also interested to discover whether racially-mixed congregations were normative for early Christianity. Should the answer be yes, then the present-day norm of racial homogeneity becomes even more incongruous.

The study unfolds as follows: in *Chapter One* I deal with introductory questions regarding the choice and definition of racially-mixed congregations. Then the underlying web of theories is sketched within which the study is suspended and from which the tools (concepts, methods) for my research come. These tools had already been adopted by congregational studies, in which sociological and anthropological categories are used for the empirical study of congregations as social institutions. In *Chapter Two* the historical growth of congregational studies is traced, followed by an outline of the major methods used. Of particular interest is the Parish Profile Inventory (PPI), an instrument drawn up by the Project Team for Congregational Studies in the USA. Chapter Two also examines the historical development of the use of social science methods for the study of the New Testament, and outlines my own preferred perspective.

In *Chapter Three* I sketch a social history of racially-mixed congregations, tracing the trajectory of the ideal of integration through South African congregations and denominations. This serves to introduce the urban and suburban contexts of the three contemporary Johannesburg congregations, each of which is discussed separately in *Chapters Four to Six*. The contemporary and New Testament congregations form the two major foci of this study. In *Chapter Seven* the insights from Chapters Three to Six are used to speculatively reread the New Testament in terms of the role of ethnicity in the composition and functioning of the congregations. In *Chapter Eight* I use the results of the study to outline a theory and a model of how mixed congregations form and function. I suggest several typologies according to the internal and external social features of mixed congregations. For additional summaries of the contents of the chapters see 1.3.3. below.

The historical development of the study is reflected in the eight chapters, which moved from the actual to the abstract, from the known to the speculative unknown. I started defining some of the concepts in mid-1990, and in December 1990 I joined one of the racially-mixed congregations that I describe (Chapter One). Simultaneously I surveyed recent literature in the field of congregational studies to uncover the qualitative tools needed for the analysis of contemporary and New Testament congregations (Chapter Two, 1990-1993). In 1991 I initiated the fieldwork in three contemporary South African congregations, which gained full momentum towards the end of 1992 and was completed by March 1993.

I completed the actual analysis of data in 1994 (Chapter Four to Six; Chapter Eight). The fieldwork and literature survey had stimulated the possibility of comparison with similar US congregations, and in 1993 I had the opportunity of a study tour of the US. Further reading about, discussion of, and visits to, mixed congregations in the USA followed. Along the way my initial definitions proved inadequate and had to be redefined (Chapter One), and I conceived a typology of such congregations (Chapter Eight). I was prompted to more fully understand the historical development of such congregations in South Africa (Chapter Three), and I embarked on this process in 1994. The rereading of New Testament congregations was undertaken from 1993 to 1994 (Chapter Seven). In the final stage of the study the theoretical concepts of Chapter One were redefined and applied.

I will now outline the parameters of this study, noting the terminology and methodology that I used (section 1 below), before turning to the multi-disciplinary theories that underpin my own (section 2).

1. MOTIVATION AND TERMINOLOGY

In section 1.1. I attempt to profile the reasons for selecting mixed-race congregations and for choosing congregational studies as an essentially sociological approach to both contemporary and New Testament congregations.

1.1. Motivating a sociological focus on race and culture

Racially-mixed congregations ("mixed" for short) are rare in South Africa and apparently also in countries with a supposedly high degree of racial integration, such as the United States or the United Kingdom. Their rareness begs the question whether such congregations are desirable in theological, sociological, but also in cultural terms. The implied answer is no, as demonstrated by their rareness, and by the unwillingness of denominations to encourage them. The popularity among contemporary church leaders of the so-called homogeneous unit principle implies that socially similar and, by implication, ethnically-similar congregations are preferable for producing maximal numerical growth.

Racial composition adds a different dynamic to the functioning of a congregation or denomination, and so is worthy of isolation (see De Gruchy 1986:246). Some South Africans would no doubt prefer non-racial terms. I am convinced that a focus on race is essential to expose overt and covert racist patterns

of behaviour, and that cultural diversity must be allowed to play a role in congregational life (see (see Bosch 1983:30; Pato 1989 159; Ramphele 1989:182).

A focus on race allows a clearer understanding of how South African mainline congregations are "still dominated by European Christian forms" (Ramphele 1989:179). As social institutions, denominations are carriers of the social, cultural, economic, and political forces in society (see Villa-Vicencio 1988:42). And so congregations also contain the values of European culture embedded in the language, structures and processes of their denominations (Ramphele 1989:179; see Cochrane 1987:26; Saayman 1994:12; Bill 1994:168). In South African pentecostal and independent charismatic churches the cultural overlay is usually that of the USA, due to historical links¹.

Every denomination and local congregation has to "come to grips with its [African] social and cultural context" (Villa-Vicencio 1988:48,56; Pato 1989:159,160). Otherwise the dominant English and Afrikaans forms of church enforce confusion, loss of self-identity as constituted by culture, and loss of political power among black Africans (Villa-Vicencio 1988:48,56; Pato 1989:159,160). European and USA cultures dominate the churches at the expense of other cultures (see Ramphele 1989:179). This creates "'a high appreciation of and desire for things English and American'" (Cochrane 1987:26²). The "cultural assimilation of blacks imposed an aura of whiteness on the missionary churches that still hovers over the English-speaking churches like an albatross" (Villa-Vicencio 1988:56). What is needed is a critical ability "to distinguish what is intrinsically worthwhile and what would lead to long-term destructive consequences" (Cochrane 1987:26).

An examination of the relations between cultural groups within congregations - with reference to configurations of power and race - is called for by the still-pervasive 19th century missionary view that only white cultures, in contrast to African, coloured, or Indian cultures, are of value (see Maimela 1988:325; Villa-Vicencio 1988:18; Goedhals 1989:107,122; Oosthuizen 1990:111; Kgatla 1994:73). Class structures in South Africa coincide with race in an 'internal hegemony', a tempered domination of power and privilege in which race no longer appears as the primary criterion. This structure is revealed in attempts to de-racialise (church) systems without loss of [white] power, an exercise based on the recognition that dismantling privilege based on race must result in the collapse of (most ?) social infrastructures (Villa-Vicencio 1988:83,84). But the increasing domination of class values does not move churches away from race as an issue, for it is *European* upper and middle class interests which now dominate local congregational structures. These configurations of power enforce *white* standards of living

¹. Many South African Pentecostal churches was founded by U.S. citizens. The pattern started in 1908, when US citizen John G Lake and others held the first pentecostal services in this country in Doornfontein, then later in Bree Street, Johannesburg. After Lake's departure, South African pentecostals founded the Apostolic Faith Mission in 1913 (Cawood 1964:102). Among mainline churches the link was made even earlier, in 1866, with the visit by the black AME Bishop William Taylor, and the subsequent establishment of the AME. The AME drew followers from the black Ethiopian movement which had broken from the Methodist church in 1896 under Charles Pamla, Samuel Brander, Mangena Makone, and James Dwane (Balta 1994:163; Villa-Vicencio 1988:33; De Gruchy 1979:43). A variation is presented by the Rhema Bible Church, founded after Ray McCauley visited the US.

². Quoting A Vilakazi's 1962 study of change in a Zulu community.

(e.g. dress codes, even within black congregations), and deny other races access to leadership (see Ramphele 1989:187³).

My focus on race is accompanied by a theoretical perspective that pays due attention to the social bases of conflict in mixed congregations. I fear that even within mixed churches "fundamental structures of control and exploitation" are "not up for auction" (Cochrane 1987:64), but are rather determined by race or class. As ideas arise from a specific social foundation, interpretations of reality will differ according to the location of church members in e.g. race and class structures. So internal conflict can be explained "as a direct consequence of socio-economic and political divisions in society" (Villa-Vicencio 1988:127). Conflict results from clashes between disparate sets of ideologies and class interests, in churches as in other social institutions (Villa-Vicencio 1988:128,130).

I opted for a socio-analytical approach to congregational analysis as demonstrated in the work of Jackson Carroll, David Roozen and others. This theoretical perspective works from within a Christian framework to correct the tendency (a) in theology to neglect social factors (context, social worlds); and (b) in the social sciences to downplay theological factors, and to neglect or negate the supernatural (Roozen e.a. 1984:264, see Gustafson 1961, Firet 1980, Polling & Miller 1985, Robbins 1988, Hendriks 1992, Reiff 1992⁴).

This approach to congregations highlights their functions and nature as human products, and provides a social perspective, instead of the traditional theological viewpoint. In addition this method yields an interactivist understanding of congregations, through which not only the composite elements of a congregation but also their interrelatedness can be uncovered. The interrelatedness of the congregation with its context, history, beliefs and values, internal structures, processes, programmes, and the social worlds of its members can also be revealed (Roozen e.a. 1984:29-30,260).

An analysis of congregations as social institutions allows their internal dynamics to be examined as struggles to incarnate the truths of the gospel, concretised in various praxes (Cochrane 1990:96-97). The tendency of churches to legitimate social forces becomes obvious, which in turn calls for social and theological critique (see Cochrane 1990:98). A social analysis can also determine the external dynamic of congregations "at the political and ideological levels" within social structures, like the community or family (Cochrane 1987:56).

Although not a major focus in this study, congregational analysis can help develop a communal spirituality⁵. Such a spirituality has been mooted as necessary in response to the strongly individualistic

³. Ramphele also examines the roots of male-dominated and patriarchal systems of leadership in black [Anglican] churches, and censures such clergy for oppressing females, fostering elitism, and enforcing conservatism (Ramphele 1989:187).

⁴. This charge is not one that the congregational studies movement in the US has entirely avoided, as Dietterich (Parish Development Centre) indicated and Reiff (1992: 268-72) illustrated by reference to major studies in that field.

⁵. Spirituality is understood here in the narrower sense of the classic disciplines of Christianity (eg. meditation). For other definitions, see G Wainwright (1986).

bias that marks the current revival of classic Christian spirituality⁶. Yet the balance of theory with spiritual experience that this offers I find encouraging. Communal spirituality attends to the 'us/we' rather than the 'I/me'-aspects of faith. The focus is on the actions of the community as a whole, on the subject about which its members communicate, and on the mode of communication (see Peck 1987 speaking of social dynamics, and Shea 1985).

The reasons for segregation as congregational norm are not primarily at issue in my research, although such congregations are referred to in Chapters Three (1.1.), and Eight (4.3.). The inclination of like to group with like according to class, status, income, and race is so common that it has become an accepted principle in sociology. In the South African context - like that of the USA - this tendency is reinforced on the secular and church fronts by denominational regulations, social and cultural attitudes and language differences. Geographic location, historical-political decisions, and urban patterns in the inner city and suburbs also play a role. Similar to current developments here, dominant residential patterns in the USA show a tendency towards homogeneity: either of a racial (black inner cities, white suburbs) or class nature (income and education) (Roozen e.a. 1984:5-7). The creeping individualism inherent in the dominant Western culture also strengthens socio-economic and religious barriers between groups (see Roozen e.a. 1984:271). So trends like industrialisation and urbanisation militates against community, and causes community (*Gemeinschaft*) to be replaced by association (*Gesellschaft*)⁷.

The New Testament research reflects particular trends in Biblical and theological studies, such as:

- a) the emphasis on social context within Old/New Testament studies, practical theology and hermeneutics, and the resultant cross-fertilisation between these disciplines and sociology;
- b) the argument that the New Testament congregations consciously crossed cultural and class barriers. Both the missiological imperative and the composition of the early Church seem to support this as normative (Tigcheler 1990).

1.2. Terminology: clarifying "integration" and "racially-mixed"

In the interest of clarity, a brief excursion of terminology is necessary, including race, racially-mixed, congregation, integration, congregational analysis, and culture.

1.2.1. Race in the sense of a visual referent was my primary criterion for defining and selecting a particular type of urban congregation for the study. I assumed that those who are seen to attend a congregation will subconsciously or consciously influence the decision of prospective and present members to join or remain in a congregation.

I understand race as a social - rather than a sociological or scientific - concept, an ascribed or claimed group-identity. Race in the public mind refers to visible differences in appearance, which are regarded as

⁶. Described in my 1989 research, *Spirituality and Socio-political praxis*.

⁷. Tonnies quoted in Stone 1985: 50.

indicative of further differences of culture, history, and language. The question whether race "factually" exists is not at issue, but the effect "of the *notion* that race exists" on social action (Eriksen 1993:5). The emphasis here is on the construct rather than on the accuracy or validity of its constituent elements. Although my definition is social rather than political, the contents of "race" are undoubtedly shaped by political structures, with attendant socio-economic forces - both which impinge on the cultural world.

The term "race" was retained because it remains an operational social construct in the South African context. Despite ideological and technical problems involved, these classifications remain functional. People perceive others and are perceived themselves as whites, blacks, asians, or coloureds (mulattos). In the academic world "white" or "black" - and thus race - is also still used, whether in sociology (e.g. Stone 1985) or theology (e.g. Felder 1989). The general acceptability of such racial - as opposed to racist - terms is demonstrated by frequency of usage in politics and in the media.

While my definition of "race" follows the previous government's classification of 39 million South Africans into whites (16%), blacks (70%), asians (3%), and coloureds (mixed-race) (11%), the racist underpinnings of such definitions are rejected (1991 census figures). The use of racial terms (such as "black" or "coloured") in this study is not meant to imply a condoning of racialism (a hierarchical social structure of exploitation and domination) or racism (the set of ideas about racial differences that supports it; Cohen 1976:11). Racial prejudice is rejected as untenable on human rights grounds and in the light of Christ's imperative to love others. When race or racial terms are used in this study, they carry no implied ranking of such groups nor any negative political-ideological connotations.

Race in this study denotes blacks of different ethnicities (e.g. Zulu, Tswana, and Xhosa) whites of different ethnicities (e.g. English, Afrikaans, Portuguese) Indians (including five language groups and Pakistanis), and "Coloureds" (with sub-cultural variances according to geographic location in the Cape or Transvaal). My assumption is that the central experience of a shared social world is the basis for a common meaning and identity, e.g. of what being "coloured" or "black" means. The common historical context becomes the dominant constituent element of race, often causing specific ethnic differences to recede and become peripheral. In South Africa the common context coincided with enforced separate group areas; which enforced white, black, asian and coloured worlds.

South African solutions to racial categories range from (a) denying that race should function as descriptive category (non-racialism⁹) to (b) affirming race ideologically on opposite ends of a continuum. The latter position is exemplified by the Black Consciousness Movement or the white right-wing. Black theology widened the meaning (denotation) of race, by regarding as "black" all those who suffer under oppression or actively identify with such. "Culture" as a synonym for "race" is another example of denying that race has an objective value (see below for discussion).

⁹. Non-racialism denies functional awareness to "race", on the basis that then no differentiated behaviour follows.

But race as a biological⁹ and visual referent entails several problems:

- * sociologically it is difficult to distinguish clearly between race and ethnicity; or to separate the overlap with e.g. class or language (Stone 1985:35-42, Cohen 1976:20) or culture (Van den Berghe 1970:366);
- * politically race has extremely negative connotations in South Africa, because of its integral use to engineer a stratified discriminatory social pyramid with blacks at the bottom (Van den Berghe 1970:365);
- * historically the perspectives that races have of one another is informed by negative stereotypical experiences. An example is the views that Afrikaners hold of English-speakers, which sometimes date from the experience of their ancestors in concentration camps during the Boer Wars;
- * to use "race" can be construed as perpetuating all the above, and to be racist (see Van den Berghe 1970:369 for argument).

Because of the above difficulties with the concept race, and the difficulty of applying it to the New Testament, I chose ethnicity as secondary concept for use in analysis. The categories of a shared culture, language, and history are usually regarded as defining ethnicity. The word is a social concept, constructed to explain cultural differences, from which it can be distinguished only with difficulty (Eriksen 1993:5). I discuss ethnicity more fully in 1.2.7. below.

1.2.2. Racially-mixed in a specific sense is used of congregations that visually¹⁰ contain more than one racial group, of which one must be at least 20% as large as the dominant ethnic group. Twenty percent is sizeable enough to influence a congregation, and is regarded as indicating the tipping point after which ethnic transition occurs more rapidly in a neighbourhood¹¹ (Porter 1992:51) or in a congregation (Gratton 1989:2). Racial or ethnic mix was the major criterion for selecting South African and USA examples, and will be called "mixed". That a particular congregation viewed itself as mixed was validated by interviews with leadership, members, and by means of a questionnaire.

Racially-mixed was preferred to multi-racial, a more ambiguous term. Multi-racial in the US, Australia, and Canada often refers to various races who belong to the same denomination but do not necessarily congregate together. The term is also used of congregations in which the various races do not necessarily meet in the same room or at the same time. This structural arrangement I understand as referring to plural societies. I will use multi- and bi-racial interchangeably; strictly speaking two of the three South African churches are multi-racial, and one bi-racial, although all are multi-ethnic.

1.2.3. Congregation (synonymous in this study with churches) means a local gathering of Christians for

⁹. Race is described as a 19th century biological idea, which linked physiological characteristics with static mental, psychological, and cultural capabilities (Cohen 1976:16, Cock 1980:262).

¹⁰. I assumed that who people see will influence their decision to join or remain.

¹¹. On a larger scale the size of a group relative to the larger population within a society affects whether it is able to slow down (large) or resist assimilation or not (smaller), as Van den Berghe (1981) pointed out. The relative size of the American Indian populations of North and South America serve as case in point (Van den Berghe 1981:220)

the joint purpose of worship and teaching, distinct from the Roman Catholic sense of religious order. The term will also be used of all local church meetings, even where other terms are preferred, such as "parish" (Church of the Province of SA), and "mass" (Roman Catholic meeting on Saturdays and Sunday services during which communion is held).

Congregations draw people from disparate backgrounds into "communities of friendship and mutual support" (Carroll e.a. 1986:7). They influence individuals and the communities within which they live. Congregations establish continuity with ongoing tradition, have socialisation functions, and yet also serve to challenge status quo values (Carroll e.a. 1986:7). A congregation is "an open system ... an organisation of various elements that are related to one another functionally; both to one another in the accomplishment of the common purpose of its members and to the congregation's environments" (Roozen e.a. 1984:29).

A congregation can be regarded as a community of faith, similar in meaning to secular perceptions of community as consisting of shared intentions, ideals or goals. Some congregations differ in that they stress relationally-based communication as ideal. True community consists not (only) of structure, nor (only) geographical proximity, but of a group that communicates honestly, has deep relationships, and a definite commitment from its members (Peck 1987:59).

1.2.4. Congregational analysis refers to the use of sociological and anthropological theories, categories, and methods to formally describe and analyse a congregation in its totality - its actions as a group, the way and the subject about which it communicates, and its social dynamics (see Peck 1987).

1.2.5. Integration is used in two ways: (a) in a general sense to mean "racially- and/or ethnically-mixed"; and (b) in a - positive - sense to describe a type of mixed congregation that has a (relatively) stable racial/ethnic mix, in which the diversity of members is represented at all levels of decision-making, and allowed to affect the content and structure of the service. Integration should be "a recognition of a racially and culturally pluralistic society ... in which cultures, languages, and races interrelate so as to bring strength, depth, and diversity to the whole. Integrations should not mean, or require, the giving up of one's accent, songs, or life-style, but it can be the framework in which diversity is shared and appreciated by all" (Davis & White 1980:100).

1.2.6. 'Culture' is understood broadly as abstract patterns of and for living and dying, which is common to and taught by a society, and evidenced in lifestyle and behaviour through language, custom, law, art, and belief (Johnson 1960:82). Other definitions abound: more than 300 were already in existence by 1952 (Eriksen 1993:10). Further discussion of culture occurs under anthropological theory, section 2.5. below.

For the purposes of this study, and within the South African context, "culture" has uses and limits as an analytical concept. The variance between South African English and Afrikaner culture, apart from language

differences, is at present not wide enough to significantly affect congregational life. This is demonstrated by the number of Afrikaners who can be found in English-speaking churches¹² (see De Gruchy 1981:160-161). The shared experience of belonging to a privileged class over the last five decades also supplies a social proximity between these two ethnicities, as do the overarching Western mode of thinking and links with European cultures.

While the cultural differences or even physical appearance between the coloured and the white groups are relatively negligible¹³, the shared experience of life as disenfranchised people (with little or no access to political, economic, and educational institutions) forms an exclusive field of experience between these groups (see Stone 1985, Van den Berghe 1970:362). On the other hand cultural differences between black and white ethnic groups (e.g. language, rhythm, musical forms, experiences of history) are large enough to affect congregational life should significant numbers be present. Visual differences coincide sufficiently with ethnic boundaries in South Africa to be relatively accurate signifiers of cultural difference.

Cultural distance is least between whites and coloureds (denied by most white Afrikaners), with asian and black groups about equi-distant from the first two. Blacks subdivide into six major ethnic and language groupings of South Africa's eleven officially recognised languages, with various European, other African, and Asian tongues spoken. Afrikaans is still in a strong position relative to others, but in practice English is the dominant language. English owes its position to its international status as *lingua franca*, and its image as second language of most South Africans.

1.2.7. Ethnicity in this study refers to groups constituted by cultural differences of particularly Western and African forms, including language, culture, and history. In this sense ethnicity is "the social organisation of communicated cultural differences" (Eriksen 1993:80). Race refers to visual markers and so phenotypes, while ethnicity refers to a relational (Eriksen 1993) or a given phenomenon (see 2.5. below). From the relational perspective ethnicity is "an aspect of social relationship between agents who consider themselves as culturally distinctive from members of other groups with whom they have a minimum of regular interaction" (Eriksen 1993:12). Ethnicity refers specifically to social interaction in which cultural distinctions make a difference, resulting in gain or loss (its political or organisational aspect), or the creation of social meaning or identity (its symbolic aspect) (Eriksen 1993:12).

Although the Greek word *ethnos* has a long history, "ethnic" was first used as analytical concept by US sociologist David Riesman in 1953. The term first appeared in a dictionary in 1972 (Eriksen 1993:3). Until the 14th century the word meant "pagan", but from the 19th century it referred to race (Eriksen 1993:4). In the US "ethnics" after the Second World War referred to Jews, Italians, and Irish - similar to South African usage to refer to African cultures (see Eriksen 1993:4).

¹². This is based on personal experience; apart from a 1979 study by Cornelia Wassenaar (referred to in De Gruchy 1981) of the presence of Afrikaners in the independent charismatic congregation of Hatfield, Pretoria (more than 90% of the congregation), I am not aware of studies of this phenomenon in numerical or social terms. Of particular interest would be whether the cross-over is two-directional (English-speakers also attending Afrikaans churches) or one way; I think the latter more likely.

¹³. But different musical rhythms is traditionally employed by coloured people in spiritual songs.

1.3. Parameters of this study

1.3.1. Research goals

My research has both contemporary and historical dimensions; that is, present, historical, and New Testament congregations. My usage of prior and New Testament research also comprises a historical dimension, which requires socio-literary analytical methods. My primary goals were to determine:

- a) which social factors played, and continue to play, a role in the formation and continued existence of contemporary mixed-race congregations;
- b) whether racially-mixed congregations are a deviation or continuation of arch-forms in the Christian tradition, and to what extent;
- c) whether the source documents (New Testament) show that the arch-forms of Christian congregations intentionally included people of different race and class¹⁴.

1.3.2. Units of analysis

The synchronous aspect of the study, an examination of a system or systems occupying the same period, requires sociological methods. The contemporary synchronic units of analysis comprise three denominationally-divergent, racially-mixed congregations with different geographical locations within the greater Johannesburg metropolitan area:

- a) Johweto, an independent charismatic church at the edge of the black city of Soweto;
- b) St. Francis Xavier, a Roman Catholic church on the borders of coloured and white suburbs of Martindale, Newlands and Western Township;
- c) Central Methodist Mission, an inner-city Protestant church.

The urban congregations of the New Testament era (with special reference to the Old Testament) form the diachronic units of analysis, as do past examples of such congregations. A diachronic study examines phenomena across past periods of time. Other aspects of the study which resort under this rubric include the history of the three contemporary congregations, and the general social history of such congregations in South Africa.

1.3.3. Methodology

A diachronic study (across time) of the (hi)story of the contemporary congregations and of such congregations in the South African context was undertaken, using historical methods. This portion of the study was inductive and contextual, and no initial hypothesis was advanced. Hypotheses were generated and empirically tested as the study progressed.

¹⁴. Israel itself is of course an archetype. The twelve "tribes" probably were a federation of different ethno-cultural groups, bound together through a unifying ideology which included faith in Yahweh (Gottwald 1979).

The **idiographic and qualitative strategy** comprised three elements: a literary overview, analysis of the social world of New Testament texts, and congregational analyses. A focus on the New Testament in turn requires literary methods that combine diachronic and synchronic method.

How I applied the above methods becomes clearer through a closer examination of the eight chapters. Chapter One is an introductory chapter that outlines the research design and point of departure. Chapter Two gives an inductive literary overview of relevant sociological material and practical-theological analyses of congregations. Accepted socio-analytical techniques and categories that have already been applied in the USA and locally¹⁵, are selected for application in the research. The social-scientific methods for analysing New Testament congregations are reviewed in the same chapter, but no specific one selected. Instead, I indicate which theoretical and methodological approaches informed my own.

Chapter Three contains a historical-descriptive outline of the social factors influencing the composition of South African congregations from their inception. This involves first-hand archival work, as well as the examination of secondary contemporaneous written sources. Chapters Four to Six contain an empirical-qualitative, idiographic and exploratory study of three contemporary racially-mixed, existing urban congregations. The congregations have differing structures, traditions, and geographic locations within the Greater Johannesburg metropolitan area. Data-gathering techniques include participant-observation, semi-structured interviews, structured questionnaires, and the analysis of documents. Analytical techniques from Chapter Two, and briefly tested on a Presbyterian church in Cape Town, are applied. Results are correlated with questionnaires and documents, and matched to existing categories. A quantitative profile of congregational size and the socio-economic status of members was drawn up. The analysis focuses on the identity, context, programme, and process of the congregations.

In Chapter Seven I attempt a social-scientific reconstruction of the social world of appropriate New Testament texts, to demonstrate the mixed-culture character of New Testament congregations from their internal and external contexts. For this purpose social-scientific analytical methods¹⁶ are applied. The purpose of this exegetical excursus is to demonstrate the legitimacy of the study as supported by the New Testament, and to connect the results from the contemporary analysis with the ancient texts. Chapter Eight is a summary of the theoretical and practical implications of the study's results, culminating in a theory of how social factors influenced the formation of contemporary mixed congregations.

1.3.4. Validity tests

The results that I obtain through the qualitative analysis of the contemporary research need to be

¹⁵. Eg. A Roux (1992)'s adaptation of Carroll e.a.'s Parish Profile Index for congregational analysis, addendum 4; and J Hendriks (1992:215), addendum 1.

¹⁶. Cf. the works of Bob Jewett, Howard Kee, and John Elliott for examples of sociological exegesis.

validated internally. To avoid the ecological error¹⁷ a cross-methodological approach was used. I attempted to escape reductionism through an inter-disciplinary social-scientific, historical, and theological method. External validation depends on the discovery of common factors in all three congregations and on comparison with a statistically significant number of other mixed congregations.

Observational errors can affect an empirical study through the reactions of subjects to the (white) race of the researcher, the motivation of subjects to participate in the project, and the length of the questionnaire. My strategy to counter these were (a) to maintain the anonymity of respondents where they supplied confidential insights, (b) to establish rapport with subjects through attending church events, (c) to identify my role in overt research by having my purpose for being there publicly announced from the pulpit, and (d) to increase the reliability of the measuring instrument through constant reference to the three basic questions outlined in the research goals (see 1.3.1. above).

Of the three congregations studied - with white/black, white/coloured and white/black/ coloured mixes - white is the independent variable. My own (white) framework meant that my choice of congregations was determined largely by ease of access for me, through contacts who are whites. The continued dominance of whites numerically in South Africa's urban congregations as lay persons and as leaders, and my location within this group, could play a role in subject-responses.

1.3.5. Value of study

Implications for the international context

- a) The descriptions and the social analysis of the factors that aided the formation of the three Johannesburg congregations can help multi-cultural congregations to formulate practical guidelines for overcoming the consequences of racism, particularly concerning their structures and processes.
- b) Insights can be gained from the study for correlating urban and congregational patterns in South Africa with that of the USA.

Implications for the South African context

- d) The results of the research can be used to construct microcosmic models for South-African institutions of how to cross racial barriers.
- e) An empirically-founded theory of practice (presently absent) can be deduced from the results of how the confession of the unity of the Christian church can practically be carried out at congregational level to break down racism.
- f) An ecumenical rather than the usual unilateral denominational approach to the research subject can

¹⁷. Conclusions deduced from a particular research unit incorrectly applied to another (e.g. from groups to individuals; Mouton Marais 1990:43).

provide:

- * greater validity and acceptance of the results of the study;
- * a better understanding of the functional similarities or differences between contemporary and arch-forms of faith-communities.

1.4. Limitations of the study

The study is not primarily comparative, nor are findings empirically compared with churches that are not racially-mixed. The descriptive - rather than quantitative - empirical methods imply that my use of quantitative data is only valid as rough references for my inferences. Purely quantitative techniques are not included.

2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

This brief excursion highlights the major concerns of and developments in practical theology, biblical studies, sociology, and anthropology that moved the disciplines towards a current theoretical intersection. The study proceeds from a theoretical perspective combined from all four and so engages the theoretical frameworks of all. My borrowing of methods and concepts is made possible by the shared interest that these disciplines have in a dialectic hermeneutic with social context¹⁸.

The analytical concept most used in this section is that of the paradigm, understood as an interpretative framework. Strictly speaking a paradigm is dependent on a circle of scholars by whom it is accepted, and on a body of literature explicitly or implicitly outlining presuppositions and methodology (see Vorster 1988:36).

2.1. Practical theology: relating past and present Christian communities

In practical theology a shift is underway from a narrower focus on training ministers (the clerical paradigm with its emphasis on preaching, worship, pastoral counselling, education) to one that centres on the congregation and the development of its members (a congregational paradigm). The shift is evident in a debate in the US on restructuring practical theology¹⁹ (Hough & Wheeler 1988; see Wheeler & Farley 1991; Browning 1991a). As part of this movement congregational studies developed into an almost discrete sub-discipline of practical theology.

From a developmental theoretical perspective at least four paradigms of practical theology evolved, dealing with three vexing problems:

¹⁸. For the view that practical theology is a hermeneutic process see Polling & Miller 1985, Hendriks 1992, Fiet 1980, Osmer 1990.

¹⁹. One effect of the contextual focus of practical theology is the realisation that the modern context - social or academic - requires a different way of structuring and teaching (practical) theology; cf. Wheeler e.a. (1991).

- a) the relation of practical theology to the (natural and social) sciences - especially to sociology;
- b) the attempt to re-unite the divided state of theology (see Farley 1983);
- c) the resolution of the theory-praxis dilemma: theory-to-practice (a,b, below) or practice-to-theory (c,d, below).

Various degrees of interaction with the social sciences are evident in the four paradigms, ranging from opposition to accommodation. The most recent paradigm resolved the practice-to-theory issue dialectically (see Browning 1991b:301, Polling & Miller 1985:11²⁰).

a) The first paradigm defines theology as a systematic understanding of God based solely on the Scriptures (Hendriks 1992:201). In Europe this view of practical theology was particularly influenced by Abraham Kuyper²¹. The result was a deductive-normative approach, with the Scriptures as the outer hermeneutic perimeter, which did not - and could not - relate to the reality in which the minister or the church operated (Hendriks 1992). This somewhat easy hermeneutical direction, from theological principle (theory) to experience (practice), was broken and reversed by the empirical sciences of the Enlightenment (Polling & Miller 1985:10). This conceptual clash could be behind the initially negative response by theologians to the use of social methodologies, a reaction aimed at the humanistic roots of these disciplines.

After World War II there was a general return in theology to this paradigm, lasting until the 1960s, with systematic theology reaffirming timeless arguments buffeted by philosophy. The work of Karl Barth is an example. A new emphasis on self-actualisation started to emerge (Lovin 1992:125). Apart from the Scriptures other approaches to understanding God (also the kingdom, the church, and the world) were disqualified; these were seen as negating the ultimate revelatory value of Scripture (Hendriks 1992:201).

b) The second paradigm prevailed from the 1800s to the 1960s, and was rooted in Friedrich Schleiermacher (1811²²)'s efforts to gain acceptance for theology as scientific enterprise by pointing out the empirical study of church practice. Subsequently practical theology until the 1960s would centre around the training of ministers from the Scriptures in what their office entails (Hendriks 1992, Osmer 1990). The notion that practical theology is primarily for leaders of the church was first advanced by Gisbert Voetius in 1667²³, and became a powerful concept that continues to dominate theological education.

The development of both Roman Catholic and Protestant moral theology reinforced this minister/priest focus. Catholic moral theology was developed from the 16th century onwards to aid the priest in

²⁰. This way of relating theory and practice has also been questioned; cf. Wheeler e.a. 1991: 10 for a brief orientation with mention of major protagonists.

²¹. *Encyclopaedia der Heilige Godgeleerdheid* (Hendriks 1992: 199).

²². Schleiermacher, F 1811: *Kurze Darstellung des theologische Studiums*, referred to in Hendriks (1992: 198).

²³. *Selectae Disputationes*, cited in Osmer 1990:219.

assigning penance. Protestant moral theology was developed to defend the Reformation against charges of undermining morality - in particular to help ministers and lay people reflect on life's moral dimensions (Osmer 1990:218).

Within the different segments of a now divided theology various attempts were underway to accommodate different non-theological disciplines; so homiletics allied with communication science, and congregational development with organisational sociology (Firet 1980:22²⁴). This was not a new step, as theology as a whole (particularly dogmatics, as noted above) had a close relationship with philosophy. Since the 19th century the incorporation of scientific studies into theology was also encouraged in US seminaries (Lovin 1992:125).

As a result what Edward Farley called the clerical paradigm was developed in practical theology, with the needs of the minister-as-trained-professional dominating the discipline. Practical theology was fragmented into many effect-centred and autonomous disciplines such as preaching and pastoral counselling; and the overall functioning of the congregation disappeared from sight (Burger 1991:17, Polling & Miller 1985:10; Firet 1980:22), a trend already present in the 18th century German universities (Osmer 1990:219).

c) In the 1970s the focus widened to include the context at which the training was aimed, coupled with an inductive-empirical approach in which a theory and a praxis strand intertwine (see Firet 1980:21-22, Hendriks 1992:198-201). The theory strand is concerned with how to bring together Christian traditions and present-day culture. The praxis strand stresses the relationship between church and society (Polling & Miller 1985:31-33).

J Firet's *Het agogisch moment in het pastoraal optreden*²⁵ (1973), is an example of this development (Hendriks 1992:200). For Firet the praxis of God is the object of practical theology, and humankind in its context the subject (Firet 1980:10-11). The task of practical theology is the development and teaching of basis theories, praxis theories, and practical training, by means of descriptive-analytical and analytical-planning activities (Firet 1980:9,9). Put differently, practical theology has as object the actualisation and maintenance of the relational growth of believers towards God, and as subject the training of persons in the skills with which to assist this process (Firet 1980:13). This approach did not adequately address the clerical paradigm, as the focus remained on individual clergy as guides of this process.

d) The fourth (north American) paradigm is that practical theology deals with the relationship of (past and present) Christian communities to theology. The hermeneutical direction here moves from shared experiences, to theological abstraction, and back to experience (Polling & Miller 1985:11). Although this view seems to extend c) above, it contained a growing rejection of the clerical paradigm, and increasingly

²⁴. Firet believes that pedagogics is the natural partner of practical theology, rather than sociology (Firet 1980: 13).

²⁵. Translated, Firet's title can be understood as *The moment of change in pastoral actions*.

embraced hermeneutics, especially that of Georg Gadamer (Browning 1991). Meanwhile there were calls for advancing even beyond this position, with James Hopewell as an influential spokesperson who proposed that theology should be re-oriented around the congregation (Hough & Wheeler 1988).

Practical theology is now seen as a theological reflection from within a shared life of faith that informs the ongoing faith-life. Communities form the context from which practical theology arises (Polling & Miller 1985:11). North Americans Seward Hiltner and George Albert Coe contributed by combining pastoral counselling and religious education with social sciences during the first part of the 20th century. Subsequently empirical methods were emphasised (Osmer 1990:220-1). Influenced by John Dewey an accompanying shift occurred, in which the relation of practice-theory was seen as dialectic and reconstructive (Osmer 1990:221).

But among theologians to this day there is a fear that the use of social sciences in practical theology will mean the loss of the theological dimension of the discipline (Polling Miller 1985:11, Wheeler e.a. 1991:25; see Hendriks 1992), as well as its distinctness²⁶ as a form of theology (Furet 1980:10, Osmer 1990:221, Robbins 1988:203-204²⁷).

2.2. Biblical studies: relating to the text

Currently Biblical Studies is undergoing an enormous flux, which has been accelerating since the late 1970s, indicating that a paradigm shift is underway e.g. in New Testament studies (Vorster 1988:31; Lategan 1988:65²⁸). The shift is best explained as indicative of a pre-paradigmatic phase, as the old paradigm survives in many forms (Lategan 1988:66; Vorster 1988:39,45). Consensus on a new paradigm is still outstanding, and the new have not yet replaced the old. The causes of changes in paradigms are shifts in wider worldviews, which in turn influence the epistemology of scholars, as convincingly argued by e.g. Vorster (1988:31). Biblical Studies is particularly susceptible to philosophical-epistemological changes in the humanities due to its interdisciplinary nature, for instance its links with linguistics, philosophy, social sciences (Lategan 1988:66).

Below follows a description of some major paradigmatic sequences within Biblical Studies.

a) Some argue that the first seventeen centuries of Biblical interpretation was dominated by a symbolic approach embedded in a wider "vitalistic" paradigm, although other paradigms existed (Vorster 1988:32). Other prefer to see this era as emphasising the theological dimension of Scriptures (see Rousseau

²⁶. The loss of the distinctiveness of practical theology threatens to return the discipline to its prior position as a mere handmaiden of theology (Furet 1980:9, Pieterse 1986: 63, Osmer 1990:219).

²⁷. Obviously this concept rests on the unconscious presupposition that there is a limited space for these disciplines to fill; and that therefore the one can "push out" the other.

²⁸. Van Aarde (1988: 59) argues that shifts in exegetic methodology do not necessarily mean a movement towards a holistic paradigm in which the part-whole distinction is dissolved. Pragmatic approaches (e.g. sociological exegesis) retain part-whole distinction while offering more encompassing analyses.

1988:409). The result was the same: meaning was seen as directly correlated to the text in what was a pre-critical period (Vorster 1988:37).

b) In the last hundred years the historical critical method emerged as the dominant paradigm, under influence of a pervasive mechanistic worldview (Vorster 1988:34,35). As a result the method exhibits an atomistic nature, shown by the use of a parts-whole and a subject-object analytical dichotomy (Van Aarde 1988:50; Vorster 1988:35).

The paradigm relies heavily on evolution and causality as primary principles of explanation (Vorster 1988:35). One assumption is that Biblical texts are historical documents consisting of fragments or parts, each with its own history of development (Vorster 1988:31,35,37). As a result the primary task is to ascertain the history of the origins and growth of the parts of texts, which stand over against the exegete as object, in order to determine their original form and historical context (Vorster 1988:35,37; see Van Aarde 1988:56). After this the second step is to establish the original author's pre-literary intention towards his original readers as prerequisite for interpreting the history, beliefs, and thoughts of early Christianity (Vorster 1988:35,37). The general purpose is to explain the distance between present-day Christianity and its origins (Vorster 1988:36). Unlike the pre-critical position, meaning is attributed to the author (Vorster 1988:37).

The success of this paradigm is due to its integration of a historical-literary method and ability to function at textual, structural, and theological levels (Vorster 1988:35; Lategan 1988:69). Sociologically, the paradigm perpetuates itself through validating a circle of historical-critical scholars that determines which research can be undertaken (Vorster 1988:35,42). Allegiance to the paradigm functions as recruitment procedure into a "guild" of scholars, which is so legitimated (Lategan 1988:67,42). In some academic and seminary circles the method is theologically justified as best serving the truth of the gospel (Lategan 1988:67).

Among the major results of historical-criticism is a general agreement that the synoptic gospels contain more information that is of historical value than do the Johannine writing, while the eschatological dimension of New Testament documents is regarded as important (Lategan 1988:66).

c) Presently a holistic worldview is emerging in which the problem of truth is resolved within a consciousness of a plurality of religions and cultures, by regarding all parts as relatively equal components of a whole (see Vorster 1988:31,32).

The tension lines between the present holistic and previously dominant mechanistic worldviews are clearly demarcated by changes in text theory. As a result a text's meaning is seen as existing independently from an author's intention. Texts are "in their entirety ... signs in a system of signs of communication, or even ... a network of signifiers", which requires communication as interpretative background (Vorster 1988:37). A change was effected in the epistemological status of texts, affecting perceptions of how we

obtain knowledge from texts (Vorster 1988:37,38). In turn this required different methodologies that focus on textual structure (structuralism), rhetoric, and narrative (Vorster 1988:38). A recent development that illustrates the change is sociological analysis, in which texts are viewed not as mere objects but as systems of communication between first century Christians (Vorster 1988:39).

Structuralism in particular signified a major challenge to historical-criticism among the text-theoretical approaches adopted for the analysis of New Testament texts. Structuralism offered "a synchronic over a diachronic, a text-immanent over an extra-textual, a relational over a genetic approach" (Lategan 1988:66). Under the influence of the holistic worldview the subject-object duality dissolved. Neither text, author nor reader receives priority in the dialectic hermeneutic process, all being regarded as equal (see Van Aarde 1988:50). More recently the active role of the reader in generating meaning has been emphasised (Vorster 1988:37,38). The most extreme dissolution of object-subject duality was posited by deconstruction, which regarded texts as "networks of traces of other texts", and so without specific meaning (Vorster 1988:38). A text is incomplete, part of an intertextual system, and interpretation is not feasible. What meaning can be attributed derives from intertextuality - the relationship of a text to other texts (Vorster 1988:39).

The danger of a holistic approach to Biblical Studies is its relativism, which Van Aarde regards as an absolute form of intolerance (Van Aarde 1988:50-51). Van Aarde argues that the "whole" needs modification, otherwise holism is in danger of collapsing into pantheism or into abstractions which bear no relation to a concrete existence (Van Aarde 1988:58). Some argue that the paradigm neglects the parts-to-the-whole relation, as well as the multi-lingual backdrop of the New Testament (Vorster 1988:35,39).

d) The current state of affairs is considered to be a pre-paradigmatic phase, characterised by the frequent uncritical combination of concepts from different disciplines in often unintegrated and selective ways (Lategan 1988:67). The consequence is that a method which account for all dimensions of the Biblical texts is not forthcoming, only partial solutions confined to specific aspects of problems, rather than such fundamental issues as the historical Jesus and the origins of Christianity (Vorster 1988: 41; Lategan 1988:68). An integrated multi-dimensional approach should account for (socio-)historical, structural (textual), and theological dimensions; while incorporating aspects of linguistic theory with static, dynamic and dialectic modes (Lategan 1988:69,70-71; Rousseau 1988:409,412-413²⁹).

Positively the current phase enables different questions to be asked than those allowed by the previous paradigm. The theory-practice relation is not only brought to the surface but consciously employed in interpretation, while a historical focus on the New Testament is continued, following from the nature of the texts as written in a distant time (Vorster 1988:41,42; Van Aarde 1988:56). The historical focus determines to an extent the direction of the upsurge of social-scientific methods (such as anthropology)

²⁹. Both Rousseau and Lategan suggest that all of these analytical components should be used within a communications framework.

in social description and sociological analyses, the former using archeology and social history, the latter sociological theories, as exegetical tools.

Currently methods are often based on the links between (a) a specific historical social context and a social meaning system, and between (b) the interpretation of a text and the social context to which congregations are theologically and reflectively responding. Social worlds are constructed from an examination of the historical context, and used as the basis for constructing hypotheses regarding the functioning of social systems of meaning, against which the texts can be interpreted (see Vorster 1988:39,41). The emphasis on communal responses to contexts that can be analysed by social-science methods provides a bridge between ancient and contemporary congregations.

The encounter with social sciences so evident in this phase brought renewal to the paradigms within which Biblical studies and practical theology functioned (Hendriks 1992:202). The process was further stimulated by various challenges to Western traditional theology, such as the reinterpretation of the Bible from the viewpoint of the oppressed in liberation and black theology. The praxis-oriented paradigm of the latter is very different from the hermeneutic interest of the former, in which the aim is to understand principles of truth from an idealist viewpoint (Vorster 1988:43-44). Marxian and materialist interpretations of the origins of Israel or the early church also extended these developments.

2.3. History: establishing a chronology

Knowledge of the field of history is a prerequisite to a study of ancient texts. A general definition current in the 1960s described history as "a science based on the closest critical analyses of written sources" (Smith 1988:11). History as a linking thread runs through congregational studies, biblical studies and sociology. Recent developments from within sociology and historical studies indicate that the boundaries between these two domains are at present relatively permeable, as indicated by terms such as "social history" or "historical sociology" (Smith 1988:168). Sociologists interested in change used revisionist history, while historians employed social science methodology to understand historical processes (Smith 1988:168).

The practice of writing history (historiography) was the domain of amateur historians until after the First World War, when the first trained academics emerged (Smith 1988:69). Until after the Second World War the dominant thematic division of history followed Ranke's treatment of national and political history, which included "politics, the state and interstate relations, military history, and the deeds of great men" (Smith 1988:69).

The next phase in historiography coincided with an increasingly socialist Europe and contained two apparently contradictory emphases: wider economic developments and class structures on the one hand, and the lives of ordinary people in an urbanised and industrialised world on the other (Smith 1988:142,164). The French *Ecole des Annales* led the way in combining socio-economic and

anthropological disciplines in an attempt to write a total social history with a material focus (Smith 1988:142,168). This school influenced South African radical historiography via Britain (Smith 1988:168-170).

Economic aspects became more prominent because Marxian analysis was increasingly used as the analytical tool of preference; a movement paralleled in biblical studies. The methodology of the social sciences was borrowed, and the narrative tone of the previous approach was eclipsed by more impersonal and quantitative work, with a focus on the collective (Smith 1988:91,168). In South Africa there was a growing trend towards studying the lives of black people (Smith 1988:91). One strain of Marxist analysis which also influenced South African historiography was Althusser's structuralism, which maintained that unconscious structures (political, ideological) determined class, while theory was prior to and produced empirical facts (Smith 1988:170).

The basic task of historians is to construct a chronology of events. A linear concept of time with a strong emphasis on causation is a fundamental presupposition in this process, which involves the selection and interpretation of past occurrences (see Smith 1988:49). As the purpose is often to understand the present, historians are always alert to the danger of "presentism" - casting history in the mould of present questions or frameworks. In biblical studies a similar problem is present in anachronistic analyses that rely on modern concepts. The similarity between biblical studies and history is the attempt to interpret the meaning of events contained in more or less ancient texts for a modern context.

Western historiography usually assumes written texts as raw material. Consequently history has been more associated with sifting through archival documents than with gathering oral information (Smith 1988:11). Oral history is regarded with suspicion, or as supplementary to written artifacts, which are seen as more reliable reflections of history. Consequently the themes historians follow is often determined by the availability of written documents as well as their own interests (Smith 1988:70). In South African historiography this meant that black societies were seldom studied in own right until the 1970s. Because black history was embedded in an oral culture, historians commonly assumed that black societies remained relatively stagnant before the encounter with white cultures. More recently state repression and high levels of illiteracy also functioned to inhibit the development of a written black history.

As the analysis of contemporary South African congregations falls within a wider history, an understanding of the different paradigms in South African historiography is required to better locate my own historical point of departure. For this purpose I will refer to historian Ken Smith's summary of trends in South African historical writings (Smith 1988). Smith proposes a division into British and settler, Afrikaans, liberal, and radical schools (Smith 1988). This division is not without problems: Afrikaner writers can also be allocated to settler, liberal, radical, and schools; while some black historical writings resort under the liberal school.

Each can be described as serving a relatively clearly defined ideological purpose, and each attempts to

answer fundamental questions, such as the origin of racism in South Africa. The two dominant answers are those of the liberal and the radical schools. Liberals believe racism to have developed in the pre-colonial period, especially among Afrikaners at the Eastern Cape frontier. Radicals believe the roots of racism lie in class-differentiation, which evolved as an economic requirement of twentieth century industrialisation. The role (central or peripheral) ascribed to blacks by the various paradigms is cited as another differentiating feature.

a) Nineteenth and early twentieth century English historians can be divided according to British or settler paradigms. The British school examines the colonies in such a way as to legitimate the British empire, and to justify the actions of its agents, settlers or officials (Smith 1988:19,26). Those within this category noted the expansion and benefits of Empire, e.g. culture, civilisation, progress (Smith 1988:18). According to this paradigm British institutions are superior to indigenous cultures that are often dismissed as of little consequence and in need of British civilisation (Smith 1988:26). Afrikaners were painted as the enemy (Smith 1988:19,36). Egalitarianism is seen as the British ideal, but should be understood as equal rights for whites rather than for blacks, given the agitation about disenfranchised British subjects in Paul Kruger's South African Republic (Smith 1988:26).

The settler school examined the colony from the theoretical perspective of dependence on the motherland, seeking to promote colonial nationalism as means of limiting imperialism. An alliance between all white South Africans were envisaged, and Afrikaners tended to be treated sympathetically (Smith 1988:37,47). As in the British and Afrikaner schools, settler history mostly ignored blacks (Smith 1988:37,47,49,103).

b) Afrikaans historical writings tend to justify the nationalist or republican cause with "little distinction between history, the language struggle and politics" (Smith 1988:60; see 57,58). Using an anti-colonial and anti-imperial paradigm that had already taken shape by the late nineteenth century, these historians see the British as the primary villains (Smith 1988:59,68). This history-as-litany of British wrongdoing was useful to mobilise sympathy and overseas support during the Boer wars (Smith 1988:62,63). Where black history is noted, blacks are minor but barbarous villains (e.g. Dingane!) who - in a variation on the British school - are in need of the Christian civilisation that Afrikaners brought (Smith 1988:61,68,84,87).

In the nineteenth century the twin axes of this school were the 1815 Slagtersnek rebellion against British rule that ended in the execution of five Boers, and the Great Trek of the 1830s (Smith 1988:59,60). In the twentieth century the concentration camps of the Second Boer War with the Trek became symbols par excellence of suffering at the hands of the British, functioning as such into the 1980s (Smith 1988:63,90). History, as in the previous paradigm, is generally the history of the triumph of white culture - particularly that of the *vo/k* - over barbarism (Smith 1988:65). Dividing eras tend to coincide with white political events, such as Union in 1910, or the coming to power of the Nationalist Party in 1948. The socio-economic implications of industrialisation were ignored (Smith 1988:65, see 69).

c) The liberal school emerged in the 1920s. Afrikaners were viewed as the enemy and British

interventions were generally seen as benign restraining philanthropic exercises on behalf of the black population (Smith 1988:138). These views were modified by the liberal tendency to present all sides of the story (Smith 1988:94,120,133). The liberal school holds distinctive liberal assumptions and a particular view of race relations. Liberals generally hold to "the basic unity of mankind [sic], the dignity of human personality, the fundamental rights of the individual without respect to race or creed, the benefits of education, the power of reason, and the possibilities of reasoned progress" (Wright 1983:4).

From the liberal theoretical perspective the South African story was "the tale of race relations", through which races are gradually moving to a unified (Western) community (Smith 1988:119). Racism was seen having developed from the attitudes of frontier Afrikaners in the eastern Cape during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, which hardened under later confrontations in the interior (Smith 1988:135,136). Linked to their use of the emerging social and economic tools of analyses, the frontier theory led liberal historians to regard twentieth century racism as an "anachronistic throwback" which will ultimately prove untenable in the face of economic development (Smith 1988:136).

The ideological purpose of the liberal school was to gather evidence with which to morally persuade others, particularly the authorities, of the errors of their ways (Smith 1988:105,112). Racial conflict is shown as not inevitable, racial harmony as the ideal (Smith 1988:142,144). The inherent gradualism of the school was based on the conviction that persuasion could fundamentally modify existing institutions, given time. Many earlier historical writings by blacks who received their training in missionary schools use this paradigm (Smith 1988:133). The endless representations to government by English-speaking churches rest on this paradigm, as does the belief in the benign effects of economic development on racism. Liberals saw history unfolding in terms of tensions "between economic and social integration" and "political separation" (Wright 1983:20).

Liberal history gave black history a more prominent position than before, but until the 1970s preferred to study black-white interaction rather than black society as independent phenomena (Smith 1988:103,104,138). Black society was regarded as inferior, and the ideal future as one in which blacks became civilised and then integrated into white society or a unified heterogenous society - the liberal Afrikaner version (Smith 1988:104;119). The disintegration of black culture was regarded as an inevitable necessity by the liberals of the 1930s (Smith 1988:104). African decolonisation by the 1970s had altered this view, with all whites starting to be seen as 'settlers' against which blacks defended themselves (Smith 1988:139). The twin axes of Afrikaner historiography became discarded (Smith 1988:139).

By the late 1960s there was a noticeable movement towards bringing insights from anthropology, archeology and historical linguistics to bear on historical questions (Smith 1988:140,142).

d) The writings of radicals (or revisionists) which emerged in the 1970s employed the economic focus of Marxian analysis to examine the history of material relations between the classes. Class conflict was seen as the driving force of history. Capitalism is regarded as dependent on the destruction of indigenous

non-capitalist economies for cheap labour (Wright 1983:14). This enables radicals to understand capitalism as the unitary South African economic system, which cannot be reformed but must be replaced (see Wright 1983:15,17). "The poverty of the Africans is a function of the wealth of the Europeans, and vice versa" (Wright 1983:17). Oral history is given greater prominence, and history's ideological function is generally recognised and sometimes encouraged.

The roots of the school were in black resistance to Nationalist rule after 1948, and in the historical writers that sided with this struggle (Smith 1988:155,158). There was a definite break with the views that went before, especially as the aim was to describe history from below, from the viewpoint of the oppressed (Smith 1988:155,162,164). From the 1950s on both Boer and Brit (particularly missionaries) is perceived as agents of capitalism, exploiting indigenous labourers who are alienated from the means of production, particularly land (Smith 1988:157). Racial oppression and political separation aided white economic development (Wright 1983:20). The period after 1948 is seen as not so different from that preceding it (Smith 1988:15). Parallels were drawn between Boer history and that of blacks (Smith 1988:161).

From a historical materialist perspective race in South Africa is a secondary ideological construct used to justify the division of labour along class lines in the political economy, dating from the colonial period (Cochrane 1987). Economic realities are a more primary basis of division in South Africa.

Smith criticises the strong focus on economic systems of the radical paradigm as reductionistic. Social psychology and political history are not allowed to feature; nor the feelings, decisions or actions of individuals. The radical paradigm is strongly influenced by neo-Marxism and historiographic developments in Europe, particularly France and Britain. In France the lines between sociology and history were blurred.

e) Smith suggests that since the 1980s a synthesis of liberal and radical views have been developing (Smith 1988:163, Wright 1983:7).

2.4. Sociology: counting versus observing

Sociology forms the other active ingredient of this enquiry, from which I derived basic techniques such as direct (participant) observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Studies of race feature prominently in the history of sociology, and I indicate the development of its meaning. I am concerned here with the larger perspectives which undergird the discipline as a whole, rather than the different theories of sociology such as functionalism, conflict theory, rational choice theory, and phenomenology (for discussion of these field see e.g. Wallace & Wolf 1991). The dominance of functionalism within the field does require that some attention be given to this theory. I also trace the concepts that I borrowed from sociology, such as pluralism, multi-culturalism, and assimilation, which together form the dominant explanation of how inter-racial relations occur.

The framework of sociology has two supports: the assumption that there is (a) observable similarities in

human behaviour, which are (b) best explained as social processes or structures. Sociologists traditionally believe that these processes or structures are most adequately analysed by the empirical methodological rules of the natural sciences, which allows for a suspension of the values of the researcher. The empirical methodology is known as positivism, an approach that is often elevated into "an anti-metaphysic metaphysic"³⁰ (O'Dea 1970:221). Similarly sociology's claim to be value-free has been criticised as concealing its positivism³¹.

Social structures are seen as existing relatively independently from the culture or psychological make-up of individuals, and exercising a causal effect on human actors. Although the reciprocal influence of individuals and systems is sometimes recognised (see Schwartz & Jacobs 1979), humans are often reduced to objects or subjects of manipulation or construction (O'Dea 1970:229³²). Sociology attempts to analyse social structure in terms of culture, social system and individual personality, and to make predictions based on such findings. The aim is to understand development, motivation, and values at work. This requires an application of psychology, history and culture studies (see O'Dea 1970:201,204).

The two major sociological theoretical approaches of functionalism and developmentalism were produced out of tension between differing presuppositions and methodologies³³. So, for instance, positivist presuppositions are opposed by humanistic ones, while quantitative methodologies differ from qualitative analysis. This situation led Gregory Baum to call for the reinstatement of the critical humanism employed by Tocqueville, Durkheim, Marx and Weber, who developed sociological enquiry to describe destructive social forces and to suggest counter forces (Baum 1979:148-167). Functionalism derives mainly from Emile Durkheim and cultural anthropology, while developmentalism leans on Ernst Troeltsch and Max Weber (O'Dea 1970:1970).

a) In a functionalist perspective institutions are seen as interdependent in either a mutually supportive or competitive role, with the aim of maintaining the total social system³⁴ (see Chalfant e.a. 1981:13). From within a functionalist sociology of religion, religion and religious institutions not only affect the social system, the maintenance of culture, and the functioning of personality; but this interrelation can also be observed in human behaviour (O'Dea 1970:204). Religion meets adaptive and expressive needs by providing a transcendent referent, or by sacralising social norms, and is essentially "an adjustive

³⁰. Similarly, the foundation of sociology is itself not open to the methods of sociology (Martin e.a. 1980). Nor do social theory prove capable of positivism's dream of scientifically verifiable explanation, control and prediction - because the meaning that social actions has for the actors has been lost (Schwartz & Jacobs 1979:9).

³¹. Some scholars also object to the subjective humanism which undergirds sociology, and point to pre-existing anthropological assumptions (Martin & Mills 1980:27,153; see Feagin e.a. 1991:14).

³². Institutions do have some measure of reductionism inherent in them, as people are viewed in terms of certain roles (O'Dea 1970: 243).

³³. There are also theoretical (e.g. sociology of religion) and empirical types of sociology (e.g. religious sociology). Each of the major theories can be further sub-divided to produce additional forms (e.g. structuralist, positivist, existentialist Marxism) (Martin e.a. 1980:25).

³⁴. A more contemporary approach would retain the interrelatedness of social systems, but would allow that some would have as aim the destruction or transformation of the overall system (cf. O'Dea 1971:209).

mechanism" (O'Dea 1970:207,228). Functionalism is to a degree based on cultural anthropological analysis of non-literate small societies, and so tends to overstress the preservative function of religion (O'Dea 1971:202, 209).

b) In a **developmentalist perspective** the development of organisations is at issue. Applied to religion, developmental thinking focuses on (a) changes within the inner structure of the church, and on (b) changes in the interaction between church and society (O'Dea 1970:210). The first concept traces how an original experience of a charismatic leader can become embodied in an institution. The second suggests that religion assumes two forms in relation to society: compromise (church) and revolt (sect) (O'Dea 1970:212). From a developmental perspective institutions can change function without losing their overall form (see Chalfant e.a. 1981:13). So in North America religion has lost some functions (e.g. integration, control) and supplanted others (e.g. some family functions; Chalfant e.a. 1981:14).

The purpose of sociology of religion is to link religion to other social phenomena, and to note the dialectic relations (O'Dea 1970:232). Of particular interest are those conditions that lead to the production of religion, and the effects of that religion. So a major concern is with the general, rather than the specific (Lovin 1992:127). In sociology religion is regarded as a network of norms, often centred around solutions to the problem of survival. Like other social institutions religion creates social structures, and the processes to place individuals into these structures. Such social interaction is the basis from which the reality accepted by individuals and groups are constructed (Chalfant e.a. 1981:12).

Sociology's quantitative and qualitative methodologies proceed from the above presuppositional bases, and can be analysed in terms of domain assumptions (units of analysis), logical form, and assessment procedure (Feagin e.a. 1991:22-3,31,34³⁵).

c) In **quantitative methodologies** data is regarded as retrievable facts occurring in social structures which affect individual behaviour. Units of analysis are individuals or individual cases, regarded as independent from one another and equal. This underlies the need for probability sampling. Data can be translated into numbers (quantified) to test hypotheses by means of mathematical or statistical formulae. An accurate understanding of a phenomenon is arrived at by adding the units; the sum equals the whole. This process has been described as methodological individualism (Feagin e.a. 1991:38).

Quantitative sociology has a logico-deductive or an inductive philosophical grounding (Feagin e.a. 1991:31). Rooted in empiricism and logical positivism, the underlying assumption is of a simplified world of causal relations which operate according to a few uniform social laws. Other factors such as different levels of meanings and history are often disregarded (Feagin e.a. 1991:22). The researcher must stand outside the research process, and objectivity is attained through standardised assessment procedures.

³⁵. Domain assumptions are presuppositions regarding the units of analysis, the relation of the unique to the universal, discovery of a system's categories, and what constitutes basic reality. Logical forms include positivism, analogy, parts-whole logic, and counterfactual analysis, while assessment procedures comprise testability, prediction, logico-meaningful method as well as alternative ways of constructing meaning and social order (Feagin e.a. 1991: 22-3,31,34).

Quantitative analysis is most often used to verify or extend existing theory through statistical generalisation. The most frequently used method is to extrapolate findings from one set of data to a larger set, within certain statistical parameters (Feagin e.a. 1991: 14). Other standard procedures are surveys and experimental designs (Feagin e.a. 1991:2).

d) In **qualitative methodology** the emphasis is on non-mathematical approaches that at the most will use less-sophisticated mathematic formulas. In qualitative sociology the meaning of social interactions is important, and participator/s' understanding is analysed from within the process (Schwartz & Jacobs 1979, Strauss 1987). As individual or unusual cases are often studied, results can seldom be verified by the same cross-comparison to a larger population as required by the statistical generalisation in quantitative models (see Strauss 1987:2). What is usually studied instead is a process, which involves a smaller population³⁶. If the process or population is adequately defined it can be argued to represent similar groups (Feagin e.a. 1991:14-5). Qualitative analysis generates new hypotheses through methods such as participation observation, ethnography, document analysis, social histories, interviews - all of which can be used to construct a case study (Feagin e.a. 1991:13). Forms of qualitative sociology include phenomenological sociology, conversational analysis, field studies, and formal sociology (Schwartz & Jacobs 1979: xiii).

The theory behind qualitative sociology is best explained with reference to its primary method, the case study -particularly as my study falls into this format. A case study is a detailed multifaceted analysis of a single social phenomenon, using qualitative methods, although comparative and quantitative work can be included (Feagin e.a. 1991:2). The aim is to provide a "rich description" for the generation of theories that can explain social action (Schwartz & Jacobs 1979:26). Behind this approach is a worldview emphasising complexity and nuance (Feagin e.a. 1991:23). Units of analysis are seen as interactive, and the researcher is part of the unit of analysis as (a) part of the social world constructed with other social researchers; and as (b) occupying a specific place within the wider social reality that affects his/her research (Feagin e.a. 1991:34,36, Schwartz & Jacobs 1979:18). Some objectivity can be attained, but while generalisation is possible, universal social laws are not.

Behind case study methodology is the assumption that humans are in complex relations with structures. Humans are social beings who depend on one another for constructing their own social world, which includes organisations. So organisations are both relatively autonomous but also dependent upon individuals. In other words, organisations cannot be fully understood in terms of statistical analysis alone (Feagin e.a. 1991:39).

Case studies are more useful than the natural science model when it comes to examining social interaction, the effect of (macro) historical events on groups (micro), and of complex institutions. Properly used, in-depth case studies can provide a bottom-up analysis of individuals not connected with the power

³⁶. E.g. recruitment by a fundamentalist church (Feagin e.a. 1991: 15).

elite in institutions (Feagin e.a. 1991:52-69). The dangers of using case studies lie in (a) the use of documentary analysis, as such literature usually reflects the view of dominant groups that exclude some sectors (e.g. women); and (b) in imposing categories on social phenomena - much in the same way as the quantitative model (Feagin e.a. 1991:52-69).

Some attention needs to be given to the theory behind participant observation and interviews, as these methods were also employed.

e) **Participant-observation** is the attempt to understand a social world from the inside. Direct observation is used to study the visible interaction of individuals or groups and their real or symbolic effects (Chalfant e.a. 1981:3-4). It solves the dilemma of involvement (becoming an insider) versus detachment (remaining objective) ³⁷ by assuming an overt (identified) or hidden role within the researched environment (Schwartz & Jacobs 1979:37-59).

f) The assumption behind measures like interviews is that a positive relationship exists between attitudes and actions (Schwartz & Jacobs 1979:39). Structured interviews assume the researcher already knows the outcome indicated by the answers. Unstructured interviews are open-ended, which assumes that incorrect researcher viewpoints can be corrected by this form of response. Prior participant-observation in the ethnographic context heightens the possibility of accurately comprehending a respondent's answers. This method also helps to establish whether the direction of the total attitude-action relationship is inverse or not (Schwartz & Jacobs 1979:41-2,48).

h) **Race or ethnicity** features prominently in sociological studies. The focus is usually on the interaction between races or ethnic groups, described as either co-operation or conflict. At least five different racial theories have developed historically, in which race functions to indicate lineage (common descent), or type (phenotype), or subspecies (genotype), or status, or class (Banton 1987). Race relations' position as a sub-field of sociology has been questioned, with critics pushing for clear distinctions from other inter-group relations.

Inter-ethnic interaction is typically perceived as occurring as either conflict, separation, co-operation, or symbiosis (compare Eriksen 1993:27). A simplified diagram of possible positions is indicated in Figure 1, below. Specifically, inter-ethnic interactions are examined in terms of either culture (assimilation, pluralism, multi-culturalism) or structure (secession, opposition). Functionalist studies describe ethnic relations by means of a systems approach, which emphasises symbiotic interaction between groups. A contrasting standpoint examines the unequal power-relations between groups, and views inter-ethnic relations in terms of conflict.

³⁷. The issue is how one can describe a social world from the inside while remaining able to transcend it to construct common denominators (Schwartz & Jacob 1979; 48).

Figure 1: Types of racial or ethnic interaction, based³⁸ on Rex (1986:22-23)

	<i>Conflict situations</i>	<i>Situations of relative harmony</i>
Group distinction on the basis of physical characteristics	Racial conflict: A	Racial co-operation: B
Group distinction on the basis of cultural characteristics	Ethnic conflict: C	Ethnic co-operation: D
Group distinction on the basis of class or status	Class conflict: E	Status system with consensual order

Within sociology discussion relating to race relations was strongly influenced by the so-called Chicago school, especially by Robert Park. Park suggested that race or ethnic relations occur in four cycles, which moves from opposition, acculturation, to accommodation, and ends in assimilation. Park believed that ethnicity was an aspect of inter-group relationships marked by mutual adjustment, and that conflict or prejudice was caused by threats to this ecological pattern (Eriksen 1993:20). He also pointed out that ethnicity would have relative levels of importance for an individual depending on context, membership of a group, and the isolation of that group (Eriksen 1993:20). Sociologist Richard Schermerhorn (1970) prefers to see a variety of types of ethnic relations, which do not necessarily move in any particular direction.

From sociological studies of inter-ethnic interaction three dominant concepts emerged: assimilation, pluralism, and multi-culturalism (discussed under the section on anthropology).

The historical development of assimilation as a concept within sociology has been traced and heavily criticised by Bash (1979). So Bash argues that like the concept race assimilation is not a sociological category, but a social category deriving from biology, psychology, and anthropology. Sociologies of race typically examine psychological attitudes rather than social structure, through instruments such as the Bogardus scale of social distance. Only when race is linked to class within stratification theory can it have sociological value (Bash 1979). In contrast Smith maintains that race is an objective fact, determined by phenotypical features which links with genotypical differences and are repeated across generations; in contrast to ethnicity, a more subjective and open-ended category (Smith 1986).

A plural society was first defined as "a unit of disparate parts which owes its existence to external

³⁸. Rex divided the status categories (E,F) from the others under the heading "Class and status in relation to racial and ethnic situations". He points out that the diagram cannot strictly be maintained, as class and status are usually strongly correlated with race and ethnicity (Rex 1987:23).

factors, and lacks a common will" (Smith 1965, quoted in Eriksen 1993:49). Various races or ethnic groups participate equally in some common institutions, but are differentially integrated. Ethnically discrete spheres of political or social activity exist so that little inter-ethnic contact or mutual influence occurs (Eriksen 1993:49). Cultural differences are recognised, political or economic exploitation occurs, along with differential participation (Rex 1986:120). This form of interaction often occurs as a consequence of colonial government, e.g. in post-colonial Burma and the West Indies, and is identified with studies by John Furnivall (1939) and M G Smith (1965) (Rex 1986:120; Eriksen 1993:49).

Some debate exists within social sciences and within ethnic studies whether description and interpretation preclude moral conclusions or not. A middling position argues that morals can come into play where they are expressed by the actors within societies committed to equality of opportunity (see Rex 1986:119). Some situations occur in which ethnicity does not matter, and in which the agents have to determine the level of significance (Eriksen 1993:30,31). There is also some debate on whether race relations should be a sub-field within sociology. Some argue that the study of race relations cannot exist apart from an incorporation into a wider canopy of sociological theory, and apart from proper use of sociologically-grounded concepts (Bash 1979).

2.5. Social anthropology: theories of culture and ethnicity

I will focus here on social anthropological theories pertinent to inter-ethnic relations, within the wider field of ethnic studies. As any cursory reading will verify, a definite interaction exists between sociology and anthropology, evident from the practitioners (e.g. Robert Park) and theoretical influences (e.g. structural functionalism) shared by both.

As in sociology (and psychology), anthropological theories attempt to balance individuals as agents able to make rational choices with the directive dynamics of a wider group within which they participate. The results could be biased towards one extreme or the other. A prime aim of anthropology is to develop methods to investigate and clarify the relationship between what people say (ideas) and what they do (actions) (Eriksen 1993:16). US anthropology is credited as the first academic discipline "to give a damn about all those other cultures", for contributing to the undermining of racism, and for raising awareness of the plight of Native Americans (Behar 1993:314-315). Yet the discipline is not "principally oriented towards programs of social change" (Turner 1993:412).

Traditionally anthropologists studied *cultures* different to their own, initially mostly those believed to be relatively static and isolated from others, conceived as tribes and races (see Rex 1986:83). This approach is "exemplified in the works of Malinowski, Boas, Radcliffe-Brown, Levi-Strauss, Evans-Pritchard" (Eriksen 1993:8,9). The realisation that a researcher automatically interprets data from within a specific cultural or ethnocentric context had several results, such as the methodological priority of accurate description (based on observation) over analysis. A basic theoretical assumption was that the culture studied was Other, exotic, and presented different modes of being and organising. The anthropologist-as-explorer had

to remove all traces of his/her presence from the research and from the subsequent production of results. Yet in effect the anthropologist's role was central to the enterprise, as the only one through which the Other was allowed to be seen but not heard. Early anthropology of the 1860s to 1890s was influenced and responded to social Darwinism with its implied competitive hierarchy of societies (Roseberry 1992:847, fn. 9).

From about 1900-1940 cultural relativism - a non-hierarchical approach in which all cultures is seen as on equal footing - developed within anthropology, exemplified by Franz Boas's *Primitive Man* (1911) (Roseberry 1992:847). This development was spurred by the problem of integrating new immigrants into US society (some anthropologists were immigrants themselves), of the resulting cultural pluralism, and of mounting a critical response to triumphalist capitalism (Roseberry 1992:847,848). Paradoxically, cultural relativism enabled criticism of the anthropologist's culture through contrast with the Other culture, while excluding critique of the latter (see Roseberry 1992:844,847³⁹). An inherent weakness in the anthropological enterprise was that the present was suppressed in favour of the past, and the importance of inter-cultural relations was largely disregarded (Roseberry 1992:844). Cultures were seen as bounded, discrete, unique transmitters of separate traditions and values, and the aim of research was to retrace its authentic roots - an approach criticised as essentialism (Roseberry 1992:849,853,858). The non-hierarchical dimension lost force as cultural traditions came to be seen as "forged in unequal and power-laden contexts", regarded as abnormal social deviations which in turn became the focus of investigation (Roseberry 1992:849-850; Williams 1993:135).

Anthropological methodology throughout aimed to achieve objective results through emphasising the distance between researcher and researched (distanciation and objectification), and accentuating the otherness of the culture studied (see Caplan 1994:99). Methods were sought to help describe a group in terms of the meanings that the actors attach to their behaviour, actions, and structures - Malinowski (1922⁴⁰)'s "native's point of view", also known as emic⁴¹ data. Analysis can only then proceed by means of a secondary system of agreed-upon concepts, interpretations, or etic data, which must be correlated to emic meanings, which it can extend but not disregard (Van Staden 1991:22-23; Eriksen 1993:11). Participant observation was one method developed for gathering emic data.

From the mid-1950s the focus shifted to *social organisation* and *social interaction* as a more fundamental issue for anthropology than culture. This shift was in part prompted by Edmund Leach's 1954 study of the Kachin in Upper Burma⁴², and by Fredrik Barth's 1969 essay about the study of ethnic relations in

³⁹. Roseberry (1992:845) argues that despite its value, neither the critical stance nor the search for systematic connections resulted in increased understanding "of Western history and culture".

⁴⁰. Malinowski, B 1922: *The argonauts of the Western Pacific*. New York: E P Dutton, quoted in Dennis 1993:60.

⁴¹. Apparently the terms derive from the terms phonemics and phonetics (Eriksen 1993:11, n.1).

⁴². Leach, E R 1954: *Political systems of Highland Burma*. London: Athlone, quoted in Eriksen 1993:37,169.

which he directed attention to the boundaries between groups⁴³ (Eriksen 1993:37). Questions regarding the social mechanisms by which a group becomes discrete from others led to attention to demarcation. The concept of boundaries was formulated to explain similar dynamics that occur in all group formation, regardless of internal configurations which may differ from one group to another. Different streams of anthropological theorising developed, dependent on whether the emphasis was placed on boundaries or on their contents.

Between the 1960s-1980s an interest emerged in exploring the systematic historical and cultural connections "between Western and non-Western experience" rather than the dissimilarities (Roseberry 1992:844-845,847 fn.9). The formation of non-western societies was studied in relation to "the expansion of world capitalism", with a method mainly dealing with processes and powers (Roseberry 1992:847,852). Spatial dimension of anthropological theory now included a unitary global framework within which issues like underdevelopment and development could be analysed (Roseberry 1992:845,847 fn.9). Problems of public power were now of overriding concern, with the focus mostly on the powerless. The systems-oriented approach was a rejection of cultural relativism of the earlier period, but tended to fuse cultural differences into a unitary narrative that emphasised hierarchy and differentiation (Roseberry 1992:847,850).

In the 1970s anthropologies developed which rejected the 'distanciation' of earlier strategies in favour of identification with research subjects. Such participatory research attempted to empower the subjects (Caplan 1994:99). Feminist anthropology criticised the male-orientedness of both researcher and researched in anthropology, and these "standpoint theorists" proposed studies by women of women, or of blacks by blacks (Andersen 1993:41; Caplan 1994:99). Their assumption is that research is a social relationship which can reproduce the inequalities of class, race and gender. Researchers are usually from privileged backgrounds and so may have an interest in maintaining such inequalities, or will be unable to detect or properly analyse their occurrence (Andersen 1993:42). In contrast feminist anthropologists have a special empathy with other women (a double-consciousness) (Caplan 1994:100). The feminist participatory movement has been criticised for assuming a similarity that ignored differences (e.g. between white and black women) and so created a false solidarity (Caplan 1994:101).

From about the mid-1980s the emerging trend was towards re-thinking "basic assumptions and categories" in Western society as within anthropology (Roseberry 1992:846). In post-modern anthropologies systemic connections are rejected and the limits of research methods, processes and products acknowledged (Caplan 1994:101). This has been censured as presentism, in which social and cultural conditions are described but not analysed (Roseberry 1992:847-848,858). The practice of Western anthropologists of using data gathered in non-Western societies for debates, legitimacy, and positions of privilege in their own contexts was also criticised as exploitative (Behar 1993:308; Caplan 1994:100). Some now called for greater reflexivity concerning the role of the researcher, and for a

⁴³ Barth, F 1969: Introduction, in *Ethnic groups and boundaries*. The social organization of culture difference, pp. 9-38. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, quoted in Eriksen 1993: 37,164.

dialogical acknowledgement of the importance of those who are researched (Caplan 1994:99). Anthropology was also criticised for dependence on a distorting construction by Western scholars of the silenced non-Western Other (Caplan 1994:99,101; see Turner 1993:421). Meanwhile the notion of multiculturalism was emerging within academic circles in reaction to the "bullying celebration of Western civilisation and the United States" of the Reagan years (Roseberry 1992:848).

Within anthropology, as in sociology, the study of the organisation and identity of ethnic groups emerged since the mid-1960s (Eriksen 1993:8). Consensus exists "that ethnicity has something to do with the *classification of people and group relationships*" (Eriksen 1993:4). The present vogue for ethnicity (rather than race) as research subject is a result of increasing inter-ethnic interaction, caused by e.g. urbanisation and migration (Eriksen 1993:7-8). This preference shows a desire by anthropologists for a more egalitarian analysis which moves away from the implied qualitative distinction embedded in Eurocentric interpretations of others as tribes or races (Eriksen 1993:10).

Ethnicity is considered as a concept of use for comparing different societies, even where ethnicity has varying levels of importance (Eriksen 1993:13). The major concerns of ethnic studies can be characterised according to emphasis on (a) the content of ethnicity, (b) the social conditions under which ethnic groups form, and (c) the interactions between ethnic groups.

a) The debate regarding what constitutes ethnicity centres around whether boundaries or their contents are seen as relatively fixed (the primordialist approach) or essentially negotiable (the instrumentalist or relational approach). The primordialist approach assumes ethnic factors are essentially static and given properties, which precede the formation of ethnic groups. Ethnicity is implicitly related to culture, language, history, custom, social organisation, and sometimes race (compare Eriksen 1993:34,50). These criteria are regarded as objective for defining ethnic groups, and include marriage within the ethnic group, shared ancestry, and religion (Eriksen 1993:35).

In a relational approach ethnicity is seen as a strategy by a group to meet specific needs within certain contexts. Ethnicity is understood as an inter-group relationship (Eriksen 1993:11). Ethnic groups are discrete units defined through an identity that emerges over against other groups, "in a sense *created* through that very contact" (Eriksen 1993:10). Ethnic identity is negotiated and does not necessarily coincide with culture, while the boundaries are often permeable (Eriksen 1993:34). In hierarchically stratified ethnic societies the culturally dominant groups may be open to subordinated groups, if the lower groups accumulate their cultural and class characteristics (Eriksen 1993:50). In the 1960s the relational theory was strengthened by the discovery of ethnic groups with indistinct boundaries and shared cultural traits (language, religion, customs), who still differentiate between themselves as discrete groups (e.g. the Lue of Thailand, Eriksen 1993:11; see Roseberry 1992:849).

The instrumentalist approach regards ethnicity and ethnic organisation functions purely as a political process in which an informal group uses cultural symbols to obtain collective support and erect boundaries

to protect their resources (Eriksen 1993:55). This position is a relational approach, but differs in that the non-instrumental (symbolic) functions of ethnicity is undervalued, while its historical and cultural origins are denied (Eriksen 1993:55). The similarity with the relational approach is that the link between culture and ethnicity is severed, and the focus is on processes of change (Eriksen 1993:55).

b) Proponents of the relational approach (e.g. Eriksen 1993) argue that ethnicity is a structural response to political and economic dynamics, in relation to other groups. Ethnicity is ultimately situational and context-dependent, and does not necessarily coincide with language or culture. From this perspective ethnicity is merely one of many possible group structures. While relational theory emphasises the usefulness of ethnicity as a strategy for a group in a particular context, its symbolic value is also acknowledged. Ethnicity must meet the structural or symbolic needs of the group.

From the perspective of conflict theory ethnic groups form through opposition to other groups, through us-them (dichotomisation) or we-you (complementarity) contrast. A recent suggestion is that incorporation (formation) of an ethnic group is directly related to the ideology of the nation-state; before the advent of this concept ethnic groups did not exist as such, although groups differentiated among themselves based on kinship, language, and village or place of origin. These pre-colonial and pre-capitalist categories were "fluid and less institutionalised than modern ethnic distinctions" (Eriksen 1993:87). In modern societies ethnic formation is "more acutely felt and more self-consciously fashioned" (Eriksen 1993:89). Ethnic identity seems more important in situations of change, flux, or threat to the group, which is why modernisation or urbanisation may in fact strengthen ethnicity, and sometimes even seem necessary for successful identity maintenance (Eriksen 1993:100,127).

Relational theories have been criticised as suffering from excessive presentism, explaining phenomena primarily in terms of their present functions. The effect is an agnosticism towards past events or cultural patterns, which are seen as manipulated by group interests, actors, circumstances, and unconscious side-effects in the construction of present structures (Eriksen 1993:92-93). From this perspective historicity is not the issue, only usefulness in explaining the present. An important corrective is that continuity with the past emphasised by ethnic groups links to "objective" cultural roots limits the possibilities that such manipulation and group formation can take (Eriksen 1993:93.)

c) The aspect of ethnic studies most relevant for my research is the discussion regarding possible types of inter-ethnic interaction, especially those in poly-ethnic urban contexts or societies. Below I discuss Handelman's fourfold concepts that emphasise the situational aspects of ethnic interaction, modes of communicating ethnicity, and multi-cultural interaction.

The concepts of ethnic category, networks, association, and community as degrees of ethnic formation (incorporation) are helpful here, especially when combined with the distinction private and public. The four concepts can describe types of interaction, or the process of ethnic formation or deformation, or levels of ethnicity that an individual may assume in different situations. An ethnic category refers to an

awareness of ethnic identity and appropriate behaviours with ascriptive functions at the personal level. In an ethnic network the individual loosely interacts with members of his or her ethnic group, and mobilises such connections to obtain economic or social resources at the interpersonal level (e.g. marriage). Association is the "goal-oriented corporate organisation", a structured political organisation of ethnic interests at collective level (Eriksen 1993: 44). Ethnic community refers to an occupation of space by a specific ethnic group at the geographic level (Handelman 1977⁴⁴, referred to in Eriksen 1993:41-44).

Ethnicity often makes a difference in choices regarding employment, marriage, political decisions, or participation in religion. An example of the political function of ethnicity within religion is protests against conducting church services in a language unrelated to the congregation (Eriksen 1993:32). The personal importance of ethnicity is determined by the value it holds for the individual; which is usually little where the identity has been imposed by a dominant group on those who did not want it (Eriksen 1993:33).

In poly-ethnic urban contexts ethnicity can be either *overcommunicated* (shown off) or *undercommunicated* (played down) at public and private levels. This was the conclusion reached in studies of urbanisation patterns among Zambia's indigenous people by the so-called Manchester school⁴⁵ (Eriksen 1993:21). Groups that did not previously have extended contact now standardise their behaviour towards one another, and form new public rituals like dances which were not originally part of their traditions (Eriksen 1993:21-22). These rituals communicate stereotypes⁴⁶ by both dominated and dominant groups for regulation of private interpersonal interaction (Eriksen 1993:23). Such stereotyping and articulation of conflict are forms of dichotomisation which defines group membership over against others (i.e. an Us-Them relationship, Eriksen 1993:27). In informal poly-ethnic contexts, social interaction usually happens with those from one's own ethnic group, or with those regarded as socially closer (Eriksen 1993:25).

A prerequisite for inter-ethnic interaction is mutual acknowledgement of cultural differences, or complementarisation (i.e. a We-You relationship, Eriksen 1993:27). "Otherwise, the ethnic identity of at least one of the parties will be neglected and undercommunicated in a situation of interaction ... Here, the cultural differences communicated through ethnicity are considered a fact and frequently an asset." (Eriksen 1993:27). Complementarity is constituted by those elements that make inter-ethnic interaction and discourse possible, such as a shared language (Eriksen 1993:27). In power relations complementarity can be mobilised to produce opposite results, e.g. by a subordinated group to gain equal footing, or by a dominating group to maintain hierarchical structures of exploitation (Eriksen 1993:28). If little complementarisation occurs between groups, the tendency will be "towards an identity shift or

⁴⁴. Handelman, D 1977: The organisation of ethnic groups. *Ethnic groups* 1, pp. 187-200.

⁴⁵. Godfrey Wilson, Max Gluckman, J C Mitchell, E L Epstein; so-called because of their association with the University of Manchester (Eriksen 1993:21).

⁴⁶. The "creation and consistent application of standardised notions of the cultural distinctives of a group" (Eriksen 1993:23).

assimilation among members of the weaker group" (Eriksen 1993:28⁴⁷).

Multi-culturalism describes a form of interaction between different groups in a multi-ethnic society. As a concept multi-culturalism contains two sets of contrasting values: equality of opportunity for all, and recognition of cultural difference as a basic human right (Rex 1986:120). This tension has been described as the paradox of multi-culturalism (Eriksen 1993:143). Equality of opportunity inevitably involves some cultural assimilation to the dominant group in a plural society, which militates against the recognition of cultural differences (Rex 1986:120). The tension between these values is often resolved in favour of complete assimilation or by oppressive stratifications of inter-ethnic relations even while cultural differences are upheld (see Schermerhorn 1970:81).

Rex suggests an alternative: (a) equality should obtain in the public domain (law, politics, economy), and multi-culturalism in the private domain (religion, language, arts, family arrangements) (Rex 1986:121,123,125). Three other configurations are possible: (b) equality of opportunity in the public domain, mono-culturalism in the private (e.g. France); (c) inequality of opportunity in the public domain, multi-culturalism in the private (e.g. apartheid South Africa); (d) inequality of opportunity in the public domain, mono-culturalism in the private (e.g. the US) (Rex 1986:120).

2.6. Conclusion: towards a perspective for this study

In conclusion, this study is socio-theological in method, utilising in more or less implicit ways the methods and concepts of practical theology, biblical studies, history, qualitative sociology, and anthropology. As such it engages the theoretical frameworks of all in an analysis of the social aspects of racially-mixed congregations, which are considered sites for various forms and processes (cultural, political, identity) of ethnic interaction.

The study occupies a descriptive-analytical place within the praxis strand of practical theology. My underlying assumption is that divine revelation is (also) accessible through observation of social activities and shared experiences - with the proviso that these stand in some continuity with and extend what has already been received in the early Christian texts. This hermeneutic enables me to apply sociological analyses to literary and social, biblical and contemporary contexts, and to note e.g. the implications of changing contexts for local congregations. I do not accept the relativisation of religious phenomena to measurable or observable entities as often extolled in sociology, or to functional adjustment mechanisms as is the norm in sociology of religion.

As a result, I understand:

- a) the traditional Christian texts simultaneously as human and divine products, containing the witness

⁴⁷. From the context here ("interethnic relations are not necessarily conflictual"), and from his adherence to the relational definition of ethnicity, Eriksen is unconcerned about the consequences of assimilation as a form of violation and misses the point that to speak of a "weaker" group already implies discrepancies of some sort.

of early faith-communities to God's interaction with them. Individuals and groups referred to serve as personal and corporate examples against which Christians must measure themselves, and establish what is programmatic for the church today;

- b) congregations as simultaneously human products, attempts at social structures that are to an extent divinely inspired;
- c) continuous transformation of congregations as necessary to:
 - * obey the word of God as revealed through circumstances;
 - * demonstrate the relevance of God to those circumstances.

The anthropological concept ethnicity provides a "conceptual bridgehead" for a comparison of the mechanisms of inter-ethnic interaction in various societies, allowing for the discovery of differences and similarities (Eriksen 1993:12-13,98). This enables me to compare US and South African congregations, and contemporary and ancient congregations.

Careful readers will note my implicit evaluative stance, which stems from experiential, theological, anthropological and sociological sources. During the study tour of the US I encountered the social-anthropology notion of assimilation of cultures, which influenced my thinking very strongly. Assimilation is the stripping of the values of one culture by a (in this case Western) dominant culture in a context of a plurality of cultures. My revulsion to assimilation is based in part on my identifying with a collective historical oppression of Afrikaners by the Dutch, then the British; and more recently with the oppression of other ethnic groups by Afrikaners.

The most prominent solution to the "problem" of cultural assimilation in the US as I understand it is pluralism. In pluralism the reinforcing of cultural boundaries of so-called minority groups through exclusive activities - such as segregated cultural and sports events - is encouraged⁴⁸. I find the term "minority" offensive, with its implications of numerical, influential, and cultural inferiority. My intuition is that pluralism is a divide and rule strategy, which lacks the necessary moral attention to the relative position of cultural groups to power and resources. Pluralism seems to me to diminish, not enhance, the chances of Spanish-speaking individual for equal participation in a wider world dominated by English and by European Americans. Language retention is a case in point. While language retention by a subordinated group reinforces ethnic and cultural identity, "it prevents the group from achieving equality in a country with another official language" (Eriksen 1993:142). In this way interaction with the wider world is hindered.

A second solution is multi-culturalism, a concept with international variations which stresses "the importance and validity of cultural traditions" (Roseberry 1992:843). In multi-culturalism cultures are regarded as co-operating from within their respective cultures in a common task, without being required to totally surrender core cultural values expressed by e.g. language or music. Due attention is given to

⁴⁸. My definition of pluralism coincides with Turner (1993:411)'s definition of multiculturalism as "a form of identity politics", for separate and equal representation which risks "essentializing" culture. Turner does not provide a definition of pluralism.

the relative lack of access to power and resources by specific ethnic groups. An implicit notion is that to be multi-cultural requires an effort at becoming relatively conversant in another culture, and people with such experience are particularly valued as bridge-builders who enable understanding and trust. In other words, cultural diversity is viewed as a positive contribution to a unifying context, while preserving differentiation. However, multi-culturalism as an applied policy in Canada and Australia seems to occur in a form often not very far removed from my above characterisation of pluralism.

CHAPTER TWO: TOWARDS AN OWN METHODOLOGY FOR ANALYSING CONTEMPORARY AND ANCIENT CONGREGATIONS

1. SOCIOLOGICAL METHODS FOR THE STUDY OF CONTEMPORARY CONGREGATIONS

Chapter Two provides a social-historical introduction to congregational studies, best defined as a sub-discipline of practical theology. Many of the concepts I use come from this field. While the emphasis is developmental, a critical evaluation will be offered in terms of the relations between research, class and power interests, and various institutions. My description of the methodological development concerns the dominant methods used during a period; I do not presuppose that other methods were not used concurrently then or at present.

Congregational studies as such came into self-awareness in the 1980s (Stokes & Roozen 1991:183). Practitioners in this field apply one or a multiple methods of empirical (quantitative or qualitative) inquiry to local churches to examine their internal and/or external functioning. In its present form congregational studies dates to the 1970s, and was given its multi-disciplinary impetus by Hopewell. Some major academic and research practitioners - such as Hopewell, Carroll, Wheeler - strongly resist the suggestion that congregational studies should be an independent discipline. This reluctance is based on the belief that the whole of theology, particularly practical theology, should focus on the congregation. Carroll argues that the practice of ministry should be defined as a corporate activity, not as the exclusive praxis of the church leader¹. These practitioners feel that to introduce another subset to the already splintered discipline of theology is counterproductive.

In the US, "congregational studies" probably became a recognisable term in 1981, when the Committee for Congregational Studies was formed to gather information about who studied congregations and what their methods were. The group later called itself the Project Team for Congregational Studies (see Wind & Lewis 1993:12). The focus on the local congregations as unit of analysis distinguishes congregational studies from sociological analyses of denominations or of religion². Although the units of analysis can be members of the same church, or members of different churches grouped together, the findings are always related to the local church.

The long (pre)history of the study of local congregations is described here through synthesising other tracings of its shape. Fukuyama examined individual contributors; Hopewell (1984) the methods used; Wheeler representative themes (1988); and Stopes & Roozen (1991) the responses of congregations to changing geographic and/or cultural contexts.

1.1. The historical-institutional development of congregational studies in the USA

¹. Personal conversation, May 26, 1993 at Hartford, CT.

². In denominational analyses the units are individuals who belong to the same denomination; but samples drawn and abstractions generalised are applied to the denomination.

The north American school has influenced to varying degrees educational institutions, consultancies, and individuals elsewhere. Currently there is a proliferation of studies and techniques from the US, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Australia, and, most recently South Africa.

My synthesis will view the history of congregational studies through the prism of institutional settings within which it was cultivated. There corresponds to Schaller (1969)'s suggestion that consultants (or "counsellors") can come from religious organisations, church-sponsored institutions, interchurch agencies, denominational offices, or be "churchmen" from outside (Schaller 1969:2). Noting the contributions of individuals or groups, several educational, ecclesiological, and other institutions (most concurrent, and still functional) can be isolated in tracing the development of congregational studies through:

- a) non-academics using sociological methods (1920s);
- b) non-academics studying congregations from within research institutions (1921-1930);
- c) church institutions, such as:
 - * ecumenical bodies in the 1950s, (by the World Council of Churches, local councils of churches);
 - * denominations' research, development, and survey departments (1930s, e.g. the United Methodist Church of America's United Church Board for Homeland Ministries (1950s) and the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA (1970s) (e.g. McKinney);
- d) from within sociology and anthropology in universities (continued in the US by Warner, Williams; Australia by Kaldor);
- e) from within theology in seminaries (usually subsumed within Church and Community/Society/Public Policy);
- f) independent consultancies, some developed out of denominational projects (Alban Institute out of the Episcopal Church's Project Test Pattern);
- g) individual consultants;
- h) from within theology in seminaries as a sub-discipline distinct from others.

In the USA the following institutions are notable for their influence on congregational studies:

- * Chicago University;
- * Hartford Seminary, with strong links to:
 - Candler School of Theology, Atlanta;
 - The Center for Church and Community Studies at McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago;
 - The Alban Institute;
 - Auburn Theological Seminary, New York;
- * Fuller Seminary, Los Angeles;
- * The Center for Parish Development at the Evangelical Theological Seminary, Naperville, Illinois.

1.1.1. The congregation and its context: studies by non-academic individuals (from ca 1920s onwards)

The forerunners of congregational studies in the US were clergy who pioneered the infant discipline of sociology³ in the universities. They developed and applied qualitative and quantitative sociological concepts to churches. Both church and sociology benefitted from this cross-fertilisation, continued in US sociology by people like Peter Berger and Stephen Warner. In these early stages *contextual* analysis was primary, and the focus was on the relation between a congregation and its surrounding world. Programmes - e.g. mission - through which the church engaged the world received emphasis, and demographic analysis was the major tool.

H Paul Douglass (1871-1953) was among the first to apply sociological methods to the study of churches. A non-academic sociologist, Douglass analysed the social context of churches using demographic surveys and observation. He wanted to understand the implications of context for rural and urban churches, ecumenical co-operation, councils of churches, and church unification (DeBrunner 1959, Hadden 1980). Douglass also produced descriptive⁴ studies through qualitative methods to analyse attendance, programme, finance, plant, and clergy in St Louis (1924) and Springfield (1926; DeBrunner 1959:64). He noted the distinctions between rural and urban congregations. Douglass' book *1 000 city churches* has been hailed by sociologist Jeffrey Hadden as the first empirical study of congregations where "organisations are the unit of analysis" (Hadden 1980:73). He argued that the life or death of a church is linked to the size of the immediate population. The more the number dropped below one thousand the less likely it was to survive (DeBrunner 1959:11). He also represents the link between tertiary education and ecumenical institutions that emerged in the 1940s, as some of his work was service studies for the National Council of Churches (DeBrunner 1959:11).

Douglass' activities in the 1920s serve to demonstrate the links forged between sociology, research institutions and ecumenical body and their contributions within the development of congregational studies. In 1921 Douglass joined the Institute for Social and Religious Research (ISSRR; 1921-34), first organised as the Committee on Social and Religious Surveys (Hadden 1980:72). His first task was a survey initiated by the Interchurch World Movement (Hadden 1980:73). In the 13-year period of its existence the ISSRR conducted 48 research projects and published 78 books (Hadden 1980:73). This stirred a wider interest in studying congregations, prompting what was probably the first manual for congregational studies: Douglass' *How to study the city church* (1928). Douglass also served to foster the link between sociology and congregational studies, when those who followed his methods of analysis were appointed to seminaries. A prime example here is Murray Leiffer, who taught *Church and community* at Garrett-Evangelical Seminary in Evanston.

1.1.2. Studies by ecumenical bodies (1950s onwards)

³. Sociology had a dialectic relationship with religion from its beginnings. The founders of sociology developed concepts such as sect-church and voluntary association in an analysis of religion. In line with this trend are wider analysis of denominations or of the role of religion within society.

⁴. According to DeBrunner one Douglass dictum was description, comparison, and analysis.

In 1954 the International Missionary Council (IMC) commissioned a series of 13 studies into the nature of local indigenous congregations in the Third World. The decision was taken at a 1952 IMC conference, and the studies were carried out between 1954 and 1970. The results were published by the World Council of Churches as *World Studies of Churches in Mission* (Mackie 1969:11,13). In 1960s the WCC also studied the "Missionary structures of local congregations" - which influenced Brown and Hines to start Project Test Pattern (Mead 1972:10).

1.1.3. Programme and process studies by denominational bodies and consultants (ca 1960-70s)

The internal dynamics of the congregation as organisation became the focus of the 1960s and 1970s. Assimilation into US culture was the dominant theme in sociological research during the 1960s, and so also influenced studies of US religious life. Some social analysts concluded that the close affinity between culture and religion trapped congregations within a homogenous blandness and programmatic ineffectiveness. This was proposed by Peter Berger, Gibson Winter, George Webber and Langdon Gilkey (Wind 1993:105). Some also argued that the gap between the gospel and the local congregation was increasing; proponents included George Webber (Harlem), Gordon Cosby (Washington) in the US. In Europe Abbe Michoneau (Paris, France), George Macleod (Glasgow), and Ernest Southcott (Leeds) held similar views (Mead 1972:10 for full discussion). In response, studies examined the internal effectiveness of the congregation through programme evaluation, a *mechanistic form of analysis*. The solution arrived at in this way was that membership size should be increased, through e.g. individual evangelism.

Later processes of decision-making and relations between members was the focus in an *organic analysis*, which drew on theories of organisational development. The question now was how to involve members and provide them with fulfilment. Analyses were often done from within national church institutions, who studied and consulted with congregations through organs such as Parish Development offices. Organisational development (OD) emerged in the late 1950s; Hadden noted the work of Peter Blau on informal organisational procedures in 1955 (Hadden 1980:75). Desportes (1971:7) refers to a consultant skilled in organisational development who studied a local parish in 1968-69, and refers to books by Argyris (1962) and Beckhard (1969) (Desportes 1971:5,16).

Among the notable developments of late 1960s was the emergence of church consultants, first within church institutions, later operating independently. By the early 1970s William Yon, director of the Association of Religion and Applied Behavioral Sciences in Birmingham, Alabama, was offering an "accreditation procedure" to consultants by (Mead 1971:6). Meanwhile definite contractual steps for the church consulting process had been developed by Project Test Pattern. These bound consultant and congregation to action-planning and evaluation cycles, and to specified termination procedures (Mead 1971:6).

In 1969 Project Test Pattern (PTP) was launched by the Episcopal Church's National Advisory Commission on Evangelism (founded in 1967). And one of the most prodigious individual consultants, Lyle Schaller

emerged -from within the Methodist church. Schaller first associated with the Center for Parish Development in Naperville. The dominating paradigm was the need for "parish renewal". A context of change existed, and the decline in mainline membership had just started to emerge after the growth of the 1950s and 1960s. Church programs shifted from education to social action, while there was a decline in clergy numbers. Within the wider US social context issues such as reactions to Vietnam, racism, ecology, and drug abuse became more prominent (Mead 1972; 10).

Project Test Pattern used paired consultants in an experimental renewal programme for congregations who requested it. Based in Washington DC, Test Pattern was in essence a consultancy broker between a "network of 30 project advisers and 70 parish development consultants" and congregations. The aim was "building stronger, more effective [Episcopal] parishes" (Mead in Gilchrist 1971: 2). The director, Rev. Loren Mead, and the other members were appointed by the presiding bishop, John Hines⁵. Hines and Robert Brown, the Bishop of Arkansas, were the conceptual fathers of Test Pattern (Mead 1972: 9). Later, when the independent Alban Institute was formed out of Test Pattern, this denominational connection proved something of a credibility liability. Both these institutions have from the start been heavily involved in consultation, education and publication. Apart from two books on Test Pattern consultations (Mead 1972, Desportes 1973), several research papers saw the light (e.g. Desportes 1971, Gilchrist 1971). In retrospect Test Pattern was research-oriented, with Mead wanting to stimulate organic, quantitative research into congregational life (Mead 1971: 7).

Schaller's work draws on organisational theory, and assumes that the same social principles operate in all organisations. He popularises insights from social psychology, organisational theory and sociology - although not often employing conventional research methods. He has published more than thirty books on congregations, numerous articles and has consulted with thousands of churches across many denominations (sociologist Dan Olson 1993: 82). Among other things Schaller concluded that church size (average church attendance) makes a critical difference in determining central priorities and in minister-laity role expectations⁶. He also focused on the function of sub-groups in enhancing or hindering church growth⁷ (Olson 1993: 82-3).

1.1.4. Sociological and anthropological studies from within universities

On a methodological level the 1970s saw the emergence of anthropological (ethnographic) methods along with a more positive paradigm for studying congregations. Field work, field notes and observation were used. The goal was to see how stories, denominational and local histories blended with other events in

⁵. Note on back of the cover of DesPortes (1971).

⁶. Schaller argues that the priorities of smaller churches are for relationships; of larger ones for performance. The role expectation in smaller churches are for greater lay involvement, with the clergy in a primarily loving, enabling role; in a larger church laity expect to be led by an "initiating leader" (Olson 1993: 82).

⁷. Schaller suggests that sub-groups hinder membership assimilation when they become saturated, and value existing relationships more than forming new ones. To enhance growth diverse sub-groups should be formed, e.g. a newcomers' group by recent members (Olson 1993: 83-84).

constructing a distinct nurturing congregational culture⁸. Destructive capabilities of stories were also recognised (Wind 1993: 105, 108). Congregations became a text to *read*.

Melvin Williams' account of *Community in a black pentecostal church* (1974) was one of the most notable examples of ethnographic analysis (Wind 1993: 105). Williams's primary method was observation. James Wind, program director in religion for the Lilly Endowment, explains that the congregation-as-culture approach presupposes that the interpretation cannot be imposed from outside. A researcher must discover meaning from the congregation's perspective. This became a primary concept in congregational studies, and can be traced in the work of Project Test Pattern consultants, the Project Team for Congregational Studies. More recently it also emerged in evaluations of theological education. (Its dominance was also linked to developments in hermeneutics, with the emphasis on allowing the text to speak for itself.)

1.1.5. Studies in the context of theology from within seminaries

Congregational (and denominational) studies have since the 1970s been occupied with the issue of church growth. Reactions to the concepts of the homogeneous unit principle and of the strong church dominated discussion. Fuller's Donald McGavran (1973) and Peter Wagner proposed that congregations with homogeneous members are far more likely to grow at all levels - the homogenous unit principle. The principle became central in thinking about what form new churches should take. To this was added the idea that theologically and behavioural prescriptive - or strong - churches are more likely to grow than liberal churches. This conclusion was reached by Dean Kelley (1972) in a study of why some non-mainline denominations kept growing while mainline denominations kept declining.

In the 1980s congregational identity came to the fore, a result of the growing emphasis on ethnographic analysis (Carroll e.a. 1986:15). Each congregation was seen as a unique culture, which could be examined through observing such artifacts as language and symbol.

Congregational studies took a giant step forward through the emergence of the Project Team for Congregational Studies and its efforts (also known as the Committee for Congregational Studies; Dudley 1983:xiii). The Project Team started after a day-long session at the Lilly Endowment in 1982 to review James Hopewell's proposals for using various disciplines to understand the congregation. The question was what the results would be when these were applied to a congregation. Hopewell's proposal for a way forward was *Congregations: their and stories*, which emphasised the importance of establishing congregational identity through ethnographic methods, allied to literary analysis. A train of events followed which peaked in 1982 with a 3-day 300-people Atlanta conference on understanding the local church. The Lilly Foundation, in the person of Robert Lynn, provided financial backing.

⁸ In a discussion on the Presbyterian identity crisis in the US the need for distinctive story (or culture) as a means of unifying information (suggested e.g. by Neil Postman) and for shaping the distinctive practices of a church (suggested by e.g. Stanley Hauerwas) was noted (Burgess 1993:206).

The purpose of the 1982 Atlanta event was to analyse a case study from different perspectives. Contributors applied various approaches (such as psychology, sociology, case studies, anthropology, practical theology, Christian ethics) to "Wiltshire" congregation. *Building effective ministry* (1983) contained the published results of the Atlanta conference. Out of the consultants' fair which ran concurrently came *The whole church catalog* (1984) - a directory of analytical tools in use originally prepared for the conference. Annotated details were supplied on various researchers and the thrust of their work (Hopewell 1984). But arguably the most influential result to come from these events was the publication of *Handbook for congregational studies* (1986).

The need for a conceptual framework of cross-disciplines through which the congregation could be viewed was another result of the Atlanta experience. The conference had shown that applying disciplines such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, theology to congregations would produce only the partial understandings possible within their frameworks. What was needed was a more holistic view which would minimise the disadvantages of each.

The concepts were already in circulation within the Project Team, as the introduction to *The whole church catalog* shows. After discarding many options, the idea of using programme, process, context, and character emerged. A trial run was conducted in 1984 over two weeks at Union Theological Seminary, NY. About 60 seminarians and church leaders were involved. Participants were divided into teams which studied one New York congregation each by using timeliness, doing a walkabout, etc. In the second week the teams presented their findings to the congregations, culminating in a banquet. The framework was modified and revised. The same technique was applied to compile a questionnaire for the Unification Church over 10 days by McKinney, Carroll, Wheeler, and Dudley. In 1985 a survey of the Presbyterian Church was completed involving a sample of about 500 congregations.

The original Project Team for Congregational Studies comprised Jackson Carroll, James Hopewell, Roozen, Loren Mead, Barbara Wheeler and Carl Dudley. Carroll, while a lecturer in Church and Community Studies at Emory University's Candler School of Theology, Atlanta, had helped Glen Church do a self-study. Questionnaires, interviews, teams, and the demographics of the congregation within its community were methods used. After tenure as director of a social research centre at Candler, Carroll was appointed as director of the Center for Social Research at Hartford Seminary in 1986. In 1993 Carroll left to take up a position at Duke University, North Carolina. Carl Dudley was appointed in his place.

Part of the influence of *Handbook* was that it not only offered a multiple perspective on congregations, but also a multiple-dimension questionnaire - the Parish Profile Inventory (PPI). The PPI proto-type was developed by Carroll while working with Douglas Lewis on a long-term parish development project. The basis for this instrument was an educational testing tool developed by Princeton for examining educational organisation (IFI & IGI). This methodology was used to design what became the *Tasks of the Church* and *Organisational Characteristics* sections of the PPI. The focus was not on the involvement of the members but on the information they could provide on the congregation.

1.1.6. The present state of play

Courses in congregational analyses can be taken as subset of a curriculum at Hartford Seminary, McCormick Theological Seminary, Emory University, Drew University, and at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. Congregational studies is also directly supported by authors on practical theology, and indirectly by an invigorated emphasis on the congregation as paradigm for that discipline. Examples emanate from Yale (Kelsey), Chicago (Browning), Australia (Kaldor, Grierson), Great Britain, and in South Africa from Stellenbosch University (Hendriks).

1.2. Methods for analysis within a conceptual framework of context, programme, process, and identity

This section is a brief survey of the major emphases that played a role in my study, with a particular method summarised in each heading. The methods which I used were drawn from *The Handbook for Congregational Studies* (Carroll e.a. 1986). In some instances I elaborate these by reference to concepts from other authors and disciplines for additional insights.

The *Handbook* (1986) stresses an interactivist approach, which highlights the interaction between the context, programmes, processes and identity (character)⁹ of a congregation (Carroll e.a. 1986:7). The interactive framework is seen as more holistic, allowing for existing dynamics to shape the analysis, rather than imposing untested theories on the data (Carroll e.a. 1986:9). In addition this multi-dimensional approach avoids the reductionist distortion from which congregational study has suffered, which emphasised one factor to the exclusion of others (Carroll e.a. 1986:15; Callahan 1983:xi-xii).

These four dimensions can be summarised as follows:

Programme comprises "those organisational structures, plans and activities through which a congregation expresses its mission and ministry both to its own members and those outside the membership" (Carroll e.a. 1986:11). In short, the term refers to the what of congregational life. Programmes are usually developed around the assessed needs of members, and around a particular understanding of how to live out the gospel (Carroll e.a. 1986:13).

Process is "the underlying flow and dynamics of a congregation that knit it together in its common life and affect its morale and climate" (Carroll e.a. 1986:11). Conceived as a query, the term answers the *how* question. It consists of stated contracts or inferred assumptions about behaviour between members in various situation (Carroll e.a. 1986:13).

Context refers to "the setting, local and global, in which a congregation finds itself and to which it responds" (Carroll e.a. 1986:12). Essentially, context is a composite answer provided to the question "where is the congregation located?".

Identity includes "that persistent set of beliefs, values, patterns, symbols, stories and style that make a

⁹. The methodological categories Hopewell used to collate the 1984 *Whole church catalog* correspond to programme, process, context, and character; which in turn also correspond to the contextual, mechanical, organic, and anthropological approaches outlined above.

congregation distinctly itself" (Carroll e.a. 1986:12). It is expressed in rituals, signs, symbols, language - in conversation, sermons and hymns (Carroll e.a. 1986:14). Identity answers the question *who* the congregation is.

These four dimensions are not exhaustive, but rather themes under which to gather and organise information. As they are not rigidly defined categories there will be some overlap between one and the other (Carroll e.a. 1986:13, 14). But in some form or another they comprise the basics with which all churches work (Carroll e.a. 1986:13). Special attention should be given to the way these four interact with one another, as congregations form a whole, and this integrity should not be neglected (Carroll e.a. 1986:15).

Church members should have access to the process of analysis, so that the results are the "shared property of the community itself". In this way analysis becomes corporate confession of the local acts of God, and the congregation's response (Carroll e.a. 1986:9). A systematic approach can allow "the quest for congregational self-understanding" to be broadened through corporate participation. This can be done through either direct involvement of a team from the congregation, or indirectly through an individual researcher (Carroll e.a. 1986:9). Among the values of a careful analysis is that a perspective on less vocal congregational members are provided; and that structures or patterns are uncovered (Carroll e.a. 1986:8). The latter may be painful, but could yet be constructive (Carroll e.a. 1986:9). The possible functions of congregations are to some degree determined by inner life/resources and context. Analysis has to seriously consider what a congregation is to facilitate what it is becoming (Carroll e.a. 1986:7).

The basic presuppositions of the fourfold incarnational approach are that (a) local congregations "are major carriers and shapers of the faith tradition of the church, and (b) God is at work powerfully in and through them". In other words God becomes visible in a limited way within a specific context through a particular congregation (Carroll e.a. 1986:18).

I will next elaborate on identity, context, programme, process; discussing some techniques suggested for analysis, before discussing the methods I selected to gather information.

1.2.1. Methods for reconstructing the various aspects of a congregation's identity

Identity has to do with a group's reflexive awareness, consisting of webs of "awareness, beliefs, values, goals". Together these form a congregation's culture (Carroll e.a. 1986:22). Identity pinpoints the distinctness of a congregation over against its context (Carroll e.a. 1986:21). In the analysis of identity the focus should be bi-focal: on the integrative (being) and transformative (becoming) functions. When a congregation neglects either dimension, an inability to adjust to change occurs. A major function of identity is to counter despair (Carroll e.a. 1986:22).

Identity is the sum of the congregation's history, legacy, world-view, symbols, ritual, demography, and

group character. Each of these has distinct functions, which can be described as follows (Carroll e.a. 1986:22-3):

- a) history: helps define identity;
- b) legacy: gives continuity, legitimation);
- c) worldview: gives significance to events/lives, esp. perceptions of order and crises;
- d) symbols: expresses and reinforces cohesiveness and multivocality;
- e) ritual: gives multiple meanings to actions;
- f) demography: contributes to identity; can create a desire for change or stability;
- g) ethos: character trait which enables a choice of difficult adaptation.
(group character)

Legacy is the "inheritance of beliefs and practices about the Christian faith and life and the purpose of the church" (Carroll e.a. 1986:25). Legacy can take the form of the creed, confessions, councils, writings, liturgies, hymns, and stories. Then it is called the great tradition, which is transmitted through the denominational stream. In this schema the peculiar experience of the congregation forms the little tradition. Sometimes facets of both are condensed. A larger number within a congregation is usually concerned more with the little than with the great tradition Carroll e.a. 1986:25,26). Current identity normally reflects little tradition (being), and should be contrasted with the great tradition (becoming) ¹⁰.

Symbols are defined as entities with high emotional stimulus and low specificity. They are distinct from signs, which have the opposite tendencies Carroll e.a. 1986:35). Several different categories of symbol exist Carroll e.a. 1986:35-37):

- a) *symbols of transcendence*: these recognizable symbols (sacrament, cross) from the great tradition link a congregation with the transcendent, through indicating the ultimate value of identity;
- b) *symbols of love*: link identity with love to show solidarity and intimacy, through for instance sharing of food or tea, etc.;
- c) *symbols of power*: suggest consequence or goals, e.g. money;
- d) *symbols of justice*: these include posters, donations, programs.

Ritual refers to a pattern of "repetitive action that has more than utilitarian significance". Ritual functions to convey meaning which cannot fully be described. Ritual often occurs at potentially disruptive occasions, e.g. greeting, or communion, celebration, negotiation, intimacy, and grief. As with symbols, rituals convey relationship to the greater tradition and are strong indicators of world view (Carroll e.a. 1986:37, 40).

Two types of ritual have been defined:

¹⁰. Important for this study is the comment that anyone who compares research findings with "the universal biblical and theological dialogue" regarding the church and its mission brings the great tradition to bear (Carroll e.a. 1986: 27, quoting Joseph Hough).

a) *rites of passage* involve "separation from a previous status, a transitional or liminal threshold) stage; and a stage of incorporation". The function of this rite is to enable the assumption and acceptance of new identity; while also rehearsing group identity in relation to individuals. Examples include baptism, confirmation, presentation of new members, funerals, ordination or installation of clergy, greetings (Carroll e.a. 1986:37);

b) *rites of intensification* are occasions which express a deepening commitment to e.g. "shared beliefs and meanings", and so particularly refers to the great tradition. The functions of this rite are to rehearse the (hi)story of the congregation, to knit together disparate groups, and to transmit inheritance. In general rites of intensification function to recycle the community from the everyday to the everyday via the extraordinary. Examples of rituals connected to the great tradition include special days, communion, and the order of service. Examples concerning the little tradition include bring-and-share suppers, and annual meetings (Carroll e.a. 1986:38-39).

Other congregational rituals occur with reference to patterns of arranging space or seating; of dealing with crises and conflict; and patterns of dress, behaviour and role expectations (Carroll e.a. 1986:39):

a) spatial arrangements contribute to a sense of place or ranking (more recent or longer-serving, younger or older, core or plebian groups. Space often functions as an index of power and importance, especially in relation to what is seen as sacred space (e.g. an altar); and how important a specific congregating event is in the lives of individuals;

b) patterns of dealing with crises and conflict "enacts an aspect of identity" through ritualised avoidance, denial, confrontation, or solutions. In analysing ways of dealing with crises the link with theological assumptions and worldview is important;

c) patterns of attitudes, dress, behaviour role expectations are explicit acknowledgement of corporate identity. These enable 'secondary' adjustments to corporate expectations by individuals, who appear to follow these while actually pursuing their own goals. Examples include actions such as leaving the service before its official finish, or rationalising controversial sermons (Carroll e.a. 1986:39-40).

Demographics usually refer to a statistical analysis of the characteristics of individuals or groups, in terms of age, sex, marital status, race, job, income, education, social class. Social class is here understood as "those who share similar positions in society related to their education, income and occupation". People in the same class tend towards confluence on "social and political attitudes, economic interests, life-style and life chances (access to ... food, clothing, shelter, and health care)" (Carroll e.a. 1986:42).

1.2.1.1. **Reconstructing identity through attention to the history of a congregation**

History can be described as representations of the past and expectations of the future which help define identity. Various methods through which a congregation's history can be traced are described below, including compilation of an oral history, use of a time-line, and analysis of successive events. Denham Grierson said that a "community is ... a sharing together of significant happenings, the substance which comes largely from remembering." (Carroll e.a. 1986:24). Examples of significant events are the founding of the congregation, turning points in its life together, the individual stories of important people.

Oral history technique: guided interviews are used to answer such questions as what's the news; what changes have happened since you (the member) have joined this congregation; what happened that you would like not to have occurred, or that you would like to have had followed up differently ? (Carroll e.a. 1986:24).

Time line technique: this takes the form of a group discussion, and uses a long piece of newsprint stuck to a wall as visual aid on which to note important dates. The founding date is written down first, on the left of the newsprint: the present date is placed towards the right extreme, and a line is drawn below the dates. Members are asked to recall important events, which are noted below the time line; above the line is placed information relating to the neighbourhood, region, nation, world (Carroll e.a. 1986:24).

Analysis of the function of successive events: The researcher/s note/s how events link together; become more complex through added disparate factors ("thicken"); unfold through causes and their effects, through the reasons given for the occurrence of events; or have unusual outcomes or developments (twists). When examining the history of a congregation, the question to ask is which events function to suppress - or dominate - others; what pattern is discernible in many events? Which occurrences are accepted to the detriment of others? (Carroll e.a. 1986:25).

1.2.1.2. Tracing legacy as an aspect of identity through verbal data and pre-existing categories

Legacy can be unearthed through the contents-analysis of sermons, teachings, documents, and other inductive techniques. Pre-defined categories like those suggested by Roozen can be used to aid the analysis.

Sermons, teachings, documents, can be examined for patterns of belief, themes, and dominant theological images. This is a primary method for establishing the present theological identity of a congregation as derived from the great and little traditions. The focus is on "behaviourial expressions of the congregation's theological identity in its organisational life", which function to "select, emphasize, suppress, focus and organize features of the common life". They make up a congregation's "fundamental vision" (Carroll e.a. 1986:27).

Other inductive gathering techniques include listening, using unstructured interviews, being a participant observer, using pre-defined categories to analyse the contents of written documents.

Using pre-defined categories helps to determine the theological diversity or homogeneity within - and distinctions between - congregations (Carroll e.a. 1986:27). The degree to which a confluence of theological ideas exists is a measure of the strength of theological identity. Clues to the interplay of the great and little tradition are also provided in this way; as well as to the interaction between beliefs and behaviour (programme, processes, relation to its world) (Carroll e.a. 1986:29). Often more than one category is present within a congregation, with one dominant and two or more secondary.

An often-referred to example of pre-defined categories is that which compares the congregation's mission orientation to its context. These were introduced by Roozen and others in an analysis of congregations in Hartford, Connecticut (Roozen e.a. 1984). Orientations can be verified - aside from observation - through leaders/members ranking them, or completing a questionnaire (Carroll e.a. 1986:30). These categories are bi-focal - the first two emphasize this world; the last two the world to come:

Figure 2: Mission orientations of congregations in relation to context, after Roozen e.a. 1984

Thisworldly	Otherworldly
<p><i>a) Activist congregations:</i> God is seen as redemptively active in the world, therefore the church should corporately speak out and act on social and justice issues. A critical stance is maintained towards existing socio-economic and political structures, which members regarded as in need of transformation or at least change. Members are not afraid of controversy. (Carroll e.a. 1986:29).</p>	<p><i>c) Evangelistic congregations:</i> The world to come is seen as more important than the present world, and so salvation/eternal life as well as church membership is emphasised (Carroll e.a. 1986:30).</p>
<p><i>b) Civic congregations:</i> Christians are thought of as having to act on public issues. Existing socio-economic and political structures must be made to work well. Congregational meetings are often seen as a public forum for debate, but not for corporate actions. Individuals act out their convictions as non-representative of the congregation (Carroll e.a. 1986:29-30).</p>	<p><i>d) Sanctuary congregations:</i> The congregation is seen as a place of withdrawal. A sharp distinction is maintained between the sacred and the secular; with the latter regarded as sinful but interaction with it necessary. Public institutions are accepted and upheld, but the deepest loyalty is that to God (Carroll e.a. 1986:30).</p>

1.2.1.3. Reconstructing the worldview aspect of identity through guided interviews and literary categories

Worldview is transmitted by language: verbal and written, but also by gestures, marks, signs, and symbols (Carroll e.a. 1986:33). Another method is to note whether the language used between the members of a congregation has indicative (events as experienced), subjunctive (referring to values), or imperative (actuation) functions. Other techniques for gathering data on worldview include guided interviews and use of literary categories.

Guided individual interviews focusing on crises are useful to uncover indicative functions. Interviewees are asked to relate their experiences of crises, and the researcher then tries to connect the answers to

those given by other persons . Connections can also be sought to other groups in the congregation, to the larger national context, or to supernatural interventions (Carroll e.a. 1986:34-5). Example questions are: to ask what was happening during the death of a friend; to describe life in a family out of control; what God is doing in the nation presently; to mention instances of experiencing God's guidance or touch (Carroll e.a. 1986:34). If enough interviews can be obtained, it may be possible to arrange them according to common themes, phrases, solutions, stories, and symbols. The various interviews can be grouped on the floor in a spatial format, or a composite life view can be written for the congregation as a whole (Carroll e.a. 1986:35). Half the sample should be leadership, and the whole should be varied according to sex, age, education, participation (Carroll e.a. 1986:35).

The use of literary categories to categorize worldview was pioneered by James Hopewell (1987). He used Northrop Frye's literary categories to describe a congregation's worldview as comic, tragic, ironic, or romantic:

a) *Comic worldview*: The opposite to the tragic, this view strives towards harmony through uncovering true reality and joining with it, while complications along the way are viewed as illusory. Subordination to power is solved by union with it. Themes that recur refer to the "hidden unfolding of meaning" or to a "deepening consciousness", while unity is often mentioned. Signs suggesting the presence of the comic worldview include the use of meditation or contemplation; particularly gestures or symbols that invite it, or references to a cosmic force. This view can also be described as gnostic, or intuitive (Carroll e.a. 1986:32, 33).

b) *Romantic worldview*: The opposite to the ironic, the romantic worldview stories the complications that follow on a hero/ine's quest, as s/he struggles and is ultimately rewarded. The story usually moves from uniformity to uncertainty or the unusual. Supernatural power encounters those who move away in adventure from the routine, but without unity. Signs indicating that a romantic worldview is present include references to sensing God, to spiritual gifts, to healing through touching others during prayer, and to visions (Carroll e.a. 1986:33).

c) *Tragic worldview*: the storyline develops from union with power to subordination or even death beneath it. This end is solved through acceptance and obedience. Signs suggesting the presence of the tragic worldview include references to confronting "God's word and will", to subjecting personal choice to some canon, to moral decay or damnation. The tragic view was often encountered in the traditional missionary (Carroll e.a. 1986:32, 33-34).

d) *Ironic worldview*: the ironic story moves from the strange or uncertain towards the common, uniform or the natural. Essentially an empirical understanding of reality as non-supernatural, the ironic view defines horizontal love as camaraderie, through which it hopes to resolve any complications. Signs indicating the presence of the ironic worldview include references to justice, to fellowship, and the use of ethical symbols (Carroll e.a. 1986:33, 34).

1.2.1.4. Reconstructing the symbolic aspects of identity through looking for more than instrumental functions

To uncover symbols the researcher has to distance him/herself from the artifacts, places, people under

consideration. This is done by considering them to have occurred in the distant past, and then to question whether they have more than an instrumental function (Carroll e.a. 1986:36).

1.2.1.5. Reconstructing the ritual aspects of identity through participant-observation and semi-structured interviews

Rituals can be located by participant-observation. With aid from members the researcher lists all rituals. Questions to ask are: which events occur regularly, annually, irregularly, seasonally; where do they occur; who are involved; what is their importance; what characterises them; what attitudes and emotions are associated with them; which symbols are used and what are their relative importance; is there a sequence of events, does it vary; how do members' interpret these rites. Sociograms can be drawn to analyse rites, e.g. of the location of people or their communication patterns during a particular event. To map the location of artifacts in this way is also an important method (Carroll e.a. 1986:40). Attention should also fall on the types of ritual and their function; their relation to traditions; recurring themes in rites and their interaction with other aspects of identity (Carroll e.a. 1986:41).

1.2.1.6. Reconstructing the demographic aspects of identity through surveys

For the practitioner of congregational studies it is important to examine the distribution of demographic categories across the congregation to describe its homogeneity or diversity. Profiles of the average member can be constructed from such data. Such data can be compared to official census figures; or to results from other congregations in the area.

The function of social class is important, especially as it often reveals inequalities between groups. Class affects the preferred style of worship, theological orientation, world views, mission styles, and the generally held view of how Christians should act in society (Carroll e.a. 1986:41). Non-members who live in the neighbourhood and are from a different social class than the congregation's members provide important views on a congregation (Carroll e.a. 1986:42-3).

The methods for gathering demographic data include getting knowledgeable members of the congregation to estimate the percentages which fit into the various categories. This is relatively reliable for up to 400 members. A questionnaire is another method for this purpose. Such data can be presented in bar, line, pie or pyramid graphs. Demographic information can help with programme development, so aiding the congregation in its "becoming" task (Carroll e.a. 1986:42-3).

The identity of a congregation can persist long after the demographic picture has changed. Such an identity would be dysfunctional for that congregation, and cause programme to be incompatible with context (Carroll e.a. 1986:41).

1.2.2. Methods for analysing a congregation's context

Context refers to the local and global setting "in which a congregation finds itself and to which it

responds" (Carroll e.a. 1986:48). Context is an inclusive concept, which extends beyond location. A local community is confined not only by geographic boundaries but also by a network of interpersonal and institutional relationships. The underlying assumption of is that congregations are open systems. Permeable boundaries provide a two-way flow in which the context profoundly shapes the congregation, and so the congregation's capacity to influence the context. Congregations are not static, but in a constant "state of flux and adaptation" to its context (Carroll e.a. 1986:48).

Contextual analysis provides awareness of the context's influence, which offers potential self-renewal, more effective interaction, and new "possibilities of response" (Carroll e.a. 1986:49). A congregation is seen as affected by those local and global trends which concretely influence the local community and so the congregation at many different levels. The affected levels influences one another in turn (Carroll e.a. 1986:49-50). Examples of three inter-related levels are the social worlds of residents, demography, and patterns of social interaction. Their interaction makes contextual impact on a congregation evident.

Carl Dudley (1978) elaborated on the obvious: that analysis of congregations cannot proceed monolithically, because small churches have a different dynamic than large congregations. Analysis or solutions which ignore this will by implication be distorted and ineffective (Dudley 1978). Are the differences between congregations so great that no generalised solutions are possible? Dudley points out that the social context of each church limits the possibilities of how effective a congregation can be, while also helping to define its borders. Walrath defined 12 types of congregations in terms of social (community) context. Between these types "pastoral care, congregational programme, opportunities for membership growth, and the character of the church's ministry" differ; but within the types there are similarities (Dudley 1979: 83). Dudley prefers major profiles to models or ideals of congregations, which correlate with growth: the church in the city, in a stable suburban community, in a growing suburb, in the small city, in the town or country, and the ethnic church (Dudley 1979: 89ff).

1.2.2.1. Reconstructing a congregation's context through social mapping

More than geographic locale, "a neighbourhood or community is a normative system with its own roles and relationships; a shared identity and status order; a common culture and life" (Carroll e.a. 1986:50). Neighbourhood is an important context through which an individual subjectively experiences the wider society.

A social map superimposes social relations onto a geographic map. Pins can be used on a map of the neighbourhood to show the location of homes of members, and to gauge the relationship of the congregation to its neighbourhood. Or such a map can be used to indicate places that have special meaning for the researcher or research committee. Differentiating between the immediate neighbourhood and the larger area in which members live can be a valuable distinction (Carroll e.a. 1986:50-51).

1.2.2.2. Reconstructing a congregation's context through a neighbourhood walk

Teams of 2 to 3 can examine the neighbourhood from different perspectives; for instance that of a

student, pensioner, or newly weds contemplating moving into the area. Questions should be asked about basic services, locations of and nature of businesses, patterns of people on streets. Publications relating to area can also be examined, such as knock-and-drop newspapers (Carroll e.a. 1986:51).

1.2.2.3. Reconstructing a congregation's context through cognitive mapping

Cognitive mapping refers to the process by which the social worlds of individuals are discovered. The concept social world refers to the perceptions of reality by which individuals organise and derive meaning from their experiences. Within a congregation a plurality of such worlds exists, each with a highly individualistic content. The current perception among many commentators is that churches have largely become both a captive and a guardian of this private realm, with implications for "religious belief and psychology, understandings of community mission, and institutional patterns and styles" (Carroll e.a. 1986:52).

Analysis of a social world is aided by observation of culture, conflict, tensions, status symbols, consumption, types of organisations, speciality shops, and media - the field of social psychology. Guided interviews - perhaps by members of the study group - with residents works particularly well. Residents can be asked to describe (Carroll e.a. 1986:52-3):

- * what attracts people to live in that area;
- * changes that have occurred causes, effects);
- * who cares about the community;
- * how they would describe their neighbours;
- * who in the area they consider to be most important in their lives;
- * people who are different, what about them does not fit, reactions;
- * what keeps people going.

The data regarding social worlds can be analysed according to different categories, for instance according to meaning systems or breadth of perspective:

a) *Meaning systems* are concepts that focus on the content of what people have said, and so require attention to responses relating to the world and their neighbourhood. Meaning systems are also revealed in differences between the views of young and old. So do instances of similarity or difference between respondents' views, and the gospel or other members' worldviews (Carroll e.a. 1986:53-54). Three examples of meaning systems already used to describe respondents are:

- * theistic meaning systems, in which God is seen as governing life, as the source of purpose, as creator, as active in this world. Personal happiness is dependent on conforming to His will. The Bible is regarded as God's law and as a guide to life;
- * individualistic meaning systems, in which humans are seen as in control, responsible for their own success or failure, and for avoiding vice. Personal willpower is the key to such outcomes;
- * social science meaning systems, in which social forces are regarded as most influential for individual and global life. Both thinking and acting are seen as occurring along socialized patterns. As far as success is concerned, opportunities are felt to be more important than hard work;

* mystic meaning systems, in which reliance on experiences of intuition and feelings are regarded as most important in transcending reality and society.

b) *Breadth of perspective* concepts focuses on the frame of reference - the "orientation to immediate environment or larger social world" - used by respondents. In ascribing breadth of perspective characteristics to people it is important to note their relationships, and the direction of traffic between religious and secular worlds (Carroll e.a. 1986:54). Two suggested characteristics are those of locals and cosmopolitans (Carroll e.a. 1986:54):

* "locals" prefer voluntary organisations, communal relationships, friendships, social networks, traditional belief and morals, and "tend to personalize interpretations of social reality". They are 'belongers', and often form the involved members of a congregation;

* "cosmopolitans" "prefer professional memberships and specialised voluntary organisations". Their relationships extend beyond immediate community, and they are generally tolerant and more open. With an "emphasis on the ethical and meaning aspects of religion" they are often on "personal religious quests".

1.2.2.4. **Reconstructing a congregation's context through demographics**

Demographic information can also be used to identify a congregation's boundaries. This can be obtained through quizzing members who are familiar with the statistics of the area. Trends projections should be avoided (Carroll e.a. 1986:68).

1.2.2.5. **Reconstructing a congregation's context through noting social interaction**

This method examines the identity of major groups in the neighbourhood, their interaction, and the congregation's position relative to them. Information gathering can be done through use of key informants, published data on the area, and direct observation in public arenas (Carroll e.a. 1986:69). Three dimensions should be noted, namely social groups, community involvement, and power and influence:

a. *Social groups* consist of social classes, racial groups (subculture), and purpose or interest groups. Congregations tend to reflect the surrounding community: either similarly divided along social class lines, or reflecting its diverse composition. Those servicing a specific group would have strong plausibility structures, but tend to resist the integration of new members and any kind of change. Internal congregational conflict may reflect tensions in the wider community. The group identity of a congregation's members' will shape the identity of the church in the mind/s of the community. Group ties are often avenues for attracting new members (Carroll e.a. 1986:69). Methods to uncover the existence and function of social groups include listing organisations operating in that neighbourhood and the number of church members involved in these; also, listing other ties between the congregation and other institutions. These ties are often an important source of a congregation's friendship patterns (Carroll e.a. 1986:70-71);

b. *Community involvement*. Differentiation in a congregation occurs along vertical (class, group) and

horizontal (organisations, involvement) lines. To highlight these research should focus on the space where groups interact, the relationship of longer-serving congregational members to newcomers, the class diversity reflected by the houses of members, and whether the congregation is controlled by longer-serving members (Carroll e.a. 1986:71);

c. Power and influence. Attempts to influence its surrounding community involves a congregation in the use of power relations. Two possible structural models are suggested for analysis of power relations within a congregation: a) the power elite, in which corporate and political power are centralised in the top echelon but carried out by the lower strata; or b) the pluralist structure, in which different independent groups influence one another, compete, may have common issues, or form coalitions (Carroll e.a. 1986:71).

There is usually a direct positive correlation between a congregation's power structure and that of its community. Congregations within elitist communities would tend to have elitist structures and so have firm ideological constraints, to ensure that goals are pursued. Such a congregation will also generally have limited independence from its context. Congregations within pluralistic structures often function as voluntary associations, and have a range of social activities to compete with other institutions (Carroll e.a. 1986:73). On this point, see contextual limitations under 1.2.3., below).

Questions which can help discover the power relations between a congregation and its context are (Carroll e.a. 1986:73, 74):

- * what are the limits of possible community involvement for the congregation? Are these limit flexible or narrowly defined?
- * in what ways do congregations exercise power?
- * what is the pastor's role in the community - is s/he part of the community's power structures, or a bridge between the community and the congregation, e.g. in terms of class or race?

A researcher can discern which model of power relations is prevalent through four suggested approaches:

- * the reputational approach, in which one asks members who they think the leaders are, and notice who are mentioned the most;
- * the communications approach, in which different target persons are selected to pass on messages, with verification of who was most effective in passing it through;
- * the structural approach, questions to find out which individual is on more than one organisation;
- * the decisional approach, questions to find out who is actually involved in making/blocking decisions (Carroll e.a. 1986:73).

1.2.2.6. Methods to construct the role of a congregation in its context

There are various information-gathering techniques to find out what role a congregation plays in its context. Different churches can be attended to hear if anything is said about the researched congregation. Note can be taken of how the congregation participates in the community. The religious history of the

area can be traced through a library, and the role of the congregation noted. The church buildings can be observed at various times of the day to see who passes nearby or who enters. The researcher can sit in on the pastors' discussion and speak to community leaders. S/he can examine the local media to see what is considered 'religious news', and observe how churches communicate themselves through e.g. advertising services (Carroll e.a. 1986:74-5). In addition a religious census can be conducted, either by a congregation on its own or with a group of other congregations (Carroll e.a. 1986:75).

Another method involves getting 20 community leaders to list 5 leaders in business, corporations, education, politics, media, social service, voluntary agencies, black politics, and various professions. The final list should be balanced for gender, race, location in city, suburb, or township. The five leaders should be interviewed regarding their perceptions of attempts by the religious community or communities) to influence public life, what impact this had, what more effective methods could have been used, which religious leaders are seen as influential, and experiences of their own contact with religious community. The interviews could be tape-recorded, with later transcriptions. Alternatively the congregation can discuss the specialness of their surrounding community, its peculiar problems, the ways in which the congregation is an asset to the community, and methods for being more publicly effective (Carroll e.a. 1986:75, 76).

1.2.3. The contextual limitations of techniques

There are contextual constraints on the application to South Africa of methods which originate in the United States. The terminology and the assumptions behind them pose major problems: for instance, that congregations have "membership committees". The language and layout of the survey also require a higher degree of literacy than present in some sectors of the South African population. The high rates of illiteracy and poor quality of education that affect especially the black sector diminishes its usefulness in mixed groups.

a) The U.S. methodologies primarily proceed from a functionalist perspective. This is clearly illustrated from (a) how a congregation's relation to the great or little tradition of its denomination is seen, and (b) how conflict is viewed. Relationship to tradition is described in terms of deviance, a part of functionalist theory since Weber used it to describe the development of church organisation from a "sect" towards a more institutionalised "church" type.

Conflict is seen in relation to how it contributes to the identity or story of the congregation as a whole. This approach is laudable when its underlying attempt is to maintain unity and to focus "beyond" conflict on the positive functions of events. But this analysis fails to reflect the realities of a heterogeneous congregation, drawn from a heterogeneous society. Such members will probably experience "even their 'common' theological heritage in a different manner" (Villa-Vicencio 1989: 130). Cochrane adds that it is possible:

"to understand the role of the Church in relation to its wider context as something more than a

history of the maintenance and transmission of a religious tradition, for this tradition communicated itself, to those inside and outside the Church, in terms largely drawn from the dominant culture and society of which it was a self-conscious part. The 'more' which the Church transmitted - the additions, omissions and reinterpretations occurring because of cultural and social values - may be referred to as its ideological over-burdening" (Cochrane 1987: 67).

When the function of conflict is interpreted as unifying a society (or a congregation), the real disparities between groups usually disappear. The predominance of the functionalist perception and the failure to apply conflict theory can be explained as a function of the homogeneous circles in which congregational studies practitioners are located. As a result they write little - if anything - about the ideological clash between class groups based in disparate social conditions, who interpret reality in different ways from one another. In reality groups at opposite ends of a social scale differ vastly from one another in skills and relative powerlessness.

The functionalist perspective needs expansion by reference to the social position of conflicting parties. This requires a methodology more suited to analyses of class conflicts, such as historical materialism. People who belong to different classes are also socialised into roles which prescribe the limits of their action and reaction in any contest over power with one another. Access to power in a heterogenous society usually has a primary or secondary connection to ethnicity or class. Members of groups who are discriminated against would be at a disadvantage in a conflict where the other side involved parties from a dominant group.

b) The prevalence of Weberian sect-church theory, combined with a predominant focus on mainline churches, inhibits accurate analysis across the whole spectrum of Christian ecclesial reality. The resulting narrowed perception is displayed in Dudley's argument that "churches cannot become sects by their own volition" (Dudley 1979: 52). Attention to the emergence of the independent charismatic churches from mainline churches would illustrate not only a movement from a "church"-type to a "sect"-type of organisation, but also how it happens.

c) South Africa may differ too much from the US for many of the suggestions contained in the Handbook to be applicable. So, in discussing the correlation between context and congregational identity, the Handbook proposes that heterogenous communities influence congregations to develop norms of discussion and action. The conclusion is that homogenous congregations are "more likely to avoid such intrusions" (Carroll e.a. 1986:74). While this may generally be true of homogenous white communities in the United States, exceptions occur here in homogenously black South African congregations in black communities. In the Anglican church in Kaya Mandi, a black township on the outskirts of Stellenbosch, the congregation regularly holds long community-issue discussions after Sunday services.

From my survey of methods which could be used in this study, I now need to turn to those available for analysing the effect of ethnicity on New Testament congregations. I will conclude with a perspective on

the methods that I select.

2. SOCIO-LITERARY METHODS FOR ANALYSING NEW TESTAMENT CONGREGATIONS

I chose the approach of constructing the social world within which the New Testament texts function. This option follows logically from my decision to use social-science concepts to analyse contemporary congregations. A definition of a sociological analysis of literature is: "the use of sociological theories and models to 'explain a particular problem or suggest links between apparently unrelated data in the same or different sources'" (Holmberg 1990:5).

An analysis of the functioning of groups within the social world of the New Testament requires a methodology which can be applied to the texts to reveal operative social dynamics. Such an interdisciplinary methodology which combines the social-sciences with textual analysis arose in the 1970s from a renewed interest in the social setting of the New Testament. A clear applicable methodology for moving from an ancient text to a contemporary situation or the other way round) has proven elusive (Van Staden 1991 ^).

Several methodological issues need to be addressed before proceeding to exegesis proper, including:

- a) the development of sociological exegesis;
- b) methodology and presuppositions of social-scientific analysis as a combined form of literary and social science analysis;
- c) the problems accompanying this approach, including:
 - * the usefulness of applying terms "race" and "class" to an ancient text;
 - * whether the primary or secondary sources ¹¹ contain sufficient social data for the proposed construction;
 - * the legitimacy of comparing ancient and contemporary congregations;
- d) the methodology adopted.

2.1. The development of social-scientific textual analysis

Social enquiry into the dynamics of the New Testament world is relatively new, and represents continuity and dissimilarity with Redaction and Form Criticism (Van Staden 1991 ^, Holmberg 1990:1, Domeris 1988:378). The dissimilarity consists of the increasing use of sociological categories. This method arose in reaction against the dominant individualistic interpretation of Scripture, which owes more to 19th century German scholarship than to the social realities of Christ's time (Kee 1989 ¹²). The continuity lies in the interest in the social settings of the texts (Holmberg 1990:1). Such an enquiry was already called

¹¹. By primary texts is meant the New Testament; secondary sources are writings contemporaneous to it. But from a historical point of view texts are primary evidence only for the time in which they were written, and secondary sources for the history they refer to (Petersen 1985:5).

¹². Redaction criticism in the 1950s developed a more individualistic concentration on e.g. the authors rather than their "receiving communities" of texts (Holmberg 1990:2).

for by Oscar Cullman in 1925 (Domeris 1988:378, quoting Gager 1982:260).

The pioneers of the modern approach worked in all corners of the globe. In Australia EA Judge (1960) was influential, in Europe Fernando Belo (1974), and Gerd Theissen (1978, 1982, 1992). In the USA John Gager (1975) and Norman Gottwald (1979, Old Testament studies) did important research. So did the work group founded in Chicago in 1973 for the social description of early Christianity (compare Holmberg 1990:4). Social-scientific studies proliferated; a list by Elliott includes 52 produced between 1980 and 1986 alone (Elliott 1986:2, footnote 1¹³). Subsequently Bruce Malina (1981) pioneered anthropological models for New Testament interpretation¹⁴. In South Africa the few who ventured into this field include Pieter Craffert (1992), Eben Scheffer, Andries van Aarde ^, Pieter Van Staden (1991), and Bill Domeris (1988). Bengt Holmberg (1990) has summarised the trends within sociological approaches to the New Testament over the last two decades.

The variety of terms used for this approach indicate a state of flux, and that more than one type of social-scientific exegesis or hermeneutic is emerging. Terms include social analysis (Balch), sociological analysis (Tidball), literary sociological method (Petersen), sociological exegeses (Elliott), and social-scientific study (Blasi, Craffert, Van Staden). Van Staden opts for "social-scientific study" as covering a multiplicity of disciplines, instead of sociological exegesis, pointing out that sociology includes numerous and sometimes dissimilar theories.

2.2. Presuppositions and methods of social-scientific literary analysis

Social-scientific analysis has several presuppositions that function to determine which methods can be used. As a method for analysing social data in a text, social-scientific analysis is of necessity cross-disciplinary. Literary analysis is combined with the historical, sociological, anthropological theories and methods (compare Belo, Maynard-Reid 1987:2, Van Staden 1991:22, Petersen 1985:ix, 1). The methods are determined by the subjects of analysis, namely a social world similar to that of contemporary congregations (sociology), distant in time (history), differing in culture (anthropology), embedded in a text (literary analysis).

2.2.1. Presuppositions of a social-scientific literary analysis

The base assumption that the texts are literary and social products forms the platform for several other presuppositions. As *literature*, the texts exhibit definite forms which stand in some relation to the world of historical events they describe, to the intention of the author, and to the implied readers. As *social* products, the texts can be brought into interaction with other social theories and methods, including history, sociology, and anthropology. The texts contain social data, which can be extracted to construct

¹³. Elliott's list is somewhat inaccurate, as some dates are of revised or translated editions, e.g. that of Belo and Malherbe.

¹⁴. Others include Abraham Malherbe (1977), Howard Kee (1980, 1989), Bengt Holmberg (1980), John Elliott (1981, 1986), Wayne Meeks (1983), Norman Petersen (1985), John Stambaugh (1986), Pedrito Maynard-Reid (1987), Dimitri Kyratas (1987), A-J Levine (1988), Robert Banks (1988), Victor Branick (1989), J H Neyrey e.a. (1991), and Cain Felder (1989, 1991).

social worlds and social histories, or exegeted in terms of sociological theories such as sociology of knowledge. Paucity of direct social references means that an inductive approach to the texts is preferable. By this means models can be constructed to explain the social causes of events referred to, or even of the text itself.

I will first enumerate and elaborate on each of these assumptions, before continuing in the following section with the methods that they imply. No order is intended by the numbers.

Presupposition 1: The New Testament texts are both literary and social products. They are constructed in form and content according to certain literary techniques. But texts are also influenced or produced by social forces, and in turn become social forces which affect society (Van Staden 1991:22). Put differently, a text functions as a "servomechanism", "combining attributes of product and producer" (Domeris 1988:387).

A perspective on texts as social products implies that the early church shared a language and a symbolic universe (worldview) with the surrounding culture. The ways of naming and of thinking inherent in the local (e.g. Corinthian) and wider Greek-Roman social worlds are used by the authors. The authors themselves are immersed in these contexts which are reflected in their writings. Sometimes a New Testament author like Paul not only transformed these meanings but also intended to change social relations (Petersen 1985:96-99; Kee 1989). The social world forms both matrix for the interpretation of texts and conduit for handing them on. Seeing the text as a social product implies the type of data (social) to look for and the means (inductive or deductive) of extracting them. Simultaneously attention has to be given to the form of the text.

Presupposition 2: The central dilemma of social-scientific textual analysis is the exact relation between the world described in a text and the external social world. There are three possible relations: (a) a one-to-one link, in which the description of a social world is an accurate picture of the external world; (b) a partial relation, in which the narrative world is an interpretation of the social world, itself an explanation of reality; (c) none at all. Presupposition (b) holds sway in current social science approaches to the New Testament (compare Petersen 1985, Van Staden 1991). How one conceives the relation between text and social world has consequences for methodology.

According to Petersen (1985:5,7) three different worlds can be discerned in a text:

- a) the symbolic world, a representation in language of what the whole world is and how it functions, consisting of elements which a text shares with the external social world;
- b) the contextual world, comprising the time in and for which a text was written and within which it functions (i.e. the world of history and the world of the author);
- c) the referential world, the historical events as they are referred to in the text, which in literary terms is a narrative world, consisting of the reality an author bestows upon characters and their actions.

The narrative world is a literary device to solve the dilemma of the relation epistles/external world. Petersen argues that in the Pauline epistles the referential and contextual worlds are the same, in contrast to the narratives of the Gospels and Acts ¹⁵ (Petersen 1985:8). The circumstances of a letter's writing correspond to the events referred to in the letter, which prompted the writing in the first place. So, in Paul's letter to the Corinthians the eating practices and disputes between groups comprise the referential world. Paul's own situation in Rome, from where he writes, is the contextual world. Yet both relate to the time of writing, and are interwoven in a narrative world, consisting of plot (a sequence of events), authorial point of view, and closure.

Petersen's solution is generally helpful as heuristic (i.e. exploratory) device. But I think that it's usefulness is confined to explaining the causal relation between the finished product (narrative world) and the external world. The means of producing narrative and social worlds differ, as Van Staden pointed out (Van Staden 1991:22). Petersen's solution seems to involve a secondary dilemma; that of only being able to say something about the intratextual world. While history is always story, not all narratives are history, and so a narrative world cannot help establish causation of an event in the extratextual world itself.

Presupposition 3: The author's intention can be established, and is related to his ideological position. Ideological position describes the specific angle from which an author presents an event to his (encoded) reader/s. His intention is often to convert the reader to his view of reality, and so to promote the interests of the group to which he belongs. In John's Gospel this is clearly the aim of the author (Van Staden 1991:22). The purpose of most New Testament writings was to convince "readers and hearers to do something" or "to accept a particular point of view" (Vorster 1988:39).

Ideology is used in a non-Marxist sense in literary criticism which assumes that a non-ideological perspective is not possible. By "ideology" is understood the author's specific vision of reality, formed by the author's ideas or views, from the social context to which s/he belongs, and reflecting his/her intention for that context (Van Staden 1991:76, 80). Representative of this stance is Van Staden's option for the literary definition, in preference to the "pejorative" meaning that Marxism attaches to the term (Van Staden 1991:75). In Marxist analysis "ideology" refers to a constellation of concepts, used by a ruling propertied class to legitimate their economic exploitation of the majority. Ideology functions to distort and mask this reality from the exploited class, and so creates a false consciousness (Cochrane 1987:206; compare Mosala 1988:312-313 ¹⁶). An ideology is a coherent worldview, "sufficiently flexible, comprehensive and mediatory" to convince the lower class of the justice of the status quo and so to "accept their oppressed condition" (Ste. Croix 1981:411). Ultimately ideology concerns a set of practical material relations "'with the real'" which is "'determined by and reacts upon wider social relations'"

¹⁵. In the case of narrative three social worlds are reflected: that of the event described (referential history) and that of the author (contextual history), and that of the intended readers.

¹⁶. For a thorough discussion of the history of ideology and the Marxist position see Cochrane 1987:204-208; and Maimela 1988:311-314.

(Solomos e.a. 1982:21; Eagleton 1979:63 - quoted in Maimela 1988:313¹⁷). The Marxian assumption then is that ideology can be avoided; Van Staden considers this inaccurate, especially as it seems not to acknowledge the possibility that ideology can hide and reveal reality (Van Staden 1991:80-81ff).

Presupposition 4: An analysis of texts using social categories to describe (social history or proto-sociology) is distinct from using sociological theories to explain (sociological exegesis or research) (Best 1983:185; Holmberg 1990:4-5 quoting Philip J Richter 1984; Domeris 1988:379; Van Staden 1991:32 compare Smit 1987:58)¹⁸. Proto-sociological analysis can be descriptions of "social realia" (e.g. by Joachim Jeremias (1969) and Martin Hengel (1974)); or of social history (e.g. by Abraham Malherbe (1977) and Gerd Theissen), using sociological concepts such as "status" (Holmberg 1990:5). Scholars considered worthy of the accolade of doing sociological exegesis include Kee and Malina.

While the distinction between describing and explaining is useful, the separation of theory from descriptive category cannot always be maintained. Sociological categories are mini-theories, and often micro-containers of macro-theories. So the category "class" comes intact with axioms regarding its function in religion, e.g. that lower classes tend towards thisworldly materialism or imminent parousia. Elliott has noted that there is a difference between raw fact-gathering (empiricism) and exploration (description). Unlike fact-gathering, description is related to sociological theory (Elliott 1986:9). Few authors use categories without explaining their implications.

Holmberg insists that social description without a theoretical frame is not possible, nor more neutral than using sociological concepts (Holmberg 1990:6, compare Elliott 1986:6). And Malina has pointed out that to "interpret any piece of language adequately is to interpret the social system [of meaning] that it expresses" (Malina 1986:3). The unsatisfactory nature of the description/explanation distinction can be demonstrated by reference to Theissen. Theissen's work can be classified as falling within the descriptive branch of social history, but also as illustrating the application of the sociology of knowledge (Holmberg 1990:5, 119ff).

Presupposition 5: Socio-literary analysis is a social science, and so has recourse to social models as frameworks for theories. A model is a conscious, systematic construction which links theories ("axiomatic law stating general principles") and observations (Elliott 1986:4-5 ¹⁹, Holmberg 1990:14 quoting T F Carney 1975). A theory is a proposition explaining a variety of observations or statements. The social

¹⁷. Maimela (1988: 313) combines ideas from Antonio Gramsci and Terry Eagleton to argue that ideology is not simply a selective filter for facts, a miscognition, nor a conspiracy by the dominant class against a subjected group. Rather it is the process by which "class interests of one group are universalised and made acceptable to other classes" while contradictions are harmonised, "a process by which the presence of certain facts is constituted by their absence".

¹⁸. Smith proposes a fourfold categorisation: (a) descriptions of social factors, (b) social history, (c) studies of social organisation, (d) interpretations based on the sociology of knowledge (Smith 1975:19-25).

¹⁹. Elliott quotes Malina: "a model is an abstract, simplified representation of some real world object, event, or interaction constructed for the purpose of understanding, control, or prediction" (Malina 1983: *Why interpret the bible with the social sciences*, ABQ (2),231); and refers to Carney (1975:7), to indicate that models are selective representations of major components indicating their priority (Elliott 1986:4).

sciences uses homomorphic models, gross abstract representations of a reality which in itself is an abstraction, such as a system of government²⁰ (Elliott 1986:5). As simplifications of reality, models are not stop-gaps for lacking evidence and cannot prescribe what must have happened (Holmberg 1990:15). Models are useful to make explicit a theory and to generate hypotheses, which can substantiate that theory if verified (Holmberg 1990:14, quoting Esler 1987, Elliott 1986:6).

A social model is a collection of theories regarding human groups (social structures), aspects of their behaviour, and the interplay and effect of the aspects on one another (social processes) (Elliott 1986:6, 9). The effectiveness of a conceptual model is measured by its explicative and interpretive functions: it must clarify the underlying selection of theories with which data is approached, and reveal the social behaviour, structures, and processes implied by the data (Elliott 1986:6,9). The use of models closely resembles the dynamic of the hermeneutic cycle. Interpretative movement occurs from data, observations, implicit theories, models which explicate theories, to observations of data in terms of the models, and so on. The two research objectives of models are either exploratory (where the model is vague or incomplete) or experimental (testing a theory) (Elliott 1986:9).

Elliott, in contrast to Malina 1981:16-24), argues that the major sociological theories²¹ should be called theoretical perspectives or styles of theorising. These determine the selection of models, and so also of theories, which are contained in paradigms (following Kuhn 1970). Paradigms are common sets of methodological and conceptual assumptions, which have been applied by practitioners over time (Elliott 1986:7; Vorster 1988:32) ²². A paradigm is the matrix (ordered elements which need further definition) of a discipline, the "framework in which solutions are sought for acknowledged problems (Vorster 1988:32).

Presupposition 6: Various sociological concepts can be used to extend the understanding of the texts of the New Testament. Sociology of knowledge provides the concept that knowledge is a corporate product, which draws naming and ways of thinking from individuals embedded in culture. Such a theory can help scholars move beyond examining the individual author as usual to focusing on the receiving communities (compare Kee 1989). The documents can be examined to detect differences in the development of organisational forms over time. This can show whether the development followed a particular pattern (sect-church forms), and how settings (rural to urban) and demography (wandering or settled followers) affected structure and function. Symbolic interactionism can be applied to analyse the social relations of the actors in a narrative world as well as the function of the text for its readers. The distinction between macro-social (relation between various institutions) and micro-social (relation of individual to institution)

²⁰. The opposite is the isomorphic model, in which the details of the original is reproduced to scale, e.g. a globe (Elliott 1986:5).

²¹. Elliot refers to structural functionalism, conflict theory, symbolic interactionism, exchange theory, phenomenology, and ethnomethodology.

²². In exegesis the historical-critical method is a paradigm, which includes theoretical perspectives on sources and the interrelationship between gospels; and models for interpreting these properties and relationships (Elliott 1986:8, cf. Vorster 1988:32).

are also useful.

Presupposition 7: The lack of direct evidence for social institutions in the New Testament requires an inductive scrutiny of texts. This can reveal patterns of interaction that indicate the structure and functioning of institutions on a macro-social level (see Theissen 1982). And on a micro-social level the reciprocal interplay of individuals with institutions can be shown (see Meeks 1988). When the texts are seen as the primary source for knowledge about the social realities behind their language and institutions, this can lead to the inductive method (argued for by Wire 1984: 210, Rousseau 1988:412; Van Staden 1991 ^). Van Staden prefers the inductive method combined with a construction of the narrative world (compare Petersen, above).

Presupposition 8: Social-scientific textual analysis can combine a historical with a sociological method, as the disciplines have similar roots (Holmberg 1990:8, quoting Philip Abrams 1982:x). That is why historical materialism, a historical sociology, can be applied to texts. Cochrane (1987) demonstrated this in his reconstruction - from archival material - of the functioning of class in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MESA) and the Church of the Province of South Africa (CPSA) between 1903-1930. Such a combination corrects arguments that:

- a) literary and sociological analysis tend to be a-historical ²³ (synchronic) in its focus on systems (compare Petersen 1985:5 for full argument);
- b) sociology tends towards "reductionist bourgeois sociology" (Cochrane 1987:194).

2.2.2. Methods of social-scientific textual analysis

I will here outline some methods (1 to 6 below) suggested for reconstructing aspects of the social world referred to in a text. The enumeration is for the sake of clarity of discussion, and is not meant as a sequence. As a method of analysing social data in a text, social-scientific analysis is of necessity cross-disciplinary. The methods are determined by the subjects of analysis, namely a social world similar to that of contemporary congregations (sociology), distant in time (history), differing in culture (anthropology), embedded in a text (literary analysis).

Reconstruction of social factors is influenced by whether the synthetic process focuses through a specific text on (a) an extratextual (referential) world, or on (b) an intratextual (symbolic or contextual) world. A dialectic variation on (a) is (c) to reconstruct the referential world of a text through comparisons with descriptions of that world in other texts. Then the text can be analysed against that reconstruction (compare Van Staden 1991:79). While all are legitimate, extratextual and comparative approaches yield a generalised picture against the specific depiction of the intratextual approach (Van Staden 1991:80).

1. At least three sequential steps have to be taken before social-scientific textual analysis proper can

²³. Some doubt that historical sociology is possible at all, and believe prospects decrease the further its subject is removed in time (Rodd 1981:469, quoted in Holmberg 1990:7).

be undertaken, namely to: (a) understand the underlying theories behind the social-scientific categories and methods (Holmberg 1990); (b) correctly define and use terminology and method (Van Staden 1991, following Elliott 1986:3; compare Blasi 1990; Holmberg 1990); (c) pay attention to the literary aspects of the texts in question, including historical questions (e.g. date and situation). Only then the reconstruction of a social world through a text can begin. But even then the issues regarding the relation between a text and its social world discussed above must be considered.

2. The first step in any literary analysis is to determine the type of text, as this prescribes the limits of analysis. Epistles and narratives are similar in that both have an underlying story. The difference is that an epistle occurs in the form of discourse, which suppresses its narrative elements (Petersen 1985:9). Intended readers, characters, plot (causal sequence of events), author's point of view, and the author's ideological position should also receive attention.

3. The author's strategy in a letter can be determined by extracting the underlying story (referential sequence). The story is compared to the way in which the author arranges the sequences (poetic sequence) to yield the (rhetorical) strategy (Petersen 1985:70, 73).

4. Theoretical conclusions regarding social structures can be tested by means of a model. Elliott (1986:19,20) offers two, originally designed for visualising Theissen's work:

a) a cross-cultural model, using available historical and social data to show the interrelationships between a structure and the processes of economic, social, political, and cultural sub-systems, within the totality of a society (Elliott 1986:13-15). These are all interconnected, and "move or stretch together as a result of external or internal forces" (Elliott 1986:15). The model enables analysis of how e.g. conflict affects the system as a whole, and can be used across cultures and periods²⁴;

b) a multi-variate model tabulates data to provide a spectrum of comparable social entities, arranged according to analytical categories, for illustrating and comparing complex interrelational patterns (Elliott 1986:18-19,20). This model is good for more detailed analysis - e.g. of aspects of conflict between groups; while allowing detection of areas where data is plentiful or thin. In this way the "selective screens in the original or secondary sources" can be pinpointed²⁵.

5. A method for extracting, transforming and verifying the social data contained in the texts exists within cultural anthropology. Data occur in a text in etic form, the significance that behaviour or events have for actors within a specific culture. Etic data has to be viewed through a system of agreed-upon

²⁴. The cross-cultural model is based on two underlying theories: that religion as separate category was both absent from Palestine society and present in all sectors; that the societal superstructure (politics, beliefs, ideologies, culture) is based on "economic modes and relations of production and consumption" (Elliott 1986:16).

²⁵. The multi-variate model is based on Elliott's theories that (a) the conflict perspective allows for better interpretation of the early Christian movement, and (b) that the Jesus movement related to the needs of people. Elliot believes that both appears more clearly when viewed in terms of smaller units of analysis rather than in systemic terms, as happens in the functionalist perspective.

interpretations, or emic data. Verification happens through correlation emic data with the specific meanings they have within their cultural setting. Emic data can go beyond etic meanings, but cannot disregard them (Van Staden 1991:22-23).

6. The use of an inductive method can produce three types of social conclusions, as Theissen proposed (1982:177): (a) constructive conclusions derive from sociological data directly described in the text; (b) analytical conclusions, obtained from indirect information embedded in events, norms, and symbols; (c) comparative conclusions, gleaned from comparing early Christian sources with contemporaneous literature, or by reference to comparable groups found across "all times and cultures" (Holmberg 1990:10). Holmberg notes that the inductive method can lead to circular reasoning in which the conclusions are based on inferences that cannot be proven (Holmberg 1990:10,122-23)²⁶. So by default deductive methods also have their champions.

2.3. Problems inherent to social-scientific textual analysis

2.3.1. Adequacy of New Testament or secondary material as sources of sufficient social data

The question whether the New Testament holds sufficient information to (re-)construct social dynamics has received more pessimistic and hopeful answers. Detractors point to the difficulty of reconstructing social institutions from a different culture, represented in ancient documents in which social data is scarce (Rodd 1979, 1981, referred to in Holmberg 1990:6-8,11). Sociological methodology (e.g. questionnaires, interviews, choice between data sets) and verification (e.g. comparison with similar or diverse institutions) is severely truncated (Holmberg 1990:7). The more the questions focus on general, typical and common patterns which require large data sets than that provided by ancient texts, the greater the improbability that certain answers can be obtained (Holmberg 1990:9). Sociological explanations often involve interpretations of inferred data which do not actually occur in most New Testament texts, which "do not treat social phenomena at all" (Holmberg 1990:10).

The similarity between historical research and sociology must relativise the objection to the use of inferred data. Particularly as the former is mostly regarded as an acceptable enterprise (Holmberg 1990:9). Malina has also pointed out that applying social science to the New Testament seeks efficient causality, not final causality; while being concerned with retrodiction, not prediction (Malina in Gottwald 1983:11-25, also in Holmberg 1990:12). Sociological analysis "seek the probabilities in the past that made the story make social sense and turn out as it did" (Holmberg 1990:12). Models from sociology can also be used to relieve this problem.

²⁶. Theissen has been criticised for not clarifying his theories or models, such as his preference for structural-functionalism over conflict theory (Elliott 1986:11-12,17). For Holmberg the lack of direct social evidence means that Theissen's constructive conclusions are circular. Theissen's comparative and analytical types have slender support, as they include atypical examples (e.g. Paul), from outside Palestine (e.g. Cynics), and from a later time (e.g. Acts) (Holmberg 1990:122-23).

2.3.2. The legitimacy of applying "race" to an ancient text

The methodological difficulty in applying social-scientific analysis to the New Testament will be revisited below. At the same time I want to explain the reasons for the methodological strategy I adopted to solve the problem. Full discussion of that strategy is not intended here, but can be found in Chapter Seven.

The central dilemma is that a method derived from the social sciences presupposes the use of modern sociological categories to reconstruct ancient social structures. This requires that time and cultural differences between the two societies be considered carefully by New Testament scholars. Ste. Croix has rightly suggested that modern terms are only legitimate if they can be shown to correspond (at least analogously) to concepts in the ancient world. The opposite is also true: a term from antiquity can be applied to aid reflection on contemporary society if it can be used to describe modern social realities (Ste. Croix 1981:32).

How legitimate is my use of race, a modern Western category, for studying the racial composition of first century AD Christian churches in the Middle East?

The use of race as analytical category has not noticeably excited many New Testament and classics scholars. Some agree that physical or pigmental contrasts were used to differentiate between groups in the Greek or Roman periods (Sherwin-White 1967; Snowden 1983; Felder 1989). But most feel that no prejudicial conduct followed based on colour. So Cain Felder concludes that there was no equivalent racial designation or elaborate ideology based on physical characteristics in antiquity as there is today. Frank Snowden agrees.

For me the issue is whether the ancients differentiated between groups, what their criteria were, and whether distinctions influenced social behaviour. Classicists like JPVD Balsdon (1979) have shown that prejudices existed between Romans and others. And AN Sherwin-White concludes from Strabo that distinctions between ethnic groups were based on differences of "physique [size, hair type, complexion], language and customs" (Sherwin-White 1976:7).

A brief survey of studies of Greco-Roman society will show how difficult it is to separate ethnic, political, economic, linguistic, and geographic from cultural boundary markers. Culture consists of abstract patterns for interpreting and transmitting²⁷ common social meaning. Skin colour was only one among a bundle of distinguishing concepts, such as language, descent, class, religion, citizenship, or birthplace. The question which of these was most significant has been a subject of long debate, with current opinion vacillating between status (prestige) and class (wealth). All seemed to have played a role, and to have

²⁷. Transmission of meaning happens through e.g. custom, art, and belief (compare Johnson 1960:82).

played different roles in different locales (compare Levine 1988:274²⁸).

These difficulties have not precluded the use of race or ethnicity to describe the New Testament social world, seldom accompanied by elaboration or explanation. Snowden (1983) and Felder (1989) discuss interaction between other races and blacks in antiquity. In discussing the extent of anti-semitism among Romans and Greeks, Theissen says the New Testament church was "inter-ethnic", Branick infers that Paul thinks across ethnic boundaries - but neither explain what social reality they are referring to (Theissen 1992:219; Branick 1989:31). Sherwin-White concludes that 'racial prejudice' should rather be understood as 'antagonism', and that racism as such did not exist. The distinction *ethnos* is "political, social and religious, national rather than genetic" (Sherwin-White 1967: 99).

Ste. Croix's comment seems justified: the fluidity of group designations in the first century requires the construction of analogous group definitions in a discussion of race (compare Felder 1989:11).

My solution to the difficulties of using race with reference to the New Testament is to look for social categories which were used to distinguish between groups in the New Testament world that approximate "race". This I will somewhat loosely call ethno-cultural differences, or indicators of social differentiation (compare Meeks 1983:22). That such differences are not equivalent to race but to ethnicity; the shared experience of culture, history, and language (Stone 1985:35-42). This means that I had to redefine race in terms of ethnicity. Broadening the question concerning the early church's ethnic composition in this way corrects the underlying modern (South African) assumption that race is the primary organising principle for intergroup relations. The strategy is borrowed from the principles of translating the ancient New Testament texts into modern languages: did a similar word exist? did a dynamic equivalent exist? are there clusters of ideas which approximate the meaning of the modern phrase?

Using this strategy I can demonstrate that ethno-cultural differences were used to create social or political distance (and prejudice) between ethnic and religious groups in the New Testament world. The relation between e.g. Pharisees/tax collectors are examples of the former; between e.g. Jews/Samaritans or Gentiles, of the latter. The issue is not which of these were primary, but what their joint effect was.

2.3.3. The legitimacy of "status" or "class" as analytical category appropriate to first century society

There is considerable debate in social historiography whether class or status is more appropriate for understanding the social structure of the ancient world. A secondary issue is how these relate to the concept "orders" (*ordo*) in Roman society. The different options result from the use in social description of particular sets of methodology, interpretation, and of evidence.

²⁸ Levine maintains that interaction between different ethnic groups may have differed according to location. The same relations may not have prevailed between all Jews and Gentiles in all the cities of the Roman world, so that statements on this subject must be made with caution (Levine 1988:274).

What class defines depends on whether one looks for (a) relationships between individuals or groups as determined by social status and distribution of power, or (b) economic criteria. The theoretical and methodological bases which undergird one's options also play a role, whether functionalist or historical materialist. Meeks (1983) opts for status, while social class is preferred by Kyrtatas (1987), as it is by Theissen (1982) who deduces his own criteria from the texts. Alföldy (1988) opts for orders or strata, while Ste. Croix (1981), his fellow historian of Greco-Roman society, prefers the Marxist understanding of class.

The objection can be raised that class and status both arose within the industrialised Western world and are not applicable to the pre-industrial Eastern world. Important differences exist between the modern and Greco-Roman world, which particularly affect the use of class as analytical tool. The means of production in the modern world (factories, banks, buses, trains) is of course absent from the Greco-Roman world. Land was the primary means of production, and free wage labour was less important than now (Ste. Croix 1981:32). Equally, the modern conception of what determines status can disqualify the term from being applied to the first century.

The economic definition of class derives from the 19th century works of Karl Marx. Here class serves as an explanation of how the material conditions of economic exploitation of non-propertied masses by a propertied minority developed historically (Ste. Croix 1981:60). Where economic oppression occurs, a class society consisting of two major classes exist, and so, by definition, does a class struggle. So class offers an explanation of the functioning of society as the relation between two groups in terms of labour and production. From a Marxist perspective there can be other divisions or sub-divisions of Roman society²⁹, but all these dissolve into a division based on control of the means of production, or lack of it. Admittedly, free labour is something of a thorny issue, particularly peasant land-owners, but here again the question is whether they exploit others or are exploited.

The Marxist concept "class" refers to social structures characterised by exploitation or resistance to exploitation in the process of production (i.e. class struggle; Ste. Croix 1981:43). When property is controlled by a particular group (i.e. private ownership) a class society exists. In this society a primary producer is consciously or unconsciously compelled to yield a surplus, for which s/he no longer receives "a real equivalent in exchange" (Ste. Croix 1981:32,37³⁰,43). A class is not an objective self-existing entity or ideal-type, yet can be empirically identified from their place in the whole system of production. The distinguishing characteristic of any mode of production is not how the bulk of production is done but how production is controlled to "ensure the extraction of surplus" (Ste. Croix 1981:52). The empirical criteria for identifying a class are according to "degree of ownership or control" of: (a) the conditions of

²⁹. Slave-owners can be distinguished from slaves, slave from free labour, and slaves with means from slaves without (Ste. Croix 1981:65).

³⁰. Ste. Croix (1981:37) admits that even in a socialist society arrangements must be made for some to provide surplus labour "to support the young, the aged and the infirm", and for services to the community. But this must happen so "that no individual or group of individuals had a right to appropriate the fruits of that 'surplus labour'" through control by property rights of the process of production.

production, expressed in property relations (i.e. the means of production); (b) the labour of production (i.e. labour relations); and (c) the relation of these factors to one another (Ste. Croix 1981:32,43).

Class as essentially a social factor derives from the 20th century work of Max Weber. For Weber the term indicated social position, determined by status, within a society consisting of many layers (Ste. Croix 1981:45). He argued that 'status situation' is decided by a "'social estimation of [one's] honour'" (Ste. Croix 1981:80³¹). Status is determined by one or more economic (class), political (power, domination, authority), and social (status, honour, prestige) criteria (Ste. Croix 1981:86). Class functions to construct a stratification of society according to status (Ste. Croix 1981:45; Eriksen 1993:7). The problem with status is that the term is often used in a way that suggests a static set of features applicable to all situations. A recent refinement proposes a dynamic set of variables, all of which come into play at once, as a more accurate explanation.

Part of the debate around class concerns the criteria for determining class divisions. Some argue that class implies (a) a collective self-consciousness of common interests, (b) expressed as explicit antagonism towards the other class, (c) exhibited in some form of collective action. On this basis some scholars point out that there is a lack of evidence to justify a class division of the Roman world. Others contend that class division exists automatically within a society in which (a) there are owners and non-owners of property, where (b) the owners exploit the labour of the non-owners to produce some surplus for themselves. Whether (c) there is a consciousness of this form of economic oppression or not is irrelevant³².

From a Marxist perspective a lack of class awareness is explained as a false consciousness created by an ideology constructed by the owner-class. A class-in-itself (without common consciousness) can also be an early stage in the formation of a class-for-itself (with self-awareness). Marxian scholars maintain that class is a self-evident distinction to use within the Greek and Roman worlds. Kyrtatas maintains the contrary; that class presumes "an ideology of identity and interests" within a group. Alfoldy agrees that class requires a common relationship³³ between members of a class and the means of production. This he finds absent in Roman society (Alfoldy 1988:149). Class consciousness occurs only among the three *ordines* of the Roman aristocracy (senators, equestrians, and "leading members of the provincial capitals") (Kyrtatas 1987:99, Holmberg 1990:22). Little if any evidence exists of class consciousness among peasants and slaves.

While correspondence to concepts used in the ancient world is an obvious solution to the debate over

³¹. Ste. Croix refers to Weber 1968, *Economy and society* Vol. II, 932.

³². Marx argued in *The poverty of philosophy* that collective self-consciousness is only a criterion for a class to recognise itself as such (Ste. Croix 1981:60).

³³. This relationship is defined by non-/ownership of the means of production, division of labour, and distribution of products.

which term to use, little agreement has emerged³⁴. Agreement exists between the two camps that Greco-Roman society is best understood through a two-fold division, but there is little consensus on the exact division for the lower strata. The latter point is pertinent to discussion of the social location of the first century Christians. Ste. Croix insists contrary to Alföldy that an independent middle group existed which possessed but did not necessarily own the means of production. He does not consider them a middle class. Alföldy, and Kyrtatas, also propose a two-fold division of Roman society into upper and lower social strata, but clearly means this in the social sense (Kyrtatas 1987:99; Alföldy 1988:149). The differences between various upper and lower strata of the population occurred in terms of income, occupation, and possession of property (Kyrtatas 1987:99; compare Holmberg 1990:22). The upper classes consisted of those who possessed wealth, education, and property (Kyrtatas 1987:99). Only the upper strata consisted of orders (*ordines*) proper, the lower strata were not so called, nor similarly stratified in a vertical hierarchy (Alföldy 1988:147).

There is also disagreement about whether a third division or class is possible. Alföldy argues that class analysis requires a middle class who owned the means of production and were direct producers. He finds that the "prerequisites for an independent middle order" did not exist" (Alföldy 1988:149). The diversity of social groups which would have to be included in a middle class is too vast, such as land-owning peasants, land-renting colonists, and (landless) artisans (Alföldy 1988:149). While some groups can be classified according to economic criteria (class), these do not coincide with the social and legal (status) criteria which also played a role (Alföldy 1988:149). As an example Alföldy refers to city councillors who were peasants but occupied positions in the upper strata (Alföldy 1988:149). So "a class model of this nature cannot do full justice to the reality of the Roman social system" (Alföldy 1988:149).

To solve the issue whether the social or economic senses of class are more applicable I decided to infer the criteria used to distinguish between groups in Greco-Roman society. For this I had to (a) find corresponding Greek or Roman terms, or (b) use only those terms occurring within Greek or Roman society. A division into a propertied (*hoi tas ousias echontes*) and non-propertied class (*hoi aporoi*) existed since the fifth century BC, bolstering the Marxist argument. The poet Euripides³⁵ distinguished three classes: the rich, the poor, and those in the middle who owned a moderate amount of property³⁶ (Ste. Croix 1981:73-74). Before him Aristotle³⁷, in the fourth century already made use of the rich-poor dichotomy to note the importance of economic realities for determining behaviour. Aristotle often drew on concrete historical realities (Ste. Croix 1981:72). A Greek equivalent for status "is hard to find"; *time* (honour, prestige) is closest. Prestige did play a significant role, but Aristotle's use of the term reflects an almost exclusive ethical sense (Ste. Croix 1981:80).

³⁴. Little wonder that categories such as class have been described as non-objective, subjective evaluations from within a specific cultural universe (Van den Berghe 1970:368).

³⁵. *Supplices*, lines 238-245.

³⁶. Also used by Thucydides, Herodotus (Ste. Croix 1981: 45).

³⁷. Compare *Pol.* iii.8, 1279^b16 ff., especially 34-80.

One distinction often made in the Greco-Roman world is that between the propertied and unpropertied. Propertied people included senators, equestrians, imperial officials, other wealthy persons, the local landed aristocracy of conquered areas who often occupied municipal offices³⁸, and army veterans. The non-propertied consisted of artisans, peasants, serfs, bond-debtors, slaves, whose labour was controlled by the former and so unfree. The ruling classes of the Greco-Roman world invariably were also the landowners, as land was the ultimate criterion of wealth (Ste. Croix 1981:40,330; Owens 1991:116). They were the primary benefactors of the legal system, as their evidence was given more weight than that of the lower class (Ste. Croix 1981:40,330). Legal position helps decide class to the extent that it affects exploitation; legally a slave could be more exploited in the Greek world than a citizen or a free foreigner (Ste. Croix 1981:44).

The primary method to ensure the biggest surplus of products for the highest levels of Greco-Roman society was the use of unfree labour. Unfree labour was extracted from the unpropertied class through e.g. slavery, serfdom, and debt bondage (Ste. Croix 1981:33,38-39,40,52). Slavery was the "most important form of unfree labour", and in the Greco-Roman world the terminology used about unfree labour was the same as those for slavery (Ste. Croix 1981:39). Which class does a slave belong to who has been granted some possessions? For Ste. Croix the answer is straightforward: to the propertied class (Ste. Croix 1981:65).

Although free producers were numerically the largest sector of the Roman world, they did not really form an intermediary class at this stage of social development. Free producers, such as peasants³⁹, artisans, and traders engaged in "essential economic activities", neither exploited the labour of others nor were themselves exploited; the exception was their own family members (Ste. Croix 1981:33,39). Free labour was also largely unskilled, relatively immobile, and confined to seasonal work, whereas slaves were relatively cheap and freely available (Ste. Croix 1981:40). Most of the labourers worked in agricultural production during the Roman and the Classical Greek period. In the fourth century BC artisans were not many, and foreign trade was often in the hands of non-citizens (Ste. Croix 1981:78).

Free labourers were likely to be exploited directly by propertied individuals (e.g. landlords, moneylenders). They were also indirectly exploited by the institutions of the propertied class, through taxation, military conscription, and forced services to the state or a municipality (Ste. Croix 1981:33,43,54). Indirect exploitation can serve to co-opt the propertied sectors of the native population, which will also affect the form of the class struggle (Ste. Croix 1981:44). This is why the Jewish propertied class became as much

³⁸. Ste. Croix refers to them as a curial class: "members of the propertied class (with their families) who made up the councils of the cities of the Greek East ... and filled all the important magistracies", originally elected by the Assembly but in the first two centuries AD nominated by the council or by officials appointed by the council. They are more commonly referred to as decurions, the Latin for councillor, as *curia* (senate house) were applied to councillors only in the fourth century AD (Ste. Croix 1981:466).

³⁹. Peasants are defined as those who "posses, whether or not they own, the means of agricultural production by which they subsist". They provide their own "maintenance from their own productive efforts", and collectively produce "more than is necessary for their own subsistence and reproduction". Peasants are not slaves, although they may be serfs or bondsmen; their occupation of land occur under many conditions. They work as a family, although they associate in a larger unit such as a village (Ste. Croix 1981:210).

the target of the AD 66-70 revolt in Palestine as the Romans themselves (Ste. Croix 1981:442).

But some argue that Roman society cannot be classified as a class nor a slave-owner society, and that no class struggle existed (Alfoldy 1988:150,153). The class struggle was prevented by the many possibilities for social advancement and the strong linkage that existed between the lower and upper strata. As a result the lower strata often pursued courses of action differing from one another, and even supported the ruling strata. An additional factor was the lack of social (horizontal) divisions within the lower strata (Alfoldy 1988:153). These conditions, he suggests, prevented the rise of a revolutionary class. But class need not be defined by collective consciousness, common interests nor by the context of a post-industrial society (Ste. Croix 1981:44,65). Class struggle need not be explicit - although it may become more explicitly evident at political, ideological⁴⁰, and economic levels (compare Ste. Croix 1981:44). In a division of society into propertied and unpropertied classes, there could be no class struggle between equestrians and senators, both propertied, as Alfoldy contends. Political struggle is a more apt term for the struggle within the upper strata (Ste. Croix 1981:42).

I think economic class is a useful analytic concept for the study of the New Testament (Roman) world, but should be supplemented with other legal, economic, political, and social concepts. Class has the advantage of a focus on the material causes and effects of status, and also produces a clearer, simplified social model. While complexity does approximate reality more than simplicity does, the strata-model generates concepts which often implodes under its own complexities. Would a member of Greco-Roman society not tend to simplify the complexities of strata by resorting to economic criteria the problem of social relations with the lower orders? A particular difficulty relates to the existence of groups which do not easily fit a class or a strata division.

The differences in explanatory value between status and class can be illustrated by reference to citizenship (Ste. Croix 1981:94-95). The status of citizenship was obtained by birth or grant, and resulted in civil rights (right to own property) and usually political rights (access to political structures). So citizen A with political (access) and civil (property) rights had more status than citizen B, who had only property; while B had more than non-citizen C, who lacked these rights. Class analysis does not consider possession or lack of these rights as determinants, nor attempts to construct a stratification. Because both citizens A and B have land (wealth), no difference exists between them in relation to C (Ste. Croix 1981:94-95). Status in a general sense retains a descriptive value, but does not possess the analytic or heuristic value of class ((Ste. Croix 1981:92,93-94). The concept generates more and more complex definitions which ultimately reduce its usefulness, particularly when the objective social or material bases which govern its meanings are not outlined, or cannot be determined (e.g. juridical categories with rights, duties, privileges, disadvantages).

⁴⁰. While examples of the ideology of the ruling class is easy to find, instances of open ideological resistance by the subjugated class is rare because of the danger of retribution. In the context of the New Testament world this took the form of apocalyptic literature (Daniel, Revelation) (Ste Croix 1981:442, see Scott 1990).

The location of status within functionalism limits its application for an analysis of Greco-Roman society, marked by oppressive opposition and social change. When functionalism is applied to the Roman East, the result is a nonsensical contractual perspective in which unfree labour and landlords can be said to need or depend on one another. Meanwhile domination and exploitation fade from view (Ste. Croix 1981:83-84). Ste. Croix prefers class analysis as best able to describe the relations of exploitation as it affected the vast majority (Ste. Croix 1981:374). Status analyses of ancient societies are irrelevant to modern society, which requires description in terms of "a completely different set of statuses" (Ste. Croix 1981:45). This - by implication - is also true for New Testament analyses.

Social status and political power "derive from distinctions based upon economic class" (Ste. Croix 1981:45). Other distinctions also usually tend "to decay in favour of, and ultimately resolve" into class (Ste. Croix 1981:45). This is true for the general proposition that status and wealth often received far greater significance than ethnicity in the Roman world. (In Judaism class became associated with religious purity, as demonstrated in the parable of the wedding banquet.) Wealth replaced noble birth as the basis for power and respectability from the 7th century BC onwards.

Although both status and wealth were important, wealth was "by far the most important determinant of status" (Ste. Croix 1981:425). Ovid said that property confers rank⁴¹ (Ste. Croix 1981:425). In the 30s BC the value of one's property was the means of distinguishing between senators, equestrians, and plebs. Possession of property-as-wealth aided promotion in the military and qualified judges for office (Ste. Croix 1981:425⁴²). In the Roman age, Greeks described the propertied class invariably in terms that suggest wealth and good morality (e.g. *agathos*). Phrases used of the unpropertied simultaneously have negative moral implications (e.g. *kakos*; Ste. Croix 1981:426). The notion arose that the primary function of the state is to protect private property, as Cicero among others argued (Ste. Croix 1981:426⁴³). The Greco-Roman equation is reversed in the teachings of Jesus, notably in the parable of Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31) and the Beatitudes (Mt. 5-7), so that virtue is also found among the poor, as passages in Psalms, Isaiah, Proverbs and Job suggest (Ste. Croix 1981:432).

Concerning methodology, Alföldy's functionalism appears to confirm Ste. Croix's concerns inappropriateness regarding analysis of the Greco-Roman society. As a result Alföldy is led away from finding ("open") conflict (Alföldy 1988:153). But theoretical differences between scholars often disguise similarities in practice or conclusion. Alföldy does note "social tensions"; he also agrees that the common characteristics of the lower strata were economic (Alföldy 1988:153,147). Alföldy seems to overstate his case in respect of links in the patron-client system which would have inhibited resistance within the lower class; this would depend on its extent. Not all of the lower strata would be affected, as many clients were among the lower orders of the upper strata; the rural elements would be particularly unaffected. Ste. Croix's evidence for popular opposition to Roman rule in the Greek East is convincing.

⁴¹. Ovid, *Amores* III.viii.55.

⁴². Quoting Seneca, *Controv.* II.1.17).

⁴³. Cicero, *De officiis* II.73, quoted by Ste. Croix 1981: 426.

3. TOWARDS AN OWN METHODOLOGY FOR STUDYING CONTEMPORARY AND NEW TESTAMENT CONGREGATIONS

3.1. Analysing contemporary congregations through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and a questionnaire

I adopted the conceptual frameworks of process, identity, programme and context for grouping data during the initial gathering phase, and as points of reference for later analysis. Before using the framework I had to take several practical steps. These include to:

- a) clarify and limit tasks;
- b) determine who will be involved (authorisation, ownership);
- c) develop the study design (relevance, methods, use/fulness of information).

The **Handbook** is a compendium of methods, and the authors recommend that more than one method should be used, but not all. Presenting the findings in an integral manner is very important, e.g. through "storying" the results by emphasising narrative features of corporate life. The story of a congregation recalls evocation, characterisation, and confession. Respectively these tell "that we are....who we are....what we are" (Carroll e.a. 1986:45). In storytelling data and narrative should balance one another to prevent either extreme determinism or disconnected fancy (Carroll e.a. 1986:46).

I opted to apply qualitative socio-analytical techniques to describe each congregation. These included use of participant-observation, semi-structured interviews, and a survey based on the 1984 version of Hartford Seminary's Parish Profile Inventory. My choice of qualitative methods was motivated by my belief that these are better aids to understanding the organic and historical dimensions of congregations. In particular I used:

- a) an interactive approach which examined the interaction between the context, programmes, processes and identity of a congregation;
- b) some recommendations regarding participant-observation
- c) selected questions for semi-structured interviews (3.1.2. below);
- d) the Parish Profile Inventory in an adapted form (3.1.3. below);
- e) documentary analysis (3.1.4. below).

3.1.1. Participant-observation

I selected participant-observation as an umbrella method for the various descriptive techniques suggested by Carroll e.a.. Participant-observation is recommended in understanding identity (Carroll e.a. 1986:27); especially ritual.

Participant-observation is the attempt to understand a social world from the inside. The researcher participates in what s/he observes, which enables him/her to come close to the perspective of an insider.

Relative objectivity is achieved by detachment; that is, by not consciously influencing the answers, actions, or beliefs of those studied. I assumed an overt (identified) role as researcher within the congregations, to achieve the maximal degree of objective detachment. This meant that I could describe the social world from the inside while remaining able to recognise common denominators (cf. Schwartz & Jacobs 1979; 48ff.). (For full description and theoretical perspective see Chapter One, section 2 above).

I applied this method to meetings (such as church council meetings, small group, and programme meetings, and services). During meetings I would record my observations in key-word or longhand form. Given the need not to influence the others, I remained silent unless asked a question. In addition I drew sociograms of most meetings to show who spoke, and to whom. The most obvious place for participant-observation was the services, during which I noted what hymns were sung, the topics of sermons and prayers. Repeated keywords were noted for analysis of worldview.

3.1.2. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are set questions which are open-ended. This method is the major means of reconstructing the oral history of a congregation. Interviews enable the perspective of less vocal members to be gained, and provide a means of viewing events through members' eyes. I wanted to use the time-line oral history gathering technique, but decided against it as I found little enthusiasm among church members for the idea.

In each interview the respondent was asked to relate a crisis. the purpose here was to discover the worldview of the individuals within the congregation. I then attempted to align the responses according to common themes, phrases, solutions, stories, and symbols. About half the interviews selected were conducted with leadership, and I tried to vary the whole sample according to sex, age, education, participation (Carroll e.a. 1986:35). Findings were verified against the multiple choice questions of the survey. Fifty-two interviews were conducted in the three South African congregations, of which 3 were with coloureds, 11 with blacks. In the United States semi-structured interviews were conducted with about 15 clergy, 16 congregational members, and 12 academics. The aim of obtaining the data from the United States was comparison with the South African research in terms of elaboration, verification, or falsification. Besides semi-structured interviews I made particular use of unstructured questions regarding the history of congregations.

Semi-structured questions used in this research

1. * How long have you been here?
2. Why not go elsewhere?
3. * What made you come here?
4. Why do others come here?
5. Who comes here?

6. * Has there been any change since you started coming?
7. * What is the news in the church?
8. Were there any conflicts? How were they resolved?
9. * What are the church's strengths and weaknesses?
- 10.* What are the church's needs?
11. Describe a crisis in your life; what was God doing in or through it; where was God ?
12. Who are the leaders, and how does one become a leader?
- 13.* What are those like who are very involved here?
14. How are decisions made?
- 15.* Who do you visit most or least from the church?
- 16.* Tell the story of the church.
- 17.* If you had to imagine the church as a person, what would that person look like?
18. How do you become a member?
19. What do you want from the church ?
20. How many people do you know that live near you and who come to this church?
- 21.* Have you been involved in any church activities? Why/not?

Legend: * indicates questions I regarded as essential, which I tried to get an answer to if I ran out of time during an interview.

3.1.3. Structured survey based on the Parish Profile Inventory

Questions were selected from the PPI with the purpose of compiling a survey to produce demographic and worldview profiles. I intended to use the questionnaires to support my qualitative analysis.

Four questionnaires were handed out to those attending three Sunday services over a four week period in batches of 350 each. Returns are used throughout as representative for the whole congregation; although they actually represent only those respondents' who answered questions correctly. My analysis is based on the factual information, but remains interpretation, though I did try to substantiate my conclusions through personal interviews with congregants.

At Martindale and Johweto the questionnaires were handed out at a Sunday service and respondents took them home to complete. The returns using this approach was about 26% and 25% respectively. In the case of Central Methodist Mission the questionnaire was divided into 4 sections, of which 360 copies of each were handed out per Sunday over four weeks. Respondents had to complete these after the service. This method yielded about 260 questionnaires returned of 655 handed out. Some of the returns for Central may therefore be too small to extend to the whole congregation.

3.1.4. Documentary analysis of sermons, teachings, documents

The documents that I analysed included pew bulletins, marriage and birth registers, occasional pamphlets, newsletters, newspaper cuttings, and books. I scrutinised these for patterns of beliefs, themes, and dominant theological images that exist in the congregation. In this way the present theological identity can be established as derived from the great and little traditions. The focus is on "behaviourial expressions of the congregation's theological identity in its organisational life", which function to "select, emphasize, suppress, focus and organize features of the common life". They constitute a congregation's "fundamental vision" (Carroll e.a. 1986:27).

3.2. Analysing New Testament congregations through an inductive reconstruction of the role of ethnicity

The method I use is both social history and sociological analysis. The intended description of the ethno-cultural composition of the New Testament churches is proto-sociological social history. My explanations of the effect of ethno-cultural differences on the relations between groups in different congregations is also sociological. I will use functionalism and conflict theories, as well as various concepts from the sociology of knowledge and anthropology (e.g. of ethnicity). I tried to take my cue from the situation of the congregations as to which theory was to be employed, rather than exclusively using any particular one. Rather, my point of departure is formed from the results of my investigation of the role of ethnicity on the functioning of the contemporary congregations. Best has noted that sociological studies of the New Testament should also generate models, instead of reactively adapting those of sociology (Best 1983:191).

As my preferred method, social-scientific textual analysis also suggests my object: the analysis of groups within a society and their interaction within a religious organisation. Social-scientific textual analysis also reflects the major subject (sociology) from which my analytical theories and categories are drawn, e.g. the parameters of income, education and occupation as forming social class. An exclusive use of sociology or of a particular sociological or anthropological theory is not intended. Instead I wanted a cross-disciplinary approach which included perspectives which some consider disparate. This is because theoretical distinctions within a field like sociology (e.g. social conflict vs the equilibrium theory of functionalism) often result from different angles of vision. When such apparently conflicting theories are used in tandem they can produce a clearer picture of the complexity of social reality ⁴⁴ (compare Holmberg 1990:17). The basic unit of analysis is the house church.

On the macro-social level I will apply both functionalist and conflict theory to show the relation of the New Testament churches to other social institutions (e.g. slavery). At the same level I will describe the internal relations between groups in a specific church. I will also use both the literary and Marxian senses of ideology in this study. The Marxist position allows for the analysis of how texts function in ideological

⁴⁴. Conflict theory can be applied to the relations within the Corinthian community, or to communities within Palestine, or to the interaction between competing groups within one urban area such as Ephesus. Theories regarding social equilibrium in which groups co-operate can be applied to the internal relations between Paul and his churches, or between Christianity and the Roman empire.

conflicts where dominant and oppressed classes exist within the same society. This perspective should not be lost in studying multi-ethnic societies. The literary definition on the other hand allows me to reflect on the positive functions of ideology, whether preservative or transformative.

The crucial problem for me is whether the political-social (strata-status) approach can blend with class analysis; and if so, how. As I tend toward synthesis, I want to reconcile them, as long as the result can be applied to an analysis of conflict (or exploitation) and to that of power. I would speculate that status rules applied more to social or juridical interaction while economic concerns largely determined political interaction. Property (class) played no role in deciding citizenship (status), but did determine access to political process through wealth qualifications. Status decided whom one could relate to, but in this context citizenship meant little and property was more important. Citizenship made a difference in juridical situations, but so did wealth.

At a micro-social level I wanted to discover whether there were sufficient ethno-cultural and class differences in the New Testament congregations to affect their functioning, and the texts addressed to them. The primary focus will be on three communities which related to Paul, as the volume of his writings suggests the greatest amount of data⁴⁵. A positive answer would raise the question - in the light of the contemporary study - of whether this is primarily a consequence of: an intentional programme by leaders; the surrounding context; or of sociological forces beyond the context. A reconstruction of the relations between cultures should include a) the relations between the culture of the authors (like Paul) and their audiences; and b) between this sub-culture and the dominant Greco-Roman culture.

Both the contextual and referential worlds will have to be considered; comparing the intratextual data to that yielded by outside sources, while also examining extratextual sources to understand the intratextual data⁴⁶. Despite the difficulties, I refuse to entertain Van Staden's safer but almost agnostic surrender of the attempt to say anything about the referential social world.

From the preceding discussion I selected the following methods for a social-scientific analysis of New Testament congregations:

- a) define the object of study;
- b) familiarise myself with relevant contemporary sociological theories and studies;
- c) choose the texts to be studied;
- d) analyse their literary aspects;
- e) scan the texts for social data while comparing the results with data contemporaneous to those texts;
- f) reconstruct typical social aspects by comparing the data with sociological theories and categories;

⁴⁵. Yet the volume and sweep of Paul's writings may suppress localised differences, the features of local situations (Wire 1984:210).

⁴⁶. I would argue the opposite: the general data of a text is easier to understand than the specific meanings. In order to understand specific meanings we have to refer to the external world. A reader can understand a text with historical references only to the extent that the contemporaneous extratextual (referential) world is understood. Shakespeare's works can serve as an analogy.

- g) verify intratextual analysis against available archeological evidence;**
- g) attempt falsification by noting whether conclusions fit alternate or opposing interpretations;**
- h) compare one's work with that of other scholars in the field.**

CHAPTER THREE: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF RACIALLY-MIXED CONGREGATIONS

1. RACIALLY-MIXED CONGREGATIONS IN THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF SOUTH AFRICA

1.1. The historical ideal of mixed congregations and political-economic factors aiding deviation

The most remarkable aspect about racially-mixed local congregations in South Africa is not that they do not exist, but that some exist at all - and in some cities continued to exist through the dark history of apartheid. Such congregations have a long historical precedent in the express ideal of most denominations from the early colonial periods on. My purpose in what follows is to sketch a preliminary socio-historical overview of earlier and more recent examples of racially-mixed South African congregations. The factors which contributed to the subsequent deviations towards segregation are recounted,¹ showing how churches in their attitudes to race mimicked their social context, and ultimately chose to view language differences as insurmountable (Hinchliff 1963:250, see Cochrane 1987).

Racially-mixed congregations were originally the result of church policy combined with location within mixed neighbourhoods, a situation that held true until the second half of the twentieth century. This is the case for some centre-city (often cathedral) congregations, e.g. St Mary's (Roman Catholic) Cathedral, Cape Town. Four socio-political factors in particular led to the emergence of deliberately mixed congregations in the 1960s (as opposed to context as cause):

- (a) the eradication of the demographic contexts for such congregations by apartheid legislation from the 1950s onwards;
- (b) the reiteration of the ideal in official statements and conferences in response to such legislation;
- (c) the emergence of clergy nourished by the ideal, bolstered by its reiteration, and chafing against both the injustices of the Nationalist government, as well as against
- (d) the continual apathy concerning systematic and concrete expressions of the ideal at local congregational level².

Mixed services were the ideal for most denominations in the major centres of the Western Cape during the 17th and 19th centuries (cf. Hinchliff 1963:210; Gish 1985:23; Loff 1983:22; Villa-Vicencio 1988:26; Goedhals 1989:108; Pato 1989:172). This ideal was also held by the Methodist (1814), Catholic (1834)³, and Anglican (1848) churches⁴. The newly-arrived Anglican clergy of ca. 1848 are

¹ Full-length discussions of the factors leading to segregation can be found e.g. in De Gruchy (1979), Kinghorn (1986), Villa-Vicencio (1988).

² Obviously there were various attempts at so-called interracial contact, but no deliberate policy to create mixed local congregations.

³ The first Roman Catholic Church building was erected in 1820, in Harrington Street, Cape Town (The Catholic Church and Southern Africa, plate between pages 8 and 9). The oldest surviving church is Saints Peter and Paul, erected in 1841 at George.

⁴ Many denominations existed unofficially for some time before their official local founding date. The first recorded appearance of Catholics was the 1685 Jesuit visit to the shore under the Protestant Dutch rule. Catholics were allowed to operate from 1804 to 1805, then forbidden again, then allowed again in 1820. The first Vicar Apostolic (E Slater) was appointed in 1816 but not allowed to stay. The first resident bishop (Raymond Griffith) arrived only in 1838 (Brady 1951: 115-116). In the case of the Anglican and Catholic Churches it is easiest to date the official commencement of the denomination from the arrival - not appointment - of the

reported as saying "it is to be hoped that masters and mistresses and others having influence over the coloured population will use their exertions' to induce them to attend" (Langham-Carter 1977:56).

The Catholic parishes of the Cape of the 1880s "included both European and coloured" (Brown 1960:204). The Catholic Church "recognized no colour bar from the earliest times, all Catholics sharing the same building and joining in the same worship"; where separation occurred (e.g. in the Transvaal of the 1890s⁵) it was because of "difficulties of language and distance" (Brain 1991:71). This inclusiveness in Catholic circles was based on the assimilationist thinking exhibited in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of the South and Central Americas, where mission was "an extension of Christian civilisation" (Brown 1960:204). But once the tribes across the Orange were thought of in 1840, the pattern of Catholic mission changed to segregated missions, as European civilisation was considered unlikely to dominate there (Brown 1960:204).

The ideal is reflected in the writings and actions of various church leaders, and surfaces in the awareness of the laity as well. In Mossel Bay of the early 1880s laity "insisted that black [DRC] members should rather join the Lutheran Church⁶ or the Anglican Church" than attend the white church (Loff 1983:22). In 1856 the Roman Catholic bishop of Natal, Marie Jean Francois Allard, wrote to Father Jacobus Hoendervangers (resident priest at Bloemfontein) that as "to colour, the Catholic Church pays no attention to it. Jesus Christ died for all men without distinction"⁷ (Brain 1990:71, footnote 75; Brown 1960:58, 180-181). In 1842 Catholic priest Aidan Devereux (later Bishop of the Eastern Vicariate) "noted that the Protestants made efforts to prevent the coloured population from coming near him" (Brown 1960:47).

But was the ideal translated into reality? Church historians are almost unanimous in responding positively, yet seldom supply empirical evidence; examples of such congregations and some indication of their composition are mostly lacking. What little historical data is offered even indicate the opposite. For instance, despite the ideal of mixed congregations in the Church of England (later the CPSA, to which I will refer to as such or as the Anglican church) Nicholas Merriman, first Archdeacon of the Eastern Cape, noted with disapproval that only whites attended Trinity Church⁸, Cape Town in 1848, which "looked

first bishops: the Catholics then date to 1838, the Anglicans to 1848. I date the Methodists, who first appear in 1806, to the arrival of their first minister, who was not allowed to preach.

⁵. Black miners who had arrived at the Rand included Catholics from Lesotho, Natal, Transkei, and Mocambique (Shangaans) (Brain 1991: 71). The Shangaans were visited by a priest from Maputo (Brain 1991: 134). Catholic priests served the white areas, and few could speak indigenous languages. One exception was the German, Father Willem Schwieta, who spoke Zulu and Setswana and was involved in the mineworkers' missions on the Reef (Brain 1991: 134). During this period Mass was conducted in Latin and the sermon or instruction in English (Brain 1991: 71).

⁶. The remark may refer to the separate congregations free from Boer-control founded by German ministers in villages (Brown 1960:198).

⁷. Allard was responding to a request for an official statement regarding Catholic doubts about black-white interaction (Brown 1960:180; Allard's Letterbook 322-323 is quoted in Brain 1990:71, footnote 75).

⁸. Trinity, along with St John's Wynberg, and St Peter's Mowbray, represented the Erastian faction in mid-1870s South Africa which would later feature in the split between Colenso and Gray, and so between the Church of England and the CPSA (compare Lewis & Edwards 1934:119).

just like a smart London congregation" (Goedhals 1989:108). If united congregations could be shown to have existed, it would demonstrate that present norms of racial segregation run counter to the initial ideal of many denominations.⁹ If examples cannot be found, the belief that such congregations existed could then be assigned to a self-justifying ideology existing within English-speaking churches.

Clearly special services - like baptisms and some communion services - were mixed. In 1864 Catholic bishop Thomas Grimley of Cape Town included eleven blacks in a May procession (Brown 1960:180). Anglican clergy had baptised "the heathen" since the first British occupation of 1795, including blacks and freed slaves, but "no-one had instructed them and they were dispersed" by the 1820s (Lewis & Edwards 1934: 5; Hinchliff 1963:4). At least 33 of 57 adults baptised in St George's Cathedral in 1849 were not whites (St George's baptism register; SACM 1850:28). These comprised 16 "heathens" (i.e. black); 12 Malays¹⁰; one whose mother had been Malay; one Chinese;¹¹ and three whose origins were "unknown" (St George's baptismal register; SACM 1850:28). In 1850 Bishop Gray baptised fifteen "natives" and confirmed seven at a church meeting in Melville (Lewis & Edwards 1934:61). At Stellenbosch "'Nana Maria'", a "'Mozambique Servant'" was baptised in the Anglican church of St Mary's on September 28, 1851. She apparently worked for Rev Frederick Carlyon, the first rector of the parish. Among the 19 communicants at the 1855 Easter service in the same church were four "non-European" names (Hunter 1952:19).

Before the building of the Anglican mission chapels in Cape Town the Malay converts attended communion at St George's in 1854, sitting in the free seats during matins or evensong (Lewis & Edwards 1934:96). Archdeacon Lightfoot (1831-1904) said that the coloured converts (including Malays) met for regular services in the chapel-school in Upper Buitengracht St, but until the building of St Paul's mission in 1880 "resorted to the Cathedral for the Sacraments" (Lewis & Edwards 1934:96). This means a sizeable number of coloured communicants participated at St George's, as by 1861 the Buitengracht congregation numbered 200 (Lewis & Edwards 1934:109). In 1877 Lightfoot reported that "a great many coloured people" attend St George's "because Greenpoint Church will not hold them" (Barnett-Clarke 1908:183). When St Paul's were completed, this was regarded favourably because it would drain away some of the coloured people.

A mixed Anglican service was held on 12 June 1892 at St Philip's Mission Chapel in English. The congregation included a "large proportion ... [of] Kaffirs of various tribes", who gathered to witness the ordination of Henry Mdeleleni, a Fingo [Mfengu] catechist for twelve years (Cape Church Monthly and Pew Record, August 1892 Vol 1 (1): 3).

⁹. For contrasting views compare Kiernan's unnuanced and unexpanded statement (Kiernan 1990: 9).

¹⁰. By 1820 the Malays at the Cape numbered 3 000. They were descendants of those exiled from Batavia by the Dutch East India Company. Malays had been baptised at St George's before Gray's period (Lewis & Edwards 1934:95).

¹¹. The SACM records that a Chinese gave 22 pounds to dean Newman "for God". He was apparently brought to conversion before the recorded incident (SACM 1 (8) 1850:254).

But these were special occasions: were there congregations which were ordinarily mixed? This seems probable; in the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), the only denomination permitted at the Cape during the 17th century (formally established in 1665¹²), membership of congregations was open to Khoikhoi as well as baptized slaves from the start (Kritzinger 1994:180; Cawood 1964, quoting from a DRC newsletter of 1963; Brown 1960:198). Henry Bousfield, the CPSA Bishop of Pretoria, in 1879 "dealt sharply with one congregation which attempted to exclude Africans from its services" (Hinchliff 1963:155). The village of Bathurst by 1830 "contained 1240 people of all colours" who were petitioning for an Anglican church, but whether the resulting congregation was mixed is unknown (Lewis & Edwards 1934:19). Again the likely answer seems probably; in 1850 a Hottentot baptised at Cape Town was one of the subscribers¹³ for an Anglican church building at Burgersdorp, so that he could have a church to go to "without fear of being turned out" (Lewis & Edwards 1934:60).

The official policies of the churches regarding racial mixing during the Dutch (1652-1795, 1795-1806) and British (1795-1803, 1806 onwards) colonial periods reflected the social norms of the ruling classes, represented by the vestry and most clergy. Segregation was sanctioned along class lines (i.e. respectability and whiteness¹⁴), so that social exclusion by the ruling classes could be maintained and degrees of political equality - not egalitarianism - allowed (Bickford-Smith 1989:44,50; compare Brown 1960:200; Hinchliff 1963:210; Cawood 1964:55). The upward mobility of those "other than whites" was prevented, and a division¹⁵ and control of labour supply legitimated (Bickford-Smith 1989:47-48). Under the Dutch and the British this meant that intermarriages were tolerated (De Gruchy 1979:7; Brown 1960:18 and footnote, 179). Andries Stockenstroom, a Swede, had a black wife, and his daughter was black and married to a Mr Meintjies, the Civil Commissioner of Beaufort Town. One son became Lt-Governor of the Eastern District; the other also a Civil Commissioner. Catholic Bishop Griffith found three Catholic men living with black women in Beaufort Town in 1838 (Brown 1960:19). The British also allowed forms of socialising with 'natives' (coloureds), as recorded in 1822¹⁶.

This attitude persisted outside and inside the churches well into the twentieth century, as demonstrated by Cochrane (1987) of the English-speaking churches. In 1838 the Anglican priest J D Sanders wrote of the "great gulf between black and white" which causes conversions to the Muslim faith, as "among Mohammedans the coloured are treated as equals. 'Slam's kerk is de zwart men's kerk,' they said" (quoted in Lewis & Edwards 1934:95). In 1951 the Catholic priest Francis Schimlek could write that "the [Roman Catholic] Church does not preach absolute equality between white and black" but only equality

¹². In essence the DRC functioned as "a branch of the civil service" of the Dutch East India Company (Cawood 1964:17).

¹³. Funds for building churches were raised through selling subscriptions or shares.

¹⁴. Locally, class segregation developed from assumptions in the 17th century that upper class was superior; by the late 18th century being upper class coincided with being white and British.

¹⁵. The slave economy of the colonial periods presented a precedent for a racial division of labour. While race at first did not matter because whites, blacks and coloureds could all be found at the bottom of the labour pool, slaves were without exception black.

¹⁶. In 1822 balls were organised where British men and coloured women mixed. But such institutions which apparently broke colour barriers in fact functioned to confirm racist stereotypes of coloured behaviour (Ross 1989:44-45).

"in the highest order of things"; by which he understood joint access to communion (Schimlek 1951:159).

The ideal of racial congregational integration apparently was practised until as late as the 19th century. So in 1828 Bentura Johannes, a "bastaard" employee of a white DRC member, became a member in the Somersets-Hottentots Holland (today Somerset West) DRC (Loff 1983:11-12). This was in line with a 29 April 1829 ruling by a government-appointed official¹⁷ at the synod of the Cape Town Presbytery that there could be no discrimination at Communion, and, by implication, not within the church either¹⁸ (Loff 1983:16, Bosch 1983:31). And a (Khoikhoi) congregation in Stockenstrom (Eastern Cape) became the first black congregation to join the DRC in 1831 from the London Missionary Society. Over the next two decades at least forty-five whites became members in this congregation (Loff 1983:18), so that for a period it was mixed.

Racial mixing in work, residential, and social spaces were consequently fairly common among the (as yet) undifferentiated lower classes of the late 17th century (Bickford-Smith 1989:47,48; compare Kinghorn 1990:58¹⁹). But the upper wealthier and white classes of Cape Town had already moved to the outskirts of the town by 1879, so that social distance coincided with geographical segregation. As a result the central areas of the city could be described as "'not inhabited by white men'" (Bickford-Smith 1989:50, quoting A. Trollope). Social segregation mirrored the Anglican pew-rent system which enabled the rich to sit more to the front in elaborate seating, while the poor (white or black) sat in plain, open-backed seats.

In mixed colonial congregations the status of other race groups clearly differed from those of whites, with differentiated participation practiced at congregational as well as polity levels in the DRC, CPSA, and Catholic churches. In 1754 and 1794 black [slave? ²⁰] DRC church attenders were forbidden by DRC leaders to linger in the foyer of churches after services (Loff 1983:20). Communion practice also varied; black DRC members sometimes received it with and sometimes separately from white members (Loff 1983:12). At Stellenbosch and Caledon in the 1820s white men received communion first, then white women, and lastly black members (Loff 1983:11,22). In the Anglican church no steps were taken to ensure full black representation in the decision-making bodies²¹, and so no black delegates attended the

¹⁷. The relationship between the Dutch colonial government and the DRC was like that between the Church of England and the British government. Church decisions had to be ratified by the government before they could be enforced; to this end a civil servant was appointed to attend all official church meetings (Loff 1983:16).

¹⁸. Had the DRC discriminated on the basis of colour, it would have been in violation of Ordinance 50 of July 1828, which declared that all free people were equal before the law. The DRC's 1857 decision was presumably allowed through Ordinance 7, which freed the church from interference by the government (Loff 1983:17).

¹⁹. Kinghorn's assertion that segregation was "natural", personal and not institutionalised, cannot be sustained. Elsewhere Kinghorn states that separation "ran along the lines of civilisation and education" (Kinghorn 1990:58), and *de facto* segregation occurred in education institutions in the first half of the 1800s (Bickford-Smith 1989:47, compare my footnote 22).

²⁰. Loff's otherwise laudable analysis lacks a distinction between indigenous blacks and slaves; I presume his references to blacks are to slaves, given the pre-1834 date.

²¹. Black Anglicans were represented by white delegates at the 1863 and 1867 diocesan synods (Goedhals 1989:109).

first Provincial Synod in 1870 (Goedhals 1989:109). At a local congregational level having financial means (i.e. being a pew-renter) was initially as much a qualification for voting in elections of the vestry (church council) as was being a communicant in good standing. Status differentiation became legally fixed along racial lines in the twentieth century, with the churches following suit.

So where the ideal found concrete form, it was often contradicted or at best skewed in practice; in differentiated seating arrangements, communion practice, segregated services, and by the equation of white civilisation and culture with Christianity (compare Villa-Vicencio 1988:43,47,54; Maimela 1988:323). Separate slave-master sections existed in many churches prior to the final emancipation of slaves in 1838. By 1837 DRC custom was "separate congregations where possible, otherwise a separate section of the church for black people, usually at the back of the church, sometimes under and sometimes on the balcony" (Loff 1983:19). Racially segregated seating became and remained unofficial Catholic practice which was only phased out in the 1970s. By 1951 a Catholic priest could write that there was "nothing wrong" with segregated seating ("special places") "for Europeans, Coloureds and Bantu", provided "they are all admitted to the same communion rail" (Schimlek 1951:159). The Anglican pew-rent system resulted not only in a rich/poor division, with fewer free seats for white and black poorer people, but caused church officials to hold prejudiced attitudes against those who could not support the building in such ways.

And becoming a Christian meant conforming to western standards of education, morality, and culture - often enforced by the format of church services (compare Goedhals 1989:107,109,110; Cochrane 1987:25,26; Villa-Vicencio 1988:56). Brown suggests this follows from Protestantism's strong national links: Anglicanism was English, Lutheranism German or Swedish, Calvinism Scottish or Dutch. The possibilities for Christian blacks were to be either "dependent Christians", or incorporated into the nationality of the particular denomination (Brown 1960:198). Catholic bishops Griffith and Ricards also took it for granted that blacks "would accept the ways of the whites along with their language ... [but] there would be no segregation in religion, and it would not be absolute in social matters (Brown 1960:200). And Father Bernard Huss set out in 1915 to "'teach the Bantu to think white'" in an effort to root out "the animistic and magical outlook" (Brown 1960:261). Brown's comment that after 1910 the "pattern of social life" for blacks was gradually conformed to the requirements of the ruling class (Brown 1960:263) also applies to the preceding period, with the only difference that it was not then legislated.

Escalating pressure on the denominations' ideal came through increasing institutional segregation and the extension of class differentiation to the lower classes during the 19th century. *De facto* segregation in schools²² had existed "from the first half of the 19th century"; and by the mid-1880s had extended to hospitals, prisons, and asylums (Bickford-Smith 1989:48; compare Brown 1960: 224). The effect was to separate poor whites from other groups (Bickford-Smith 1989:48). One base of this developing

²². The Anglicans had schools for the offspring for coloureds at Bishopscourt, and for those of African chiefs at Zonnebloem (Hinchliff 1963:36).

ideology of racial discrimination disguised as liberalism was the increasing industrialisation (e.g. of mining) and the "mineral revolution" in the 1870s (discovery of copper, diamonds, gold, coal). This increased government resources and so the competition for them. The liberal sentiments²³ which influenced the English-speaking churches²⁴ from the 1880s emphasised the worth of individuals regardless of race; but paradoxically also maintained white power and social control (Goedhals 1989:111). Among some missionaries (e.g. Stewart of Lovedale) this idea was expressed in paternalistic terms, with whites regarded as adults, and blacks as children (Saayman 1994:16).

The effect of this political economy can be seen in the role of mission policy in the supply of labour for which segregation was necessary. Labour needs dictated by political interests determined mission policy, as it would in the 1920s (Villa-Vicencio 1988:72). Missions' emphasis on "economic individualism" and tithes functioned to co-opt black peasants into a labour market controlled by whites, as much as government taxes did (Goedhals 1989:106; compare Kiernan 1990:15,16; Cochrane 1987:24). Through learning new agricultural methods Africans also learnt "'capitalistic approaches to the apprehension of self and society'" (Saayman 1994:14, quoting De Kock 1992:126-127). In addition a market was created for items manufactured by the British (Villa-Vicencio 1988:44, quoting John Philip of the LMS). This was particularly exemplified by missions to the Tswana (Kiernan 1990:16-17). While mission schools, hospitals, social services, and missionary interventions on behalf of blacks undoubtedly had benign effects (Villa-Vicencio 1988:52; Saayman 1990:33), the stress here is on the effects of mission on black society and on the integration ideal.

The division of mission work along racial lines almost from the start reflected the influence of "racial structuring of society" on theological reasoning (compare Saayman 1990:29). In the DRC ministers were at first responsible for bringing in converts; but in 1824 missionaries were appointed with the sole purpose of preaching to the (black) heathen (Cawood 1964:20; Kritzing 1994:180). The results were segregated services and later on segregated buildings, the convention not only in the Dutch but also in the separated settler parishes and 'native missions'²⁵ churches of the Anglican, Methodist, and Catholic traditions (Goedhals 1989:109; Hinchliff 1963:194; Brain 1991:133-136). At Springbok in 1867 an Anglican missionary notes the existence of a mission congregation which met at different times (morning and afternoon) in the same building as the "European" congregation. The mission services were in Dutch (Lewis & Edwards 1934:101). In the case of Marianhill, the mission concept was based on examples from the European middle ages. Ultimately this resulted in white (mostly urban) churches alongside black

²³. "Liberal convictions include a belief in the importance and dignity of the individual without regard to colour, culture, creed and sex; emphasis on equality of opportunity, freedom of thought, conscience, speech, movement and association, and the rule of law; and the conviction that society can achieve political stability, economic prosperity and social justice by human effort and evolutionary pace (Goedhals 1989:112).

²⁴. The term English-speaking churches originated in Britain, use English as main medium of communication, and for long was controlled from Britain, from where their clergy came. The term includes Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist churches, and was popularised through its use by De Gruchy (1979:18) and Villa-Vicencio (1988:16). The earliest instance of the term I found was in Hinchliff (1962:1).

²⁵. The settler/mission distinction can be deceptive: mission churches were white-dominated and so captive to the interests of the rulers, despite noble intentions and occasional pro-black advocacy by white clergy (Cochrane 1987:14,21,22). From the black perspective there was little difference between Brit and Boer (Villa-Vicencio 1988:43).

"location" congregations or rural missions.

After blacks were deprived of their land by the frontier policies²⁶, mission stations and schools contributed to the provision and distribution of labour for agriculture and public works, just as they would in the early 20th century (Goedhals 1989:106, Villa-Vicencio 1988:50,59; compare Cochrane 1987:74,84). The four Anglican mission stations established with grants from Cape governor George Grey in 1854 near Grahamstown exemplifies the links between mission and empire (Saayman 1994:13; Ramphela 1989:179; Cochrane 1987: 20,26; Villa-Vicencio 1988:56), and between mission and capitalism (Saayman 1994:14). These missions had the express purpose of pacifying the Xhosa²⁷ (Goedhals 1989: 106; compare Ntsha 1994:140; Hinchliff 1963:48). The concept behind the founding of the Catholic mission at Marianhill (at the instigation of bishop James Ricards) was that "the missionaries would bring the advantages of material civilization and so obtain more easily a hearing for their religion" (Brown 1960:104²⁸).

But missions also had cultural effects: mission land was often an alienated enclave on which blacks became foreigners in their own land, a pattern particularly prominent among missions to the Nguni (Kiernan 1990:18; Saayman 1994:14). Cultural resistance to conversion meant that inland only those on the edges of tribal society were converted (Kiernan 1990:18). Resistance to mission by the Zulu was accompanied by a definite disregard in accepting European values (conveyed by Catholic mission) as superior (Brown 1960:206). A possible etymology for "Kaffir" is the Zulu word for converts: iKhafulo, those "'spat out' by society" (Kiernan 1990:18). It was not until the forceful co-option of resisting cultures (Zulu, Bapedi) into the imperial culture "more benign to the missionaries" that larger scale conversions became possible (Kiernan 1990:19, Saayman 1994:14). In this way the transformation of the material conditions and social structure²⁹ of African society preceded (and was requisite for) the replacement of the ideology of traditional society (Maimela 1988:314; Brown 1960:104,206). A modified policy of placing catechists within villages was pursued in the Anglican church after 1891 when William Carter became Bishop of Natal (Hinchliff 1963:192). This had also been attempted by the Catholic bishop Allard in 1854; and in the mission to the Basuto in 1862 Allard (Brown 1960:205,207).

And so by 1872 most denominations had surrendered the ideal of inclusive local congregations to the developing sentiments of segregation. Within the DRC a growing resistance to integrated communion services, coinciding with and fuelled by rising Afrikaner nationalism around economic issues (Gilliomme 1989:~), ultimately led to a 1857 decision to allow segregated communion services in separate buildings

²⁶. Missionaries sometimes aided the process through which tribal land was lost. The Wesleyan William Shaw fulfilled this role in relation to parts of the land of the Basuto (Villa-Vicencio 1988:57).

²⁷. Similarly the Bethelsdorp Mission Station was used to "lure Khoikhoi away from from the rebellion led by Klaas Stuurman" (Villa-Vicencio 1988:59).

²⁸. Brown somewhat paradoxically denies that material changes contribute significantly to conversion among tribespeople (Brown 1906 214). He believes that material changes ("improvements") followed after - not before - conversion (Brown 1960:215).

²⁹. The insistence that polygamy ends is an example of such structural change (Brown 1960:206).

for different races ³⁰ (Kritzinger 1994:180). This reaction ³¹ eventually led to the preclusion of Bentura Johannes from communion with whites, and prompted the white members of the Stockenström ³² congregation to establish their own (white) congregation in 1862 (Loff 1983:17-18). Some DRC churches had already been ignoring the 1829 ruling (Loff 1983:11,22). Like the English-speaking churches, the DRC mirrored the ideals of the dominant society (Villa-Vicencio 1988:22; Saayman 1990:28; compare Cochrane 1990:95). The ideal foundered first in rural areas - especially on the frontier - where armed insurrection broke out in 1801 at Graaff-Reinet to prevent evangelisation of blacks, as it would put them on equal footing with settlers (Villa-Vicencio 1988:26)

Congregations of other denominations also were segregated, e.g. the Methodists and Wesleyans (compare Bickford-Smith 1989:48). Archdeacon Merriman witnessed the turning away of three Malays from a 1848 service at St George's (Anglican) Cathedral in Cape Town (Goedhals 1989:108) ³³. The significance of Merriman's description is that other races were willing to attend white congregations, while whites resisted this. So despite the ideal of non-segregation "within 20 years the practice of the [Anglican] church was divided on racial lines" (Goedhals 1989:108). The churches not only aided the destruction and alienation of African traditional society (Villa-Vicencio 1988:52) without extending the full benefits of Western (industrialised) society, but also treated black converts the same internally.

In the Protestant "English-speaking" churches without an official segregation policy, blacks were designated evangelists or catechists. Initially they found it difficult to become clergy, and even more so to be appointed to higher leadership (compare Goedhals 1989:108; Maluleke 1994:94; Balla 1994:163) ³⁴. This was due at times to active opposition by white clergy, as in the election of James Calata as the CPSA bishop of St John's diocese (Goedhals 1989:116,117). In the Roman Catholic Church the massive influx of blacks into the previously white denomination as a result of mission work ³⁵ neither changed the leadership's make-up nor the character of the institution (Villa-Vicencio 1988:36). The English-speaking denominations remained under home rule from abroad ³⁶, from where its ministers also came

³⁰. The DRC decision eventually solidified into three separate missionary branches: the DR Mission Church (formed in 1881), the Reformed Church in Africa (1968). Although each branch had its own polity, they were in effect controlled by the white DRC. The DR Mission Church, for example, was dependent on the DRC for finances, clergy supply, and ratification of decisions (Kinghorn 1990:59).

³¹. The racism of the whites was framed in terms of the cultural-religious distinction between "born" Christians (i.e. Europeans) and recent converts (mostly slaves) (Loff 1983:12).

³². The Stockenström congregation, later designated coloured, remained with the NGK until deciding to become part of the NGSK in 1957 (Cawood 1964:23).

³³. The first recorded instance of a black receiving Anglican communion was 10 June 1849. Significant numbers of blacks started joined this denomination only in the 1870s (Goedhals 1989:110).

³⁴. The initiative of black evangelists deserve recognition: in the period between 1873-1875 their solo work lay the foundation in South Africa for Swiss missionary work; while Josefa Mhlahamhala took the gospel to Mozambique in 1882 (Maluleke 1994:94).

³⁵. Catholic mission started late, after the industrialisation which drove blacks of the land to the mines, e.g. in the Transvaal after 1890 (Villa-Vicencio 1988:36; Brain 1991:70-71).

³⁶. The CPSA remained under rule of the British church until constituting itself separately in 1870 (England 1989:22). In 1953 all bishops were white and had been born in England; by 1980 only one diocesan and four suffragan (assistant) bishops were black; by 1988 nine out of 18 diocesan bishops and five suffragan bishops were black (Goedhals 1989:121; Pato 1989:172).

(Goedhals 1989:122, compare Cochrane 1987: 86; Hinchliff 1963:245³⁷. Black clergy were appointed only to black parishes, and often paid less than their white colleagues (Hinchliff 1963:207³⁸; Cochrane 1987:186; Villa-Vicencio 1988:36)³⁹ - a state which would not change until the late 1970s⁴⁰. The 19th century white colonists regarded mission as "the work of white priests and black evangelists" aimed at blacks - a perspective which contributed to the dominance of white priests while functioning to remove the influence of the church from the socio-political sphere which whites controlled (Goedhals 1989:109). As late as 1987 only in the CPSA did a conceptualisation that the reverse process should happen in evangelism occur: of black to white, of women to men (Goedhals 1989:122).

Black Christian resistance to these conditions took many forms, such as:

- a) breakaway movements from white denominations, e.g. Nehemiah Tile's independent Tembu National Church in the Transkei 1884 (Oosthuizen 1990:102; Hope & Young 1981:37). A similar division of the CPSA into "'an African Branch of the Catholic Church'" was proposed (and rejected) in 1940 and 1941 by two black priests, Hazel Maimane and James Calata (Goedhals 1989:116), although a similar arrangement had been made for the Ethiopian Order⁴¹ under James Dwane in 1900 (Hinchliff 1963:202);
- b) hostility to missions, illustrated by attempts in 1860 by some blacks in the Grahamstown area to stem contributions to missionary work (Goedhals 1989:108)⁴²; and by retributive attacks on and converts in British Natal and in Zululand (Kiernan 1990:18);
- c) lay criticism of a colour bar in the CPSA at the 1923 Provincial Missionary Conference (Goedhals 1989:116);
- d) early forms of a Black theology, as exemplified by Tile, which crystallised in the late 1960s (Cochrane 1987:220; Balia 1994:163);
- e) pressure groups to demand internal change, e.g. the 1976 Black Methodist Consultation (Gish 1985:80; Balia 1994:163);
- f) the founding or joining of black churches before the turn of the century (in part through missionary activity); particularly the African independent churches - presently the largest Christian grouping (22% in 1991) - which varied in form from mainline copies to syncretism (Cochrane 1987:89).

Segregation at the turn of the century had developed into a fully-fledged racist ideology as "the dominant political emphasis in colonial policy", combined with a labour-repressive economic system of capitalism

³⁷. In 1963 less than half of about 85 clergy in the Grahamstown diocese were South African-born (Hinchliff 1963: 245).

³⁸. The exception was always the diocese of Cape Town, which paid "all its clergy at the same rate" (Hinchliff 1963: 207).

³⁹. In the MCSA black ministers received a lower stipend until 1976 (Gish 1985: 69).

⁴⁰. Only in 1963 was Seth Mokitimi appointed as first black head of a major denomination, the Methodist Church (Gish 1985:74). In the whole history of the MCSA since 1806 only seven black presidents had been appointed by 1988; the ratio at conference by 1978 was 70 whites to 41 blacks (Gish 1985:4,69).

⁴¹. The Ethiopian Order broke away from the Methodist Church in 1892, led by Methodist minister Mangena Mokone. Ex-Methodist minister Dwane joined the movement in 1895, and soon became its leader (Hinchliff 1963:202).

⁴². This anti-missionary sentiment was again expressed more than a hundred years later (1970s), in a call across Africa for a moratorium on European missionaries (Goedhals 1989:122)

(Cochrane 1987:48,62 ⁴³). This ideology was applied in various legalised forms both before and after the National(ist) Party came to power in 1948. The post-1948 results were racially exclusive institutions, diminishing political power for coloureds ⁴⁴, residentially separate cities ⁴⁵, severely curtailed contact between whites and blacks, and individual prejudice.

The roots of this ideology entangled the colonial and post-colonial churches⁴⁶. As social mirrors of their times ⁴⁷ the churches often embedded "imperial ideals and colonial administration" (Goedhals 1989:107; Maimela 1988:325). Church membership of the English-speaking churches implied extending paternalism in return for submission to the British government, as noted of missionary policy in general and specifically of Anglican policy (Cochrane 1987:88; Mosala 1988:315; Goedhals 1989:107). In the pre-apartheid period until 1930, segregation in Anglophone churches enforced and duplicated the division of labour into racial categories (Cochrane 1987). Both English and Afrikaner as ruling classes became committed to the supremacy of whites in the political-economy (Villa-Vicencio 1988:46). The reactions of these churches to the social upheaval of the 1920s remained the position of the ruling class, and of the mine owners and mining capital (Cochrane 1987:132). In effect the Anglican church before 1911 was "almost a state church" - in contrast to the period up to 1920 (Cochrane 1987:154).

The ideal would not reappear until the 1950s; it would take to the end of the decade before it would be recast in concrete form. By 1964 most denominations admitted that "people of different races do not normally worship together in the same church" (e.g. the CPSA, MCSA, RCCSA, PCSA, Cawood 1964:58,61,52,76,92). With some exceptions the segregated congregations option would continue well into the 1980s, enforced by a segregationist ideology. Their capitulation meant that by the time colonial segregation hardened into apartheid policies the churches were already compromised by more than 70 years of segregated practice. A fact demonstrated by the claim that "apartheid" was first used in the 1929 NGK Synod to describe the principle of racial separation in mission work (Oosthuizen 1990:105).

But non-racial ideals expressed at denominational level did not affect the exclusive white dominance of church decision-making bodies, nor the composition of local congregations. In the Swiss Mission which was founded in 1875 (today the Evangelical Presbyterian Church), it was 1910 before Jonas Maphophe was the first black ordained as clergy (Maluleke 1994:94). By 1941 black Anglican clergy were still not represented at diocesan chapter, provincial or diocesan synods (Goedhals 1989:117). Black Anglicans had

⁴³. Cochrane's historiography uses a revisionist (racism has a political economic basis and has class interest as cause) rather than a liberal approach (Cochrane 1987: 43).

⁴⁴. Parliamentary disenfranchisement of coloureds occurred in 1951, provincial in 1961, and municipal in 1971 (Pinnock 1989: 162).

⁴⁵. By 1970 "at least 208 new towns for coloureds and 76 for Asians had been proclaimed". The design of many of these cities were to "enclose people in hostile environments" with few access roads which could be sealed off (Pinnock 1989:159).

⁴⁶. An insightful picture of the theology of the white colonial church is provided by Maimela (1988:324-327).

⁴⁷. Anglican and the Congregational (Union) churches promoted a Verwoerdian principle of educating blacks for labour at the same time that increased industrialisation occurred (Cochrane 1987:68).

to wait until 1960 for the first black bishop (Alpheus Zulu, appointed as assistant (suffragen ⁴⁸) bishop to Zululand), and until 1986 for the first black archbishop, Desmond Tutu (Goedhals 1989:120,124; Cawood 1964:16,56; Hinchliff 1963:240). Although the Presbyterian movement started in 1824, a black presbyter of the seven regional presbyteries was not elected until 1952, in Port Elizabeth (Cawood 1964:89,91). By 1964 the predominantly black ELC-SER still had a white bishop as sole leader (Cawood 1964:87). By 1964 in the CPSA there were "a number of African archdeacons [official with oversight over clergy and laity of groups of parishes] whose archdeaconries include white priests and lay people, for example Pretoria" (Cawood 1964:58).

When leadership opened to blacks at a higher level (RC, CPSA, Methodist), the same did not happen in local congregations. The frequently expressed ideal of racially-mixed congregations was not realised. White congregations found they could ignore the more radical statements by - black - leadership, and black leadership found themselves restrained by the dependence of churches on white funding (Villa-Vicencio 1988:152; Maimela 1988:325). The far more conservative stance of laity as opposed to clergy has long been a feature of white congregations in mixed denominations (compare Hinchliff 1963:240).

Racially-mixed churches, rare before 1948, became even more so after the National Party gained power in 1948 and gradually eliminated by force the mixed neighbourhoods which provided the soil for mixed congregations. Legislation was passed which forbade whites to enter black areas and controlled black entrance to white areas. In some metropolitan centres Catholic and Anglican cathedrals and churches by 1964 remained racially mixed islands in a sea of segregation ⁴⁹, for instance the Catholic church in Pretoria and the Kimberley Cathedral at (Cawood 1964:10; Brain 1991:157). The link between racially-mixed churches and their mixed neighbourhood (especially in the Cape) was noted in 1964 (Cawood 1964:10,59), and illustrated by St Mary's Cathedral (Roman Catholic) in Cape Town. Some mixed neighbourhoods persisted with their congregations until the late 1970s, of which an exceptional few outlasted the declaration of the neighbourhood as officially white.

Various historical attempts were made to rectify segregation of local congregations through calls which ironically often proved the extent of segregation. The most important of these were calls for:

1. *interracial contact* within the churches, e.g. at the 1948 Non-European Christian Conference on Race Relations; and the 1958 Methodist Conference's resolution that it will remain "one and undivided" (Gish 1985:13, Cawood 1964:50). Such calls were translated into action through mixed study groups and pulpit exchanges, e.g. in the MCSA (Gish 1985:27). But this seemed not to bear fruit at local level, with MCSA president of conference admitting in the 1970s that most congregations were uniraical (Gish 1985:71)
2. *interracial co-operation* outside the churches, which e.g. Methodist president Seth Mokitimi's 1942

⁴⁸. The office of suffragen bishop does not allow for the same privileges or duties (membership of or voting in the Synod of Bishops) as a Diocesan bishop (Cawood 1964:56).

⁴⁹. Two of the most notable examples are the Rhenish and the Anglican churches on Stellenbosch's town square.

address to the Christian Council of SA urged the churches to promote (Gish 1985:13), reiterated by the 1949 conference on living in a multi-racial country (Gish 1985:16)

2. *mixed congregations*, e.g. Canon John Collins of St Paul's Cathedral (Church of England, London) who implored CPSA bishops in 1953 to appoint "at least one church in each diocese where no colour bar of any sort whatsoever operates" (Clark 1989:150)⁶⁰. At the WCC's second assembly in 1954 member churches were asked to remove segregation in congregations (Cawood 1964:123). The 1960 MCSA Conference accepted an education programme which recommended that "the possibility of establishing in one of our city circuits a racially inclusive church as a pilot scheme" - thus admitting that at that time one did not exist (Cawood 1964:51). And a 1962 Methodist pamphlet encouraged "multiracial" worship (Gish 1985:72, see 7,13,24,71). In 1981 the MCSA's Obedience '81 conference, a grassroots meeting of 800 Methodists, resolved to demonstrate racial unity at local congregational level (Gish 1985:47-8).

4. calls for the *internal unification* of denominations, e.g. the call by Methodist president Stanley Mogoba at his induction in October 1988 for the creation of a non-racial church (SAIRR 1988/89:726); and the call by the PCSA's Church and Nation Commission on members "to work and pray for a non-racial church that will faithfully reflect Christ's unity for His church" (SAIRR 1988/89:728). In response the Methodists have formed geographic circuits; while black Anglicans found improved representation at provincial and diocesan levels (Balía 1994:164; Charton 1994:155).

The MCSA in 1972 and the RCC initiated internal racism investigations, as did the CPSA in 1973 (Gish 1985:76; Prior 1982; Charton 1994:154). Whether this measure changed anything is doubtful; by 1976 Methodist president Hendricks' wrote a letter to be read in all churches urging examination of internal racist trends (Gish 1985:41). The CPSA admitted racial polarisation in own ranks by the late 1980s (SAIRR 1988/89:725). White Christians were presented with an ultimatum "to demonstrate their willingness to purge the church of racism" in concrete actions by the black participants in a 1980 SACC conference on racism (Villa-Vicencio 1988:150). Currently several attempts to unite racially divided "missionary" branches are underway, e.g. between the NGSK and NGKA. These also exemplify attempts to shape the social base which has determined the form and content of the churches as social institutions in the first place, and so demonstrate the dialectic relationship of religion to society (compare Villa-Vicencio 1988:128).

But despite the above attempts the composition of local congregations were not affected at all (Charton 1994:155). Until the 1970s regional structures of denominations mirrored the legalised division of white vs. other race groups, and that of the Afrikaans or English vs. the other ethnic groups (Goedhals, Gish 1985:7⁶¹). Denominations were segregated by race, or were united but inwardly divided along racial

⁶⁰. Collins was responding in a sermon to Trevor Huddleston's request to publically express opposition to government policies (Clarke 1989:150).

⁶¹. So the MCSA's annual synods (which deliberates regional policy) became "multi-racial" only in 1973.

lines. In 1977 a study ⁶² found that 94% of Christians polled felt that the church practised racism ("racialism"). Polarisation was most evident between those who had never experienced joint bi-racial (black/white) worship (Identity 1977a: 456).

In reaction to years of racial discrimination a non-racial ideology developed, representing a desire to eradicate race as means of social classification.

Present ecclesial options on a racial matrix developed out of this context are, broadly speaking:

1. Segregation at local and denominational levels ⁶³

1.1. Black denominations:

- a. African Methodist Episcopal Church
- b. African Independent Churches
- c. Evangelical Presbyterian Church ⁶⁴
- d. Presbyterian Church of Africa

1.2. Divisions into "missionary" racially-defined sub-denominations:

- a. Apostolic Faith Mission (in 1989 initiated talks to unite⁶⁵, SAIRR 1989/90:291)
- b. (Indian) Reformed Church (RCiA)
- c. Full Gospel Church of God in SA (decided in May 1990 to merge; SAIRR 1989/90:292)

1.3. Denominations with membership officially "open" to - but with few members of - other race groups in local congregations:

- a. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southern Africa (mainly black; SAIRR 1988/89, see Identity 1977a: 458; Cawood 1964:85)
- b. Dutch Reformed Church (NGK; mainly white ⁶⁶, but opened membership in 1986)
- c. the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa
- d. Baptist Convention (mainly black) and the Baptist Union of SA (mainly white; elected first coloured president in 1988; SAIRR 1988/89:729)

1.4. White denominations:

- a. Afrikaanse Protestantse Kerk (whites only membership, broke away from NGK in 1986; SAIRR 1988/89:732)
- b. Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (Article 3 restricts membership to whites, has a small black church, the Hervormde Kerk in SA; SAIRR 1989/90:292; Villa-Vicencio 1988:26)

2. Rare integration at local level, segregation at denominational levels

⁶². The study was conducted by probably the first church research organisation in SA, the Ecumenical Research Unit under Trevor Verryn, on behalf of the SACC (Identity 1977b:455).

⁶³. Factors leading to the formation of these churches were different, ranging from missionary societies who worked exclusively within ethnic groups to secession as reaction to racist theology.

⁶⁴. First known as the Swiss mission in South Africa; then as the Tsonga Presbyterian Church (1962); then by its present name since 1982 Maluleke 1994:94).

⁶⁵. The black and coloured branches have united.

⁶⁶. The exception that proves the rule is St Stephens NGK congregation, Cape Town, which is coloured (Cawood 1964:23). Kritzinger maintains that all Reformed churches "have members from more than one racial group" (Kritzinger 1994:183).

- a. other races attending white congregations, e.g. in white NGK congregations in the Goodwood-Parow circuit ⁵⁷
 - b. breakaway congregations of the (Indian) Reformed Church in Africa, e.g. the former Charisma Reformed congregation, Lenasia
 - c. Melodi Ya Tshwane NGKA ⁵⁸, Pretoria
 - d. Seventh Day Adventist Church ⁵⁹ (e.g. Johannesburg Central, 80% black; some English-speaking congregations in Pretoria)
- 3. Segregation at local, unity at denominational levels**
- 2.1. Denominations with joint unity at higher polity levels:
 - a. Assemblies of God
 - b. Gereformeerde Kerke of SA (75% of representatives at General Synod in 1988 were black; SAIRR 1988/89:734)
 - 2.2. Denominations moving towards regional unity ⁶⁰:
 - a. the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (NGSK), Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA) (SAIRR 1989/90:296); the NGK is expected to join them
- 4. Rare integration at local, unity at denominational level**
- 4.1. Mainline denominations:
 - a. Methodist Church of Southern Africa (e.g. Central Methodist Mission, Johannesburg)
 - b. Roman Catholic Church (e.g. St Francis Xavier, Christ the King, Johannesburg)
 - c. the Union of Congregational Churches of SA
 - d. the Church of the Province of SA
 - 4.2. Pentecostal and Charismatic groupings
 - a. the IFCC grouping (formed by 3 500 churches in 1991) has rejected racial separation (SAIRR 1991/92: 91), e.g. Rhema Bible Church, Randburg (which founded over 100 "nonracial" churches in 1989; SAIRR 1988/89:737)
 - b. the Associated Christian Ministries (Johweto Vineyard, Soweto; Stellenbosch Christian Fellowship)

The focus will now shift from the failures to the exceptional few racially-mixed congregations which managed to sustain the ideal.

⁵⁷. Coloureds had also often attended the Groote Kerk NGK in Central Cape Town as late as 1964 (Cawood 1964:30).

⁵⁸. Melodi comprises a 1992 fusion between the Reformed Confessing Community (a small breakaway from the RCIA) and mostly domestic workers of the outlying (city) wards of Mamelodi NGKA.

⁵⁹. The structures of the Seventh Day Adventist Church functions at three levels: local (open to all); conference or provincial (segregated, except the Transvaal conference which because of their small size includes coloureds); and union or national (segregated). Information supplied by Gerhard van Wyk, Dept Practical Theology, UNISA.

⁶⁰. Not all attempts are progressing smoothly, some floundering on economic grounds through alleged mistrust by whites of black ownership of resources (plant), or through whites allegedly wanting to entrench their control of structures - a charge levelled at the AFM's efforts.

1.2. Towards a history of racially-mixed churches

In South Africa studies of racial-ethnically mixed local congregations are almost non-existent. A case study of St Peter's-by-the-Lake Lutheran Church, Johannesburg was conducted between 1972-75 as part of a world-wide look at the identity-mission relationship by the Lutherans (Identity 1977b:455, 457-8; Identity 1977a:9,25). Brief descriptions occur in various books. Hope & Young (1981) narrates three, although focusing mainly on their leaders (North End Presbyterian, East London, and St Anthony's and St Stephens United Congregational-Presbyterian Churches, Johannesburg). The mixed Anglican congregation of St Philip, Wetton (Cape Town) was used to illustrate a primer on contextual Bible study (Germond 1987). St Anthony and St Philip respective contexts were forced removals of other race groups, and state violence.

Related works include studies of racial attitudes. The major analysis of this kind was a 1983 countrywide study of the relationship between religion, intergroup relations and social change, commissioned by the Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria (Oosthuizen e.a. 1985). Earlier Robert Buis examined the 1974 racial attitudes of (white) members from a Dutch Reformed, a Roman Catholic, and a Presbyterian congregation (Buis 1974; Massie 1993:46). A similar but wider survey was conducted by the now defunct Ecumenical Research Unit; which also examined racism within the Roman Catholic Church (Prior 1982). Works which look at racial-ethnic aspects of South African church history in general include that of De Gruchy (1979, 1983), Cochrane (1987), Villa-Vicencio (1988), and Prozesky (ed. 1990).

Horn reflected in an unpublished article on his deliberate attempt to turn a white Apostolic Faith Mission (pentecostal) congregation in Windhoek, Namibia, into a multi-racial congregation (Horn 1993). Although the denomination has an officially open membership policy, the white pastor's attempts were opposed by the white members, who wanted to retain a culturally safe zone undisturbed by the wider transition in Namibia (Horn 1993:7). A general article recently called for critical thinking about the composition of local congregations (Massie 1993).

The lack of serious analysis correlates with the rareness of these social institutions. Despite predictions about their imminent increase, racial-ethnically mixed congregations remain rare in the United States of America (Davis & White 1980:83,102; Foster 1993:3,4; Porter 1992:53) as in South Africa (Villa-Vicencio 1988:79; Massie, 1993:20). Of 30 congregations in Windhoek, a city resembling many South African cities, only three were multi-cultural (Horn 1993:4). The scarcity is made even more stark against the abundance of almost totally uniraical, segregated congregations.

In both the U.S.A. and South Africa (S.A.) there are similar causes for the rareness. These include experiences of white racism, fears of assimilation, racial and cultural assumptions about other ethnic groups, language differences, the supposition that certain ethnic groups cannot be integrated, and the resigned general acceptance that combining racial-ethnic groups in one congregation do not work and is

undesirable (cf. Leonard 1989:160; Schaller 1989:3; Foster 1993⁶¹). Yet congregations in both countries included slaves up to the mid-19th century, and so were open to other races (Loff 1983; Boles 1988; Schaller 1989; Kritzing 1994).

Obviously there are differences which need to be kept in mind in a comparison between these two countries. Demographically, the ratio of the white to other ethnics is markedly smaller in S.A. than the U.S., which could increase resistance by whites to mixed congregations.

The Catholic Cathedral of St Mary's, Cape Town, remained racially-mixed (white, coloured) until the late 1940s, due mainly to the mixed nature of the neighbourhood of the parish. Different races sat in separate places by choice, but unconsciously patterned on old master-slave divisions. There was little conscious social mixing outside the Masses, and no representation of coloured members at leadership level⁶². A similar situation with reference to the seating existed in the Kimberley cathedral; when the building was opened in 1951 a coloured and Indian parish was joined to the white one with the races sitting separately. By the 1970s this unwritten custom had slowly disappeared (Hill 1994⁶³).

Apart from those based on neighbourhood demographics, examples can be found of deliberately-mixed congregations. One of the most poignant examples is the Anglican church of St Mary's on the Stellenbosch town square. Coloured parishioners are reported as attending communion there in as late as 1952 (Hunter 1952:42). After their removal after the Group Areas Act was enforced, to this day coloured parishioners spontaneously return every Sunday to the small building on Sundays in a symbolic reclaiming of space.

In contrast to such informal group decisions, Rev R J D (Rob) Robertson in 1961 (and again in 1968) formally proposed to the Assembly of the PCSA that a deliberately racially-mixed congregation be started (Robertson 1968:1). Although the idea germinated in ca. 1958, it took until 1962 before the North End Presbyterian Church, East London had its founding meeting (Robertson 1994:2; Regehr 1979:162). The denominational context was a programme launched in the Presbyterian church to promote more white-black contact at congregational level (Regehr 1979:162). Northend's racially-mixed congregation was near the border of lower income white and coloured areas, and also drew blacks from a nearby township (Storey 1994).

Robertson's motivation was "frustration in ministering to congregations ... unwilling to consider any kind of permanent fellowship with people of other races" (Robertson 1962: 9; Cawood 1964:92). Robertson further said that within the Presbyterian church at a congregational level there is "general resistance to any kind of mixing", which means that "the minority in our congregations who wish to meet and share in congregational life with Christians of another race are quite unable to do so" (Robertson 1962:9;

⁶¹. Personal interview, July 29, 1993, Emory University, Atlanta.

⁶². Childhood reminiscence of Dr Albert Nolan, interviewed on 11 March 1993.

⁶³. Interview with Monsignor Hill, 15 June 1994.

Cawood 1964:93). Robertson described his congregation in two articles which appeared in 1962 and 1963 (Robertson 1962, 1963).

North End is the only congregation so far which measures up to the fuller definition of integration referred to above. The services were attended by about 42 people, with roughly equal representation from blacks, whites and coloureds. The session (church governing body, elected for life) comprised two black, one coloured and three white elders (Robertson 1962:9; Cawood 1964:95). The congregation disbanded in 1970, with two mixed groups being absorbed into all-white congregations - which in turn became and remained mixed in 1981 (Hope & Young 1981:124; Robertson 1994:2). Hope & Young suggests the dissolution was because North End had been "only a pilot project" and that the members had "no wish to form another church". The latter reason would later be repeated by members of Charisma as the motivation for joining the DRCA.

Robertson's example stimulated a similar attempt in District Six, where Rev Peter Storey was stationed from 1966 (until 1972), at Buitenkant St Methodist Church - a traditional coloured congregation⁶⁴. Storey had corresponded with Robertson about the idea of a mixed church, receiving in August 1968 the two memos Robertson had proposed to the PCSA's Assembly in 1961 and 1968 (Robertson 1968:1). The Group Areas removals of coloured people from District Six had just begun. In this context the Buitenkant St youth met with their counterparts at Seapoint. They came back questioning why they felt so inferior during the encounter. A group formed to explore the empowerment of the gospel, which led to the design with Storey of a course called "My brother and me". Through advertising in other Methodist churches some whites were involved, and through this conduit ultimately some 60 whites joined the congregation of 400 (Storey 1994⁶⁵).

St Peter's-by-the-Lake Lutheran Church, Johannesburg, was deliberately constituted in 1961 by whites, a black couple, and an Asian couple with their three children as founding members (Identity 1977bb:455,457-8) ⁶⁶.

Robertson's better-known deliberately mixed congregation was St Antony's Church, Pageview, founded in 1975 (Hope & Young 1981:124). A Presbyterian minister, Ian Thomson, had started a ministry to mainly the homeless in an empty Anglican building in Pageview. A support/advisory committee was formed which included Storey and Rev Alan Maker of St Colomba's PCSA. This committee later invited Robertson when Thomson left [to teach at Fedsem?]. The founding members of the "new" St Anthony's under Robertson included Denis Beckett and Bobby Godsell, both former Methodists. As far as Storey could recall, St Anthony's roneo'd 15 page songbook was "the first hymnbook with mixed languages".

⁶⁴. The congregation has since been amalgamated with the Metropolitan congregation.

⁶⁵. Related during an interview with bishop Peter Storey on May 25, 1994, Johannesburg.

⁶⁶. St Peter's affiliated with the German-background white ELCSA-Tvl in 1964, as the Lutheran denominations are "organised along ethnic lines" (Identity 1977a: 458). The members became dissatisfied with this arrangement because the denomination's persistent use of German, it was felt, isolated churches from English-speakers and the African context (Identity 1977a:459,461).

St Anthony's eventually merged with St George's PCSA, Joubert Park.

In 1987 a small group of about 20 whites and Indians broke away⁶⁷ with one of their (white) ministers - the Rev Klippies Kritzinger - from the Indian (Dutch) Reformed Church in Africa (RCA) in Laudium. The group later called itself the Reformed Confessing Community (RCC). The small congregation first met in a school hall in Laudium, first using the RCA's liturgy and structures, but then deciding to create these anew. Instead of taking over the old offices, like deacon, they asked themselves what the essential functions were that needed to be done in a congregation. Action committees were formed around each function, with the leaders forming a "service council". They also experimented with different liturgies.

But within the RCC the desire was always to rejoin the broader Reformed establishment and so had not officially constituted as a separate congregation. RCC members also feared that they would become a too closely knit group. Members had established good relations with black Reformed churches the RCC, and did not want to be cut off from the issues facing black Reformed people, and particularly wanted to be part of the uniting process between the black Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA) and the coloured Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC). They were told by the two moderators of these denominations that to do this they had to join a congregation of either denomination. While considering these options, RCC members heard of and decided to join the newly constituted and numerically small Melodi Ya Tshwane (see below). Melodi presented a more favourable alternative than the large black Atteridgeville congregation, in which some RCC members feared they would be swallowed up. This and the distance from Laudium to Atteridgeville caused some Indian members to leave the RCC at this stage.

Melodi Ya Tshwane⁶⁸ (black) Dutch Reformed Church in Africa congregation is a deliberately formed mixed congregation, established in 1992. A black church in the heart of Pretoria was the idea of women domestic workers, who were travelling in from Pretoria to a Mamelodi DRCA congregation under white minister Nico Smith. The congregation was formally established during a service in Kilnerton Methodist Church, in January 12th, 1992. The Mamelodi members by now had been joined by the Reformed Confessing Community, which had been invited by Smith. In October 1993 the church met in a church building of the former Meintjeskop DRC in Arcadia, Pretoria. Meintjeskop was a white congregation that ceased to exist because of dwindling numbers.

Melodi's leaders come from all genders and races, and in the services different cultures and languages are reflected in the songs and style of worship. The ministers include the reverends Frans Mnisi, , Louis

⁶⁷. There were several reasons for the split, but two stand out: the issue of continued financial subordination to the DRC, and the leadership style of a later full-time minister. Kritzinger was the full-time minister at Laudium from 1979-81; and a part-time minister until 1986. When Kritzinger objected in 1982 to being paid from funds supplied by the DRC to the RCA, and suggested that he support his ministry through part-time work at UNISA instead, the RCA synodical commission took away his status as minister. The congregation in turn refused to accept the commission's decision. In 1987 the full-time minister, Rev N Shunmugam, objected in an authoritarian manner to "having politics in church", referring to a poster put up by a Sunday School teacher. Two other congregations also left the RCA at about this time.

⁶⁸. Melodi Ya Tshwane (the song of Tshwane) was the name given to Pretoria before the whites came, by men listening to the birds as they brought their cattle to drink at the Fountains. Evangelist Piet Mabuza had suggested the name for the congregation.

Thobela, Nico Smith, Klippias Kritzinger and evangelist Piet Mabuza. The ministers and laity serve the congregation and its fourteen outlying wards (wyke) in the Eastern Pretoria area. Each ward elects two members to serve on the church council of 28, and to preach to them. Services start with informal singing, with the seated members suggesting songs, which are sung without instrumental accompaniment from a looseleaf white songbook. The songs are in Sotho and English. Formally the liturgy remains Reformed, although the usual sermons are sometimes replaced with discussions, or with testimonies in the African style. Melodi has two kinds of members: those who come to the Sunday service in the city, and those who go to one of the fourteen ward services at three p.m. on Sunday throughout Pretoria. Such ward services resulted from apartheid laws which forbade blacks to start a church, or own a church property in white areas.

2. EXAMPLES OF RACIALLY-MIXED CONGREGATIONS FROM THE UNITED STATES

2.1. US studies of local congregations

Relatively few studies of racial-ethnically mixed local congregations exist in either the U.S.A. A quick non-exhaustive survey confirms that by 1984 the major works in the U.S included Thurman (1959); Wilson & Davis (1966); Mains (1971); Ziegenhals (1978); Davis & White (1980). Recently a popular book appeared describing life in Rock of Our Salvation Free Church, a mixed congregation in Chicago (Kehrein & Washington 1993). Other works refer to the topic in a section or so, e.g. DesPortes (1973), Leeds (1974), Yon (1982), and Schaller (ed. 1993), Foster (1993). Davis & White (1980:101-105) and Schaller (1989:99-108) offer the most elaborate descriptions.

A largely autobiographical study relates the story of one of the oldest intentional integrated congregations, The Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples, inaugurated in 1944 in San Francisco, as an independent, interdenominational church with ecumenical ties (Thurman 1955:41, 50). The founding member was a Rev Albert Fisk, Presbyterian and white, who was soon joined by Howard Thurman, a black Baptist. The church eventually included black, white, Hispanic, and Asian members (Porter 1992:2,35-8).

While obviously not conclusive in any way, I came across only two articles on mixed local congregations, that of Schaller (1989) and Ortiz (1991), while a third referred to it (Religion Watch 1993 8 (7): 2). Ortiz's article is a mini-case study of the significance of Circle Church, Chicago, a mixed church of the late 1960s to mid-1970s (Ortiz 1991). Most current work on racially-mixed local congregations is done by graduate students (e.g. Bonner 1982; Brightman 1984; Lebelo 1989; Porter 1992). At the 1993 annual RRA meeting Andre Nauta (Case Western Reserve University) presented a paper on the subject. My presentation at that meeting forms the basis of this section.

Two recent research projects from Emory University, Atlanta, respectively looked in direct and more oblique ways at racial-ethnic diversity in local congregations. Chuck Foster's study team examined the functions of ethnic-racial diversity in congregations, using a multi-disciplinary ethnographic approach with

a preference for letting the subjects define themselves (Foster e.a. 1993:v; 1993b:27). Nancy Ammerman's project emphasised the relationship between local congregations and social change, some of which happens to be racial-ethnic change, (Ammerman 1993:1).

Related studies are often large scale surveys of those who attend such congregations (e.g. Kramer 1955; Hadaway et al 1984), or of black-white attitudes of church-goers (e.g. Campbell & Fukuyama 1970; Carroll 1973; Carroll & Hoge 1973). Carroll's work was probably influenced by his participation in the civil rights movement as a Methodist minister in the South. With Hoge he examined the racial attitudes and mission orientation of Georgia and New Jersey suburban Catholic and Protestant churches (with Dean Hoge 1973). A similar activity was Carroll's 1973 *Project Understanding*, an attempt at raising awareness of and working through racism in the churches.

The large scale studies indicate that many mixed congregations comprise a handful from one ethnic group who attend a congregation dominated by another group, usually of similar class. Only 1% of 13 597 white congregations surveyed in 1955 contained more than ten people from other ethnic groups (Kramer 1955:52-3 ⁶⁹). I suspect that this is also true of the congregations to which the 38% of whites belong who claimed to attend church with blacks in 1978 and 1980 ⁷⁰ (Hadaway et al 1984:206,215). Hartford Seminary's tabulation of a 1986 inventory completed by 72 congregations netted only two congregations with significant racial-ethnic ratios, approximating 80%-20%.

Most analyses of such congregations are pessimistic. Olson has quoted church analyst Lyle Schaller as saying that attempts to establish ethnically (and otherwise) diverse congregations "usually fail" because of difficulty in understanding and forming relationships involved (Olsen 1993:84). Schaller suggests that diverse subgroups are a solution within a congregation, but does not see internal heterogeneity as necessary for all subgroups or all congregations. Churches which stress theological uniformity Accommodate diversity far easier than those which emphasise "fellowship and belonging". The latter needs be more intentional about creating a place for diversity (Olson 1993:84).

In the following sections I provide a number of examples of US congregations which I analysed by means of discussions with leaders and in some cases with members of the congregation. Further examples of US mixed congregations are discussed in Chapter Eight (1.1., 1.2.1., 2.2.).

2.2. Examples of racially-mixed congregations from New York

In November 1993 at a workshop at New York Theological Seminary (NYTS) a number of racially-mixed

⁶⁹. Kramer found that 1.6% of the white congregations had more than 5 other ethnics; and 8.2% had less than 5. His survey of Congregational, Presbyterian and Methodist congregations concluded that mixed congregations made up 7% of all congregations in these denominations.

⁷⁰. The study was based on the 1978 and 1980 NORC General Social Survey.

congregations participated, which form the majority of my examples below.

2.2.1. African United Methodist Church

About 200-50 people are members of this church, of which 120-30 commute to worship regularly. The ethnic mix is 98% Liberian (representing different Liberian tribes) and 2% African-American. The congregation was formed out of white Methodist congregation in 1991, which was eager to have black members and called Daniel Gueh, a black Liberian minister, to look after them. Liberian blacks found that they were welcome as members, but were not taken up into leadership. They raised questions regarding their status, with Gueh, who later voiced these openly. The issue was not resolved and the blacks left to form their own congregation. Of those who come to worship, 15% have post-high school and 75% high school qualifications, while some are unemployed because they do not have US work permits. Services are conducted in English, with African symbols and drums used.

2.2.2. Church of the Intercession (Episcopalian)

Intercession is a 147 year-old, historically white, church. At present there is a bi-lingual Spanish- and English- speaking congregation of 250-300 people attending four Sunday services, of whom about 5% are Caribbean- and African-Americans, with a smaller group of Malays. Demographic neighbourhood changes were the major cause for Intercession's current mix, according to one of its leaders, Gerald Collins. The neighbourhood around the church building on 550 West 155th Street was originally white, then became black, and now is increasingly Spanish-speaking and Caribbean-American. The church became a black Episcopalian church in the 1950s, and an independent congregation in 1976. At present it is regarded as a mission, rooted in the surrounding community. There are 1 100 people are on the membership roll. Most members have high school qualifications (95%) or post-high school qualifications (about 80%).

2.2.3. First United Methodist Church

This 102-year old building in Ridgely Park NJ today has a congregation of 146 members, most white. In keeping with the surrounding multi-cultural community the congregation is slowly moving towards a multi-cultural leadership with a black female minister, Sherrie Boyens, while two laypersons (a Korean and an Egyptian) are prominent. According to Boyens her appointment is mainly the result of the open itinerancy policy of the UMCA, and the dynamics of the church's polity by which the hierarchy can assign any minister to any congregation. Her appointment may also be an attempt by the UMCA to respond to - and draw in people from - the changing context. A striking difference between long-time members and newcomers is that about 50% of the women from the former group do not work; while the 2% who forms the second group does.

2.2.4. First Conservative Baptist Church, Queens

The church Flushing, Queens NY, started as a white congregation in 1856, with blacks starting to attend in the 1940s. The church split on the issue of whether to remain committed to their neighbourhood. Queens first had white residents before blacks moved in and then out; currently Chinese, Korean, and Hispanic numbers are increasing (Kwan 1990:4,5). By 1984 the leaders had developed guidelines stating that the ethnic diversity should be represented in the leadership, and that leaders should be culturally sensitive to other ethnic groups. The biblical basis for heterogeneity was Acts 13.1-2 (Kwan 1990:8).

This congregation has developed a unique approach to multi-cultural ministry. The congregation of about 1 100 includes Spanish- (300), Portuguese- (40), Chinese- (200), and English-speaking members (500), with about 150 children, regarded as a cultural group in themselves. The education-income class of the congregation is also mixed: about 20% upper middle class, 50% middle class, and 30% working class. The average age of members is between 25 and 35.

Currently several ethnic congregations meet during the week, but all meet on Sundays and in the larger church all participate in joint activities. This arrangement aids ministry to Chinese-speaking and English-speaking Chinese, in a manner reminiscent of pleas for bi-cultural ministries (Hawkins 1986, Boltnew 1986). The different cultural groups have their own language services, meet in more than 30 small groups (of about 15 apiece), but participate in joint activities. This is a deliberate policy which staff and members alike are asked to commit to. Within the space available to them combined services are difficult to manage. Flushing contradicts the homogenous unit principle in two ways: it is a growing heterogeneous congregation, and the Chinese congregation committed to remain within the larger body (Kwan 1990:5).

At the workshop Russell Rosser, senior pastor at Flushing, stressed inclusivity and unity, which he sees emphasised in such Scripture portions as Ephesians. He describes First Baptist's mix as "enjoyable". Rosser thinks that leaders of multi-cultural congregations must take time to listen, care, and keep the wider congregation informed. In order to have a credible mission to a heterogeneous environment a congregation in turn must be heterogeneous, he says. The former pastor in charge of Chinese work at Flushing, H Kwan, also says that a homogeneous church could not serve the diversity of a mixed neighbourhood like Queens; nor would it be practical to create an ethnic congregation for each group (Kwan 1990:6,7).

A similar congregation was the Baptist Church of the Redeemer in New York City, which made an explicit choice for a culturally pluralistic church (Leeds 1974:148). Redeemer had separate language meetings on Sundays, with occasional joint worship services held in all four languages - English, Chinese, French, Spanish (Leeds 1974:149). Aspects from the various cultures were included in the worship and preaching styles and joint social events (Leeds 1974:149).

2.2.5. Parkchester American Baptist Church

Parkchester's 47-year old building is in a Bronx neighbourhood that was white in the 1940s, became black

in the 1960s, and now is multi-racial (Spanish-speaking, African American, West Indian) . Parkchester became racially-mixed through neighbourhood change. At first whites leaders resisted the change through the diaconate, which voted - often unfavourably - on whether to accept blacks. Finally a black minister, Rev Hillary Gaston, was appointed, who altered the structures through which members are accepted as he considered these tainted by white racism. Gaston also changed the style of worship, which made some of the white members feel that he was enforcing his culture over theirs.

The 300 people attending services (out of 400 members) consist of Caribbean Americans (52%), African Americans (42%), Spanish- speaking Americans (5%), and some whites (1%) (approximate figures). About 90% of the females are single mothers, while 10% are married. The educational level of members is high school (95%), while 15% have post-high school qualifications. The average age is about 40. The minister describes the congregation as middle class.

2.2.6. Crossroads Free Methodist Church

Crossroads' 18 year old building is the rented home of a small congregation of 75 people and 85 members on the rolls. The Latino (40%) and the white (35%) groups are almost equal in size, with two smaller groupings of blacks - Caribbeans and Nigerians (12%) - and mixed couples (10%). The average age is between 20-30. Crossroads' mix is not intentional, and present minister Rev David Ellis indicated that the congregation is almost fearful to broach the subject. The board of the congregation is all white, and the congregation meets in a white middle class area. The Latino members are from impoverished backgrounds; 70% of the congregation is working class and 30% are middle class. During the week the members meet in four home cells. Services are in English, which all the Latinos in the congregation speak.

2.2.7. Reformed Church in America, Closter

The 65 people who attend the bi-lingual services in Closter's 131 year old building is white (70%) and Korean (25%). Ninety-five people are listed as members. The whites are a greying and retired population (average age 65), while almost all the Koreans are in their mid-40s, of whom 95% are working. Closter's neighbourhood was described by its Korean minister, Dr Jeremiah Park, as middle- to upper-middle income white (85%), with a small mix of other ethnic groupings: African American (18%), and "other" (20%). This is reflected in the educational level of the congregation (90% has post-high school qualifications). The major cause of the congregation's mix is survival: the whites either had to accept Koreans or the imminent end of their church. For their part the Koreans are attracted and aspiring to white middle class values, according to Park.

2.3. Examples of racially-mixed congregations from New England

2.3.1. Central American Baptist, Hartford, Connecticut

Central American Baptist in downtown Hartford, Connecticut, is a commuter congregation which in 1993 drew 150 people to its Sunday worship from across a wide urban area. The congregation was estimated as being 40% white, 20% Jamaican, 7% Haitian, 7% Afro-American, and 8% Hispanic & Vietnamese. Whites are from British, German, Italian and Swedish descent. The main service is held in English, and worship is along white cultural lines, with European hymns sung. The congregation is predominantly middle class, and the white sector is elderly. The 203 year-old church was formed by a merger of two other Baptist churches. The ecclesiastic environment was initially hostile to Baptists (as to other denominations) in New England, with Congregationalism forming the state religion up to the 1830s (Gillespie 19/5/1993⁷¹).

The church has always been open to new immigrants, who typically move into the area before going elsewhere. As a result five separate mission congregations once shared the premises, including Hispanic, Russian, Ukrainian, Italian, and French-speaking Haitian. The Haitians still meet at Central Baptist; all others have now acquired and moved to their own premises. The Hispanic group moved in 1993, using a \$50 000 loan which Central Baptist helped acquire. By the 1950s only about five blacks were attending the initially white congregation. Seven to ten black families started attending in the 1960s, when the congregation numbered 1000. A strong anti-Vietnam War sentiment was adopted by the leaders, partly responsible for a membership decline in the 1970s to 800, then 400. White congregants also started moving to the suburbs. Central Baptist's building is still made available for use by activist organisations, as a 1992 anti-Gulf War demonstration showed. Integration on leadership level was slower, and did not really happen until 1985.

Pastors Paul Gillespie (Anglo-American) and Hopeton Scott (Jamaican-American) believe that no particular factor is responsible for the racial mix of their congregation, apart from an inclusive culture. The church pamphlet twice mentions racial inclusiveness, and has pictures of white and black members, and of the two pastors. This constitutes a highly symbolic message to potential members. They believe that people are also attracted to the more formal style of worship, particularly Jamaicans who are typically less attuned to the livelier style of worship offered by Afro-American churches. Ethnic workers appointed to leadership positions also draw in people who belong to the same ethnic group. The white to black ratio is a result of two suburban churches (Manchester, Southfield) which opened, causing white numbers to fall, while black figures remained steady. Some members prefer a church which reflects the ethnic diversity that they experience in the workplace. Many people also live in suburban towns with a high degree of racial mix.

Scott explained that Jamaicans do not share the same experience of oppression as African-Americans. They relate differently to white America and its institutions, without the animosity induced by oppression. During the civil rights riots in Hartford's Asylum Avenue, Jamaican homes were also attacked, as were Scott's. The Jamaicans were seen as "black Jews", which presumably refers to access to power and

⁷¹. The reference system used here indicates a personal interview, in this case with Gillespie on 19 May 1993.

control over financial resources. Even Anglo-American whites do not regard Jamaicans in the same way as they do Afro-Americans. Jamaicans are also more readily accepted than Afro-Americans because they are seen as foreigners. In recent history Jamaica's blacks ruled themselves; even under British rule blacks occupied positions of authority (Scott 30/5/1993). Jamaicans seem from a cultural viewpoint little different from the Anglos.

Diversity - understood as ethnicity and differences in thinking - is prized among members. One member spoke of the need to have her children grow up in a diverse situation. Another compared Central Baptist to another homogeneous church, which she found 'boring'. Cultural diversity is expressed through events such as the holiday of Thanksgiving, when the different communities bring and share ethnic meals. On Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve the different languages are used in the service, and flags displayed that represent the various nationalities in the congregation. Task teams study and run workshops on topics relevant to the diversity of the congregation. One way of dealing with racial differences was to pair couples from the different groups, and get them to discuss and then present selected topics in a panel. Joint actions seem to have a higher value than fellowship or friendship outside structured church activities.

Rich symbols of Central Baptist's resources applied in its mission is demonstrated by two paintings which depict Central Baptist's most recent past (1970-1980, 1980-1990). Outward actions and leadership (lay and ordained) feature prominently. A housing project, a young girl from the church at work on a building in Puerto Rico, the first black associate pastor, the organ, and the choir are shown.

2.3.2. Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hartford, Connecticut

Grace is a church which grew out of white immigrants (mostly displaced ethnic European groups), which because of their own displacement and being foreigners were open to the influx of blacks from first Alabama, later from Jamaica who went through similar "rats-and-roaches" experiences. The Jamaican blacks were able adjust with relative ease because of their Anglican background ⁷²; their status as foreigners meant that their roots were fairly tenuous. Presently the church has about 27% black members and 73% white.

The ELCA denomination has a constitutional goal to move towards an overall integration of 10% of different colour and language groups. Quotas have been introduced to achieve this at all decision-making bodies, with especial attention to women. At its start the ELCA was 1% ethnically integrated. Minister Paul Santmire wants his church to be an experiment of what the denomination church wants to do. But the expected funds which should be a priority for inclusivistic programmes has dried up in the denomination. This could be because the ELCA is based mostly in suburban and rural parishes, and

⁷². Anticipating the discussion in Chapter Eight, Grace's Anglo-Catholic liturgy can be said to form a transcendent dynamic which enabled the ethnic diversity to be transcended.

integration is more a factor in city churches. "The only reason to integrate is because God wants to do it," probably best describes the disillusionment brought about by this situation.

2.3.3. Calvary Baptist Church, Providence, Rhode Island

Calvary is located in a South Providence neighbourhood that used to be an affluent, white residential area (Schoonmaker 6/6/93). After the Second World War the whites started moving to the suburbs, but commuted to the church into the 1950s. Judging from photographs from an anniversary brochure, African-Americans were already attending Calvary by 1973 (Calvary 1973).

By the 1980s the neighbourhood consisted of low-income whites and blacks, with Asian (Cambodian, Hmong, Vietnamese), Hispanic segments, and Portuguese from Cape Verde Islands. Towards the end of the 1980s Nigerians and Liberians begun arriving in the area. The Asian sector included the Hmong, a Vietnamese ethnic group transplanted wholesale after the Vietnam War for fear of genocide, as the Hmong had collaborated with US troops during that conflict (Schoonmaker 6/6/93). These changes spilled over into the congregation, which for a while became known as "the international church" (Tibbets 1981:19). In 1993 the neighbourhood was described as one of the poorest in Rhode Island.

Calvary's leaders responded to these changes in 1980 with the vision of intentionally recruiting other ethnic groups from their neighbourhood. That a mixed neighbourhood will result in mixed churches is refuted by a nearby Methodist church, now attended only by blacks. The intentional strategy caused fears among white members that white middle class attendance will fall away (Tibbets 1981:17). Hmong and an Hispanic ministries were developed and meet in separate services in the same building as the English-language congregation. A denominational church analyst was engaged in 1981 to evaluate the future of the congregation (Tibbets 1981:21).

At present Calvary's English-language congregation consists of 40% Anglo-Americans, 10% Hispanics, 10% Asians. In addition there is a 40% black group which includes African-Americans, Liberians, Nigerians, Haitians, and Jamaicans. Whites still bring their children to Sunday School (Schoonmaker 6/6/93). Judging from the posters in the building, Calvary is very involved in and aware of social welfare, housing, and health issues. Some Spanish-speakers and Asians who possess adequate English language skills attend the English service. They rooms in which they usually hold meetings are decorated by posters and handwritten notices in their language. A separate bulletin board exists for the Spanish congregation.

Calvary has a mixed staff, including a white English-speaking pastor (Paul Schoonmaker), a lay person overseeing the Hmong (Kia Yang), a Spanish-language pastor, and a Liberian in charge of ethnic ministries (William Shaw). Shaw also runs a mixed fellowship group, although much of his ministry is taken up by helping immigrants deal with bureaucracy. Shaw also had to deal with the friction between the different Liberian factions. Schoonmaker said that they have to constantly work against being used as a soapbox for Liberian conflicts (Schoonmaker 6/6/93). Occasionally events such as food fairs are held where people

from the congregation dress in their ethnic costume, and offering traditional foods.

2.3. An example of racially-mixed congregations from Atlanta, Georgia

Although my focus in section 2 is on congregations which I examined myself, I mention an outstanding example of a mixed church, taken from an excellent study by Merry Porter (1992), included in Foster (1993).

2.3.1. Oakhurst Presbyterian Church, DeKalb County

Oakhurst Presbyterian Church was officially founded in 1921, in what is today an urban area east of Atlanta, in southern DeKalb County, on the city border with Decatur (Porter 1992:102). After World War II white middle-class blue and white collar workers moved in. During the 1960s some whites started moving away to the suburbs. Lower-income blacks moved in, displaced by the buying of cheaper land in Atlanta to build an interstate highway system, athletic stadium, and the Civic Centre (Porter 1992:44). The increasing number of lower-income white and black groups eventually resulted in redlining and panic-selling. The population in the area changed from 1% black to largely black, and increased 158% over ten years (Porter 1992:45).

The congregation started dealing with racial issues in 1963, when the congregation decided, after some debate, to seat all people "regardless of race or color". But during a 1964 vacation Bible school children from a black area across the railway line were told to rather go to Trinity Presbyterian Church, a black congregation in Decatur. The minister at the time, Reuben Allen, resigned over this action (Porter 1992:105). Membership started declining (Porter 1992:106). The minister in 1968, a Rev Morris, preached on repenting from prejudice (Porter 1992:106). With two other Methodist churches Oakhurst commissioned a neighbourhood survey that pointed to the need to adapt or die (Porter 1992:108).

Two black men started attending in 1969 and 1970, and joined the church; one after being invited by the minister (Porter 1992:108,133). Oakhurst held joint services with Trinity on Race Relations Sunday, and later embarked on a week-long "spiritual enrichment" course shared by black and white preachers (Porter 1992:108). Meanwhile membership declined to 336, probably because blacks were joining, perhaps because a lot of energy was now focused on them. A member reported that older members were "anti-blacks" (Porter 1992:109).

In 1972 Oakhurst's called their first black pastor, Lawrence Bottoms, and a white female associate minister, Janeen Murphy, who became assistant pastor in 1974. Bottoms often preached that male elitism denied covenantal relations between Christians (Porter 1992:114). For Bottoms integration was a by-product of "true Christian fellowship", not the other way round (Porter 1992:111). Although he believed that society had not opened for blacks, he felt the way forward was through emphasising

personhood, not black identity (Porter 1992:111). He interpreted Revelation as calling for inclusivity under Christ (Porter 1992:114).

Some 92 people now attended worship, of whom a quarter were black (Porter 1992:111,113). The congregation was the highest giving per-capita church in their presbytery. A biracial ministry team "presided at an Oakhurst Presbyterian wedding". A film about Oakhurst, "The beautiful feet", was made, and shown to the Atlanta Presbytery (Porter 1992:113). Bottoms encouraged the congregation "'to build community across class, cultural, and racial lines ... so that relational learning develops across all of these lines'" (Porter 1992:113-4).

Membership continued to decline, down to 116 in 1976. The stated goal of the church by now was "'to be community-oriented'" and to include "'those of other traditions, races and backgrounds'" (Porter 1992:115). Of 15 elders, seven were black. From 1977-82 the minister was Bruce Gannoway, a former missionary to Africa for 16 years (Porter 1992:115). During this period some friction arose over music, as the music director did not include black music or changed the rhythms to suit the whites (Porter 1992:117). By 1982 membership stood at 80, with 42 regular attenders (Porter 1992:117).

In 1983 a married couple, Nibs Stroupe and his ordained wife Caroline Leach, became Oakhurst's latest ministers (Porter 1992:117). The search committee emphasised ministry to children, and intentional gender and race inclusivity (Porter 1992:118). Stroupe, still the minister, addresses social issues in his sermons, including injustices caused by race and class. Frequent themes are Ephesians 2:14 and Romans 8:38-9 (Porter 1992:95-6).

By 1992 Oakhurst had 140 members, of whom 55% were black (Porter 200). Members were predominantly middle class with tertiary qualifications, although some mix of income and class exists (Porter 201). The neighbourhood had become 87% black by 1989. Blacks, whites and hispanics started buying up and rehabilitating properties - a process known as gentrification (Porter 1992:46). Oakhurst's members initiated various community works, including a community health centre, a pre-school programme, and an anti-drug coalition. An adult literacy and a Head Start programme is currently housed at the church (Porter 1992:101). Ecumenical unity is emphasised through participation in joint social services (a shelter), and worship (Porter 1992:101).

Various liturgical and visual symbols express the new mixed identity of the congregation. A new mission statement was created and dedicated in 1990 (Porter 1992:95). Every fourth Sunday worshippers "encircle the sanctuary and sing together" (Porter 1992:97). A three-panel stained-glass window at the front of the church was altered by an artist so that the Christ-figure is brown. The people gathered at his feet were also coloured in, and now represent an ethnically mixed group. A smaller Christ-figure in a stained-glass window at the back of the building was left white. "We shall overcome" is sung often. Teachers and classes in the Sunday School are mixed, although adult classes are mostly white (Porter 1992:100).

Children are very involved at Oakhurst. Two bring in the mission offering once a month, with an adult standing behind them and doing the praying (Porter 1992:99). An annual Jesus's Birthday Pageant at Advent involves all races, for instance with a white Joseph, black Mary, and black Jesus doll (Porter 1992:100-101). In 1992 the vacation Bible school had race and rainbows as theme, a number of events on race and prejudice, with cultural dress encouraged (Porter 1992:98). Rainbow-coloured streamers are suspended from the front panels across the width of the church (Porter 1992:94).

3. INTRODUCTION TO THE JOHANNESBURG STUDIES

Three congregations of different sizes, from different traditions, and in three separate geographical locations within Johannesburg, part of the Witwatersrand metropolitan area⁷³, were selected for this study, namely:

- * Johweto, an independent charismatic church at the edge of the black city of Soweto, called

- * St Francis Xavier, a Roman Catholic church on the borders of coloured and white suburbs of Martindale, Newlands and Western Township,

- * Central Methodist Mission, an inner-city Methodist church

Each of the three congregations represents a relatively unique case within their respective Methodist, Catholic, and independent charismatic traditions. To appreciate exactly how this is true I will briefly describe developments within these traditions relevant to this discussion of racially-mixed congregations.

3.1. The denominational context of the case studies

Of the 6% of South African Christians who belong to the Methodist Church in Southern Africa (MCSA), 80% are black, as is the current president. Yet local congregations generally remain segregated, presently because of the continued effect of racially-segregated residential areas. But historically this is also due to the ideological captivity of the denomination, first to the dominant capitalist sector of colonial society, later to the political and economic class of white members. Alongside most (white) suburban congregations developed a black vernacular service for labourers - mostly domestic-related workers - which met at three o' clock on Sundays, separated from their white counterparts by language, colour, and class. Black and white ministers were appointed to congregations of their respective race, and paid unequally.

⁷³. Stricter definitions than that which I employ have identified nine "metropolitan areas" in South Africa: Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth, the Orange Free State goldfields, Pietermaritzburg, Pretoria, the Witwatersrand. In this framework "urban areas" refer to non-metropolitan cities and towns; while rural refer to areas with low population density and relatively high agricultural income (SAIRR 1992/93:255).

**FIGURE 3: MAJOR DENOMINATIONAL ORIENTATION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S POPULATION
(1991 estimates)**

South African Population = 39 million; Christians = 67.9%					
Independent 22.2%	Roman Catholic 7.8%	Methodist 6.2%	Anglican 4%	Lutheran 2.5%	Reformed 7.8%

The history of Methodism in the Transvaal started with a mission station near Maquassie in 1823, under Revs Samuel Broadbent and T L Hodgson, and later Revs James Archbell and John Edwards (Hall 1962:1). The latter two "led some 12 000 Barolongs, Griquas and Korannas to better grazing lands they had aquired for them" near Thaba Nchu in the Orange Free State (Hall 1962:1). A black refugee from Mzilikazi's conquests, David Magatha, was converted here and returned to his own near Potchefstroom; although beaten and prohibited from preaching he carried on elsewhere. Under protection extended by letter from President Paul Kruger he later returned to Potchefstroom (Hall 1961:1). Magatha's work drew a visit in 1871 from Rev George Blencowe of Harrismith, who had already been to the Transvaal twice before. His glowing report-back to Natal chairperson Frederick Mason caused Blencowe, George Weavind, and William Wynne to be sent to Potchefstroom in 1872 to establish "the first European Society (Hall 1961:2). The implication is that there was no thought of joint worship at this stage.

In 1873 Weavind was sent to Pretoria, where he was joined by Rev James Calvert in 1873 (Hall 1961:2). In 1882 the first Synod was held in Pretoria under Rev Owen Watkins, who was acting as superintendent for the whole Transvaal - which was treated as a single circuit, having been established as a district including Swaziland in 1880 by the Missionary Society (Hall 1961:2-3). Weavind "opened up" Barberton for Methodist work in 1885-1886, preparing the way for Rev William Meara as the first resident minister there in 1899 (Hall 1961:3).

After the discovery of gold a shanty town arose around the diggings on the Witwatersrand, including Methodists who met in each other's homes. Two Methodist laymen, a "Father" John Dednam and layman A John Thornhill Cook⁷⁴, in 1886 started holding regular services in "a workshop belonging to Mr E O Leake" in what was then Ferreirastown, population 6 000⁷⁵ (Central Hall annual report 1936:1; Hall 1961:3; Central 1991:1⁷⁶). These were "probably the first religious meetings to be held in Johannesburg" (Central Hall annual report 1936:1). A Society (Methodist term for a congregation) was

⁷⁴. Ancestor of a present-day Central leader Jonathan Cook.

⁷⁵. Webb claims that "the earliest records of the Methodist Church in the Transvaal" show the population of Johannesburg to be 8 000 in 1886 (Webb 1944:1).

⁷⁶. "Central" refers to **The Central Methodist Mission**, November 1991 - a document compiled for use by incoming superintendent M H Dandala.

formed in January 1886 under Rev George Weavind from Pretoria, and Ferreirastown was included on the Pretoria Circuit Plan, with monthly services held by Weavind and Rev Courtney James. Cook and Dednam also began holding services in 1886 on the farm Concordia of Kidger and Sarah Tucker, near Baragwanath. Hall 1961:7). By March fortnightly services were held (Webb 1944:1). "An appeal was sent to England", and Rev Frederick Briscoe from Pretoria was appointed in April 1887 as resident minister, servicing the area from his ox-wagon for six months. After the building of the President Street Church in 1889 other Methodist church buildings were erected at Fordsburg and Jeppe (Commemorative brochure 1967:1). The Witwatersrand became a separate circuit in 1890, and in 1893 Rev William Hudson was appointed superintendent of Johannesburg circuit (Hall 1961:3). Concordia remained on the Central Hall (preaching) Plan until 1931 (Hall 1961:1). In 1890 a new church was built at Jeppe (cost: 1 000 pounds) (Webb 1944:1).

Recently the Methodist church introduced measures to erase the use of race in church matters, to unite districts, and set quotas for gender-race representation at judicatory levels.

The Roman Catholic Church pursued an open denomination, with parishes which catered for specific ethnic groups. Until fairly recently, black Catholic priests were appointed only to black parishes, and found advancement in the hierarchy difficult. Some years ago the Church launched an internal investigation into racism in its own ranks. In some metropolitan areas Cathedrals were integrated islands in the surrounding sea of segregated inner cities. When white priests were later appointed to black parishes, they often served as the voice of conscience in times of state-controlled violence. The South African Bishops Conference (a voluntary and consultative body of bishops, vicars and others was established in 1947) played a similar role. The SACBC in 1957 "became the first church body to theologically reject apartheid" (Villa-Vicencio 1988:36; compare Oosthuizen 1990:109). In 1991 about 8% of all Christians claimed to be Catholic.

Most charismatic churches separated from mainline denominations like the Anglican church, while some were planted by US churches. Both charismatic (with Pentecostal) churches have been accused of promoting loyalty to the Nationalist state through their so-called a-political stance (compare Villa-Vicencio 1988:39). A major study of pentecostal churches along the east coast of South Africa described them as promoting faith-as-withdrawal (Schlemmer 1977). Today two major networks of charismatic-pentecostal churches exists, the IFCC and ACM. Both are white-dominated for the most part, while ACM has strong Indian support. Towards the late 1980s a gradual shift towards a more critical stance regarding state policies developed among the pentecostal-charismatics (compare Villa-Vicencio 1988:39). The exact total of those who belong to the charismatic groupings are not known.

3.2. The urban and suburban contexts

For the most part of its existence Johannesburg has been a white business and residential district. Blacks were allowed entrance only during the day as labourers serving these constituencies. At night they had

to return to the black cities. Some lived on the outskirts in major hostels, or in servants quarters on top of buildings. The city remains part white-collar business (banking, insurance, law courts) and part residence, with 166 blocks of flats found to be concentrated towards the central and northern parts of the inner city, with no apartments south of President St⁷⁷ (Ching 1988:1).

The urban patterns of Johannesburg mirror those of some cities elsewhere ⁷⁸, such as increasing urbanisation ⁷⁹ since the 1940s and movements by whites to the suburbs (1960s) ⁸⁰ (compare Mabin 1991:36). Apartheid also affected the city, for instance in 1963 the predominantly Malay area of Pageview was declared white (Pinnock 1989:162) ⁸¹. Other typical patterns were the relocation of shopping areas to the suburbs (1970s); industry moving to the south and south-west of the metropolis; the central business district gradually turning from shopping area to office park (as in Cape Town; compare Pinnock 1989:166). These events turned the present demographics of the inner city to predominantly black, with few whites, too old and too poor to move, remaining. Between the 1940s and 1980s most of what little natural features remained (trees, parks) in the city were eradicated through building programmes, so that today central Johannesburg can be said to be "lacking in any natural character at all" (Storey in Scott 1981:18).

The eastern, southern and western suburbs are traditionally lower income; although gentrification has begun towards the west. The central and northern suburbs are higher middle income.

Indians, coloureds and blacks started flowing into the central city by the 1980s, followed by redlining and its consequence, declining residential standards. Indians and coloured people had secretly begun living in white suburbs towards the outskirts of the white areas, like Doornfontein and Mayfair, since at least 1978 (Robertson 1994:4). Following various actions by lawyers, organisations like ACTSTOP and the Black Sash, and by individuals like Robertson⁸² in 1979, "so many Indians had moved into that part of Mayfair that the Government ... reproclaimed it an Indian area" (Robertson 1994:5). A Supreme Court ruling by Judge Richard Goldstone in 1983 (that an eviction could not be effected unless alternative housing was available) the number of "illegal" occupants of areas like Hillbrow increased (Robertson 1994:5).

⁷⁷. Ching surveyed an area between President, Wolmarans, Sauer, and Nuggett Streets (Ching 1988:2).

⁷⁸. A generalisation: population movement, social dynamics, and layout differ between South Africa's four major provincial cities. For instance, unlike their counterparts in Durban and Johannesburg, white Cape Town traders dominated trading in coloured areas. In District Six 200 white businessmen owned properties valued at R2 million in 1962, employed 2 000 people and had an annual turnover of R4,5 million (Pinnock 1989:162).

⁷⁹. Black urbanisation was hastened in the 1960s by the extent of their eviction from rural areas through the expropriation of black land in areas declared white, the excision of some reserves in favour of the consolidation of homelands, and eviction of 'illegal squatters' (Mabin 1991:36).

⁸⁰. Central Cape Town's white exodus occurred in 1951, coinciding with an influx of 22 000 'non-whites' (Pinnock 1989: 161).

⁸¹. Group areas were declared "on the basis of land-ownership and not residency" (Pinnock 1989:162).

⁸². He first joined the (Indian) Naidu family who had been evicted onto the pavement outside their rented house, and then rented the house so that they could live there. This led to them being charged in the courts, but the case went through 11 remands before being referred to the Supreme court (Robertson 1994:5).

A visitation team from Central Methodist Church found that 40% of flats visited in 1986 in central Johannesburg "were occupied by so-called coloured, Asian and African persons" (Rees 1986:1). This population was mobile, partly due to fear of eviction: 49% of the sample had only lived there for a few months; re-visits found that "over 50%" had moved inside two months (Rees 1986:2). The change in the city population was obvious: increasing numbers of young coloureds who could not find housing elsewhere, Asians who did not want to commute over long distances, better paid blacks, and poor elderly and unemployed whites (Rees 1986:2). By 1988 55% of Mayfair was Indian, and more than 100 000 "illegals" lived in Johannesburg as a whole (Robertson 1994:5).

By 1990 the number of South African blacks living in central Johannesburg had been added to by their foreign counterparts from Zambia and Zaire. The tension of eviction under the Group Areas Act had been replaced by the threat of deportation. Some were here legally, but permits were not always extended to spouses, leading to arrests (Ching 1990:2). The number of homeless was noticeably increasing (Ching 1990:3).

CHAPTER FOUR: CENTRAL METHODIST MISSION, CENTRAL JOHANNESBURG

1. IDENTITY

In 1993 Central had about 350 people participating in three Sunday services; of which 58% are black, 22% white, 16% "coloured" (mulatto), and 4% Asian. Most people come because of the racial mix (35%), or because they live nearby (27%). The largest single group of those who attend live in the centre of the city (15%); smaller groupings can be found throughout the metropolitan area. Other areas most inhabited by Central people are the adjacent suburbs of Berea (6.9%), Hillbrow (6.6%), and Joubert Park (4.6%).

There are two perspectives on Central's history which surfaced for me. The first is the prominent place given to The Building of whatever era, which in old historical notes looms larger than individual ministers. The story of the building is more often than not seen as the story of Central - with successive ministers jostling for equal reputational stature with it. I struggled to find information about the ministers, about whom data were far scarcer than details about the building. The members disappear almost totally between the ministers and the building, surfacing only in their roles within the social structures of a local Methodist congregation. I can explain the building's prominence only in terms of the eminence of the building within the Johannesburg of the recent past, its symbolic presence within the minds of Methodists (especially those in the congregation), the sheer physical size of the present Mission (as of the past Hall), and the equally daunting debt of construction costs and upkeep which accompanied the building. The cost of upkeep is presently threatening the continued existence of the present congregation, and so I can easily compare the congregation with the fictional Dr Victor Frankenstein, whose monster threatened to destroy its creator.

The second perspective on Central's history is that when extraordinary ministers managed to triumph over the building, they became captive to the offices of Methodism and to their own high profiles within the city and South African Christianity, often to the extent that their personal contact with the congregation was impaired, barely maintained, or ultimately lost.

1.1. History in context

Central's 1992 pew bulletin motto proclaims: "Serving the church in the city for more than a century", and so it seems appropriate to start with the situation then. Central Methodist Mission (Central) had its first incarnation in 1889 in the centre of Johannesburg, two years after the founding of the city around gold mining. Methodist services were held by lay preacher John Cook¹ from 1886. Rev Frederick Briscoe from Pretoria was appointed in April 1887 as resident minister of the congregations, which met wherever they could, including the Theatre Royal (Hall 1961:3; Webb 1944:1). A temporary tin chapel was used before the cornerstone of a stone church was laid in April² 1887 by the Landdrost, Captain von Brandis.

¹. Ancestor of a present-day Central leader Jonathan Cook.

². Or July, according to Clegg 1936:1.

The building was opened in September³ 1887, seating 300 and costing 900 pounds (Commemorative brochure 1967:1; Webb 1944:1). A Day School was opened in 1888, which also soon had a chapel added (Webb 1944:1).

The first (Wesleyan) Church Hall was completed and opened in July 1889 at the corner of President and Kruis Streets (Hall 1961:3; Commemorative brochure 1967:1). The building was "patterned along the lines of the great Central Halls of England⁴, with a ministry which combined evangelistic preaching with social upliftment" (Central 1991:1). The President Street Church, as it was known, is described as "the centre of education, cultural activities, and hearty Sunday Services" (Commemorative brochure 1967:1). In 1890 several setbacks affected the mining town: a typhoid epidemic caused the death of many, including forty Methodists; the share market collapsed, causing decreased business and the departure of many residents of the town (Webb 1944:1). In 1893⁵ the Hall was enlarged (Hall 1961:3). The ministers of this era included Revs F J Briscoe (ca. 1887), R F Appelbe (ca. 1887), W Hudson (ca. 1893), J S Morris, Thos. Wainman (ca. 1893) (Clegg 1936:1; Webb 1944:1; Central 1991:1; Hall 1961:3).

The Deaconess Society was founded in 1890 by Dr T B Stephenson as The Wesleyan Deaconess Institute; the first Deaconess was a "Sister Theresa", employed by Rev Fuller Appelbe to work among the poor of Johannesburg (Central 1991:1; The Deaconess Order: 1). Theresa lived in a "small Deaconess home" built by Central's leaders for her (The Deaconess Order: 1). In 1894 the first overseas Deaconess, Sister Evelyn Oates, arrived for work in Johannesburg (The Deaconess Order: 1).

Partly due to the "'crowded congregations ... under the Rev Glyndwyr Davies' ministry'" the building of a bigger Methodist Central Hall was proposed by the Transvaal Synod⁶ of the Methodist Church in 1913 (Goodwin, quoted in *The Star*, 3 February 1916; Hall 1961:5). At the time the Central Hall was "heavily in debt" and the proposal was accepted by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in 1914, on condition that the debt be redeemed. The Society offered to pay off 20 000 pounds if overseas funds were matched by an equal local effort. Central minister and superintendent of the Central Circuit⁷ Henry Goodwin agreed to raise funds locally (*The Star*, 3 February 1916; Hall 1961:5).

The foundation stone was laid on the corner of Pritchard and Kruis Streets in April 1917, and in November 1919 the church moved to its new building "just opposite the entrance to the Courthouse" (*The Star*, 3 February 1916; Hall 1961:5). Dignitaries at the opening ceremony over the weekend included the

³. The bronze plaque in the foyer gives the date of opening as July 1887.

⁴. Under Hugh Price Hughes, Central Halls rather than churches of traditional design was erected at places such as Westminster, Manchester, Birmingham, and Bristol (70th anniversary brochure 1956:1).

⁵. In 1892, according to Clegg 1936:1.

⁶. Synod is an annual business meeting of a District, attended by ordained members (ministers, deaconesses) as well as lay members of the Methodist church (circuit stewards, lay representatives of Quarterly Meetings, lay Connexional Officials, members of District Committees, District Presidents of Women's Auxiliary, Women's Association, and Women's Manyano). Other laity who attend if resident in the District include elected members of Conference and the general president of the Women's Auxiliary.

⁷. A number of congregations (societies) together comprise a circuit, whose affairs are administered by a Quarterly Meeting.

Governor General (Rt Hon Viscount Buxton), the President of the Methodist Conference⁸ (James Pendlebury), with Prime Minister Jan Smuts addressing a men's fellowship (the Brotherhood) at an afternoon meeting which also included the mayor of Johannesburg (G B Steer), Prof Jan Hofmeyr (later deputy prime minister), and Bishop Johnson of the American Methodist Church (Webb 1956:2). Smuts' address noted the need to discover a way of dealing with black-white issues (Webb 1956:2). The debt of the Pritchard St building was 35 000 pounds Hall 1961:5).

Central also soon developed a reputation for choral music, a Johannesburg Wesleyan choir with instruments having existed since 1895. The several organists and choir masters before 1920 included a (Mr) Green, Neil Mathias, Madam Hooper-Reeves, Wansborough Poles, and Robert Pritchard (Hall 1961:5). The opening of the 1919 Hall was celebrated by the "splendid singing of the choir" under Poles (Webb 1956: 2). Under Meara an impressive organ was procured in 1928, and Rupert Stoutt was officially appointed as organist and choir master in 1924, although he served in this capacity from 1920 until the 1970s (Hall 1961:5).

William Meara (1920-1934) and J B Webb's ministries covered almost forty years, spanning two world wars and a depression (Central 1991:1). Meara was an Irishman who had arrived in South Africa on June 9, 1899 and was first appointed to Barberton. He was appointed to Central as superintendent of the Central Circuit in 1920. Missionary endeavour was obviously important, as attested by the number of surviving pamphlets from the 1920s which call for contributions and advertising meetings. The principal of Kilnerton Institution spoke at a May 1927 "missionary anniversary service". In 1931 Meara reported "consistently larger" congregations "than any year of our history" (Annual Report 1931:6). Evangelism, ministry "to the poor and needy" peaked during the Depression; Meara told of "fifteen young men and women seeking the Lord" on a Sunday evening (Annual Report 1931:6).

Arthur Clegg was minister at Methodist Central Hall between 1934-41, appointed at first to substitute for Meara, who returned overseas on a 11-month leave in June. In March 1935 the foundation stone of the Wesley Hall (a church hall) was laid, with the official opening on 17 November. From 25 to 30 July 1937 Donald (later Lord) Soper, the Methodist Billy Graham of his time, appeared at Central Hall⁹, giving a series of evening sermons on such subjects as materialism, fascism and pacifism. Soper had befriended Webb at Cambridge in the 1920s (The Octagon November 1971: 12).

Meanwhile the work of the Deaconesses continued. In July 1937 Sister Annie D'Urban broke down under the strain of filling a position previously occupied by two Deaconess and resigned (Clegg 1937:1). In January 1938 Deaconess Sister Edna Peters from Leeds arrived, followed by Sister Dora Fitton in September (Clegg 1938:1). The ministers of this era included George Lowe (ca. 1901), Ernest Titcomb (1901-1919), Barrett Cawood, Stuart Franklin, John Howard, Henry Goodwin (1916-1928), Glyndwr

⁸. Conference is the governing body (legislative, executive) of the Methodist Church, as well as the final court of appeal in matters of discipline.

⁹. He also spent time in Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria (bulletin advertising Soper's talks, 1937).

Davies (1919-1920), William Meara (1920-1936) and Arthur Clegg (1934-1941) (Clegg 1936:1; Central 1991:1; Hall 1961:3).

Joseph (Joe) Webb was appointed superintendent at Central during the War years of 1942. Saturday-night entertainments were laid on for soldiers in the Wesley Hall, as were teas after Sunday evening services in the Conference Room (Webb 1943:2). Sister Vera Temple (1939-1943) had people over for visits to the Deaconess' flat in Villiers Court (Webb 1943:2). Webb made an effort to keep in contact with Central members on service, sending out a monthly letter and 200 parcels in December 1942 (Webb 1943:1). Long-standing member Mrs Preyer, who attended Central for 46 years (1945-1991), described Webb as a popular, down-to-earth speaker who made a name for himself as a broadcast preacher, and as a campaigner "for racial justice and understanding"¹⁰ (Preyer 20/2/93). The membership in 1943 was a "flourishing" 500, Sunday School attendances peaked and was also good in the Women's Auxiliary, the Women's Bright Hour, and Young People's Guild (Webb 1943:2). Sister Grace Woolcott replaced Dora Fitton, who left to marry, as Deaconess (Webb 1943:1; 1944:2). Webb also proposed in 1943 the provision of a Youth Institute: a games room, a reading and writing room, and a library for use by young working people (Webb 1943:2).

By November 1944 the membership stood at 627, and missionary subscriptions were at their "highest ever": 420 pounds (Webb 1944:2). Webb made his first of several pleas for the necessity of appointing "additional ministerial staff"¹¹, noting the pressure of his dual role as chairman of the district and superintendent of the Hall (Webb 1944:2,3). Two full-time secretaries¹² looked after administration (Webb 1944:2). A Tuesday evening fellowship in the Conference Room was well-attended. An Easter youth camp was held at Grasmere, where a five-acre campsite was purchased on a ten-year lease (Webb 1944:3). The Saturday night entertainment for soldiers was abandoned due to the introduction of a 9 o'clock curfew, and as Sister Vera had meanwhile got married, members of the RAF and South African military were now entertained at the Manse on Saturday and Sunday afternoons (Webb 1944:3). An apartment "at the top of the Hall" was converted "as for a club", and the first meal was to be prepared there on November 8, 1944 (Webb 1944:3). Other plans include adding "one more floor to Wesley Hall for our expanding youth work", more seating, and a permanent public address system - instead of hiring one - to relay services to the Wesley Hall (presumably for overflow congregations) (Webb 1944:3).

Central Hall was also becoming known through various broadcasting activities. In 1944 the Central Hall Choir under Stoutt had recorded hymns for SABC religious programmes, and Stoutt's organ interludes were used to introduce and end epilogues (Webb 1944:3). Central was allotted "three broadcasts per thirteen Sundays", resulting in many letters received and personal interviews with people "who normally

¹⁰. But Webb's pronouncements on racial issues were quoted and used in "You are wrong, Father Huddleston", a rebuttal to Huddleston's "Nought for your comfort". Huddleston's book had condemned South Africa's racial policy through describing its effects on Sophiatown.

¹¹. Webb speaks of help "in this regard" by Rev A A Kidwell; who must have served in at least a part-time capacity at the Hall in 1944 (Webb 1944:2).

¹². Mrs F M Price, Mrs H C Stocks.

never go to church" (Webb 1944:3).

In 1945 Deaconess Sister Mary Caley served a probation period at Central before going for training in England, where she was ordained at Liverpool in 1947¹³. After her return to Central she was employed by the Deaconess Society until her retirement in 1982 (The Deaconess Order:2). By November 1946 Webb's idea of a youth centre had finally been concretised, with the Centre opened by Mayoress Mrs J McPherson in June. Matt Eddy was appointed as Director of Youth Services and as manager of the Book Depot (Webb 1946:1). Webb also proposed in 1951 that "at least one junior minister" be appointed in addition to himself (Webb 1951:3). Because of Webb's popularity the Pritchard St Hall frequently overflowed, and in 1946 it was decided to build yet a bigger building (Webb 1946:2). In 1949 Webb issued "A plea for regular giving", a brochure encouraging members to use an envelope system to contribute on either a monthly basis to a Sustentation Fund, or to a Weekly Offering System (Webb 1949).

The place of Central Hall in Johannesburg society and within Methodism between 1919 and 1942 can be gauged by several factors. **First, the extensive use of Central property for Methodist gatherings and annual celebrations of the anniversary of Methodism in Johannesburg, as well as for other Christian events.** So the "Universal Week of Prayer" was held in January 1930; a Great Jubilee Rally of Rand Methodism in November 1936, with the president of conference (A A Wellington) present; and a February 1938 Central Circuit Rally was held in the Wesley Hall ¹⁴. In 1943 lunch hour prayer services were conducted in Wesley Hall by ministers from different denominations (Webb 1943:2). **Second, Central's anniversary was often held simultaneously with that of Johannesburg Methodism in Central's building¹⁵.** A pamphlet from Meara's time proclaimed in large bold print the 42nd anniversary, and in small print in brackets underneath, 9th of Central Hall). **Third, successive Mayors of Johannesburg participated regularly in Central's functions, and the exchange of roles and buildings were sometimes reciprocated.** So Mayor Penry Roberts chaired the 47th anniversary of Methodism in November 1933, Mayor M Freeman chaired the 15th Central Hall anniversary meeting in November 1934, and Mayor Donald Mackay officiated at the 1936 jubilee ¹⁶. Clegg chaired a Good Friday "evening of sacred music" in the City Hall, arranged by the Witwatersrand Church Council (according to an undated pamphlet distributed to "church members").

The Hall was renovated and re-opened in 1956 to include a floor of offices, "a new system of ventilation and air conditioning", a small side-chapel, and new seating (Webb 1956:2; Hall 1961:3). During the five months that the congregation was excluded from the premises during restoration, services were held in the Plaza Theatre (Webb 1956:4; Hall 1961:3). At the re-opening a Te Deum "to a rendering especially

¹³. In November 1944 Webb noted that Caley and Woolcott was welcomed "as Deaconesses" during the year ending June 30th, 1944 (Webb 1944:2; compare 1943:1). Assuming that Webb knew what was happening in his own congregation, either Caley started her probation period in 1944, or the dates 1945 and 1947 are incorrect.

¹⁴. Berea, Central, Orange Grove, Norwood, and Turffontein societies were represented.

¹⁵. This explains the confusion in sequence of anniversaries; I had to distinguish whether numerals in old material (e.g. 47th anniversary) referred to e.g. Central Hall, to Methodism, or (later) to a particular Central building.

¹⁶. Followed by Mayors J S Fotheringham in 1937, J J Page in 1938, T A M Huddle 1939, and so on into the 1940s.

composed for the occasion by Rupert Stoutt" was played (Webb 1956:4). In the same year the Central Hall Choir performed in a Festival of Music to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Salvation Army in the city with the Johannesburg City Band.

By 1961 Central was touted as the "leading Methodist Church in Southern Africa", and as having established a reputation as "Methodism's leading place of worship", a status it achieved due in part the endeavour of Meara, Webb, and Stoutt (Central 1991:1; Hall 1961:5). The latter's glory is symbolised by the prominently positioned choir stalls in the present sanctuary. But the choirs were all-white affairs, and "no other race was allowed until Stoutt's death in 1987" said a coloured member since 1985. The motto on the 70th anniversary brochure proclaimed "Your church, as old as the city" (Webb 1961). Webb died of cancer in 1972. Rev Stan Pitts, appointed after Webb, was "popular and sincere ... The congregation came first - he knew what was happening and came to visit when there was trouble," said Mrs Preyer. She remembers Pitts as the last minister to regularly visit members. But Webb was a hard act to follow, and Pitts "did not have the same appeal" (Preyer 20/2/92).

The present six-storey building was completed in 1966, with the congregation saying goodbye with closing services on 29 May 1966 in the old building at which Pitts, Webb, and Young were present (News & Views August 1966:10). Then the congregation, arranged in fellowships or groups, walked to the new building. The new church was one block east, at the corner of Smal and Pritchard Streets, next to the Supreme Court. The procession was headed by the Mayor and Mayoress, and Pitts laid the foundation stone (News & Views August 1966:4,6,10,14). On May 31 volunteers started moving equipment, files and furniture to temporary church offices in Pritchard House as well as into the new building (News & Views August 1966:1). The half-finished new building was still being completed, and in August 1966 services were still being held in the finished basement (News & Views August 1966:1). The building programme coincided with a 1966 fund-raiser in the guise of a Christian Stewardship Campaign, presented by Pitts as an opportunity to "re-dedicate ourselves" and "fulfil the purposes of God for our Church set in the midst of the City" (in the brochure "Central Methodist Church: Christian Stewardship Campaign 1966"). Hostess Chairman (sic) Daphne Pitts explained that the Campaign followed on a visitation programme in which "almost 125 women" had visited "nearly 1 500 families".

On 15 October 1967 the newly named Central Methodist Church was officially opened with a dedication service. The motto of the church was "As old as the city itself". The building, had a restored organ¹⁷ from the Central Hall and cushioned tip-up seating for 1 012. According to Pitts the name was chosen because "many of our people" had "reiterated wishes ... that our new place of worship will be more a "Church" than a "Hall" (News & Views August 1966:1). This may indicate a class shift among members. The Hall was later demolished.

The building contains numerous halls and rooms. The old entrance was at first protected by a huge sliding

¹⁷. Although Pitts said it was new, he probably meant the "new three manual console and pedal range .. to make all note and pedal movements automatic" described in the Commemorative brochure of 1967 (compare News & Views August 1966:1).

grille, long since removed. To the right of the main entrance was the old church lounge, presently subdivided into shops separated from the church building. From the ground floor main lobby a visitor can see two staircases, the two brass fish door-handles of the chapel to the right, and a corridor leading straight ahead to an elevator. The right staircase leads down to the Wesley Hall in the basement, an auditorium containing a stage and seating for 500, with six windowless rooms behind the stage. The left staircase leads upwards to the Minor Hall (seating 200) on the mezzanine floor, and the main sanctuary on the first. By the staircase to the left of the elevator one can reach the first floor lounge (the old Coffee Room); a second floor room (the old parlour) and the sanctuary gallery; the third floor offices, board room and apartment; the fourth floor offices and apartment; and the fifth floor accommodation for cleaning staff. Five rooms behind the sanctuary are designated for use by various sanctuary officials. At gallery level there are two cry-rooms.

The building contains many deliberate symbols, which are described in the *Pew Bulletin* of 15 October 1967 and the Commemorative brochure of 1967. These include the foundation stones (1889, 1917, 1935) and copper depictions of past buildings. In the ground floor chapel the central pieces of furniture are a large communion table and a lectern. High small stained glass windows remind worshippers of the connection with Christians past and present. Depicted in the windows are the shields of the four apostles, the Old Testament (a rose), four missionaries (Andrew, Peter, Philip, Paul) and John Wesley, two badges representing "World Methodism" and "World Christianity", Christ (a crown, a red cross), and the Holy Spirit (a descending dove). Around the altar rail are kneeler cushions, with 12 tapestry symbols of "the community in which we live": Mining, Industry, Commerce, Building, Farming, Hospitals, Education, Science, The Home, Music, Transport, Sport.

In the main sanctuary on the first floor seating is arranged in a six-sided semi-circle. At the front, on a raised platform surrounded by rails, is an altar table, a lectern to the left of the centrally placed pulpit, a baptismal font to the left, and six chairs at the back of the platform, three each on both sides of the raised pulpit. The altar rail is in the shape of an octagon. The choir stalls rise in three rows above the pulpit to the organ screen stretching across the central part of the main sanctuary; the top stall is level with the second floor gallery. The organ screen stretches to the ceiling, and is divided into nine sections; four flanking a large central copper cross. The eight sections have small, blue Jerusalem crosses near the top, surrounded by four even smaller white crosses. The Jerusalem crosses represent the centrality of the cross, while the four white ones symbolise "the outreach of the gospel to the four corners of the earth". Octagon-shaped panels decorate the rest of the screen, symbolising the "binding of the family of God together". The ceiling is a six-sided (hexagon) with recessed lights. A stained glass window to the right of the organ screen depicts the ascension and repeats the ceiling-shape. In all, twelve stained glass windows portray scenes from the life of Jesus.

The succession of ministers were known as good preachers, with five eventually serving as presidents of the Methodist denomination; Meara after he had left Central (1937, 1945); Titcomb, Goodwin, Webb (thrice: 1950), Storey (Hall 1961:5).

During the period 1889 to 1976 the South African racial problematic was visible only at the fringes of Central's collective awareness; and the attitudes of members seem at best to have been ambiguous. A "rummage" sale advertised for Friday 16 May 1930 was "for natives only"; and probably contained the leftovers from the previous day's "jumble" sale which was advertised "for Europeans only". The Men's Fellowship reported visits to "the Johannesburg locations and Kilnerton Training Institution" in 1951; and their April 1966 meeting heard of black malnourishment (80% of labourers on the Rand) and high infant mortality rates (Webb 1951:8; News & Views August 1966:10). In 1966 the YANSYS¹⁸ women's fellowship heard from (minister's wife) Mrs Cook "a vivid account of her life at an African College"; while the Sunday School collected money "to buy a bicycle for an African Minister in one of the townships" (News & Views August 1966:8,12).

Comments about black impoverishment and the desire for freedom by all races are bynotes in missionary appeals (District Missionary Fund campaign 1930) and editorials by Central's ministers (Pitts 1966). The "alarming number of deaths while in custody of African prisoners" deserved one sentence in 1969, in contrast with the two pages devoted to the "manpower" shortage suffered by the Methodist ministry (News & Views 1969:7). This was to change radically in 1976.

When Rev (now Bishop) Peter Storey was appointed superintendent minister of Central Methodist Mission in 1976, racial integration was his publicly declared intention, in the year that high-school students in Soweto revolted against apartheid education. His declaration by itself drew Coloureds and Indians to attend Central (Storey 1993: 1).

Central at this time was a large white congregation, with members who travelled in from the suburbs (Storey 1992: 4) - a factor which continues to this day. Central became integrated before its context did. Preyer said that blacks slowly started drifting in, and remembers as one of the first Thandike Arnolds, "who was married to a white man" (Preyer 20/2/93). FLOC director Wendy Young remembers that in 1982 when she first started coming there was "a small group of coloured folk in the back left corner" (Young 5/5/92). At the core of Storey's deliberate attempts to mix Central was the six-day "My brother and me"-course run over six Tuesdays in 1976, which "enabled whites to face their prejudice in the presence of blacks". Storey describes the experience as not different from the progression of conversion: "proximate intimacy, confrontation, repentance and confession, commitment". Participants had to undertake to attend the whole course, "otherwise most would have left when it became uncomfortable in the third week or so". Another important factor was the consistent preaching of Storey on socio-political themes, and the function of the worship service to pull people back to central things such as the Bible and doctrine.

Mrs Preyer said that Storey "saw change coming, saw the social injustices ... he stressed social consciousness and our obligation to other people". Compared to his predecessors "he was more of a

¹⁸. "Young and not so young".

policy-maker; and a lot of things the minister used to do now fell on the shoulders of the people" (Preyer 20/2/93). Evangelism team leader Dave Ching spoke of "Peter Storey's greatest gift is being prophetic, seeing where God is working in the wider world" (Ching 10/2/92). Young said that "without Peter Storey Methodists would have lost their place in the city" (Young 5/5/92).

In 1976, another signal of Storey's intent to cross racial barriers was the appointment of Lindi Myeza, a female social worker, as Central's first black staff member, a position she retained until 1982 (What a

Figure 4: Central's ministers 1887-1992 (dates and names approximate) ¹⁹

Frederick Briscoe 1887	Thomas Wainman, Stuart Franklin, Owen Watkins, Barrett Cawood 1889	George Weavind 1881-1890 JS Morris	Robert Appelbe 1890-1895 W E Lancaster
William Hudson 1893 ²⁰ -1898	George Rolland 1899	Robert Rogers 1898- 1903	George Lowe 1901 ²¹ -1904 Amos Burnett 1902
Ernest Titcomb 1901 ²² -1909	John Howard 1909- 1912	Henry Goodwin 1912- 1928	Glyndwr Davies 1915-1920 ²³
William Meara Superintendent 1920- 1936 ²⁴	W Loxley-Chamings	Arthur Clegg Superintendent 1934- d.1941 ²⁵	Joseph Webb Superintendent 1942- 1964 (d.1972)
Stanley Pitts 1965-1975	Ernie Young 1963-1966	John Scholtz 1967-1969	Paul Bester 1972-1973
Peter Storey Superintendent 1976-1992	Trevour de Bruyn 1978	Ric Matthews 1982-1985 Rowan Rogers 1985-?	David Newby 1986- Fred Erasmus 1986-1987

¹⁹. Due to the vagueness of the sources, dates and names are not certain until Meara's era.

²⁰. Webb deduced that Hudson was at Central Hall since 1895 from the first and last times he signed the marriage register (Webb 1944:1).

²¹. Calculated by first and last entries in the marriage register, Lowe started in 1903 (Webb 1944:1).

²². According to Webb's calculation Titcomb started in 1904 (Webb 1944:1).

²³. According to Webb's calculation Davies commenced in 1915 and moved on in 1917 (Webb 1944:1); the legend under his portrait in the vestry reads 1915-1918.

²⁴. Clegg 1936:1; the inscription under Meara's portrait in CMM's vestry reads 1919-1935.

²⁵. According to Webb, Clegg's dates are 1936-1941 (Webb 1944:1).

Trevor Hudson 1973, 1979-1982	Philip Mvunyiswa 1987-	Janet Hudson 1989-1992	H Mvume Dandala 1992-
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Family, May 1982:7). Myeza also taught in the Academy for Christian Living - Preyer said some objected "to a black woman preaching to us" (Preyer 20/2/93). During the same year a part-time black minister, Sizwe (Tom) Mbabane was appointed to reach out to black workers housed on top of the flats around the church building (Storey 1992:4; What a Family June 1980:1). He started black-language services at Central in 1980 on Sunday afternoons (What a Family Sept. 1980:12). At the same time Helen Muller started two pre-school centres in the black city of Soweto, one of which - Thlokomelong Jabavu - continued to exist until 1992. In 1985 Lionel Lennart was the first Coloured leaders to be appointed Society Steward at Central (Central Church News July 1985:3).

Storey's preaching also contained a strong anti-apartheid message, supported by his public role of opposing the State's race policies as president of both the SA Council of Churches (1970s) and later of the Methodist Church (1980s). The implications of such actions (his role and appointments) must be seen against the wider socio-political canvas of revolt (1976) - and State repression through States of Emergency (e.g. 1985 (Storey 1992: 4). Central's sizeable plant was also made available as a meeting-place for activists, which were banned from gathering. As a consequence there was many confrontations with the police who wanted to invade the building and effect arrests. Storey describes the period 1982 to 1988 as "the siege years" (Storey 1992:5). This standoff on one occasion led to all the ministers being arrested. Central's treasurer (former circuit and society steward) Ken Roberts lead the call for their release at John Vorster Square police station. At one point the police did enter the building "and sat on our communion rail, training their guns on the 800 people in the Sanctuary" (Storey 1992:5). The ministers were also involved in a march on John Vorster, this time without arrests (Storey 1992:5). The SABC refused Central airtime on its roster of church services "rather than let us preach the truth" (Storey 1992:5).

Central started The Academy for Christian Living (AFCL) in March 1977, under Muller (What a Family, Nov. 1978:1). The Academy provided adult Christian education courses in four areas: bible, skills, personal growth, current issues. The idea was inspired by similar programmes run at the Church of the Saviour in Washington DC, which Storey visited. Course attendance regularly averaged 80 people, many of whom started attending because of visits by Central's evangelism team, which they regarded as an experience of care. The sudden tapering off in 1982 of interest in Academy and its eventual closure transparently puzzles and pains Storey. He suggests that the inner city area around Central increasingly became seen as unsafe, especially after five assaults over four months in Central's building in the early 1980s, even though the safety factor was sorted out with the police. The worldwide petrol crisis impacting on South Africa at about this time probably also played a role; as did the decision to alternate

the classroom activities with small Growing in Faith Together Groups (GIFT) which met in people's homes²⁶. All of these combined in a culture change, which made people reluctant to come out to meetings (Storey 25/5/94). The present incarnation of the Academy is the School for Christian Living, an internal education programme for church members which encompasses the New Life Group (Central 1991:24).

Noticeable growth of black membership started only in 1978, after an intentional three-step plan to symbolise concern for the real needs of urban (particularly black) people (Storey 1993: 1-2):

- a) establishing the People's Centre Restaurant in Central's basement in 1978. This was the first to cater for all races in Johannesburg, when it was still illegal for blacks and whites to be together in such places under the Public Amenities Act (Storey 1993:1; Scott 1981:18);
- b) running the black/white contact programme "My brother and me";
- c) allowing various persecuted bodies which could not legally meet to hold protest meetings in Central's building.

The three-step plan coincided with the 1978 campaign to encourage church members to give "to God through Central Church". The campaign highlighted the ministries of Central, which included "homeless men who gravitate to this city church" and a "special fund for the unemployed ... in the present economic recession". The giving scheme was dubbed "Adventure in Giving", as "giving is an adventure in gratitude and faith".

The People Centre under Joan Rudolph provided a meeting place for black and white, and, Storey contends, became the source for Central's first black worshippers²⁷, "who went there first and then after a while decided ... to attend worship" (Scott 1981:24). Beth Logan took over for a while, then Wendy Young, until Joan returned to see it through its final years. Its purpose was to be a meeting place for inner city people, open 5 days a week. The Centre was also used for church functions, such as the 95th anniversary dinner in 1981.

Social roles of white and black were reversed in the People Centre, as white volunteer members served black patrons - a startling symbol for the congregation's formally stated intent. A young black male People Centre patron commented in 1981 that people "were learning to get on quite naturally" (Scott 1981:13). An elderly white man "felt that the solution to the country's ills had to follow the lines which the restaurant was modelling" (Scott 1981:14). A middle-aged black "commented that he had been given the opportunity to form relationships with whites more than before through his contact with the People Centre" (Scott 1981:14). In conjunction with the contact programmes whites (members and otherwise)

²⁶. The GIFT groups probably also fulfilled other functions than those expected; 4 people of 5 (7 originally) meeting in the western suburbs were from the defunct Civic congregation.

²⁷. In 1981, 14,3% of respondents polled in the restaurant were involved in Central activities (Scott 1981:11). The sample was quite small: 21 out of 1045 patrons. In other words, 14,3% of 21 respondents translates to only 3 women. Two were black and attended Worker's Worship during Wednesday lunch hour, and one a white female choir member (Scott 1981:11,8). Scott's data gives no clear indication whether blacks attended Central activities as a result of coming to the restaurant, although she thought they did (Scott 1981:15,24).

were brought into contact with blacks, to work through their prejudice, and so a climate of acceptance was gradually established within Central.

A name change was introduced in 1985, with Central Methodist Church becoming Central Methodist Mission. This reflected a totally outward vision initiated by Storey in a 13-point Mission Statement, the aims of which included changes from :

- * "a suburban mentality to identification with the city
- * a white membership to an inclusive community
- * an inward orientation to creating frontier ministries
- * traditional growth patterns to intentional evangelism"

Figure 5: Name changes at Central

President St Church 1889-1919	Central Hall 1919-1966	Central Methodist Church 1966-1985	Central Methodist Mission 1985-present
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Under Storey's leadership several structures through which the outward vision was to be embodied were created, along with a Mission Statement. This included a cluster concept of ministry groups. Storey admits that he was formatively influenced by his own sojourn at the Central Methodist Mission, Australia (CMAus) under Rev Alan Walker - but not in terms of racial mixing, not a concern for the Sydney Church. This concept of a church that existed for others and not for itself was founded on a Australian church that he had spent time in. The Australian Central did have some Aborigines who attended; but had a Fijian-speaking congregation which met separately, in line with the present policy of multi-culturalism in the Uniting Church of Australia (cf. *The cultured pearl*). The influence of the Australian mission can be traced in various aspects of Central's ministry:

- a) the People's Centre Restaurant, which brought "the frontier with the city into the very building" of the congregation (Storey 25/5/94; compare Scott 1981: 17);
- b) the mixture of evangelism and social concern in both worship and ministry. Storey believes that this has always been the - neglected - Wesleyan balance. "The right to preach to the city is earned by involvement in the pain of the city" (Storey 25/5/94). In 1980 Walker conducted a mission to the Witwatersrand from Central (What a Family June 1980:1).

In 1985 Central began lighting a "Candle of Peace" at each service - a large white candle on a simple wooden base, encircled with barbed wire (Storey 1992:5). Many of Central's leaders were prominent in social justice groups such as the pacifist Methodist Order of Peacemakers, founded in 1989, which among other things picketed outside a SA Defence Force exhibition (E Storey 1992:6). Storey's wife Elizabeth was part of the Detainees' Parents' Support Committee in the mid-1980s (E Storey 1992:6). The Central

of the late 1980s was described by a member of 42 years standing as valuing efficiency more than love, programme more than people.

Apart from the interracial contact programme and the People Centre Central's other ministries at the time included:

- a) "Release", a programme for helping people recently released from the Old Fort prison in Johannesburg to adjust to life on the outside, partly by housing them in three Hillbrow flats for a couple of weeks (Storey 25/5/94);
- b) a typing school which ran for many years at Civic Methodist, Braamfontein under Michelle (Muller) Bowes (Storey 25/5/94);
- c) Hillbrow House, a racially-mixed ministry to the poor²⁸. Hillbrow House evolved another ministry for drug and alcohol abusers, Genesis²⁹, in 1980. Central members like Janet Brodrick³⁰ are still involved (Storey 1992:4; 25/5/94; What a Family Nov. 1979:4-5);
- d) Careways, "the first ever after-school centre in the city" initiated by Muller³¹ in 1973 (Storey 1992:4; What a Family Nov. 1978:2);
- e) a hospital visitation team launched under Errol Gray³² in 1978 (Storey 1992: 4);
- f) Cornerstone House, a "caring home for 56 disabled and pensioned people for eight years" ³³, until events like the Khotso House explosion "made it untenable" (Storey 1992:4,5).

Later the property was restructured to include shops "so that property financed property", and so that the congregation's financial gifts could be expended on ministry. Storey remarked that an inner city church cannot survive purely by the giving of its people, and must retain good relations with donors (Storey 25/5/94). In 1984 the hotel next door was forced under municipal regulations to buy air (space) from Central, bringing in R325 000 and free parking on Sundays for the congregation and for the staff during the week (Storey 1992:5). In 1987 the debt on the church building was paid off (Storey 1992:5).

From 1986 Central became partners in the City Care project with St Mary's Cathedral Church of the Province, a project attempting "to alleviate the suffering of [about 40] destitute people in the city through providing counselling, financial assistance and a lunch-time feeding" (Central 1991:43; Storey 1992:5). A social worker carries out the work; in 1991 this position was filled by Mrs C Tsotetsi (Central 1991:42). For the Love of Children (FLOC) was launched by Wendy Young in 1989, based on a ministry of the

²⁸. Hillbrow House was a joint Anglican, Presbyterian, Catholic, Methodist (Civic and Central) project (What a Family Feb. 1978:ii). The first director was Brother Jeremy from the Anglican order the Community of the Resurrection (1976-1978); the second director was Jonathan Cook from Central (1979-81), then Toni Wood (1981-) (What a Family Nov. 1978:4-5, March 1981:3).

²⁹. Genesis is a residential alcohol-rehabilitation centre which used to resort under the Deaconess Society, but now is a ministry separate from Central.

³⁰. Brodrick served on Genesis' Management Committee in 1992, as did Pogiso Takwesi.

³¹. Also involving among others Janet Vercoe, Jean Grose, Margot Spong, and Jenny Watts (Storey 1994: 4).

³² 12

³². Also involving Jonathan Cook, Sheila Walker and Jannie van Rensburg (Storey 1992:4).

³³. Involving John Rees, Joan Rudolph, Sed and Beth Logan, Mick Bluff, Em Kushke, and Nestor Swindells (Storey 1992:4).

Church of the Saviour in Washington DC (Storey 1992:5). The Evangelism Team (later known as Malihambe) was formed in 1986, led by Rev Fred Erasmus in 1987, and then by Dave Ching from 1988 (What a Family Nov. 1988:2). In 1990 the Teenager's Activity Group (TAG) was started by Jenny Watts; followed by the Paballo ya Batho ministry to street people in 1991 by Janet Hudson, who had been appointed as associate minister at Central in 1989.

The reputation of credibility built by these corporate - and Storey's individual - actions, functions to draw members to Central to this day (Storey 1993:2, 1992:4). The actions and the resultant mix created a supportive network of ideas (a symbolic universe) which drew strong in/out boundaries. By the mid-eighties when blacks came into the flatlands of inner Johannesburg, Central's black component had already surpassed the 20% mark, so that Central was "able to welcome new black residents with an already integrated community" (Storey 1992:4; 1993: 2). At present the black/white balance is under threat, due to white flight from the city, and an imbalance in the white/black ministerial team (Storey 1993: 2). In 1989 a "non-racial young adults' group" called Khululeka had been established (Ching 1989:1).

In response to the mix some 200 members left. A white member described these as "those who did not like so-called political preaching". According to Mrs Preyer some of those who stayed said that blacks were acceptable "'as long as they behave' - but they would not have said the same thing about whites" (Preyer 20/2/92). Comments by a member who stayed show the struggle in white minds to come to grips with black members: "We had to accept it - I did not feel happy: it changed the atmosphere ... also in the [women's] clubs we did not feel free to talk - for example about a murder - as they would know it is about a black man." Many of the younger white couples started attending local churches once they started families.

Another anti-government faction present in Central's mix during the eighties was a large number of conscientious objectors, including Storey's son, Alan. The evening service at one stage contained about 20% of them. This group was horrified when a company of national service medical corps started attending the service - complete with armed non-commissioned officer, a man who regularly brought whoever served under him to this service over the next three years. It was arranged that the NCO would hand over his pistol to the steward at the door - under army regulations an illegal move. Storey said that to this day he does not know what the steward did with the weapon during the service (Storey 25/5/94).

Central's leaders are aware of failures along the way. Present leaders say that the main problem is that the (mostly black) congregation remains uninvolved in Central's programmes. Although they have tried everything that they can think of, the situation remains the same. Storey spoke of failing to get blacks involved in the decision-making group and in "helping to carry the load" during his time at Central. He suggests that black Methodism's habit of black ministers running the show with no lay involvement may be why blacks are so uninvolved at Central. He believes that a massive issue still facing Methodism is the need for changing black authoritarian styles of ministry. Another failure was the constant stop-start nature

of the youth group (Storey 25/5/94). Storey also admits that his style of leading was top-downwards, with some members commenting that he had been "dictatorial" and "very authoritarian". The difficulty to be informal and spontaneous among black members during worship at Central may be related to their perception of the role of the black superintendent.

Storey was succeeded in 1992 by Mvume Dandala, who became Central's first black superintendent minister. Storey had moved on to become bishop of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa in the Transvaal at the end of 1991. Dandala was approached by Storey about the possibility, and had mixed feelings about accepting, related to the travails of the city, and to what "could I try that Peter Storey has not tried"; particularly as the leaders would remind him at meetings that "we've tried that" (Dandala April 1992). In a newspaper interview he described the job of running Central as "the mother of all challenges" (Weekly Mail Oct 15-21 1993:12).

Dandala had been a member at Central while working as the General Secretary of the Missions Department of the Methodist Church. Since 1986 he has been living in the predominantly white satellite city of Edenvale, a move which generated friction with whites in his neighbourhood, reported in two daily newspapers. Dandala trained at the Federal Theological Centre, Alice in the 1970s, before winning a scholarship to Cambridge, England from 1974-1975 (Weekly Mail Oct 15-21 1993:12).

In 1975 Dandala was appointed to Empangeni for five years, in a circuit which in 1978 became "one of the first to become a racially-integrated" (Dandala April 1992). White and black societies had met in racially-segregated circuits prior to this, and a 1976 Conference decision for geographic groupings was left to the circuits to interpret, with positive reinforcement from the Missions Department (Dandala April 1992). The main thrust of his ministry was to the "'desperately poor community of kwaMfeka'" (Weekly Mail Oct 15-21 1993:12). From 1983-1985 Dandala was superintendent minister in Port Elizabeth North, "during the height of political conflict between the United Democratic Front and the Azanian People's Organisation" (Weekly Mail Oct 15-21 1993:12). He came under pressure from all sides and the police, spending some time in detention without trial "'for accommodating students' meetings and trying to be peacemakers'" (Weekly Mail Oct 15-21 1993:12).

Dandala felt that the tasks which face him at Central were (a) "to help blacks feel at home - that they are not just visitors", (b) to deal with the "real fear of the implications of major black leadership for members", and (c) to "help make the church financially viable" (Dandala April 1992). The difficulty that black members would experience at Central, he said, was to settle "in what was a strong white traditional church" (Dandala April 1992). Dandala's early months at Central was difficult, particularly as he inherited structures and expectations not of his own making. One of the difficulties was working with the 10 step charter designed by Storey.

1.2. Members of the congregation in their context

At the beginning of 1992 approximately 1 000 people were listed on Central's computerised records. By a complicated classification system they were divided into four categories: full member, potential member, friends, and associates. For this reason I use the phrase "members of the congregation" (meaning those who come together on a Sunday) or speak of "attenders"; unless I am sure that the person referred to is a member. Of those that attend Central, 54% are not members. Potential members have filled in a slip saying they would like to be a part of Central, are placed on the mailing list, but come irregularly and have not formally gone through the New Life programme. Friends and associates live outside Johannesburg, but come when they are in the area, and promote or support Central's ministries.

To understand the story of Central and the behaviour of its members you need to understand its immediate context. Johannesburg's inner-city context reflects the problematic of the wider South African context: growing unemployment, increasing population numbers, homelessness, inner city decay, rising violence, galloping birth rate, deepening poverty, inadequate and exploitative housing. The inner-city is also known for the breakdown of supportive relations through isolation, fear of others, hopelessness, and alienation because of a rapidly changing environment (particularly for older white folk).

Central's main doors are separated by the Smal St Mall from the Johannesburg Supreme Court and the Jeppe Post Office. The Mall is a commercial canyon dissecting several blocks north-south, with numerous clothing, souvenir and eating enterprises. Central's immediate neighbours are a hotel with an underground parking lot (available to Central's Sunday worshippers), a police station across the Mall, numerous office blocks, and nearby residential apartments in various stages of decay. An internal information memo said that 70 000 people lived within 2 square kilometres of the church building, in addition to those who come into the area to work, whether as hawkers, bankers or business people.

Many of Central's prominent members³⁴ originally belonged to Civic Methodist in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, which was closed in the 1980s because of declining numbers and finances. Civic was run as an outpost of Central, with a Central minister doubling up at Civic. Some members say that this was an additional pressure on the survival of that congregation, which caused Civic's morning meeting to close down first.

The largest portion of Central's congregation is made up of women (62.6%). Central's attenders live in at least 39 different locations in the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Area. The largest single percentage of these lives in the centre of the city (15%), Berea (6.9%), Hillbrow (6.6%), and Joubert Park (4.6%); of these 42% live within two kilometres of Central - almost the same percentage (38.9%) that said they walk to church. On the other hand 28% live further than 10km from the church. My survey also indicated a mobile congregation: 66% of the respondents said they "would probably move within three years", 22% said this would "definitely" happen; while 19% have lived in one place for 2 to 3 years.

³⁴. E.g. Janet Brodrick, Jannie Janse-Van Rensburg, Eric van den Berg - all were leaders at Civic and now serve on Central's lay leadership. Former associate minister David Newby also came from Civic.

Enormous differences exist between members of the congregation in terms of education, income, language, ethnicity, and location.

Figure 6: Estimated average number of congregation members at Central

1985: 574	1986: 424	1987: 418	1990: 455
1991: 479	1992: 433 ³⁶	1993: 402	1994: 424

2. PROCESSES

Methodist churches have prescribed structures which are adapted as the local church seems fit. In Central the superintendent minister has ultimate responsibility and ultimate power, while the finance executive and the society stewards wield significant power. Any matter with financial implications has to pass by the financial executive. Society stewards are responsible for calling and evaluating prospective ministers. The decision-making in these two groups exclude input from ordinary members.

Formal procedures - rule by chairperson, voting, decision-making according to majority vote - prevail in all meetings, but are seldom adhered to throughout. Often these only surface in references to "Mr Chairman" by (particularly) older members of the congregation. Decisions in the leaders' meetings are by silence-taken-as-consent, rather than voted for. Various white individuals acting as chairpersons gave noticeably strong directive leadership to the meetings. One leader said that the staff actually make and implement decisions which lay leaders merely "rubber stamp". Few blacks are involved in leadership meetings.

Both symbolically and in reality the superintendent minister occupies chief position, chairing most of the meetings. In some meeting another leader may chair, or do so when the superintendent is absent. The superintendent minister does allow discussion and often asks for advice from the group. But he - as was the case with the Malihambe ministry - is not beyond insisting on following and exercising his will. Whether chaired by the superintendent minister or not, little attempt if any is made in meetings to elicit responses from those who are not particularly vocal.

Sometimes the chairperson is pushed by members to make a definite, final decision; sometimes the chair asks the meeting to formulate a decision. During my research Central was in the throes of severe change at top (new superintendent) and at middle-management (Ching left) levels. The presence and unfamiliarity of the new senior minister also affected the processes.

³⁶. Over 1992, membership shows a drop from 481 in July to 386 in December, a loss of 90 people.

Central actually consists of two sections: the Central Section (Central proper) and the Fordsburg Section. Fordsburg Section was joined to Central in 1987 and comprises four "afternoon societies" (Braamfontein, Ophirton, Crown Mines, Central) attended mostly by blue-collar black workers³⁶ (Central 1991:2,47). Fordsburg is governed by their own leaders' meetings under a Central minister (Rev Philip Mvunyiswa), accountable to the superintendent and reporting to the Quarterly Meeting³⁷ (Central 1991:2,47). Once a quarter representatives from both sections and all programmes meet in a joint Quarterly Meeting. In 1992 the formal authority structures at Central consisted of the ministers, pastoral staff, and nine mission clusters:

- a) worship (ministers, team);
- b) Malihambe (evangelists, team);
- c) discipling (School for Christian Living);
- d) communications (What a Family, tape-recording, decor);
- e) youth and children (Sunday school, youth group);
- f) community life and pastoral care (fellowship groups);
- g) healing (hospital visitation, healing services);
- h) Ubulungisa (justice);
- i) frontier ministries, which is also the Deaconess Society.

But by 1993 the cluster system appeared to have collapsed. Several of the programmes no longer functioned (e.g. Ubulungisa); only functioned in a limited way (e.g. only two fellowship groups remained³⁸); or had been closed (e.g. Malihambe). The clusters functioned differently from one another, some being more, others less democratic (Ching 10/2/92). The leadership of some were shared between a staff member and volunteer, with both represented in the leadership executive; but in reality staffers made most decisions (Ching 10/2/92). A survey of the names also showed that 38 people occupied 82 places in the nine clusters, as stewards, as representatives, and on the finance committees³⁹ (compare Central 1991:4-5).

The formal process of internal communication within the congregation is enabled by two publications: the six-weekly newsletter "What a Family"⁴⁰ and the weekly pew bulletin. Aside from providing information on events, these publications also function to build "a sense of 'belonging'" among members of the congregation (Central 1991:44). The newsletter is also distributed to supporters of Central within and outside South Africa, and the superintendent is informed of the possible content before it is put together (Central 1991:44).

³⁶. Migrant labourers, domestic workers, retired mine workers, Soweto-families, and nurses (Central 1991:47).

³⁷. Members of the Quarterly Meeting are ministers, deaconesses, stewards (Circuit, Society, Poor Fund), fellowship leaders

³⁸. Most GIFT groups ((home-based study and prayer) dissolved "with the return of the School for Christian Living, but some still meet, using [the booklet] Faith and Life as their guide" (Central 1991:26).

³⁹. Of these, 19 people only served in one group, 16 were in 2 groups, and 6 people served on 3.

⁴⁰. What a Family was the latest in a line of church publications, including the blandly named News and Views: The Quarterly Magazine of the Central Methodist Church (ca. 1960s), later embellished as The Octagon" News and Views of the ... (ca. 1970s).

The membership assimilation practices is unclear to newcomers, as is the processes by which members can become involved in a ministry group. Several attenders expressed uncertainty about the processes, for instance how a leader is appointed. At present there is little opportunity for feedback from congregation to leaders. Most people (96%) said they wanted leaders to seek feedback from the ordinary members about what their ministry groups are doing, and 16% felt that this happened seldom or never. The majority (53%) believe that some members should not have more influence on decisions than others. A constant fear among leaders, that the ministries actually disempower the congregation through being leadership-driven, seems supported by the lack of involvement.

2.1. Authority structures

A multiple four-tiered staff services the Mission, comprising:

- a) **three ministers:** a superintendent minister (MH Dandala), and two ministers, which in 1992 comprised Revs Philip M Mvunyiswa and Janet Hudson⁴¹. Dandala has been there since the end of 1991, the previous incumbent (Peter Storey, 1976-1991) having been promoted to Bishop;
- b) **full-time ministerial staff** a pastor in charge of the outreach to street people (known as Paballo ya Batho), and one full-time and one part-time person for the evangelism-visitation team;
- c) **administrative staff:** two secretaries and eight cleaning staff;
- d) **lay leaders.**

The staff structure at Central has grown from four ministers and two secretaries in 1972 to three ministers and 24 others in 1992, (not including cleaning staff) with a budget around R700 000 (Storey 1992:5). Storey's visits overseas have brought a "growing measure" of financial support for the work of Central; although by 1992 this was starting to dry up.

That a measure of systemic dysfunction occurs within Central's structures and so influences the functioning of the leadership and congregational involvement is particularly noticeable (a) in weak role definitions, e.g. of what it means to be a member; (b) changing expectations, e.g. of the role of the superintendent minister, of the (outward) ministry of Central, and of the role of the congregation.

The ministers are liked (16% come because of them), the superintendent's gifts of public involvement are appreciated (and noted in the media), and the sermons well-spoken of.

Mvume Dandala, as the superintendent minister, occupies chief position symbolically and in reality, chairing most of the meetings. But other leaders do chair meetings or do so when he is absent. The superintendent minister does allow discussion and often asks for advice from the group. Whether chaired by the superintendent minister or not, little attempt if any is made in meetings to elicit responses from those who are not particularly vocal. Also in the services the superintendent takes the lion's share, with

⁴¹. Hudson was replaced by Reinhold Koetter, a German national seconded to the Citizen's Department of the Methodist Church in Southern Africa.

the assistant ministers doing just that - assisting. Philip Mvunyiswa holds a dual responsibility as minister in charge of the Fordsburg Section (his primary responsibility), and associate minister at Central. Janet Hudson served her candidature for the ministry as a youth worker at Trinity from 1982-83, and as minister at Forest Town Methodist Church until 1989. She was ordained in 1986 as the very first woman Methodist minister in the Johannesburg district, and became associate minister at Central in 1989 (Hudson 10/11/1992). She found that the associate minister is "not completely a partner" with the senior minister, being excluded e.g. from finance meetings. The associate does "the things the senior minister cannot do, because of time" (Hudson April 1992).

The ministers and staff meet weekly for worship, for ensuring that decisions are implemented, and for co-ordinating and generating ideas (Central 1991:2). This staff meeting does not include cleaning staff. Various degrees of burnout were evident among staff members, especially among those who had been involved for more than six years. Said one: "There is no attention to the individual spiritual development of people. Central is strong on the journey outward but has no inward journey." This is probably the combined result of:

- * the continuous outward focus formalised in the 1985 name change;
- * inadequate mutual support between ministers and other staff, and between the staff themselves;
- * blurred role descriptions which cause leaders to have more than one function;
- * doubling up of lay leaders and paid staff in the different ministry groups (clusters).

The five member finance executive is concerned with all financial decisions, such as "budget, salaries, investments and expenditure, etc. and reports to the Quarterly Meeting" (Central 1991:2). This means effective control of Central, Fordsburg, and Deaconess Society funds (and so of the People Centre, Careways, FLOC, Paballo ya Batho) (compare Central 1991:35). The members in 1991 included the superintendent, the Fordsburg section minister, circuit stewards, and the mission treasurer. Central's budget grew from R60 000 in 1974 to R90 000 in 1978 (1978 brochure inviting readers to join a planned giving scheme).

Another important meeting is that of the Property and Finance Committee which deals with "property problems" and related expenditure (Central 1991:2). This committee comprises the property steward and trustees from each Section. Issues on the agenda at a June 1992 meeting included rental questions around the use of space in Central by the SACC and by Soweto-based minister Paul Verryn; the need to tune the organ every six months (R800); how to deal with the root of a tree growing through a floor; servicing the intercom system to the cry-rooms; the sale of the Civic organ; problems with Central's air-conditioning; and overshooting the maintenance budget. The meeting was dominated by interchanges between Ken Roberts, John Rees, Mvume Dandala, with lesser contributions by Philip Mvunyiswa. Two people did not say anything at all throughout the entire meeting.

Central has highly committed staff and lay leaders. A stable core of members has contributed time, money

and effort in many ways over a long period. Some 13% of the 1993 congregation had been at Central for more than 11 years. The ministers are liked (16% come because of this reason), the superintendent's gifts of public involvement are appreciated, and the sermons appreciated. The lay leadership was until 1992 divided into general and executive leaders' meetings.

A leaders executive meeting in March 1992 was formally chaired by Dandala. The topics discussed included the election of four morning and two evening representatives from the congregation; the amalgamation of the leaders and the leaders' executive meeting; drivers for the minibus which collected older members; the cost of sending representatives to the New Land Conference⁴²; the future form of the School for Christian Living; the need to encourage greater financial contribution among members; moving Bibles from the chapel to the main sanctuary; a government grant to Paballo; and the shabby conditions of the cry room which had upset a couple.

Leaders regard Central's task of reaching out to the people of the inner city as an important one.

2.2. Decision-making processes

Meetings are male-dominated in style and in choice of chairpersons. There is an under-representation of blacks and women, despite these two groups forming the majority of the congregation (blacks 58%, women 62.6%). And at a leaders' meeting in January 1993 attended by 25 people, 12 were women, 3 blacks. Exclusive communication circles became noticeable in the handling of ministry closure and staff dismissals, with important decisions conducted mostly between the superintendent and the financial executive. This process excludes people from input, as illustrated by the consequent attempts to communicate frustration and anger through a middle person - often the superintendent's secretary. The finance executive by its constitution and composition would tend to be constrained in its decision-making to contain Central's annual debt of R65 000 (1992); in 1991 the figure was R32 000. The period between Storey's exit and Dandala's entrance was a three months period which caused stress for the leaders like Hudson. In addition, when Dandala replaced Storey, he necessarily came in as a spectator, inevitably lacking in intimate knowledge of Central's history and processes. Some of the leaders commented that "Mvume does not fully understand the old Central".

2.2.1. Closure of the People Centre

In 1992 the People Centre was experiencing a fall-off in patrons, and the resulting financial losses led to the evolution through various meetings of the idea of closing the restaurant. At a February 1992 Deaconess Society meeting a R2 000 loss was reported. Various alternatives were already in place, such as a 32-hour four-day work week for restaurant staff. The remuneration of the lowest paid was R535, in addition to being allowed to take food as needed.

⁴². A consultation within the Methodist Church on how the denomination should adapt to future changes.

Three responses were considered: (a) to lay off staff, of which there were now too many, measured against turnover; (b) to let Central's personnel pay normal instead of discounted rates; (c) to improve the signage advertising, as it was felt that the image of the People Centre was "very poor". Advising People Centre staff of "possible termination of services" were suggested at a February 1992 Deaconess meeting by John Rees (finance executive chair, circuit steward).

At a May 1992 Frontier Ministries meeting, the question of an audit was also raised, which would help control pilfering, but this expense would also increase the loss. Ken Roberts argued that the loss was actually not large when considered against turnover, particularly as Central paid the electricity bills of the People Centre⁴³. Turning to the question of dismissals, Dandala pointed out that People Centre staff could least afford to be laid off. A decision regarding possible staff lay-offs was deferred to the leaders' meeting. A suggestion by Dandala that a drama or art group which wanted space could be used to attract customers and potential members to Central was endorsed by all.

The losses of the People Centre lead to a discussion at the same meeting of what ministry the restaurant fulfilled. Superintendent Dandala suggested that the intention of the People Centre should be measured against its effectiveness. Joan Rudolph replied that the People Centre has no definite ministry; many patrons come purely for the cheap food, many for the atmosphere in which they feel at home. She said she did not know whether people actually wanted more; although on occasion "we have prayed with some in the chapel". Janet Hudson thought that the People Centre fulfilled a ministry of hospitality.

Storey believes that Central will regret closing the Centre in 1993.

2.3. Conflict processes

Two particular conflicts were revealed during the study involving staff, lay leaders and the superintendent minister. The issues were resistance to the superintendent's handling of conflict; and to the time consumed by the superintendent's public role. The superintendent's outward involvement is in line with the reasoning behind his appointment to Central, and does give a high public profile to the church. From a systems-theoretical perspective this role has been defined for him by the intentions of the society stewards, past structures, direction, and also the history of his predecessors.

More subtle conflict is visible in the behaviour of two senior leaders (in terms of service and position) who almost always talk and laugh among themselves when the superintendent is chairing. One - unlike the other - appears to ignore the proceedings and seldom if ever makes a contribution. In return the superintendent ignores their subdued but visible indiscretion.

2.3.1. Closure of the evangelism ministry: confrontation in relation to vision, role definition and process

⁴³. In turn the restaurant paid for snacks and teas at all Central meetings.

After Dave Ching left Malihambe in 1992, conflict slowly developed among the remaining staff of the cluster, and between some staff and the senior minister, which eventually involved all leaders to some extent. Several factors fed into the tensions, including the internal dynamics (declining participation, self-doubt, a power vacuum); a letter written by Allan Storey regarding inefficiency on the part of the remaining staff (not Bassingthwaighte); the use of funds earmarked for Malihambe to employ a secretary; and the imminent cessation of German funding. The position of director vacated by Ching had not been filled immediately. Both Takwesi and Bassingthwaighte felt that the superintendent had given them the impression that they would be appointed. This caused confusion as to who was heading Malihambe, and some tension between the two arose.

Open conflict erupted when the superintendent made clear his intention of closing down the ministry, an action that had a ripple effect. Dandala gave as a reason the imminent cessation of funding, which had been known about for some time; the Germans indicated that their contribution would draw to a close in 1992. There was some uncertainty about whether a final instalment was forthcoming or not. According to Takwesi the decision was given to him personally by the superintendent without prior discussion or warning. The immediate implication of the decision was his dismissal as well as that of part-time evangelist Alex Collins; Bassingthwaighte had been offered and had accepted appointment to head Paballo.

Meanwhile the impression arose among staff that the closure had to do (a) with a general scarcity of funds within Central; (b) a personality conflict between Dandala and Takwesi, who had expressed hurt at the superintendent's actions. Reinhold Koetter, a German national appointed temporarily as assistant minister, tried to get confirmation from Germany about whether the final instalment would still arrive under the impression that its availability would postpone the closure. This brought him into conflict with the superintendent, as Koetter had not consulted Dandala about this action. Koetter felt that this was the reason why he discovered at the Quarterly Meeting that the search was on for a replacement for him. Some staff questioned why a portion of the funding had for some time been diverted to the salary of a secretary who answered the switchboard and kept the church's records up to date.

Attempts at resolving conflict did not occur directly between the parties concerned, but through two others outside it. The first covert attempt was made through the superintendent's secretary, who was subjected involuntarily to staff and leaders (and probably the superintendent too) speaking to her about how they felt about one another. A second overt attempt at resolution was to draw in another person to intervene with the superintendent. Some lay leaders who felt that Dandala was not handling the closure correctly, chose to ask Jonathan Cook, a psychologist, to speak to the superintendent about the issue, rather than confront him directly themselves. They perceived the closure to be as a result of a personality clash between Dandala and Takwesi. The conflict dragged on for a couple of weeks, surfacing implicitly or directly in several meetings. The end result was that the visitation ministry was closed down.

The unwillingness of the conflicting parties to openly discuss differences with one another seemed due

to a fear among the staff of retrenchment as instrument of retribution. This may explain their use of the secretary to speak to one another. The strategies illustrate a lack of trust and openness, reluctance to engage in honest dialogue, and triangling - the process by which one party in a conflict with another attempts to get a third party to ally with it. The projected antagonists in this conflict are an indication that people within Central are aware of some systemic dysfunction, but prefer not to deal with this at a deep level. Rather, certain individuals are seen as at fault, while in reality the whole system needs to be overhauled.

3. PROGRAMME

Outreach to city-dwellers happens through one day- and one after-school care programme, and a feeding-medical programme for the homeless. Central's inward life is supported by a visitation team. Various groups take care of floral arrangements, the choir, a Tuesday meeting for pensioners, a Sunday School, and a youth programme. Only two fellowship groups survive from a previous period; neither integrated. The strong emphasis on ministry to the inner city seems to be to the detriment of Central's own congregation.

The cluster concept employed at Central means that the leaders of several programmes gathered for shared leaders' meetings. So in 1992 the Frontier Ministries' Cluster included Careways, the People Centre, FLOC, and Paballo ya Batho. For the sake of simplicity these will be dealt with separately below.

3.1. Services

Central Section has three services, two in the morning, one in the evening. Like other churches, the services are very different from one another. The early morning service is attended by a handful older members, and is held in the chapel.

The mid-morning service in the main sanctuary is a relatively formal event, drawing the largest congregation of the day, usually with all three ministers officiating at some or other level. Most whites who come are in their late fifties or sixties, while the black/coloured/Asian sectors are in their mid-30s. The organ is used to lead hymns, and the choir usually sing an anthem. Children are part of the service until after a children's talk, when they leave for Sunday School. The talk is hosted by one of the leaders, and the children go forward and group themselves on the kneeling section of the altar rail. The service itself is very western, with little attempt at indigenization.

The evening service in the chapel is informal, with lay members often leading the worship which starts the service. Rob Thompson of the Peacemakers often plays piano to accompany the selection of choruses, or for the hymns during the service. Sometimes a play will take the place of a sermon, and Janet Hudson involved different people in the readings, supporting the contention by Lynne van den Berg that "the evening people like change". The evening service has noticeably few blacks.

A Sunday mid-morning service, 1 November 1992

With those arriving for the Sunday mid-morning (10 am) service I park my vehicle in the parking garage underneath the Holiday Inn Garden Court in Jeppe St. We walk up the garage ramp, turn left into the Small St Mall for a short distance, then turn left again through the double glass doors of Central's main entrance into the ground-floor lobby. The stairs to the left lead to the green-carpeted first floor, where a number of people mill around and talk. At the far end of this foyer is a brass plaque commemorating those who died during the World War, and a large green couch. Joan Rudolph and Lionel Lennert sit behind a metal table, endorsing parking vouchers with today's date. Presentation of such vouchers to the parking garage attendant means you do not have to pay a fee.

Two people (door stewards) stand outside the high wooden double doors leading into the sanctuary, on both sides. One steward greets me as I enter, shakes my hand and gives me a pew bulletin. I sit in one of the soft green tip-up seats arranged in rows around the sanctuary. Above me the balcony extends out over a third of the sanctuary. In the rack attached to the seat in front of me are a Methodist hymn book and a bible. The congregation is being led through a couple of songs which will be sung later in the service. At the front left of the sanctuary is a banner on a stand with a shell and the words 100 beneath it⁴⁴. The central space behind the altar rails is occupied by a huge table, with a red cloth spread over it, on which towards the right is placed a large white candle encircled with barbed wire. Behind the table is a large podium, and behind that the choir stalls and organ screen. A baptismal font and a piano are visible towards the right.

The front page of the A-5 size six page pew bulletin tells me that I am "welcome to Johannesburg's Central Methodist Mission", which has been "serving the city for more than a century". During 1992 the illustration of a black dove silhouetted against an outline of Africa decorated the front page, with the Prayer for Africa as the inscription: "God bless Africa/Guard her children/Guide her rulers/And give her peace" ⁴⁵. The left of the inside two pages asks the reader to preserve "quiet before worship - 4th Sunday before Advent"; while the rest of the notices concern the date for the annual Christmas concert (4 November), the vacancy of assistant at Careways Children's Care Centre, an invitation to join in Children's Day celebrations (7 November), and an explanation of the sponsor of this week's flowers (a huge arrangement prominent in the front, like every Sunday).

The right inside page supplies dates, times, and ministers officiating at services, as well as events during the coming week. The back page again extends a welcome, and supplies information about the ministers, lay pastors, office hours, worship services, New Life and GIFT groups, availability of cry rooms, "free, safe parking"; and a service by which tapes of services can be ordered. There are two inserts in the

⁴⁴. The symbol of world Methodism, here linked to the centenary celebrations of Methodism in Southern Africa.

⁴⁵. In 1993 different illustrations were used on the bulletin's cover: 7 February 1993 had a figure wearing a long robe and carrying a cross and the inscription "Serve me and follow me". 2 February 1993, a baptismal service, had a large cross with three persons, holding one another, in the centre and the inscription "Jesus said: 'Let the children come to me, do not try to stop them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these'".

bulletin: a page with songs printed on both sides; and one with "Central Methodist Mission: Daily Devotions" for the coming week. At the top of the latter page is a list of names preceded by the rubric "Healing". Each day has a devotion assigned, consisting of a heading; two readings (a psalm in every one); a short written paragraph focusing on a thought; and ending with a short prayer. The bulletin also informs me that today is the 106th anniversary service of the Central. A carillon sounds outside. I know that as Central has no bell tower the tones are being provided by a tape recorder switched on by a door steward.

Dandala and Mvunyiswa enter from opposite ends, wearing black robes and dark suits, with white strips on their high collars. They take their places on the seats next to the pulpit. The organ sounds, and the eight-person choir, dressed in robes, rises and sings the anthem. As they finish, Mvunyiswa steps towards the small podium to the left, and announces the hymn, which is also visible on two wooden boards high on the left and right. The congregation, which numbers by now about 270, stands for the hymn and the prayer. Mvunyiswa then leads the congregation in a prayer. The prayer is addressed to God, the "fountain that sustains our life", of which "we are not worthy but have been made worthy". Thanks is expressed for "the great flame of Methodism kindled here, and the work and testimony in the city ... There were times when we let you down, but You have not counted it against us." The prayer ends with a plea for "strength to continue to do Your work in the city. Be with us in the hymns, prayers, the word, and each item". The Lord's Prayer is introduced, with the congregation joining in after the first couple of words intoned by Mvunyiswa.

The Sunday School goes to the altar rail led by Young, and after a talk throws coloured streamers into the congregation. The children exit, and Dandala lights the candle. He speaks of the hurts suffered by the church in trying to meet the challenge of bringing Christ "relevant and alive to each situation"; and of celebrating "the ministries that have flowed from this church", starting with preaching from the ox-wagon. He introduces the next song, the Prayer for Africa printed at the front of the bulletin. Then the notices are read: a welcoming service the following Sunday for new members and an ordination service. Dandala announces that the contributions of the congregation "to the work of God" will now be received. Eight stewards move from the back to the front of the congregation, stopping at every second row to circulate a velvet bag attached to a wooden handle in which the congregation place their money. Three of the stewards are white (one male, two women), three coloured (two male, one female). The stewards take the bags to the altar rail while the congregation rises, and Dandala prays: "We bring these out of love and commitment to You ... Receive these gifts and bless them to your service." The stewards take the bags out by a side door, and Dandala and the congregation sits as the choir stands to sing.

To celebrate the anniversary, each ministry of the Mission in turn now comes forward, with Dandala reading out the financial contribution they have raised through the year for this purpose, including the Bright Hour, People Centre, FLOC, Careways, Flower Guild, and the Choir. The amounts vary from the Sunday School's R100 to the R1 800 raised by the Women's Auxiliary ("you cannot be a strong church without a strong women's organisation"). Representatives from the different ministries then kneel at the

altar rail and Dandala prays a prayer over them, ending with a request not to dwell on the past, but on a "clear vision of what God wants to do in future". The congregation remains seated for the prayer. Another hymn is announced and sung with the congregation standing; noticeably few sing, and even fewer sing loudly.

Dandala then climbs the pulpit. Before starting the sermon, he commends those who have donated and arranged the more elaborate flowers than usual. The reading and the page in the pew bible are announced (Rom 5:1-5). Some find Bibles and turn to the place. At the end of the reading the minister says: "This is the Word of God", and the congregation responds "Thanks be to God".

The theme of the sermon is the suffering of Central through dire finances now and in the past after World War I; those members, parents and their children, who participated in World War II; and those who suffered because of oppression under apartheid, or because of their opposition to it. But each time of suffering also called forth a faith response. During the economic depression there were "people who stood up and said 'come what may, people must hear about God'". Given the present situation of continuing violence people "still have every reason to be angry, to despair - but for Christ. We have a hope that says to us 'move on into the future with Jesus'. The present is saying to us 'be human', but we must be like God. When the world is saying hate, take revenge, give up - we will say 'in the Name of Christ we will not'."

At the end of the sermon another hymn is sung, then Dandala says the benediction, spreading his arms out over the standing congregation. People sit down, and silence reigns for a while. The two ministers quickly walk out to the foyer outside the sanctuary, where they shake hands and briefly talk to the congregation who filters past.

3.2. Malihambe Team

The origin of the Malihambe Team (meaning "let it [the word] spread") is traced differently according to the personal perspectives of those telling its story. Storey remembers the origins as going back to a challenge about Central's evangelism, presented to him by the society stewards during a regular Tuesday 6.30 am leaders' meeting for prayer and planning (Storey 1992:5). Former Evangelism Cluster director Dave Ching looks back at events since 1981, when "as many members of the congregation as possible" were involved in going out and inviting people to special occasions, such as Easter services (Ching 1992:4). The team evolved through several stages, of which the later forms were most clearly anticipated in the 1986 visitation campaign, in which a team of 40 people visited 20 apartment buildings between February and May, convened under John Rees (Rees 1986:1).

In 1987 probationer minister Rev Fred Erasmus was appointed as the first full-time evangelist "to explore flatland ministry", and a permanent team was formed to go out on weekly visits (Ching 1992:4). The

team⁴⁶ identified 83 apartment buildings "within one quarter of the area defined around Central", and visited a total of 1 776 flats in 15 of these (Visitation evangelism 1987:1). Where tenants could not be personally contacted, various pieces of literature were left, supplying an evangelistic message and information about Central (Visitation evangelism 1987:2). From 7-9 April Lay Witnesses⁴⁷ assisted the Central team in visitation. In July a visitation city plunge was arranged by the team for theological students from the Federal Theological Seminary (FEDSEM) and Rhodes. During a plunge people from outside the area is exposed to mission in central Johannesburg in an event described as "a pilgrimage of pain and hope". The team found many tenants grimly resisting eviction in terms of the Group Areas Act through Flat Committees and later ACTSTOP Tenants' Association, which opened a Tenants' Advice Office in Central's building (Visitation evangelism 1987:2).

In 1988 Dave Ching joined the Evangelism Cluster, and conducted a survey with Ms K L Bang which showed 166 apartment buildings existed within the city centre. For visitation purposes Ching narrowed these down to 100 buildings within a six-block radius from Central. A visitation evangelism blitz, following initial training on 18 March, was held during the evenings of 21-26 March, reaching 10 apartment buildings, with an average of 6 people going out every night - three from outside churches. Seventeen more buildings had been visited by June with a team which averaged eight people, although "officially 14 belong" (Ching 1988:1). Of the people visited, at least 13 came to Central; five came regularly, with two of these joining the New Life membership group (Ching 1988:2). Flat Fellowships were introduced for people "reluctant to come to the institutional church". These evangelistic Bible studies aimed "to take the gospel into their own context" (Ching 1988:2). One was started, with low attendance and two people "committing their lives to Christ" (Ching 1988:2). After suggesting that a full-time assistant be appointed, Ching noted his own desire to reside in a block of flats in order to be "more relevant and 'incarnational'" (Ching 1988:2).

In 1989 Ching was appointed as lay pastor and full-time Director of the Evangelism Cluster, which consisted of a part-time evangelist and 23 members from the congregation (Ching 1989:1). The Cluster met on Thursday evenings, and went visiting in twos. A team of lay volunteers⁴⁸ regularly joined these staff on outreaches on Thursday evenings, bringing "many, many people to the Mission and to conversion" (Storey 1992:5). Aside from extending friendship, noting problems and needs, the twos also offered advice on where to find help, whether at Central or "other caring agencies like ACTSTOP" (Ching 1989:1). A young low-income Afrikaner was helped with clothes, and with his loneliness through inclusion in the non-racial fellowship group Khululeka: "his first contact with blacks, but his prejudice is being outweighed by the friendship offered there" (Ching 1989:1). The visitation team also found themselves befriending "the large community of 'street people'" (Ching 1989:2).

⁴⁶. Members of the team included Mick Bluff, Doreen Pistorius, Em Kuschke, Eunice Nvambo, Charles Trangmar, and George Wall (Visitation evangelism 1987:3).

⁴⁷. This lay organisation mobilises Methodist volunteers for evangelistic visits to another Methodist congregation.

⁴⁸. Including Mick Bluff, Em Kushke, Doreen Pistorius, Darryl Geffen, George Wall, Tudor Maxwell and Gillian Davey (Storey 1992:5; Central 1991:18).

City plunges were arranged for members of suburban and township churches, the most successful of which drew 30 people for an afternoon's training and three nights visitation (Ching 1989:1). Black township dwellers were as "horrified" as their white privileged counterparts "at the conditions they discovered - far worse than in the townships", including overcrowding, lack of electricity, and passages flooded with sewage (Ching 1989:1). Six Bible studies were established in as many different blocks in 1989. The method was to start the study in the apartment of someone linked to Central, identify a leader within the group, and then to allow that person to take over the group. The end results were spiritual growth, mutual caring, "a healthy network", and "a sense of community" which turn "strangers into friends" (Ching 1989:2).

Funding was sought, and eventually provided by German churches for 1990 (EMW Hamburg & German Methodist). The Cluster now had two full-time (David Ching, David West) and two half-time evangelists (Alan Storey, Pogiso Takwesi) who were required to live in the city "among the people they serve" (Central 1991:18; Ching 1989:2). The visitation team was now known as Malihambe. From November the visitation team was joined by members from nearby St Mary's Cathedral, Church of the Province of South Africa (Ching 1990:2). Aside from several shorter experiences led by the team, a week-long plunge was held over Easter for Durban students from Pentecostal and charismatic backgrounds (Ching 1990:2). The team helped to distribute bread and soup for those sleeping on the streets; a winter programme organised by the Usindiso night shelter and several churches (Ching 1990:3).

West and Takwesi were in charge of youth ministry in 1990, in response to Ching's suggestion in 1989 that the job-description of one cluster staff member be a focus on children and youth. The 1986 team had found that of 754 flats visited over 406 had children with average ages falling into two sets: 1 to 10, and 15 upwards (Rees 1986:1). The children were often latchkey kids⁴⁹ with nowhere to go after school. Some were locked out for the afternoon until a parent would return, spending the time sitting on the stairs or wandering the streets. Some cannot go to school at all, due to lack of money for transport (What a Family 1992:3). During a visit in 1990 the team came across a two-room flat in which lived fifteen women and children. The children slept underneath the beds (Ching 1990:1). Two new foci were a Friday evening youth programme called "The Basement", and visiting the so-called escort agencies. The Basement was relatively unsuccessful in attracting numbers (Ching 1990:4). At the end of 1990 Storey and West left, with the latter replaced by Namibian Judy Bassingthwaighte in 1991.

In 1991 the aims of Malihambe were described as (a) friendship evangelism (through "cold visitation"), follow-up of potential members, and evangelistic Bible studies; (b) "city plunges" (Central 1991:18). Ching and Bassingthwaighte were full-time staff members, with Takwesi part-time. Director Ching enthused about the effectiveness of the team "due to their different gifts ... different cultural backgrounds", and "their ability to work as a team" (Ching 1991:1).

⁴⁹. Children who are given a key to let themselves back into a dwelling after school because the parent/s are still at work.

The beginning of 1991 saw a good start by the now joint Anglican-Methodist team of 12 to 14 visitors. The Central team were mostly whites, and the Anglicans mostly blacks (Ching 1991:1). The denominational mix brought about new arrangements: a Methodist and an Anglican were paired where possible; team meetings were alternately held at St Mary's and Central for two month-periods, with visits to flats nearest each building. The mix also eased the impression among flat-dwellers (and perhaps in the minds of the team) that visitation was essentially a recruiting exercise by a specific denomination (Ching 1991:1). But Anglican enthusiasm waned and by 1992 only one (Yvonne White) remained, although a Catholic woman (Cathy Freeman) was now a regular participant. Three regular Methodists withdrew and by the end of 1991 the team numbered eight⁵⁰ (Ching 1991:1).

Partly to boost team morale the first Thursday of each month was now spent in Bible study and prayer. This was judged "well worthwhile" as increasing the "understanding of the spiritual foundations and purposes of our task" and so improving effectiveness (Ching 1991:1). Strategy was adjusted further by reserving the second and third Thursdays for visiting a specific building for two weeks, with revisits on the last Thursday to those who respond positively. The result was reports of people joining both St Mary's and Central churches (Ching 1991:2). The last plunge of the year occurred on the Sunday before Christmas, with the evening congregation going carol singing, and a picket by the youth held in front of Central on the Monday to point passersby to the "real meaning of Christmas" (Ching 1991:2).

The team led workshops on evangelism at a Laity Convocation, and also a Faith-sharing Course at the School for Christian Living during September, the designated Faith-Sharing Month. Some participants accepted the challenge of going out with the team during the course (Ching 1991:3). About 100-125 flat dwellers per month were visited in 1991, as were 25 people who attended Central, while about 10 "meaningful conversations" occurred with prostitutes (Central 1991:18). Visits were also paid to visitors to Central who had completed a visitor's slip during Sunday services. The full-time staff sent letters of welcome and visited these.

But signs of change were appearing in 1991: besides the declining numbers of volunteers visits became more difficult due to increased security at apartment blocks. Although several short plunges occurred, longer plunges proved difficult to arrange, with only five people participating in the week leading up to Easter. The September faith-sharing course was poorly attended, and those who went out visiting did not come regularly after the course had ended. The dwindling numbers of volunteers and the lack of enthusiasm can at least be partly explained by the results of the demographic survey (see section 5, below): mission and evangelism are supported by 56% of the congregation as extremely important; but 34% are prepared to personally share their faith with others. This implies that the congregation is happy to support others to do this, rather than do it themselves.

3.3. Paballo ya batho street people ministry

⁵⁰. Ching, Bassingthwaite, Takwesi, White, Kushke, Freeman, Tudor Maxwell, Mark Proctor, with irregular participation by Nomaziz Rajulii and Tony Maybank (Ching 1992:1).

Paballo ya Batho is a ministry which by 1991 cared for about 350 homeless street people in Johannesburg by providing weekly soup and medical treatment (Central 1991:42). The actual work is carried out by a team of volunteers from St Mary's, Central and other churches under present director Judy Bassingthwaighte.

Paballo, according to founder director Janet Hudson (1989-1992), had a small start: one cake box full of bread, a bucket for soup, and a combi bought for R900. "We got the soup powder for free but had to buy the bread. The needs grew, the numbers on the streets grew, and so the ministry had to grow." In mid-1992 there were a team of volunteers, five buckets of soup, 2 medical teams, and the use of a clinic. Five hundred homeless people are catered for "and we turn away double that", said Hudson. "I could not sleep thinking of the people on the streets. Giving out soup was fine; but when we tried to give out blankets the street people would attack out of desperate need".

3.4. People Centre Restaurant

The People Centre was initiated by Storey in 1977 as "a crucial inspiration". Storey felt at the time that the congregation was too traditional for the concept, and his options were either to wait until the idea had taken root, or to go ahead and provide a model "of the kind of thing I meant when I talked about the church serving the world" (Scott 1981:6). Finance for the project was found outside the church, and the concept was approved at a leaders' meeting (Scott 1981:6). There was some opposition from the fellowship groups, about 300 people, who would now no longer be served tea in the rooms within the church building where they were meeting at the time (Scott 1981:7,26). A committee comprising representatives from each fellowship group was appointed to examine the use of space - a step which engendered a satisfactory sense of participation, even though the group eventually dissolved without formally deciding anything (Scott 1981:7). The Centre's most obvious forerunner locally was Webb's Youth Institute, which operated from 1951 on (compare Webb 1951:12).

The People Centre opened in April 1978 in the downstairs foyer of the Wesley Hall in Central's basement (Scott 1981:7). A sign outside the building in Smal St alerted passers-by to the restaurant's existence (Scott 1981:1). The restaurant was open from Tuesday (10 am to 7.30pm) to Saturdays (10am to 12.30pm) (Scott 1981:1). The People Centre was not charged for rental or utilities, but provided tea and snacks for Central and district offices, refreshments after services, and monthly meals for executive leaders and the Finance Executive (Central 1991:36).

The first director was Joan Rudolph, appointed in 1978 as Central's first full-time lay staff member (What a Family 1978:2). After three years her feet "gave in" and she returned to her former occupation (Rudolph 29/5/92). Several people then managed the People Centre for short periods of time (an Austrian for 3 months, a Canadian for 6) (Rudolph 29/5/92). Eventually Beth Logan took over as director overseeing the staff and volunteers in 1981, in what was considered to be an integral part of Central's mission. From 1986-1989 Wendy Young (now FLOC director) took over. Rudolph then returned in 1989 for a second

stint, lasting until 1992.

The stated purposes of the People Centre were (a) to be an informal meeting place; (b) to provide organised as well as (c) educational (spiritual, social, vocational) programmes for special interest groups such as senior citizens, office workers; (d) social events (Scott 1981:7). By 1981 1045 people used the People Centre Restaurant, of which 48,7% (510) were black and 44,5% (465) white (Scott 1981:11-12). An average of 253 people was served a day, but only 32 on a Saturday (compare Scott 1981:11). Given the mix among patrons the People Centre could be said to have met its first goal (Scott 1981:18). A number of older white people also found a place where companionship was easier to find (Scott 1981:18); whether as patrons or volunteer helpers.

The People Centre also fulfilled its envisaged function of moving the frontier with the city from the doorstep of the church building to into the building itself. This drew in people who in Storey's words were not the "fairly churchy" type who would "come through the doors of this building" (quoted in Scott 1981:17). Rudolph said that she aimed to serve people with dignity, whether "they are wearing overalls or are dressed to kill" (Rudolph 29/5/92). Some alcoholic street people saw the People Centre as a soup kitchen, so providing a challenge to the staff. If allowed in, there was always the danger of that they would vomit; so they were first sent upstairs to be screened by the social worker. Then they would receive a meal and be sent to St Mary's. Rudolph told of one older street person who came in once a week and tried to preach, but "responded to gentleness". There were also those who were aggressive; she told her staff that the way to deal with these people is to "state your case and walk away" (Rudolph 29/5/92).

In this way the needs of city people were brought to the attention of church people - so the People Centre also served Central (Storey in Scott 1981:17). Several patrons had volunteered to work at Central's reception desk (Scott 1981:23). Storey said that as a result of the People Centre blacks "'felt totally free to use the church's facilities'", and some had approached him for counselling (Scott 1981:19). A probably unforeseen dynamic was the interaction between black restaurant staff and black patrons, and between them and Rudolph. Rudolph said:

"I tried to get black staff to assume responsibility, but it didn't work; they couldn't. A pity, because I wanted to grow them. Perhaps they were from the older school, but the first thing they did [when confronted with a difficulty] was to call me. We talked about it, but they could not handle it. They would get manipulated and intimidated by blacks."

By 1991 the Centre had six full-time staff and six regular volunteers⁵¹, with an annual budget of R135 000. Patrons had declined to between 600 to 800 per week, and there was "concern about the feasibility of keeping the Centre open on a Saturday" (Central 1991: 36,37). In 1992 the restaurant staff consisted of a cook, Eva Philips, Lulu Zazini, who had been there for four years and worked the cash register; and

⁵¹. Of the list of 6 volunteers in 1991, three were regulars in other Central activities (Central 1991:36).

two washers of dishes. Storey said there was evidence of "a deep sense of ministry amongst those who work in the kitchen" (Storey in Scott 1981:19,23).

But since 1981 not as many people had volunteered to help as Storey had hoped, and this still had not changed by 1991 (Scott 1981:19; Central 1991:37). By 1992 there were only five volunteers, the most remarkable of whom was 81-year old Ming Talbot, who helped out during the Tuesday and Friday lunch-times (Rudolph 29/5/92). The original intention had been to involve the congregation more, with a skeleton restaurant staff who would be involved at the minimum (Rudolph 29/5/92). At first it worked: Rudolph and one person employed to wash up were the only full-time staff. The volunteers were mainly older people, who realised the work was "about service", but there were seldom younger volunteers, perhaps because of transport and parking (Rudolph 29/5/92). Others did not come because they saw working there as "just kitchen work, and they employ [black] people to do that" (Rudolph 29/5/92). Black volunteers were almost non-existent, perhaps because many of them were in any case unemployed, and could not afford to do work for no remuneration (Rudolph 29/5/92). The exception was Hlanipa, a young black woman studying through UNISA, who helped out on Wednesdays and Fridays (Rudolph 29/5/92).

The ideal of involving large numbers of volunteers from the congregation succumbed to the constant "danger of being a professional operation" - an occurrence later repeated in many of Central's other ministries (Storey in Scott 1981:19,23). The idea of the People Centre director initiating other programmes, using the People Centre as base (for instance pastoral work among Central's numerous elderly people in the afternoon) collapsed too. The demands of running the restaurant proved too much; and in addition Rudolph had also become caretaker for the whole building (compare Scott 1981:24,26,27; Rudolph 29/5/92). Yet as late as 1992 Rudolph still dreamed of running programmes aimed at specific groups, but knew the impossibility of this without more personnel (Rudolph 29/5/92).

Because the People Centre is in reality the foyer of the Wesley Hall next door, during the eighties the frequent union meetings without warning were quite disruptive. "The Wesley Hall was used at the drop of a hat," remembers Rudolph. The massive crowds "doing just what they wanted to" and the amount of noise put people off from using the restaurant. She lodged complaints with Storey, and at a staff meeting it was agreed that the Hall would only be used after 3pm (Rudolph 29/5/92).

3.5. New Life Group

The New Life Group is an eight week programme in basic Christianity for people wishing to become new members at Central (including transferees), although it is also seen as a discipleship course⁶² (Storey 1992:5). At the end of a course members are received in a Welcoming Service, which may include baptism and confirmation. Storey wondered about the success of this group, and his doubts are borne out by the survey which shows that almost half of the attenders do not become members. Some even

⁶². Also involved were Janet Hudson, Elsie Banwell, and Elizabeth Storey, the wife of Bishop Storey (Storey 1992:5).

serve on some of the programmes: Musa, a young black woman, has been at Central for two years, and was already serving in Paballo without having gone through New Life. A black member who joined New Life in order to have his child baptised said he was turned off by the class, as leaders were always cancelling them.

3.6. For Love of Children (FLOC) Pre-school and Child-minder training Centre

FLOC was started in June 1989 by Wendy Young on the 7th floor of Wynrop House, central Johannesburg. The ministry aims to provide (a) a full-day (7.30am to 5.15pm) pre-school for 56 children between the ages of 3 to 6 from January to November; (b) twelve training courses for home carers recruited from flats; (c) home care units for up to six children; (d) enrichment programmes for domestic workers looking after children (Dimension May 1989; Central 1991:38). The children receive lunch and mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks.

By 1991 FLOC reflected the city "in the proportions of Black, Coloured, Indian, and White children attending" (Central 1991:38). The full-time staff included Wendy Young (director), Murial Vala, Ellen Klaas, and Pontsho Mosoatsi, with Sandra Shabungu as cook. The staff is assisted by volunteers, and students from the Johannesburg College of Education; such as the eight whom "completed their Community Education Programme at FLOC" (FLOC Annual Report 1991:1). A high turn-over of children, about 20% per annum, is experienced (FLOC Annual Report 1991:1).

FLOC's expenditure in 1991 was R50 000, raised from fees⁵³ (73%), and other sources (donations, fundraising, sponsors)⁵⁴ (Central 1991:38). The fundraisers included musical evenings at Bedfordview Methodist Church, jumble sales, sales of Easter eggs and Christmas decorating balls⁵⁵, and an exhibition of the children's art⁵⁶ (FLOC Annual Report 1991:2). A highlight of 1991 was the purchase of a 16-seater mini-bus, which made the weekly excursions to parks easier. These visits provide "experiences denied to children surrounded by concrete", such as discovering coloured leaves, insects, and animals (FLOC Annual Report 1991:1). The training programme for child-minders, 6 one day workshops, beginning in April and ending with a residential one stretching over September. But the programme had to be abandoned as it was discovered that the Johannesburg College of Education already had such a pre-primary programme in place (FLOC Annual Report 1991:5).

In February 1992 there were 53 children in FLOC I. A second centre - FLOC II - was started in the YMCA centre in Braamfontein and reported 35 children (Central 1991:39). The popularity of the FLOCs meant

⁵³. In 1992 the fees were R230 per month.

⁵⁴. These include groups in South Africa (Anglo-De Beers, Mobil, the Loewenstein Trust, JCI, Russell's furniture chain stores, the Perm Building Society); the UK (St John's Playgroup, Orpington; Harpenden Methodist Church); the USA (Foundry United Methodist Church, Washington; Dranesville UMC), and Sweden (The Federation of Swedish Liberal Women) (FLOC Annual Report 1991:2).

⁵⁵. In 1989 FLOC sold 1 500 Christmas balls at R1 each (The Star 15/2/90).

⁵⁶. Patrons of the exhibition in Jun 1990 had to pay R1 per adult and 50c per child (Dimension Supplement: Vol VII/V/VI No 5).

that people from outside the city centre were bringing their children, but could not be accommodated as the goal is to cater for inner city children.

3.7. Careways Children's Centre

Careways is an after-school care centre for 50-60 children, between the ages 6-12, from 1.30pm to 5.30pm, Mondays to Fridays. The main aim "is to bring children of all races together in order that they learn to live alongside each other" (Central 1991:41). Careways is "not an extension of school", and so provides toys, activities, and a library for children; most of which does not involve adult supervision (Careways information brochure page 1).

Careways raises 81% of its R60 000 budget from fees, and the rest by donations from overseas congregations in the USA and the UK, as well as through fundraising events involving the children and parents (Central 1991:41). One such an event in 1992 was an Easter concert involving 60 children and drawing "more than a hundred parents" (What a Family 1992:4). In 1992 the Careways staff included a director (Ann Fackrell), assistant (Anna Cheeseman), cook/cleaner (Mirriam Moramotse) and driver (Ezekiel Moabi).

3.8. Deaconess Society

The Wesleyan Deaconess Institute was established in 1890, but was not accepted by the British Conference until 1910. Meanwhile a Deaconess College had been established at Ilkley in the United Kingdom (The Deaconess Order:2). The Deaconess Order within the Methodist Church of South Africa was only officially founded at Conference in 1944 (The Deaconess Order:2). The prestige of the Society can be judged by the attendance of the Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor and Mrs D Anderson, at the Annual Meeting in February 1929.

The Deaconess Society is an "umbrella welfare organisation for [all Central] ministries which raise moneys [sic] from the public" for general application in "the work of the Methodist Church in Johannesburg and Soweto" (Central 1991:2,35). The Society is the oldest welfare organisation in Johannesburg, and was "established as the caring arm of the then Methodist Central Hall" (Central 1991:35). A senior leader affirmed at a Frontier meeting in May 1992 that "any project [at Central] which wants to raise funds would have to come through this meeting". The purpose of the 1946 Society is to ensure that funds are raised in accordance with fund-raising legislation. The Society consist of the superintendent, a treasurer, a secretary (who also happens to be the chair of the Financial Executive⁵⁷), and representatives from each Frontier Ministry, which function as its sub-committees (Central 1991:35). In other words, the budget of the Society comprises the total of the budgets of all Frontier Ministries (Central 1991:35).

⁵⁷. The Society "defers to [the Finance Executive] on matters of movements of funds" (Central 1991:35).

3.9. The choir

According to Stoutt The Central Methodist Choir was established in the 1920s and 1930s, as an "aid to the proclamation of the gospel", not "merely as a recital of sacred music and a display of voice" (News & Views 1969:12). In about 1945 Stoutt formed the Sanctuary Singers (sixteen women's voices) "to provide a consistent and worthy standard of singing for Sunday morning worship" (News & Views 1969:12). A group of mixed voices was formed several years later to alternate with the Singers, with both choirs participating also "in churches of other denominations in Johannesburg and on the Reef" (News & Views 1969:12,13). A big musical event was the premiere in 1969 of "The Lake", a cantata composed by Stoutt to be sung in five parts. The "'sacred opera'" was based on "A Man born to be King", and the lyrics were by the late Rev Loxley Chamings (News & Views 1969:15). The cantata was to be presented at the annual Conference, held at Central Church in 1970 (News & Views 1969:15).

The prominence of the central huge choir stalls facing the congregation is somewhat of an anachronism, given the small number of choristers. The choir which had averaged 30-40 during the early 1980s were down to about 16 in 1992.

3.10. Youth group and Sunday School

In 1992 the Sunday School met during worship time for adults, leaving during the early part of the service. The School caters for children between 2 and 15 years old, divided into four departments, with an overall attendance of 99 (Central 1991:28).

By 1951 the Sunday School had boasted 245 children and 42 teachers (Webb 1951:4). In 1966 the Young People's Fellowship, which met on Sunday mornings with the Sunday School as well as during a week-night, was renamed the Teen Club (News & Views August 1966:14). Apart from Sunday School, youth had the option of meeting in four different age-differentiated groups in the week (News & Views August 1966:14).

In 1969 an effort was made to introduce the term "Youth Department" for "the work involving the children and teenagers", in an effort to overcome the resistance of older children to "Sunday School (News & Views August 1969:13). The week-day activities of the Junior Guild (JIGS) had ceased due to a lack of a leader (News & Views August 1969:13). By 1971 143 children attended Sunday School (The Octagon November 1971:8).

In 1981 Storey said that Central had "'singularly little success'" with youth (Scott 1981:28). In 1991 the youth group consisted of Friday evening meetings of 15-20 inner-city youth with the purposes of building relationships with them through recreation and spiritual input (Central 1991:27). The racial mix in the Sunday School by 1992 included children who spoke mostly vernacular languages, and a call went out for teachers fluent in Sotho or Zulu (What a Family 1992:2).

3.11. The Bright Hour

The Bright Hour is a fellowship for elderly women, started by the Deaconess Society (Preyer 20/2/92). Mrs Preyer, who attended the Bright Hour for 20 years, remembered the Hour as essentially a social event, with tea. Things were brought and sold for reasonable price, with some money going to the church. The fellowship was usually led by the wife of the senior minister (Preyer 20/2/92).

4. RACIAL COMPOSITION AND THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL FACTORS ON STRUCTURES

4.1. Why different races come to Central

The racial composition of the church is the major reason why 35% of the people attend. This attitude was echoed by the black member who spoke of seeing Mvunyiswa baptise a white child; "this shows that whites accept change ... I have not seen this anywhere else" (Ndamase 11/2/93). Ching said:

"racial integration is an expression of the kingdom, while uniraical churches are a cheapening of it. In Revelation all nations are worshipping God together. The Homogeneous Unit Principle is heresy, especially in [racially] divided nations" (Ching 10/2/92).

The mix in Central is also the result of those white and black members who are resisting the transition from a - until the mid-1970s - mostly white to an all black congregation. In 1992 Dandala said that he wanted to be part of a racially mixed church "because of a commitment to various races reaching out to one another ... South Africa has got to be a non-racial community, and I want to be part of [such] a community on the basis of an informed faith" (Dandala April 1992). He felt that some attended Central because of the "image of the church as a non-racial church". He pointed out that blacks who attended could go to vernacular services, but wanted to belong to a church which is for everybody. A large number (63%) of those who attend Central indicated that they had invited others to come; presumably these like the mix and invited others who would also respond positively to it.

Some believe that blacks who travel in from Soweto to attend are doing so because the service is shorter and the authority structures less formal and strict than in the black Methodist churches. "A lot come because they are not tied down as tightly," said Rudolph (29/5/92). Yet black dress code at Central is markedly more upmarket than those of whites. Black member Charmaine Ndamase said that people are accepted in terms of dress, in contrast to the more formal dress code at the 3pm vernacular service (Ndamase 11/2/92).

Some of Central's structures act as doorways with the outside world, through which people find their way into the church in the manner of Alice's mirror. So the People Centre provided a meeting place for black and white, and was "'a model for the bridging of racial differences within a social setting'" (Storey in Scott 1981: 18). Some come because of the involvement of their children in FLOC or Careways. Central's reputation of social engagement built by Storey and the congregation actions during the 1970s and 1980s

continue to draw members to this day (Storey 1993:2, 1992: 4). Coloured member Claude Ortell said that he had heard of Storey during the 1976 riots (Ortell 1992). He felt that a racially-mixed church in which people were treated the same was important, and that "each one could benefit spiritually from the different cultures".

Central's involvement in the struggle for social (racial) justice through "building up a reputation for being the centre of protest and a haven for those who were being harassed by the security police" most of all gained credibility and drew both blacks and whites of the same persuasion into the congregation (Storey 1993:2). Examples are the Van den Berg couple, Eric and Lynne. Eric, a lawyer, is a conscientious objector and a member of the Methodist Order of Peacemakers. Lynne had been a member of the radical student organisation Students United for Christian Action (SUCA), and had attended a church in the coloured suburb of Coronationville. She had heard of Storey's "anti-apartheid Christianity", and wanted to be part of a group where she would not stand out (L VD Berg 18/2/93). Van den Berg said in comparison to Central, she found during a visit to Northfield Methodist "no candle and no reference to the taxi war" which was raging at the time (L VD Berg 18/2/93). Similarly Floc director Wendy Young came because she was "looking for a church involved in wider issues", and drives past "13 other Methodist churches" to attend Central (Young 5/5/92).

But interaction outside of official programmes (meetings, ministries) appear to be superficial, limited to Sunday teas after the services; and the general culture of Central is both English and white. Rudolph said that "We are trying to maintain a [sense of] family; but maybe the bridge is too wide. We are trying to involve people with one another, but this does not appear to be important [to them]" (Rudolph 29/5/92). The attempt is not helped by the fact that people seem to have so little links between themselves; the Ndamases, who live two blocks from the church building in an apartment block, did not know of other Central people nearby (Ndamase 11/2/93). But I counted about 48 other Central attenders living on the same city block as they do. Curiously enough, Central's white culture and English language-orientation could actually contribute to the mix. Whites, and probably Coloureds and Indians, would not come to a vernacular service; while some blacks would prefer not to attend the traditional, more formal, black Methodist service.

In summary, then, transition to a racially-mixed congregation was aided by:

- * the decision by previous senior minister Storey to move the church in that direction in the 1970s;
- * the symbolic (lit.: to draw together) value the church acquired through anti-apartheid activities;
- * the influx of blacks into urban areas in the mid-1980s, and the exodus of whites to the suburbs during the late 1960s;
- * the large number of black members in the Methodist church (the largest of any South African mainline denomination);
- * the influx of black Methodists into central Johannesburg - some 27% of those who attend come because it is the nearest church (e.g. the Momthandazos, the Mthembas);
- * some blacks come to escape more conservative black township churches, according to Central's

black ministers.

4.2. How sociological factors affect structures and social relations

a) Whites are slowly disappearing from the church - a concern expressed by the superintendent minister and other leaders; all of whom regard retaining the racial-mix as vital. An older member attributed this to whites moving their children to suburban Sunday Schools. Central is in a slow transition to become a black church. In contrast the evening service has since 1992 become mostly white, and a member who attends this service regularly, said there was a need "for more blacks to come".

b) The (mostly black) congregation remains uninvolved in Central programmes, despite the leaders having "tried everything we can think of". Most who attend (54%) have not become members, and 70% belong to none of Central's ministry groups. This uninvolvedness was strikingly illustrated by an event during tea-time after the service, when the regular helpers had not arrived. A white leader asked the crowd of mostly black attenders to help pour, "but they just sat and looked at me". The situation was only resolved when the old (white) hands arrived.

The GIFT home fellowships could not succeed in attracting black members, probably because they originally met in the (white) suburbs (compare Central 1991:26). A choir member for four years said that the majority of people would not join the choir as they were fearful of being asked to read music. This is another example of the tension which comes about between Central's Western middle-class, writing-oriented culture and that of the present majority black, oral culture.

Lack of motivation for involvement in programmes may be a function of the inner-city context: the combination of unemployment (13% of respondents), low-income, poor yet expensive housing, inadequate social and emotional support systems, and fear which accompanies the inner-city lifestyle. Most of the congregation may be set only on survival - with little or no energy left to care for others. In their perceptions of Central most of the congregants are like passengers waiting in a station - they are only passing through, and Central fulfils only a temporary function.

Uninvolvedness is probably the result of factors in relation to structure, leadership, and to the congregation itself; including the lack of personal contact between leaders (including ministers) and ordinary members; and between ministers and leaders and ordinary congregants in the context of the latter's homes.

In 1992 no-one was solely responsible for pastoral visitation and care - apart from Malihambe staff. Full-time staff who have a pastoral role also have more than one function which seriously impair their availability and energy (e.g. Joan Rudolph). Most of the superintendent's time is spent in executive functions (chairing meetings) or in meetings with no direct bearing on Central.

A result there is little evidence of investment in developing churchgoers' talents; the focus of almost all of Central ministries is not on its uninvolved members. The symbolic message of the above actions to

members and staff should not be underestimated. This could be interpreted to mean that no-one is "there" for them - why should they be there for Central? Central is described by a long-standing member as valuing efficiency more than love, programme more than people. More accurately, the energies and vision of Central has become so outwardly oriented that little or no attention is given to the inward care of those who attend.

c) Uninvolvement is also evident in the financial giving - 43% contribute less than R10 per month, of whom most are black. A building which is expensive to maintain cause financial difficulties. A member indicated that financial problems have been part of Central's history since the completion of the present building. The dire financial straits have led the superintendent minister with the finance executive to advise closing down the restaurant and the evangelism-visitation ministry. One member said that financial problems have been part of CMM's history since the completion of the present building.

d) Socio-economic and geographic gaps exist between the leaders (mostly white) and the people (mostly black) - most leaders live in the suburbs while most members (42%) live within two kilometres of the church, in contrast to the 28% who live further than 10km away. Members live in 39 different locations throughout Greater Johannesburg. The result is little common vision, indicated by differences in beliefs and opinions of churchgoers. The high mobility of two-thirds of the congregation means that its worldview could change very rapidly. In contrast some of the older white members have lived in the same suburban place for over a decade. More than a third (37%) do not know where the nearest member of Central lived, while almost the same number (27%) did not have close friends who attended Central.

e) Although a quarter of people earn less than R1 000 per month (of whom half are unemployed ⁵⁸), the majority are from the middle and upper income groups ⁵⁹.

f) The current composition raises the question whether the pew bulletin or newsletter are appropriate means of communication, as 63% indicated that they never or seldom read either; while 16% said they were unaware of when activities happen. This question needs to be evaluated against to the socio-educational backgrounds of the congregation.

g) Blacks and inner-city churchgoers are badly under-represented in volunteer leadership (in relation to their numerical presence in the congregation). Even women (who make up 63% of Central's congregation) have better representation. "There are many potential leaders, and we've had many meetings with them - but they do not turn up," said a white leader.

h) Most respondents to the survey prefer a church which pays attention to social issues (unemployment, caring for the needy and the aged) to one with a socio-political stance against discriminatory structures and laws. Of those who felt for the former, 80% thought it important with 48% feeling extremely

⁵⁸. While 13% earn less than a R1 000 per month, another 13% of the total number of respondents were unemployed.

⁵⁹. The two single largest income groups belong in the R2 000-2 999 bracket (21%) and in the over R5 000s (19%) categories.

personally responsible to do it; as opposed to 72% and 29% (This is reflected in the relatively big number of members involved in Paballo ya Batho.) More than 80% said it was important that the church help the sick, lonely, homeless and poor; with 84% satisfied that Central was doing this.

This contrasts with Central's past. Involvement in the community around the church is no longer regarded as a major issue, with only 25% feeling extremely personally responsible to do this.

i) The worship of the congregation remains white, Western, and English-speaking. Asked to project into the future, Dandala said he had no idea how the church would look like in 6 year's time; except that "it will be English-speaking" (Dandala April 1992). A black whose wife attended Central felt more comfortable in the 3pm vernacular services, as the morning services' songs were "too white" (Ndamasa 11/2/93).

j. Janet Hudson reflected on the difficulty of being white and a minister in a congregation of which most members are black, within a larger society which was oppressive. She said "I have not been as free to concentrate on things spiritual; neither myself nor Peter Storey felt free to choose [a hymn such as] 'It is well with my soul' - but Mvume Dandala can." She felt his appointment enabled a new thrust towards the spiritual (Hudson April 1992).

5. SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

I analysed Central between April 1992 and March 1993 through participant observation (in 10 meetings¹, 10 services) and twenty interviews with congregation members. The research period coincided with an identity survey I was commissioned to do by the superintendent minister, in which I was assisted by a lay volunteer team². Four questionnaires were handed out in batches of 350 to those attending three Sunday services³ over a four week period. The congregation was asked to complete these at the end of each service; responses ranged from 65%⁴ for the first (a demographic section) to 13% for the last (a section on the function of Central and members' personal beliefs)⁵. Six interviewers helped with scheduled questions which allowed free responses.

5.1. Church participation

5.1.1. Length of membership at Central:

Less than 2 years	50,6
2-5 years	20,5
6-10 ⁶ years	11,6
11-25 years	12,76
More than 25 yrs	14,5
<i>N=166</i>	

5.1.2. Reasons for coming

was invited	15,4%
live nearby	26,6%
racess mix	34,9%
less strict rules	7,69%
because of ministers	15,4%
<i>N=169</i>	

5.1.3. Frequency of attendance at worship service during past month

None	5,2%	
Once	9%	
Twice	19,9	
Thrice	18,5%	
Four times	23,7%	
> 4	23,7%	<i>N=211</i>

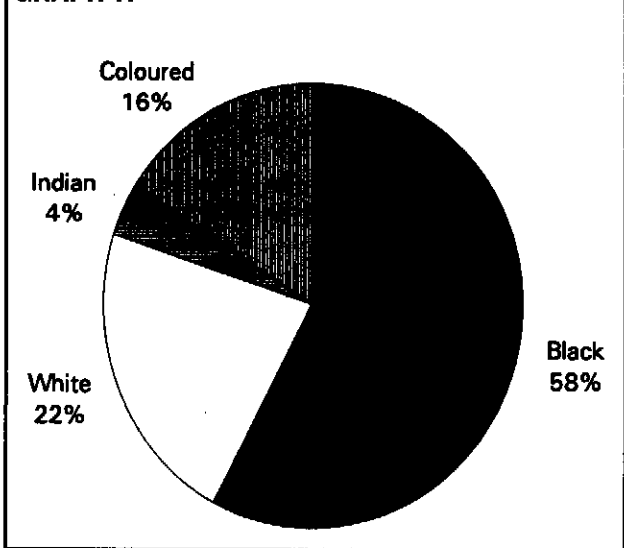
5.1.4. Membership of groups in the congregation

None	69,6%	
One	1%	
Two	7,85	
Three	15,2%	
Four	2%	
More	4,2%	<i>N=191</i>

5.1.5. Hours per week spent on Central affairs

Less than 1	24,5%	1-5 hours
30,4%		
6-10 hours	24,5%	11-15 hours
4,9%		
16-20 hours	5,4%	More than 20
10,3%		
<i>N=184</i>		

GRAPH 1: CENTRAL'S RACIAL MIX



5.2. Membership characteristics

5.2.1. Income, education, profession, age, gender, marital status

13% of respondents earn less than R1 000 per month, while 31% earn more than R4 000. The four largest income groups were the R2 000-2 999 bracket (21%), the R1 500 - 1 999s (13%), the over R5 000s (19%), and the R 4 000-4 999 (13%) categories. About 13% are unemployed, while 12% are self-employed. Educationally 51% have std 10 or less, while 33% are graduates or higher. The two largest profession represented were nurses (13 people) and teachers (11 people) - not large enough groups to be particularly significant - although both are helping professions. Most people are single (44%), while only half of the spouses of the 36% that are married are members at Central.

5.2.2. Monthly financial contributions

R5 to R10	43,4%	R41 to R 60	15,6%
R11 to R20	10,4%	R61 to R 80	0%
R21 to R30	7,5%	R81 to R100	2,3%
R31 to R40	4,6%	> than R100	4%
<i>N=173</i>			

¹ Including Leaders', Property and Finance, Circuit Quarterly, Staff, and Frontier Ministries meetings.

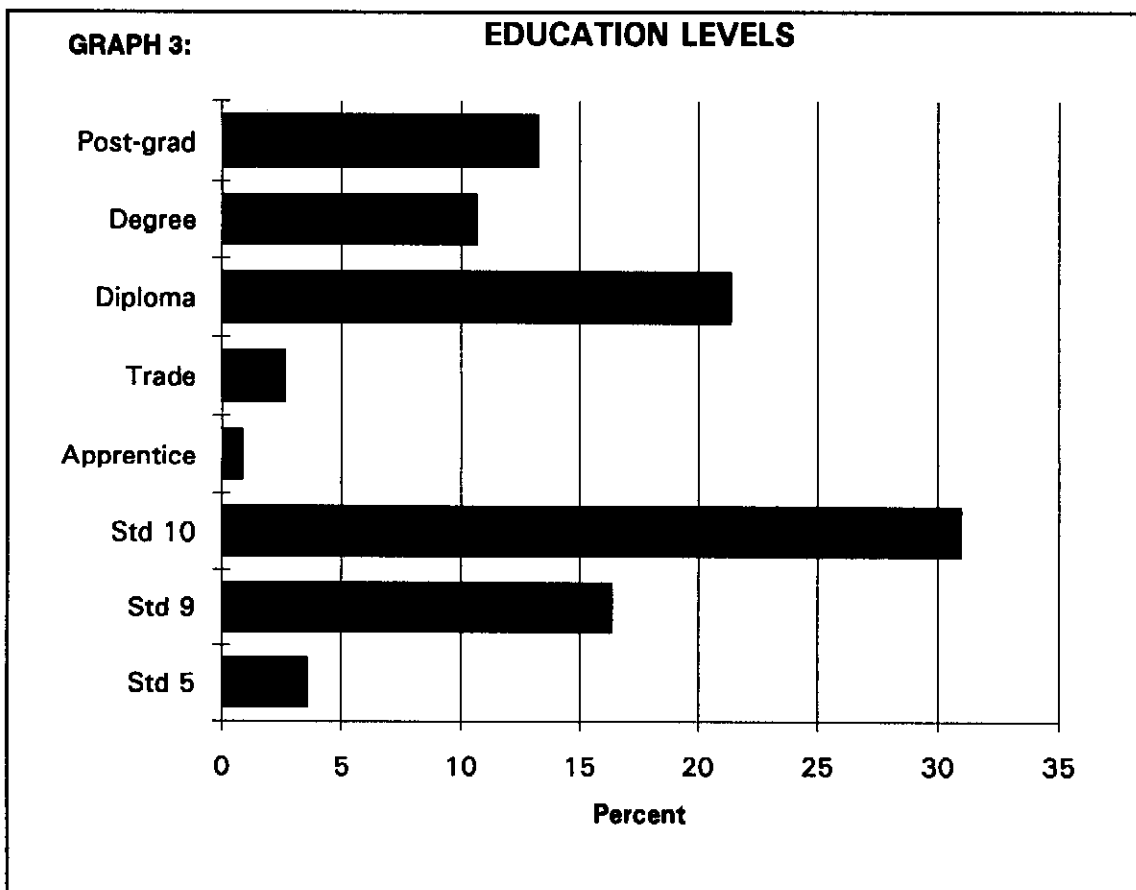
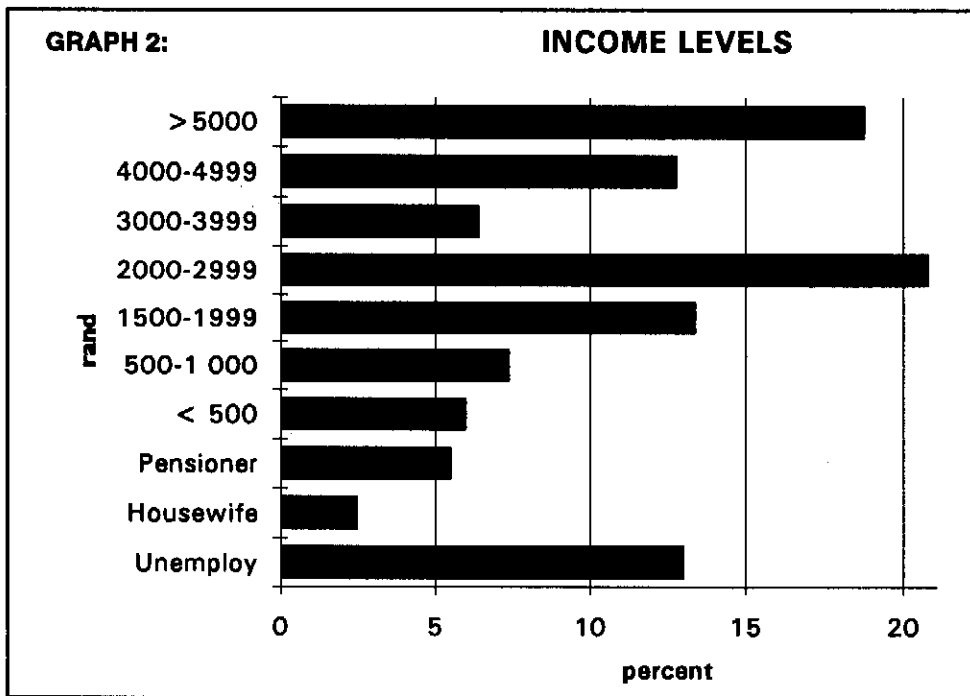
² Janet Brodrick, Rudolph Stanley, Khanyi Rajulli, Jannie Janse-Van Rensburg, Mxolisi Mgojo, Rheinhold Koetter, and Eric and Lynne van den Berg.

³ Early morning, mid-morning and evening services.

⁴ 228 of an estimated 350 possible respondents.

⁵ Other sections included organisational analysis (92 respondents or 26% of 350 surveys handed out).

⁶ Any person attending for more than 5 years was placed under the 6 years category, more than 10 years under the 11 years category, and so on.



5.2.3. Age

10-20 years	6,3%	41-50 years	15,6%
21-30 years	18,8%	51-60 years	7,8%
31-40 years	34,4%	> 60 years	17,2%
N=64			

5.2.4. Marital and family status

Single	44%
Married	36%
Separated, divorced	16%
Widower, widow	4%
N=202	

5.2.5. Spouse member of this congregation

Yes	49,4%	No	50,6%
N=77			

5.2.6. First language

Afrikaans	10,2%	Xhosa	18,9%
English	36,4%	Zulu	10,7%
French	1,9%	Tswana	7,8%
Swazi	1,9%	Other European	1%
English	91,5%	Other African	4,9%
Sotho	6,3%	N=206	

5.2.7. Nationality

South African	88,8%
Other African	7,4%
Other	3,7%
N=190	

5.4. Relationship to the community

5.4.1. How long resident in your area?

< than 2	37,6%	6-11 years	18,5%
2-5 years	34,7%	more than 12	9,22%
N=185			

5.4.2. Likelihood of respondent moving within three years

Definitely will move	21,7%
Probably will move	21,7%
50% chance of moving	22,2%
Probably not	20,6%
Very unlikely	13,9%
N=180	

5.4.3. Method of transport to Central

walk	38,9%	bus	4,4%
car	45,8%	train	0%
taxi	10,8%		
N=203			

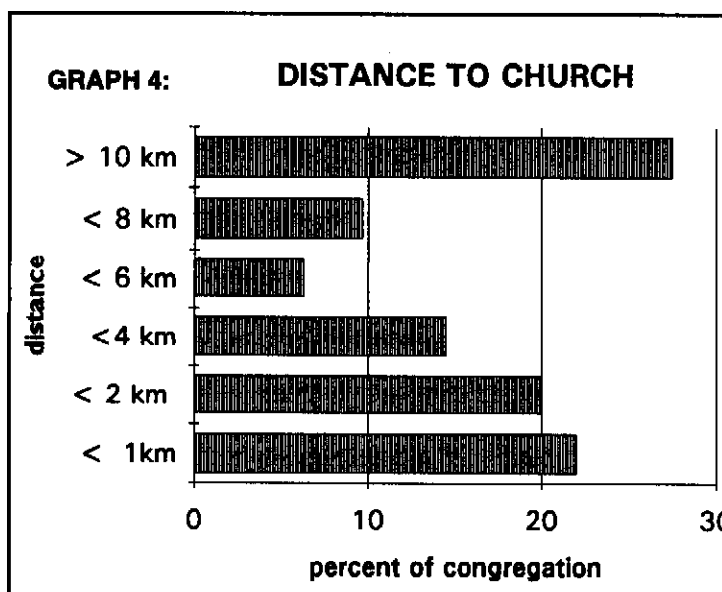
5.5. Internal Interaction

37% of respondents (75 out of 202) did not know where the nearest member of Central lived; 27% (43 out of 157) had no close friends who attended Central. About 10% live further than 10km from the nearest member.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Have you been visited by someone from Central?	36,2%	63,8%
Would you like to be visited by someone from Central?	71%	29%
Have you introduced yourself to the minister	62,5%	37,5%
N=208		

5.5.1. Distance to closest other person who also attends Central

less than 1 km	26,7%	2 km or less	13,9%
4 km or less	7,9%	6 km or less	2,9%
8 km or less	1,5%	more than 10km	9,9%
Do not know	37,1%		
N=202			



CHAPTER FIVE: ST FRANCIS XAVIER ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

St Francis Xavier is a Roman Catholic congregation located in the west Johannesburg suburb of Martindale - the reason why St Francis is known as "Martindale" to her parishioners. The original title of the parish was St Francis Xavier (African) Mission, but no overt memory survives of this name.

In 1993 Martindale is very obviously racially-mixed and multi-cultural. About four Indian couples, some blacks, many Coloureds (40%) and a majority of whites (60%) are among the 230 people who come to two Masses on Saturday and Sunday. The cultures represented include Lebanese, Portuguese, white as well as coloured English-speakers, and Afrikaans-speakers. Of these about 50-60 come on a Saturday, and about 160-170 on Sunday. Small numbers attend four other morning Masses during the week¹. The official parish estimates show that about 600 Catholic people live in the parish (Parish statistics, 1 January to 31 December 1993).

The data for this qualitative analysis come from twelve interviews (three with Coloured persons), participant observation in nine meetings and 8 Masses². I received 45 completed questionnaires of 250 handed out (i.e. 28%). Of these 42 were from whites, 1 from an asian, and 3 from coloureds. Research was conducted between September 1992 and March 1993. This section on Martindale is organised around description (2.1.-2.4.) and interpretation (2.5.), with a summary of demographic data from the questionnaire (2.6.).

1. IDENTITY IN CONTEXT

Martindale's identity is formed by the history of its surrounding neighbourhood, as much as by the history of change in the wider Catholic church.

1.1. History

In 1897 Herman Tobiansky bought 237 acres of land 7 km west of Johannesburg, including what later became Martindale and Sophiatown. Because of a lack of interest by whites Tobiansky eventually sold plots to anybody - mostly to blacks (cf. *History* 1992: 427). The area became a freehold area in which blacks could own land and live in a city otherwise reserved "for whites only". To the north-east a similar situation prevailed in the township of Alexandra.

After the First World War the municipal location of Western Township was proclaimed a block away. This contributed to the fact that St Francis Xavier, Martindale, was apparently from the start a place of worship for different races (cf. *History* 1992: 427). Martindale's church building was completed in 1929 by Fr Yves-Marie Saccadas OMI (1879-1946) as one of the first Black missions in Johannesburg instigated by Bishop David O'Leary (1880-1958, appointed 1925), the third vicariate apostolic of the Transvaal

¹. All figures are for 1992-93, and for the most part was taken from Martindale's official Parish Statistics documents.

². Three Parish Council, two St Vincent de Paul Society, four Renew meetings, seven Sunday one Saturday Masses.

(Brain 1991: 205,212). Saccadas, who served there until 1944, was based at Mayfair; from where he travelled regularly since 1926 to serve the Martindale area.

The parish was called "the Mission", short for St Francis Xavier African Mission. According to a story attributed to the late Betty Charles (a parishioner from that era), most parishioners then were blacks, with some coloureds and a small group of whites. Hymns were sung in Sotho and Zulu, and a black choir used the balcony as a choir-loft³ ⁴. Another factor in the mix was the building of a convent school, run by the Notre Dame Sisters from Namur, Belgium in 1931 (compare (Brain 1991: 205,212). The school was attended by some 1 000 children. It is said that when Fr Jean-Marie Delajod OMI (1905-1970) arrived, Mass was held in a mix of Latin and Zulu, which was the language of most parishioners. Delajod was the resident priest at Martindale from 1945-1960. Delajod was known for walking to all corners of his parish. During his time Portuguese parishioners started attending. Coloureds continued to come because Martindale was the closest Catholic church. Initially the parish was an "OMI parish", due to the Bishop belonging to that order; but neither Kotze or the present bishop does.

But on 10 February 1955 this period of being an African mission was brought to an end. A police force of 2 000 began removing at gunpoint the first 110 families of blacks to be moved to the black city of Soweto, mostly to Meadowlands. At the opening of the Catholic parish building in Meadowlands a former Martindale parishioner who had been moved said: "We will never recapture what we had at Martindale", recalls Haynet Alves - a parishioner at Martindale since 1945 - who attended the function. When this slow and painful process was completed in 1961 more than 80 000 blacks had been removed from Newclare, Sophiatown and Martindale under the Group Areas Act of 1950 (*History* 1992: 423). Sophiatown was bulldozed and subdivided, with the major part renamed Triomf (Afrikaans, meaning "triumph").

These events were witnessed by Frs Delajod and Leo Muldoon OMI (1902-1982, priest between 1955-61). Effectively this severed black participation at Martindale. The area immediately surrounding the parish building became white neighbourhoods. A plaque, originally part of the altar, now enclosed in the cry-room (for parents with infants) recalls the events of the 1950s. The four black marriages registered at Martindale after 1961 (the last in 1976) imply that a few black parishioners tried to continue their link with Martindale.

Coloureds were also forced under the Act to move, some to just across the major street (Ontdekkers Road) which separated white Martindale from coloured Western Township. Some coloureds were moved more than once, first from Newclare and Sophiatown to Albertsville, where they could not own property, then from Albertsville to Western, according to Alves. Many parishioners were moved from Albertsville to Bosmont, among them Reggie Prins' family, who later emigrated. So did Mary Thomas' daughter Stella Starr, the singer; while: "One coloured family pretended to be white, and did not mix with the rest of us

³. Later this was the cry-room, before the present downstairs one was built.

⁴. Haynet Alves heard this version from Betty Charles "an old [coloured] women [who had been] married to a white guy" (interviewed on 14/11/1993).

coloured or black parishioners."

Figure 7: Martindale's priests, 1926-1992

Yves-Marie Saccadas OMI (1879-1946) 1926-1944	Jean-Marie Delajod OMI (1905-1970) 1945-1960	Patrick Brennan OMI (1919-1968) 1947-1948	Reginald Webber OMI (1925-1980) 1954-55
Jozef de Bock OMI. 195?	Emilien Dupuis OMI (1904-) 195?	Leo Muldoon OMI (1902-1982, 1955-61)	Anthony Bailey OMI (1940-) 1973-74
Michael Tuohy 1975	Brian Van Zeil 1975	Michael Fitzpatrick 1975-1978	Victor Kotze 1978-

In response Fr Jan Molenaar OMI (1912; priest from 1961-1972) had a church built in the coloured suburb of Bosmont, nearby. While the building was under way, Martindale parish bussed in coloured parishioners from their new areas to Mass, says Alves. Although the racial mix at Martindale during the 1960s was largely white with some coloureds, Chinese and Portuguese ethnic groups also came. The Chinese⁵ were prominent until the mid-1970s, but have since left; the last sign of their presence a 1976 entry in the marriage-register. In contrast, the first sign of a Portuguese presence dates to a marriage registered in 1934. Recalls Alves:

"Many Portuguese had vegetable farms in what is today Northcliff suburb. They sat in the first three rows - did not want to sit with the blacks."

Numbers declined until the mid-1970s, when, parishioners say, the diocese considered closing the parish. Fr Vic Kotze's appointment in 1978 marked a turning point in numbers and ethnic mix. A parishioner said that this is because he "makes people feel wanted". By now so many of the parishioners were Portuguese that a Portuguese priest asked permission to conduct Easter and Christmas Masses as well as special Portuguese holy days in Portuguese. Permission was granted. In the 1980s the first of the Indian parishioners came, and later brought his cousin. What attracted him was Martindale's warmth, and the singing of "'Nkosi Sikel' IAfrika" during Mass that day, says Alves: "Vic's political views also drew a lot of people". By 1982 about 80% of parishioners were whites (McGregor 28/10/92). Overall attendance at Mass steadily increased. But not all found Martindale under Kotze to their liking: Kotze admits that Portuguese numbers declined because of his views. One estimate is that about 50% of all Portuguese had left, so that they only make up 3-4% of the present parish as a whole (McGregor 28/10/92).

⁵. Chinese people were originally brought into the country at the turn of the century as indentured labourers (Brain 1991: 114, 117).

Included in the present mix are Lebanese⁶ families like the Sadies. Most Catholic Lebanese belong to parishes using the Maronite rite, "which follows the Syriac liturgy of Antioch" (Brain 1991: 178). In 1905 the Maronite Catholic Church was begun in Diagonal St Johannesburg, and in 1908 a Maronite church building was erected in Fordsburg (Brain 1991: 118, 178).

Estimates of growth and decline over the 14-year period for which figures are available are difficult, as the number of parishioners in Martindale parish is estimated. The methods used are unclear, and at least one correction is due to a change in the way this is estimated, the reason for the apparent decline from 724 in 1978 to 405 in 1980.

Figure 8: Estimated number of parishioners at Martindale, 1978-1992

1977: 639	1978: 664	1979: 729	1980: 405	1983: 450
1984: 287	1988: 330	1990: 327	1991: 527	1992: 600

Ironically, given the forced-removals past, blacks, Indians and coloureds have recently begun buying house in Martindale suburb.

Although not a complete picture, the original marriage registers help to highlight the history of Martindale. First, it bears out the picture of different races living together and sometimes intermarrying⁷. Some 34 people (17 couples) married outside their ethnic group according to records in the *Liber Matrimoniorum* (1955-1993). Twelve of these occurred after the passing of the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949⁸ (in force until 1985). Before 1955 ten more are recorded in another marriage register dating from 1929-55. The number of mixed marriages at Martindale becomes significant when they are placed against a national average of about 100 such marriages annually in South Africa during the 1940s (compare History 1991: 375). The last mixed marriage was in 1983. Most of those who married lived in Sophiatown. These also show that Martindale was largely a black parish until 1961; starting with the first wedding in 1933, black marriages dominate each decade into the sixties. Of the marriages between 1933 and 1955, 216 were of blacks. A marriage of a white couple first appears in 1934, five years after the church building was erected; the first Indian marriage occurred in 1942.

1.2. Parishioners in their context

⁶. Lebanese were originally designated as 'non-Europeans' before the formation of the Union; both the secular and Catholic press argued that they should be regarded as 'European' (Brain 1991:258).

⁷. 5 before 1949, 5 from 1948-55, 7 between 1967 and 1983.

⁸. Although the Mixed Marriages Act prohibited marriage between whites and other race groups, other ethnic groups were also affected. People had to accept the racial identity of the person they married.

The perception is that some parishioners have been at Martindale for a very long time, with the Korb and Willemse families pointed out as having been around the longest. Dorothy Ford (85) was one of the six people involved in the founding of the initial parish, while another, Lilly Veldtman, survived until 1993.

Relatively few white parishioners now live in the suburbs immediately surrounding the church building, and "a lot travel quite a distance" (Kelly 24/9/92). In one small-group meeting Martindale was described as "not strictly a suburban church". Most parishioners usually come from afar, from inside the geographical boundaries of other parishes such as Florida, Bosmont or Victory Park. This is still a relatively unusual phenomenon for a Catholic parish. Fothergill estimated that about one-fifth of the parishioners come from within the boundaries of the Florida and Coronationville parishes. Florida suburb contains the single largest number of parishioners.

Although some white parishioners believe Coloured attendance is declining, parishioners at a 1994 report-back session on my analysis said that more coloured children are coming than any other group, often without their parent/s. This was because the children do not go to a Catholic school, and wish to be confirmed after catechesis at Martindale⁹. The report-back group estimated the number of blacks attending Mass at 10. According to a Council member Martindale's black population has grown.

The probability exists that Martindale could eventually become dominated by the coloured ethnic group. Coloureds attend because as a group they live nearest, but also because people are accepted at Martindale. Referring to one Coloured family, a parishioner said that at Martindale "they find community, without having to perform a role". Presently an estimated 80% of all those in catechism classes are coloured children. But this was not always the case: a catechist teaching junior high school said that in September 1992 only one of six Coloured families eligible sent their child to catechism. That only one child was attending this class was raised in Mass during informal time, and commented on in the parish notices. It has also been noted that there are too few Catechists. About 80% of all baptisms are of Coloured infants, said Kotze. The youth group is about 50-50% white/coloured. A parishioner pointed out that only 5-6 of the 70 to be confirmed in Florida parish was coloured.

The differences between parishioners are not only racial and cultural, but also income and education. Fothergill said that the parishioners include two professors, doctors, psychologists, two ex-priests and the Broderick family who are prominent in the theatre world (Fothergill 25/9/92). Most white parishioners - but not all - are from middle to upper income and education groups. Most coloureds are workers from lower income groups, while some fall into the middle income bracket, and a few in the higher income bracket. According to parish secretary Florence Fenn the largest monthly contribution (R480-) comes from a Coloured family. Deacon Kevin Fenn thought that people who live in the area surrounding Martindale are middle to lower income. Some from these groups used to come, but had fallen away "because of the [high] standard of homilies", which now draws "intellectuals" who find the homilies challenging from the

⁹. This situation led to a decision in 1994 to require parents whose children are undergoing catechism at Martindale to join the parish for the duration (Parish information brochure 1994:7).

northern and central suburbs (e.g. Bryanston, Yeoville) (Fenn 1/10/92).

Some parishioners were "battling financially to make ends meet", said white parishioner Mike Hyam, with some "facing losing their houses". This was true even for some whites, some of whom are self-employed. So money and employment are obvious needs among certain segments of the parish. Some parishioners said that they did not know others well enough to describe their needs.

1.3. Language

Identity is expressed in a group by the language used by its parishioners - here parishioners. When asked why they come to Martindale, several people used the word "community". Given the lack of relational contact outside official church gatherings, community should be understood as "friendly acceptance". Hyam explained community by speaking of a "feeling of belonging, concern".

Reconciliation is another key-word, which finds visible expression in the church's architecture. The church has a reconciliation room instead of a confessional, where parishioners have "a choice of a face-to-face encounter or the anonymity provided by a screen" (1989:3). This is in keeping with Martindale's emphasis on the common priesthood and removal of barriers.

Inclusive language is also used, e.g. in the opening prayer to "our Mother and Father God" at a Pastoral Council meeting in September 1993 and at a Mass. But male language for God still surfaces in individuals' prayers. At a liturgy meeting the need to "de-sex the songs" on the overhead foils was accepted. The choir was singled out as still singing the "old" (sexist) words.

Martindale's uniqueness is another topic often spoken of¹⁰. Said parishioner Hyam: "There is a commitment and liveliness [here] that you do not get in a lot of parishes ... I have been around, but everyone finds here what is lacking elsewhere - what other [parishes] avoid or skirt". And Fothergill said that he "doubts whether there is another parish like it in the diocese" (Fothergill 25/9/92). Parishioner Joan McGregor said that Martindale was the only parish that met her need for a "non-racial parish ... I would rather not go if that need is not met: I need a place where I can be different from the norm" (McGregor 28/10/92). She said the "liturgy and ethos [is] based in the current situation" (McGregor 28/10/92).

Comparisons are often made to other parishes, especially St Charles' parish in the suburb of Victory Park. Victory Park (as St Charles is known) has a large congregation (about 5 000), a modern building in a more prosperous area, and some charismatic parishioners. Many Martindalers cross through its geographical area on their way to their parish. Comparisons with Victory Park were referred to Renew participation (greater at Martindale) and finances (offerings more in one month than what Martindale generates in one

¹⁰. E.g. in the booklet *St Francis Xavier Martindale 1929-1989: The Story of our parish*, 2.

year). The nearby Coloured parish of Bosmont is regarded as an alternative attraction for Martindale's parishioners, because it "is very charismatic". Coronationville also "has more programmes [for youth]", said a catechist. Martindale is frequently and favourably compared to parishioners' former parishes, e.g. Florida.

Kotze is partly responsible for creating this sense of uniqueness. He has a strong vision for Martindale's role in the wider South African Catholic Church, believing that lay involvement at Martindale "points to the future of parish life and the service of humanity" (1989:2). Parishioners agree: their conclusion to such comparisons is: "Our parish is an example of what Vatican II had in mind: the church is the people, not a building." Another said that Martindale is "set-up" for the new South Africa. Parish co-ordinator Gordon Fothergill explained that Pope Pius XI had spoken of Catholic action "in the marketplace", which by definition meant the laity (Fothergill 10/9/92).

Martindale's ethos is described as "a clear non-racial stance, while maintaining an inclusive stance". Its identity is said to be the result of a "deliberate choice to take and stay in the middle of the road, to please everybody. We tried to create something that most people can relate to at any time".

1.4. Symbol

The sacrament of Mass is an important part of the Catholic tradition which is also reflected at Martindale. In 1989 the church building was restructured as a concrete symbol of the parish's liturgical self-vision. The changes were intended to increase the focus on the liturgy¹¹, a "deepening eucharistic community", and a "sense of common priesthood" (1989:2). Services (Mass) are divided into two major parts: the sacrament of the word (the readings, the sermon or homily) and the sacrament of the eucharist (consecrating, breaking, and sharing of bread and wine).

Space is used in Martindale in a highly symbolic manner: a stage in the front suggests sacred space by being raised above the level where the parishioners sit. This sense is supported by the specialised functions in the liturgy performed by those allowed to occupy it during Mass. Parishioners often express a longing for a church hall, and say they find it "difficult to have a purely non-spiritual event when the sacrament and altar is there". "Altar" refers to the table on which bread and wine is prepared for communion; but the term also applies to the whole raised area, which is also called the sanctuary (K Fenn 1/10/92). Another phenomenon which shows the significance of space is the way that specific groups habitually occupy the same section of seats every Sunday or Saturday. This indicates a strong sense of place (see 1.4. above for full discussion). In interviews parishioners could easily remember which group or family sat where.

Originally only the priest, the servers, the deacons and sub-deacons were allowed in the sanctuary. The

¹¹. By a "simplicity within spaces (including the furnishings)", according to parish member Mike Hyam, who designed the interior (St Francis Xavier booklet 1989:3).

servers made the liturgical responses, the choir did the singing, and parishioners were confined to being an audience (Fothergill 3/9/92). At Martindale readers and servers still occupy the stage, but since about 1986 no longer wear robes (chelbs). The choir does not occupy the stage, but sits to the left, at the same level as the rest of the parish. Other visual references on the stage include the table of the Word (where the bread is broken), candles, and a transparent perspex cross with a wooden Christ-figure. In keeping with the idea of a common priesthood, there are deliberately no barriers (altar rails¹²) between priest and parish at Mass, or between parishioners themselves; benches were replaced by chairs when the building was remodelled in 1989.

During Mass the priest is the focal point who holds everything together. In Catholicism he is regarded as *in locum Christi*, the deputy or presiding representative of Christ (Fothergill 3/9/92). At the appropriate moment Vic holds up a flat, round baked bread instead of the round wafers which are the norm in Catholic and Anglican churches. He breaks the bread facing the people. After being served communion themselves by the priest and deacon, the eucharistic ministers (laity who help serve communion) distribute the bread and wine to the people. They stand at several points in the front, near the altar, and the parishioners stream forward. Every eligible person takes wine, which is slightly unusual for the Catholic Church, in which communion can be of two "kinds": in the form of bread, and in the form of wine. Both are not necessarily served at the same time. At Martindale parishioners have communion under both kinds.

There is no permanent cross at Martindale, although the perspex cross remains in view during the whole service. "The cross symbolises the one sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb that is eternally slain - Mass is not another sacrifice, but we are brought into contact with Christ through transubstantiation" (Fothergill 3/9/92). Christ, who is seen as present all the time, is regarded as especially present when the words of consecration are spoken, which is seen as changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ (Fothergill 3/9/92).

A procession gathers at the back of the church every Sunday before moving through the congregation to the stage where the altar is. The procession symbolises the journey of Israel through the desert, following Christ, Christ himself, and his cross through which salvation came. Candles, a Bible, and the cross are carried in the procession by the servers, readers (of the Scripture portions) and eucharistic ministers (Fothergill 3/9/92).

The pilgrimage symbolism from the Old Testament for the procession is echoed in the names for the objects on the sanctuary (podium): the tabernacle and the altar. The tabernacle is a cloth-covered container for the consecrated bread for, or left over from, communion. In Martindale there are two tables of equal weight but of different sizes. The one is called the Table of the Word, where the sacrament is broken.

¹². This is unusual but not totally unique; altar rails are also absent at Bosmont parish building (Fothergill 10/9/92).

Candles are used in Mass to represent the light of the world ¹³. Two candles are present in holders on the central pillars of the church; the liturgy committee's idea to represent tongues of fire. During the Renew season which focused on empowerment these were lit. The use of candles on the altar and during the procession are like a spotlight that focuses attention and underlines action (Fothergill 3/9/92). During bygone days six candles surrounded the tabernacle.

A plaque commemorates which recalls the suffering of forced removals provides a link with the past. Today enclosed in the cry room, the plaque was part of the original altar. Continuity with the past - painful for the most part - is important at Martindale. The old building was retained and reshaped, rather than demolished. Demolition would probably have been too painful to contemplate here, given experiences of forced removal and demolition. Some old benches were recycled as wooden furniture, including the Tables of the Word and Eucharist (1989:3). A row of three other benches was kept intact in front of the shrine - the present cry-room. So the plaque commemorates the experience of the '50s was near the shrine.

Psychologist-priest Kotze motivates remembering the past as necessary for growth: "I believe this great sadness and injustice must be understood and assimilated...if our present growth is to be graced by God". The focus is neither to "take on the guilt" nor "rest on the glory of the past", but to assimilate and acknowledge both. This would help Martindale "become fully alive in the present in order to create our future" (1989:1).

Generally, the darker people's skin colour, the further away from the altar they sit. The left back ¹⁴ and front right-hand side (when facing the altar) is favoured in particular by people of darker hue. The symbolic significance of the latter, intentional or not, is to strongly link with both the political and the churched past. Blacks who sit there provide a visual link with 1954; pre-1989 Martindale; and indicate their own preference for tradition. The habit of some to sit in the same place according to race is also a reminder of an era when races sat apart in the Catholic church. When Martindale's church building faced the other way, the coloured and black parishioners used to sit at the back ¹⁵.

2. PROCESSES

2.1. Authority structures

The authority structures at Martindale are like those at other Catholic parishes, with a fourth added:

a) the priest

¹³. This is also a change from the old days, when six candles were present with the tabernacle - the holder for the consecrated bread for Mass - in the middle (Fothergill 3/9/92),

¹⁴. When I refer to directions at Martindale, they are given as though the observer was standing directly in front of and facing the central part of the church - in this case, the raised platform from which the Eucharist is served and the sermon delivered.

¹⁵. Fr Albert Nolan recalls that in the 'forties people of colour and whites had voluntarily sat segregated themselves in different rows in St Mary's Cathedral, Cape Town.

- b) the finance committee, consisting of one person (Brian Kelley) in consultation with the priest ¹⁶
- c) a Pastoral Council, including the liturgy committee, the catechists, children's liturgy, and the Renew committee
- d) Martindale Counselling Centre, which officially exists outside the parish, although on and using parish property

The processes in Martindale's structures and programmes can be illustrated through examples of how confrontation, decision-making, and the ebb and flow of liturgy are implicitly and explicitly dealt with. In keeping with Martindale's decision-making processes the general process of being recognized as a leader is informal. People are usually either approached by Vic or volunteer themselves; a more recent avenue is for the parish secretary to become aware of potential through Renew, and to recommend people to Vic.

Structures, programmes, and processes at Martindale are driven by the idea of the laity as the "unordained priesthood" (1989:2). This understanding of leadership is seen as the result of three factors: an attitude fed by constant encouragement of Kotze; the size of Martindale; and the part-time religious position of the priest (mentioned at the Fothergill-Fenn Renew meeting). Kotze not only allows lay participation but actively encourages it, and works at not exercising control. He has explicitly stated that the laity is the "unordained priesthood" (1989:2). The idea finds a great deal of support in the parish, with some leaders claiming that their involvement is "a freedom rather than an imposition". But one parishioner said the system inevitably favours those who are vocal, who for that reason serve on the committees. He said that the bulk of the congregation is silent, and have no forum for discussing their feelings regarding e.g. the shape and direction of the liturgy.

The differences between ordained priest and unordained Catholic laity surfaced at a Saturday Mass in September 1992. The event had to be cancelled because Kotze was taken ill and a priest could not be found in time to consecrate the host. Gordon Fothergill had also explained to me that only clergy can forgive sins, consecrate sacraments, and prescribe penance. Yet laity occupied the sanctuary now more than before, which was particularly noticeable with regards women, who previously were not allowed there at all (Fothergill 10/9/92). Parishioner Maureen Cassidy said that "if you told me at six that I would be able to do that at sixty I would just have laughed" (Cassidy 24/6/94).

The small size of the parish is credited with aiding "community", in which people are invited to become involved and to know others. Said a parishioner:

"Some people tried to leave Martindale, but were not satisfied with being a number [elsewhere], so they came back."

Some parishioners believe that this style could be in some tension with the traditional triangular hierarchy of the Catholic church. The parish mediates this tension by arguing that involvement of laity is firmly

¹⁶. The members of the finance committee are not allowed to serve on the Pastoral Council, and vice versa. But Brian Kelley does sit in on the Council meetings.

rooted in Vatican II, and is the result of a renewal started under Pius XI. Gordon Fothergill, for example, says :

"The hierarchy of the Roman Catholic church is based on that of medieval society. The picture is of the people in a cart - pulled by the pope and the bishops, with the religious brothers and sisters pushing. Now we do away with the cart."

Martindale's leadership is described as "concerned in many directions: people, church, country" and as "confident enough to make decisions" (Kelly 24/9/92).

2.1.1. The Priest

Parishioners emphasize the importance of Vic Kotze to Martindale. Kotze works as a psychologist part-time, and the parish only contributes R135 per month (apart from housekeeping costs) to his salary. Some feel that without him the parish "would fall apart". Kotze is spoken of as "very empowering, good at debunking", and as "open to criticism". His own character and ethos strongly influence that of the congregation. As priest Vic sits *ex officio* on every parish committee. But although in terms of the Catholic church he can veto any decision, no-one could recall this ever happening.

Foreign to Catholic parishes, Kotze "invites reactions to the liturgy", said a parishioner. And people are not shy to respond with critique; Deacon Kevin Fenn spoke of Martindale as

"a tough parish; people tell you if they do not like something: someone telephoned Vic to complain about a communion that I had done"

Kotze has acknowledged in a August 27, 1992 Mass that as a preacher he is in a powerful position, where people cannot talk back. Yet he invited response to him in person afterwards. He relativised his homily on Lazarus and the rich man by saying "It is only my opinion". "Vic tries to relate what he preaches to everyday life," said a parishioner'. But another felt that there was among parishioners "a reluctance to take the things Vic preaches about outside the church [building] and look at it again .. [these things] are not spoken about a great deal among parishioners".

And certainly the high estimate of Kotze's worth does not obscure for parishioners his failings. For one thing, he is very concerned that the liturgy should be done right, a parishioner said, and "he gets very uptight when it looks a mess". This creates the impression that he is "sometimes on an ego-trip", and is not "always as good with people as he should be".

Some feel that he should visit parishioners more, and one complained about the priest's absence during a crisis. These feelings persist despite Kotze having clearly stated from the onset that his position was part-time, and that his psychology practice would inhibit visitation. But Kotze is concerned about his availability to the parish during crises. In keeping with his vision of a laity-driven parish he feels that visitation is not only the priest's role, but should be shared by others.

2.1.2. The liturgy committee

The liturgy committee is often spoken of as behind most decisions - but, as a parishioner remarked, this is to be expected in a Catholic parish. Especially, one in which such a high standard is placed on the liturgy by the priest. The liturgy committee in 1992 consisted of ten people, including the priest and the present deacon¹⁷. Five are female, one coloured. The tasks of the group are to plan and prepare services, including selecting themes, decorations such as banners, and hymns. A parishioner said the committee puts "a lot of effort into it".

Evident at a liturgy committee meeting was the common purpose that this group shares: suggestions were not argued about - rather there was a feeling of movement to the common, with contrary ideas carefully listened to rather than heatedly debated. This can be ascribed in part to the disinterestedness that follows when the importance of liturgy is a given, with personal opinions subjected to it. Their enthusiasm was also revealed by the fact that everyone at the 1993 survey report-back session was from this group.

At a 1993 meeting (14 February) the following subjects were discussed: a locked room of the old cry room (in the old choir loft), the readers' list, the need to have Scripture readings explained in the bulletin as "most Catholics are very ignorant of Scripture", singing in which only one-third of the congregation participates, first communion (October 17th), confirmation (November 14th), co-ordinating Renew and Lenten readings, banners in the building, and the healing mass. The parish's budget requirements lead to a call for a recycling drive.

Many of the major decisions about Martindale's life are taken by Vic and the liturgy committee. Then it comes to the vote, where people are asked whether they do/not approve of such decisions. Vic even put the decision about whether he would be appointed as a part-time priest to a written vote (or whether a full-time clergy should replace him). Mass was also moved by vote to commence later on a Sunday. Most changes up to now were initiated by the Pastoral Council and the liturgy committee. Their powerful influence is not hidden, and is recognised by many - some who resent it.

A liturgy committee member described the liturgy at Martindale as the result of a:

"deliberate choice to take and stay in the middle of the road, to please everybody. We tried to create something that most people can relate to at any time."

2.1.3. The Pastoral Council

The Pastoral Council is "the decision-making body of the parish" (Parish information brochure 1994:13), which meets once every quarter. Voting representatives for the different committees of the council are elected by the parish for a two-year period. Any parishioner may attend meetings and put forward his/her

¹⁷. Mike Hyam, Maureen Cassidy, Joan McGregor and her husband, Vic Kotze, Kevin Fenn, Sue Booysen, Gordon Fothergill, Lucia, and Val Halley-Wright.

views, but cannot vote (Parish information brochure 1994:13). The representatives report on the activities of their respective groups. The function of the Council has been described as "being concerned with the spiritual health of the parish - the real needs of people" (Fothergill 28/8/92). A great deal of the council's time is taken up with financial issues.

In 1992 the Council included representatives from the Justice and Peace group (Theresa Sadie), the adult and youth catechists (Gordon Fothergill), the SVdP (Terry de Lacey), the confirmation group (Kevin Fenn), the liturgy group (Hyam), the choir (Pedro Garcao), the repository (Haynet Alves), the youth group (Peter Sadie), the finance committee (Brian Kelley), the junior liturgy (Marika Pina), the Centre (Jill Brink), the readers and altar servers (Nerissa Naidoo), the MT (Peter Evening), the C (Tony Laurencio), the SG (Frank Cutugno), the TT (Ralph Harrington), and the GT (Susan Mnisi). The Council was chaired by Peter Cobbold.

Decision-making in the Council is described as "semi-formal" by a member. He said "things are not clear and formal; things move along without any goal or direction. They do move, but there is no broader in-depth planning, e.g. regarding unemployment". The same applies to its decision-making process; decisions are made informally, rather than by formal proposal-secondant-vote procedures. After some discussion the chair of the Council or priest will simply say "Accepted? [pause] Done!" Although the process tends towards consensus, the priest and chair are still tacitly assigned the role of showing when this point has been reached. Another Council member said that committees usually make their own decisions - after discussing these with Kotze. Although the parish is supposed to elect the council, no election has been held "for a long time".

The council in its present form is functioning well, but this was not always the case. Last time an election was held during a Mass, but Gordon suspects that the names nominated came from those with access to pencils - which did not include everyone (27/8/92). Since then there have been no further elections. "So much was on the go" (e.g. raising funds for the Centre renovations) that a prolonged tenure was suggested by Vic. The Council up to then had "hardly done anything", and so wanted some things to be done by the next election at the end of 1992.

On 20 September 1992 the Pastoral Council discussed the building of the new cry-room, the finances, the state of the entrance foyer, lighting, the Martindale Counselling Centre, the poor state of catechism, ministers of the eucharist, the SVdP, the next steps to take after Renew ends, organising a special session for the next Renew season (evangelism), no-one turning up for the youth picnic. Someone offered to give training in human rights. The discussion on finances and Renew occupied most of the time (compare 2.2.1.5. below).

2.1.4. The deacon

Kevin Fenn was ordained deacon in 1993, although many parishioners thought of him as such before

then. A deacon is regarded as a lay-minister, ordained to the bishop - not the parish nor the priest. To become a deacon requires five years of theological training. The position of deacon largely fell away but was reintroduced because of the shortage of priests characterising the present post-Vatican II period. His ordination bestows upon him the title "reverend". As a deacon Kevin is sanctioned to administer the sacraments of baptism, burial rites, marriage, and the eucharist, and may officiate at funerals. In 1994 Kevin suggested that he also engage in parish visitation.

In the Catholic Church a deacon has to be given written permission by his family to undergo training. The whole family is considered affected by his ministry. A deacon is not allowed to remarry should his wife die.

2.1.5. The finance committee

A Pastoral Council member said in an interview that Martindale is kept going financially by "a very few" people - about twelve. One Sunday in May, designated as Dedication Sunday, is used to boost finances. The finance committee consist of two people: Brain Kelley and Vic Kotze, and is run "very informally". There are no agendas; accounts are looked at and discussed. Parish budget requirements are estimated at R5 000 per month. The annual financial report is published in the bulletin. Each parish committee submits an annual budget to the finance committee that cannot be exceeded.

Kelly says that the parishioners "are more generous than they should have to be" (Kelly 24/9/92). He said that most find it very difficult to make ends meet, estimating that about 20% are unemployed, about 30% are at subsistence level. Kelley believes that "probably about 20% carries the church" (Kelly 24/9/92). Kelly was asked by Vic to be on the finance committee, and says that he has often tried to get others involved, without success.

2.1.6. The parish co-ordinator

A position unique to Martindale is that of the parish co-ordinator, occupied by Gordon Fothergill. He described his function as "having to know what is going on" (who are meeting when, and what are they doing), and "having to make things happen"; a "co-ordinator of information". That is, to see that people do not work in isolation and/or have conflicting meetings. Gordon oversees catechism and adult education, and edits the parish bulletin. Most of the information he needs to do his job comes through informal channels via Haynet Alves, who is in charge of the repository (pious objects for sale). He acts as general assistant to the priest and the deacon, and liaises with the bishop's office (Fothergill 27/8/92).

2.1.7. The parish secretary

Florence Fenn is the present parish secretary. Her function involved co-ordinating Renew, helping with

the bulletin, and doing other administrative tasks, such as filing.

2.2. Decision-making Processes

As happens with most congregations, Catholic or otherwise, decisions at Martindale are taken by those who are actively involved and interested in the parish. Below I trace the process through some examples.

2.2.1. Remodelling the church

Before the remodelling in 1989 Martindale's church building was typical of Catholic Churches, remembers parishioner Vivien Taylor. The building had the usual long and narrow east-west shape of Catholic congregations, with the altar at the eastern end and rows of wooden pews facing it. The present layout turned the seating north-south, with the altar on a raised stage in the southern part and upholstered chairs facing it in a semi-circle. Advice on the new setting was obtained from Anthony Bordello, who has a degree in liturgy. Bordello lectured the Pastoral Council on the proposed changes in 1988 (Fothergill 3/9/92).

Parishioner Vivien Taylor thought that the liturgy committee "mainly felt that the set-up did not express [the essence of] Christianity: embracing around the altar". The table, made from the old pews, was to be "as simple as it would have been in the early church" (Taylor 5/10/92). Hyam, an interior decorator previously a member of the Cathedral in Johannesburg, became involved in Martindale as part of the revamp. Hyam says that the remodelling was "answering a need arising in the parish for a greater sense of community" (Hyam 24/9/92). This is borne out by parish secretary Florence Fenn, who feels the physical change "gives far more warmth and [a sense of] being together" (Fenn 10/9/92). According to Kelly the new shape results in "Mass becoming more of a whole" (Kelly 24/9/92).

2.2.2. The Cry-Room

An example of decision-making which involved the whole parish was deciding to rebuild part of the sanctuary as a cry-room (a sound-proof area for parents with infants). The previous one was situated on a gallery with inadequate air-conditioning and sound system. Now the cry-room is on the same level as the rest of the congregation, and has sound proof glass walls, allowing parents to feel more part of the Mass.

The need for a new cry-room was talked about by especially parents, and awareness grew over increasing dissatisfaction. Communication between people is described as good.) The issue was raised within some parish group-meetings. A parish-wide meeting was suggested and Kotze consulted. At Mass the meeting was announced, and at it problems and alternatives were discussed. Agreement was regarded as reached when "everyone realised they were talking on the same level". There was no dissent.

A liturgy committee member was asked to do the cost-estimates and report back at Mass, where responses were again invited. After these suggestions were acted upon, another feedback session took place at Mass. The liturgy committee had decided to go ahead if the invited responses were positive, otherwise to defer to the Pastoral Council for decision. In the event, despite the positive responses, the issue was put to the vote in the Council, although one member "came across as never having heard of it [before]". His objection, that the expense was inappropriate given other needs in the parish, was overridden; but a parishioner remarked later that this did have some effect as the alterations were carried out at a lower cost. Then the plan was put before the finance committee (Kotze and Kelley), who approved it.

At the 1993 report-back session some were unsure whether the voting procedure gave everyone a say, or whether it accurately reflected the opinion of the parishioners. The cry-room decision was seen as an example of a decision made by the liturgy committee, for whom the vote was merely rubber-stamping.

2.3. Conflict processes

The process for handling conflicts in Martindale mirror that of decision-making. At a 1993 report-back to the Pastoral Council on my analysis, I was told that no conscious attempt is made to "force conflict resolution"; instead conflict is "left to sort itself out". Kotze wondered whether this was causing some unhappiness, which could "boil up at some stage". The question to what extent those from different races have a voice in the various processes remains unanswered.

2.3.1. Timetables: a confrontation process in relation to the priest

Despite Kotze's attempts at openness, not everyone feels comfortable with confronting him. Criticism of other parishioners, or of groups are sometimes channelled via the parish secretary or through Haynet Alves, a long-standing Coloured member in charge of the Repository: "A lot of people speak to Haynet," said a parishioner.

Two parishioners had worked on and handed out timetables for the altar servers; only to have Kotze come in and give out ones he had worked out. No-one said anything to him. Vic's tension created tension in those officiating, said someone who was there. The present solution is that the Deacon looks after the ministers of the eucharist and the altar servers, and Kotze communicates any unhappiness to him.

2.3.2. The organ choir: cultural and sub-cultural conflict mediated through liturgy

The organ choir resigned *en masse* in about the middle of 1991. Before this Martindale had two choirs, identified by parishioners according to the leading instruments used for accompaniment. The organ choir had more coloured members, while the guitar choir was more white. The guitar choir introduced more new songs, while the organ choir was more traditional.

The resignation of the whole choir followed on a series of conflicts with the liturgy committee, two of which was singled out by a member as critical.

The first conflict was caused by criticism from the liturgy committee that the songs selected by the choir did not fit with the rest of the liturgy. A parishioner said the conflict concerned the words of songs, which had "no bearing on the theme for Mass, as set by the Scripture reading". On the other hand the words of the offending songs were considered "too simple"; while the melodies were "uninteresting". The criticism was taken hard, as the songs had been selected "with the best will in the world". Most of the choir were coloureds and some blacks. They were not as schooled in liturgy as the liturgy group, the parishioner said, so this was really "a class conflict".

Another described the episode as "non-white people finding acceptance, risking, and then being hurt". As a result the choir did not sing again for six months. There were various attempts at reconciliation by Vic, the liturgy committee, parishioners, Wolter te Riele, and Val Halley-Wright. In general parishioners were perceived as having little understanding of liturgy, and several sermons focused on this topic, especially after the remodelling of the building.

The second conflict was caused by the disregard by the organ choir for a liturgy committee decision that after communion no singing should happen. Members of the liturgy committee confronted those from the choir, who felt that this was the last straw. The leader of the choir went to see Vic. Meanwhile the liturgy committee had expressed their dissatisfaction to Vic as well. Vic then went to speak to the choir, but the choir members were too angry to listen, which in turn angered Vic and the issue was unresolved. Some choir members even stopped coming to Mass for a while. This conflict reverberated in the parish in several ways. Some blamed Vic, saying that his people-handling skills had not been as good as they had thought; others resented the liturgy committee; and a third faction blamed the choir. "Vic was aware of the unhappiness," remembered a parishioner, "but people did not approach him - they were too nervous." Many people spoke to Haynet instead.

Aside from the liturgical issue at stake, the conflicts concern sub-cultural styles of worship. Of all Martindale's structures the "organ" choir represented the ethnic mix best, singing African language hymns and using drums. These expressions of cultural diversity have since not been in evidence. But the guitar choir was also criticised as "not preparing the congregation enough for new music".

Deacon Kevin Fenn feels that Renew resolved the issue. A choir member who was "most hurt" was delegated to attend the initial Renew liturgy meeting. People from the parish - including the liturgy committee - also attempted to bring the choir back, emphasising what a good choir they had been. These efforts resulted in the former choir members becoming more amenable. All members are back in the parish, with some even participating in the guitar choir. A parishioner said that since the conflict two members of the liturgy group had joined and started educating the choir from within: "the difference can be heard".

2.3.3. The detainees' Mass: political conflict mediated through liturgy

A Sunday's liturgy in 1988 which included dramatic a presentation of the issue of detention without trial caused some people to leave. The altar was decorated with prison bars cut from paper. Members of the Justice and Peace group occupied the sanctuary, said a prayer for detainees, and lit a candle with barbed wire around it. Some of them were chained and had blindfolds.

Parishioners remember that afterwards someone had reported Kotze to the Special Branch. From April 1987 it was illegal to call for the release of detainees (Villa-Vicencio 1988: 95). Roman Catholic Archbishop Stephen Naidoo had called for prayers for the release of those in detention (Villa-Vicencio 1988: 95). This prompted an "angry sermon about traitors", related a parishioner. Kotze remembered that later he had discovered that it had been a visitor and not a parishioner that had reported him. A parishioner said he felt the event was in reality a clash between Vic and the people on justice and peace issues.

According to a parishioner most of the people did not like the event. "They felt that the spoken word conveys enough; the priest can talk about these issues. I do not believe that Mass is a drama - it is a time to lift up hearts and minds to God," he said, "other parishes call Martindale a circus." Another said that "people feel that the liturgy is not a place to put a point across so heavily". Some approached the liturgy group and asked them to tone down such events.

Part of the repulsion felt towards the event, aside from the emotionally charged symbols, probably centred around the invasion of "sacred" space by a "profane" (political) issue. Parishioners had also reacted negatively to a 1991 Mass during which someone had knocked loudly at the church building door, to illustrate that some was locked out of society. The Justice and Peace group also read out letters from detainees during Mass. These events, along with Kotze's preaching, led to a raised political awareness at Martindale. In this context the February 1990 developments were "a major event for the parish; something that was prayed for and seen as God at work" (Te Riele 15/10/92).

3. PROGRAMME

The programmes of the parish are mostly parishioner-oriented; consisting of mass, catechism, choir, and unsuccessful attempts at establishing a youth group (up to mid-1993 when it took off). The two most successful programmes are the parishioner-oriented Renew and outwardly-focused Martindale Counselling Centre.

Of the two programmes focusing on non-parishioners, the St Vincent de Paul Society does social welfare work among Catholics who do not belong to the parish. Martindale Counselling Centre provides psychological counselling to anyone regardless of creed, and occasionally trains all who want to be involved. But at a report-back the leaders emphatically described activities initiated by individuals as proof

that Martindale's focus is not merely inward, nor aimed only at Catholics. Through individuals' initiative other programmes do happen from Martindale's premises, such as a soup-kitchen, a sewing class, and a literacy-programme. These events are not the result of an "official" group nor was it planned by the leaders. So Martindale's premises are also used for non-Catholic meetings - also unusual for a Catholic parish (Te Riele 15/10/92).

Parishioner Hyam estimated that about 50% of parishioners are involved in one way or the other, although the level of involvement obviously varies (Hyam 24/9/92). He felt that this was a higher percentage than in other parishes he had been in, where one or two people did everything (Hyam 24/9/92). The parishioners - apart from the 16-34 group¹⁸ - seem quite happy not to become further involved. Most of those in the liturgy committee and the Pastoral Council belong to the + 34 group, and are already so committed that they do not want any further involvement.

3.1. Mass

Martindale's two week-end Masses are quite distinct in character. The liturgy is described as the core attraction of the Sunday Mass, with parishioners coming from afar as Alberton to attend. "People come specifically for that rather than during the weekday Masses". A [Sunday] parishioner commented:

"The Saturday Mass is more introverted, private and individual. They [who attend] do not like songs, and go home immediately afterwards."

A typical Sunday Mass

Like most newcomers my first decision as I entered Martindale for a Sunday Mass on August 23, 1992 was where to sit. The rows of upholstered seats were arranged in six blocks, forming a semi-circle facing a raised stage, where two wooden tables and a transparent perspex reader's podium are always visible. Behind them is a row of chairs back against a high screen, with one relatively plain high chair placed centrally. There are no altar rails between the stage and the parishioners. At this service (unlike some others) there is no-one at the door to hand out the pew-bulletin, which are already on the seats.

The typed, two-page roneo'd bulletin sports the Renew logo, and besides it the telephone numbers of the priest, office, and counselling centre. The times for the Masses are shown: Saturday at 5.30 pm, Sunday 9 am; Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 8.15 am; Tuesday at 7 am. Confessions are given as between 5 and 5.25 on Saturday, or Sunday "before Mass on request". Then the date, right next to the information that this is "the 21st day of ordinary time, Cycle C, page 680". Entrance, response, alleluia, and communion responses follow below that. Most notices concern Renew announcements and explanations regarding the goals, interspersed with condolence for two deaths, and congratulations regarding a marriage. The St Vincent de Paul Society pleads for volunteers to help at a fete in support of Nazareth House, and asks that a flea market at Curtin's service station be supported. Two retreats are announced; for anyone, and for Catechists. The back page has notices regarding adult catechises and the RCIA, in

¹⁸. The rating for people in this group who wanted to be more involved was 5.5, against an average 4.9 (Kotze's survey).

follow-up to the welcome on page one to the four adults confirmed the previous Sunday. Most of the available space is taken up by the RCIA, adult catechises and Renew notices.

Some parishioners are practising a responsorial song, under guidance of Vic and (guitar) choir leader Tony Brink. The song is beamed onto the overhanging white-painted concrete support beam by two overhead projectors, worked by two teenage girls. (Altar servers and projectionists are taken from the confirmation candidates; Parish information brochure 1994:7.) After a while Vic left, to join the preparations for the procession in a small room at the left back. At the sound of a bell the children leave for children's liturgy. An entrance song sounds: "You alone are my God ... do not leave me for dead ... show me the path for my life" and the procession winds along the back (actually the side) of the building and through the central aisle towards the raised stage. Two visual foci dominate: a transparent perspex cross and a huge Bible. The five members of the procession do not wear robes, except Vic. When Vic reaches the altar, he bows and kisses it and takes the central chair. A song is sung: "Let all who thirst come ... let all who seek come ... all who have nothing ... let all who toil ... let all the poor ... come"; and another while the servers on the raised stage lights candles on the altar: "Glory to God in the highest".

Vic prays of the God who brings oneness of heart, compassion and mercy, and concludes "in the Name of Christ our Lord". Then a white lay reader announces the reading from Isa, but do not give out chapter and verse. The readers rotate so that every one reads only once in three months. None is needed; no parishioners have Bibles in hand, and there are no storage spaces in the backs of the chair - and so no hymnals or prayerbooks, either. After the Old Testament reading the practised responsorial song rings out: "O God let all the nations praise you". Then it is the New Testament reading by another lay reader, from Hebrews: "when the Lord corrects you do not be discouraged .. suffering is part of training .. bears fruit ... so be steady". The reader ends with: "This is the word of God", to which the parish responds "Thanks be to God". Again there is a procession with the lit candles and the Bible, while the "Alleluia" is sung. Kotze reads from the Gospel of Luke while the congregation remains standing. The portion concerns the admonition that only a few are saved. Vic ends with "This is the Word of the Lord", and the parishioners respond: "Praise be to God".

Kotze's sermon concerns water as symbol of baptism. "Just as without water we dry up, so without God, too." He connects the image with new birth and with the Holy Spirit: "We are born once and shaped, but also again and again ... we must constantly be reshaped by the Spirit." What are the signs of the Spirit's presence? One can say that the Spirit is seen in those who are born-again, who speak in tongues; but also in such events as Nelson Mandela "reaching out a hand of reconciliation", in FW de Klerk's unbanning of organisations in 1990, in mother Theresa. People often cannot bring themselves to think that the Spirit also lives in them. But when "for once we are tolerant" where we did not show tolerance before, it "is not sheer accident, but God in us. God's Spirit helps us survive, breathes in us an ability for justice ... everything that makes us human". After the sermon the creed is recited together. A prayer follows, asking that God "help us to form our life in God's Spirit". Vic also prays by name for those who are away and who are ill. The corporate Prayer for Africa is said. The collection is taken up as children come back into

the building.

As preparations for the sacrament of eucharist begin another song is sung: "Here am I, Lord". The procession again winds through the congregation to fetch and return with the communion elements. A cloth is placed over the altar, and a liturgy book, the elements and a candle are set out on it. A song concludes "I'll tend the poor and lame ... I will go if you lead: I will hold Your people in my heart". A prayer addressed to "God our Almighty Father and Mother" follows, and then the responsorial song practised at the start of the service. Vic takes the bread and holds it aloft; when he says "this is my body" a bell sounds; it rings out again when he lifts the cup ("This is my blood ..."). The eucharistic ministers, in pairs, help to hand out the bread and the wine to parishioners, who walk to the front to receive communion at different points. Another song is sung: "We hold a treasure, not made of gold ... the Christ in earthen vessels". Vic prays the final prayer, asking God "to increase Your healing power within us".

At the end of the service some notices are read aloud by Vic. One is about a special Mass for the sick at St Charles', Victory Park. Vic then asks those who have had birthdays to identify themselves, and congratulates them. The procession leaves the stage and the parishioners file out afterwards. Many chat to one another. Outside tables have been set out and women are serving tea while groups of friends talk together.

The number of people on display at a Martindale Mass demonstrates the orientation towards lay involvement. Apart from the priest and the servers (in their teens), there are eucharistic ministers, readers, servers. All assist the priest. Other than in most Catholic churches where all eucharistic ministers serve during the Mass and take communion to the sick, only some eucharistic ministers in Martindale visit the sick. The extensive use of readers and servers in Martindale emphasize that the clergy are not the church; they only serve the church and the people of God, said Fothergill.

3.2. Renew

Renew¹⁹ is a small-group programme for which the parishioners volunteer by signing-up. Renew consists of five "seasons" (periods of about six weeks), each with a specific theme, stretching over two and a half years during Spring and Lent. My research coincided with the 3rd season. The general theme of Renew is "community serving humanity". Each Renew meeting (once a week) involves discussing the Renew booklet for the season. About a third of Martindale's parishioners participate in Renew groups, compared to 10-20% at Victory Park.

Through special liturgy during a Spring or Lent season the whole parish participates in Renew, Florence Fenn (also Renew co-ordinator - her original appointment) pointed out. Renew season proper is preceded

¹⁹. Renew was started in 1978 as a diocesan programme of the Archdiocese of Newark, NJ (Community 1978:22). Renew offers formation in prayers, Scripture, community-building, justice, liturgy, evangelisation, family-life, and support for adult-catechate. The other aims serve this one: providing common experience, actively involving passive parishioners, developing new leaders, drawing lapsed parishioners back to the sacrament (Renew 197:9).

by a "sign-up Sunday", and a "prayer commitment Sunday", at which the parishioners commit themselves to praying for success during the season.

The Renew programme is run on a committee basis. The official suggestion is to have ten committees represented in the local parish Renew Team. Although I could only find ²⁰evidence that two committees were operating (the prayer network committee headed up by Val Halley-Wright, and the Sunday liturgy committee), I was assured that eight of the ten functions did occur: small faith sharing groups, take home, sign-up Sunday, publicity, and evaluation. Only the telephone and home visitation committees never functioned, according to Fenn. Between each season Fenn visited the diocesan Renew team for instructions.

Renew has played a major part in revitalising the lives of those who participate in it. One parishioner said that when she first came to Martindale "For a long time I felt alienated, and did not get involved. There was no connecting, and I went home quickly after Mass. Renew helped, because it was a small group." According to deacon Fenn most of those in Renew groups were not involved in parish activities before (Fenn 1/10/92). Aside from the small-group meetings Renew also involves a large-scale social occasion ever season.

3.4. St Vincent de Paul Society (SVdP)

The Society exists to "care for the needy in our community", collecting, packing, and distributing food parcels, second-hand clothing and furniture. At an SVdP meeting in August 1992 it was explained that a general rule is that recipients "must be seen to try and help themselves". The Martindale SVdP also runs two feeding schemes (Parish information brochure 1994: 12). Members of the SvdP are not allowed to receive help from this organisation themselves.

People needing food, clothing or help with some other problem sometimes arrive on Sundays after Mass and accost parishioners for help. They are referred to the St Vincent de Paul Society. A parishioner said that she found relating to such people a mix of "compassion and revulsion: it makes it more meaningful that they are there, but I can't pretend that I am moving out towards them".

The issues discussed at the August 1992 meeting included fund-raising (a Durban July sweep and a relatively unsuccessful cheese and wine evening, which was not well attended by coloureds), helping with a boerewors braai at Nazareth House, a raffle on behalf of the Centre, visits to the destitute and to a soup kitchen run by the Yeoville Catholic church.

3.4. Junior liturgy

²⁰. Document entitled Parish Renew Team Committees, pp. 33-37.

Children's liturgy, for children from Grade 1 to Std 3, is the equivalent of a Protestant Sunday School. Parishioner Marieke Pina suggested the idea in 1991, thinking of a question and answer format using the Scriptures. The present format is "the same as in church, but simplified", explained a parishioner who is involved. "There is an entrance hymn, a gospel [reading], and bidding prayers." The programme occurs during the first half of the Sunday Mass (the liturgy of the Word), and children are allowed to go in to Mass afterwards.

In 1992 the team of 10 women - two whose husbands were also involved - rotated so that they were only on duty one Sunday every two months. The team was 80% white, 20% coloured. Children, whose numbers fluctuate between 25-70, are divided into 6-7 groups. Most of the children are coloured, and their parents do not attend Martindale.

The leaders are volunteers, and the team was formed by a "natural gravitation of those who know one another well". The lack of participation by coloured people in leading children's liturgy was explained as "shyness, not unwillingness" by a white parishioner. She reflected that the process by which children's liturgy was formed was "not very democratic; Marieke took the idea to Vic, who presumably agreed. I am not sure of [whether there were] discussion; nor whether or not it is evaluated. It worries me that we are not trained, but children's liturgy is less formal."

3.5. Catechesis

Older children participate in catechesis as preparation for first communion (regarded as a sacrament) at the age of about nine years (std 1). This happens before confirmation at 16, which is also considered a sacrament. Deacon Fenn pointed out that "most kids disappear after first communion". In the Catholic Church baptism of children is equivalent to membership; confirmation "confirms baptism" (K Fenn 1/10/92).

The Pastoral Council decided that "in each case, the course will be two years, and a minimum of 80% attendance by the young person is necessary" (Parish information brochure 1994:7). First communion is allowed when "children can distinguish between bread and consecrated bread, and have a relationship with the Lord", said Fothergill, a former priest in charge of catechesis. He decides whether this can happen, after an assessment which includes observing whether the child regularly attends Mass, and praying with him or her (Fothergill 10/9/92).

Strictly speaking a catechist is someone "who instructs [others] in faith after conversion" (Fothergill 10/9/92). But now catechism is "making someone aware of God's constant presence", so that the person is able "to appreciate and respond to it", explains Fothergill. "Catechism is to interpret life in the light of the gospel" (Fothergill 10/9/92). Catechism was described by another parishioner as "a rigorous training in Catholic doctrine, such as penance".

Eleven people are registered as catechists (Parish statistics, 1 January to 31 December 1993). The literature used for instruction is produced by the diocese. Florence Fenn, who took the Std 6 class in 1992, said that "through catechesis more youth participate than before" (Fenn 10/9/92). She felt that the inconsistency in their attendance can be explained by the gap between the highpoints of first communion and confirmation (Fenn 10/9/92).

3.6. Rite of Catholic Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

In 1993 eight adults were under instruction (Parish statistics, 1 January to 31 December 1993). This is a membership programme for people who wish to join the Catholic church, including those from other churches or who had not attended church before. Such candidates have to have "sponsors" active in the parish who attend special preparatory classes with them. In August 1992 four new people were received during the service. Vic referred to them as part of Martindale and Christ "to bring justice and renewal in our land". With their sponsors the four had to come to the front of the gathering, and publicly declare their commitment. This included saying "I believe all that the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims to be revealed by God". Vic made the sign of the cross on the forehead of each person, saying "be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit".

3.7. Youth group

Youth are very visible at Martindale as altar servers and as projectionists, while simultaneously (1992) the youth group was seen as unsuccessful, and as having been a problem for some time. The reasons given vary: school pressure on the co-ordinator at the time who is a teacher; and a shortage of people in the 20-30s age group to co-ordinate. According to Florence Fenn the parish also has a relatively small percentage of young people, with only 15-30 being confirmed in 1992; many teenagers also work on week-ends. She said that a Renew had been planned for young people, but although twenty signed up only four turned out (Fenn 10/9/92).

The decline of youth activities was attributed by parishioners as being an universal problem within Catholicism.

3.8. The Martindale Counselling Centre

The Martindale Counselling Centre is a service provided by trained counsellors under supervision of five clinical psychologists. The Centre was initiated in 1984, out of the experience of final year MA clinical psychology students (including Vic) who did community outreach. Under Vic's direction the old priest's home on the premises was converted into a counselling centre, for which funds were raised from a Catholic funding organisation. The Centre was renovated in 1992.

Vic is the director of the Centre. There is also a co-ordinator²¹, appointed by the supervisors, who organises the service, deals with complaints, and with everything related to the Centre (Te Riele 15/10/92). Volunteer counsellors were trained in conjunction with the University of the Witwatersrand, and originally were all parishioners, who were commissioned in the parish building during a Mass. Volunteers have to make a two-year commitment, and are trained over 3 months for eight hours a week. This is followed by in-service training of 2 hours per week, besides one hour's supervision per month. Four of the original counsellors are still at it (McGregor 28/10/92).

Tapes are usually made of each session for report-back to the clinical supervisors. This is seen as "the primary pastoral outreach of the parish" (Kotze 1989:2). In a Renew group people said that the counselling centre embodies Martindale's character. According to Florence Fenn the parish "revolves around the Centre", with many parishioners involved as clients or as counsellors. Legally the Centre is separate from the parish, although it exists on the same premises, and people who are prominent within it are also prime movers in the parish. One danger that the Centre face is that a new priest may object to this use of diocese property. Vic rents a room from the Centre for his practice.

4. RACIAL COMPOSITION AND THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL FACTORS ON STRUCTURES

The general question to be answered here is how - from a sociological perspective - Martindale became racially-mixed; and how sociological factors affect this mix.

4.1. Why different races come to Martindale

In short, three major reasons can be isolated:

- a) historical factors, such as the original mix of the area and the proximity of Western Township, particularly Westbury;
- b) the function of symbols, in particular the building and the past it represents, and the mix which itself attracts different races;
- c) the role of the priest, particularly to create a climate of including everyone; of acceptance.

Kevin Fenn also reminded me that "in the Roman Catholic Church a lot go because of obligation" (Fenn 1/10/92); although Vic has said that if that is the only reason why people come then they should not. The relative importance of geographic boundaries and obligatory attendance makes the analysis of a Catholic congregation different from a non-geographic and voluntary organisation such as Johweto. In the past it was regarded as a sin for Catholics not to attend at least one Mass a week. Although probably not affecting the racial mix, a parishioner felt that some come because of the presence of a charismatic group in the parish.

²¹. In 1992 the Centre co-ordinator was Jill Brink.

1. **The priest himself attracts parishioners:** most [white] parishioners said that they go because of Father Vic Kotze. One estimated that about 80% of the present congregation started coming because of him. "Most parishioners have been there ten years or less," he said. Some recall that the diocese was considering closing the parish when Kotze agreed to come in 1978.

2. **Because of the racial and class mix,** said a few. One parishioner said that: "Probably the main factor I go is the multi-racial mix ... It is also wonderful to discover the class mix - poor whites as well. This mixture of people is [what makes the parish] alive." Te Riele said that "parishioners who come [here] display by coming an acceptance of one another" (Te Riele 15/10/92).

White parishioners offered various reasons why some blacks and coloureds come. According to one they come because "some [of their] hurt is officially recognised and articulated from the pulpit .. in the presence of whites". Because of the non-racial stance of the parish "they are not primarily seen as a member of a different race group in contrast to white Roman Catholics". Another said that some come "just for the hand-outs".

3. **Because of people who live nearby.** This applies mostly to the Coloured parishioners, and a few whites. Most of the Coloured people attend because "it is convenient - they can walk", a [white] parishioner said. The socio-economic realities of Coloured parishioners appear to limit their options of alternate venues. Yet some pass by other parishes that are even closer to come to Martindale. Competition in the form of a charismatic parish in the Coloured area exerts a strong pull on this group's attendance. But most whites come by car, the largest number travelling over 6 km and ignoring other parishes' boundaries to attend.

4. **Because of a general inclusive culture of acceptance which attracts like-minded people.** Acceptance, an attitude also attributed to Kotze, is the second largest reason people come as revealed by the questionnaire. The parish functions to enhance status: people are accepted at Martindale, without having to perform a role. A white parishioner said that "coloureds experience a real conflict of identity", and that some in this group may come because "they want acceptance from whites".

Martindale is more a by-product of inclusivity - explained as acceptance of "gays, those married outside the [Catholic] church" - than an intentional overt attempt to include race groups. Parishioners could point to non-Catholics who regularly attended and received communion. Race does not feature as a conscious category; in part a function of the attempt to combine what has been described as a "clear non-racial stance" with an "inclusive" one.

In other words integration happens as the result of the construction of a symbolic universe which draws people who share similar convictions. The centripetally functioning resources that are used as building blocks include the accepting attitudes of the priest, the South African Roman Catholic tradition, theological orientations, ideological positions, and prior experiences of parishioners with people of colour. An example is the parishioner who remembered that her parents were committed to fight against apartheid, her mother belonging to the Black Sash. "We always had black people in our home, and I was

brought up to believe that people were equal," she said.

This symbolic universe of concepts attracts (particularly white) people for whom these represent important values, which validates their own ideological frameworks and prior experiences. Elements used for this centripetal construction abound; the language in sermons and on the posters in the church building make parishioners aware of the link between faith and socio-political realities. Many whites who come are open to the interracial contact and some have existing interracial friendships outside the parish. Other issues which attract this group include human rights, the dignity of the poor, creating employment, the defects of a charity which enchains people in dependence on hand-outs, and the coming 1994 elections [for an interim government] which required voter registration.

Similarly the decline or disappearance of Portuguese, Chinese, and even Coloured parishioners can be ascribed to the loss of the network of ideas that supported their presence. These include a changed building, disappearance of ethnic forms of celebration (e.g. Portuguese holy days), the type of language used in sermons, and the altered liturgy.

Two posters issued by the SACBC are displayed in the church, urging people to get identity documents to be able to vote. In one sermon Kotze said that:

"The gospel has a tremendous amount to say about the way our socio-economic life is ordered."

The flaws of capitalist (consumerism) and socialist economies (state control) were pointed out.

Other elements used to construct this way of understanding the world are Mass, with:

- * its inclusive symbols of a flat round bread from which all participate,
- * the different hues of those serving on the altar and those seated in the congregation;
- * the lack of barriers between priest and parish at Mass, or between parishioners themselves (benches thrown out in favour of chairs) in keeping with the idea of a common priesthood,

Martindale's building itself expresses liturgical self-understanding as well as a continuity and discontinuity with the past. The past is remembered and transformed in the building through the plaque commemorating the removals; and the Tables of the Word and Eucharist) made from the previous furniture.

So continuity with the past - painful for the most part - is important at Martindale. The old building was retained and reshaped, rather than demolished. As a psychologist-priest Kotze motivates remembering the past as necessary for growth:

"I believe this great sadness and injustice must be understood and assimilated...if our present growth is to be graced by God". The focus is neither to "take on the guilt" nor "rest on the glory of the past", but to assimilate and acknowledge both. This would help Martindale "become fully alive in the present in order to create our future" (1989:1).

As a Catholic parish Martindale has access - and uses - tradition as resource for binding people together, even across racial boundaries. Tradition is often used in discussions and sermons to underline a point. A

sermon contained a reference to one of Leo XIII's letters written 130 years ago. The awareness of the denominational stance on racial issues is reflected in the comment of one parishioner who said:

"The Roman Catholic Church has always been non-racial... I feel Martindale accurately represents what society should be - not separate development ... if there is a language problem then an interpreter is needed, not separation."

Despite the inclusiveness strong boundaries are drawn in the frequent favourable contrasts parishioners make between Martindale and other Catholic parishes. Some draw boundaries between the parish and the predominantly low-income Afrikaans-speaking context of Triomf, of whom it is said "what they hear and see at Martindale would not suit them."

Sub-group identities are also maintained, with parishioners able to distinguish between non- and charismatics; non- and traditionalists (referring to liturgy); and politically conservatives and non-conservatives. During a Mass when N'kosi Sikelel'i'Afrika was sung a parishioner was observed giving the power salute favoured by black liberation movements.

A self-ascribed conservative could point out other political conservatives and identify nine (many long-standing parishioners) as liturgical traditionalists. He said that in Martindale, as in the wider Catholic church, "there is not enough concern for conservative Catholics: it should be fifty-fifty". Another felt that parishioners belonged to parties as diverse as the ANC, NP, and Federal Party. So a Council member was inaccurate when he said: "I do not think there are any politically conservative people in the parish; they would have left after that [pro-detainee] Mass."

So paradoxically the inclusive culture also functions to exclude to a varying degree liturgical or political conservatives, as distinct from liberals. Several parishioners recalled friends who had left Martindale for one reason or another. The general political climate and the informal leadership style in Martindale, as revealed through some processes, work against the continued participation of politically conservative parishioners. That this causes some tension is evident from a white female parishioner's description of the liturgy committee as "the Inner Circle". The tensions also surface in various anomalies, such as the parishioner who still said the rosary during Mass. This was one of the few functions open to the laity when Mass was said in Latin.

A political conservative parishioner thought that politically speaking, parishioners were mostly "democratic, with a slight CP/NP presence". Yet he believed even the conservatives to be open-minded. He demonstrated this by saying that he himself accepted the ANC's Freedom Charter, though he objected to the SACP presence in the ANC. Although he identified with the conservative Catholic movement "Family, tradition, property", he thought they were "fanatics". He spoke approvingly of Kotze who "who does well; he speaks against injustices, but does not attack the Government".

Yet some who disagree with their priest remain. A parishioner speculated that it is because "There is far

more to him [Vic] than that [politics]: he takes a strong position, but is also a man of immense understanding of sin, sexuality in all forms ... People have disagreed, but come despite that." Vic was also credited with not favouring a specific political party, but speaking of gospel values instead (Fothergill 25/9/92). This phrase was often repeated during my interviews with parishioners. A contrasting view is that Vic used the ANC's name, but "only insofar as protesting against injustice". He has "castigated the ANC when it was seen not to operate on Christian values". The political tension between the political conservatives and progressives clearly surfaced in the infamous Mass for detainees, but also afterwards, when a visitor reported Kotze to the Special Branch.

The changed physical environment (removal of most statues, permanent crucifix) and ritual (no robes, change of place and size of altar) must have an excluding effect on liturgical conservatives. But simultaneously these factors attract those who feel at home in this environment. An example of a more liberal liturgical viewpoint was expressed by the woman who said:

"The Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady was sucked out of the [Catholic] church's thumb ... I agree with the Protestants on idolatry - I do not pray to or through her."

The strong sense of place observable in Martindale functions as a marker of sub-group identity. At the same time groups use race and physical environment to reveal the nature of social relations in the parish. Different sub-groups usually sit in the same area every Sunday (Coloureds, religious, elderly, those with children, leaders). Coloured parishioners tend to sit at the back, particularly the left back and "immediately to the right of the main door, especially on Saturdays", as a parishioner said ²².

The seating habits also show how symbols will function differently for the different races and cultures. Coloureds, Indians, and blacks sit further away from the altar while blacks used to sit near the plaque. The construction of the cry-room may signal a loss of "their place" and their presence may disappear altogether. Symbols may be more important to people with less formal education, and also hold appeal for better-educated contemplatives.

Another sub-division is between non- and charismatics. A politically and liturgically conservative parishioner referred to them as "happy-clappies". "If they clap hands in the recessional hymns I walk out," he said, "it could be disturbing." Parishioners place Kotze in the non-charismatic (expressively more conservative) sub-group and his sister in the charismatic groupings:

"They are two sides of a coin: the intellectual versus the born-again - very different, strong Christians."

A parishioner explained that Kotze

"feels that charismatics are simplistic .. with an 'arrived' mentality which sometimes denies difficulties or that we are still on a journey - yet he recommends the [charismatic training] Life

²². Directions are given from a position directly in front of and facing the central part of the church - in this case, the raised platform from which the Eucharist is served and the sermon delivered.

in the Spirit Seminars."

This charismatic group became visible during a healing service, described as "very exuberant". Mainly composed of women, the group had presented its written proposals to the liturgy group. The group includes the newly appointed deacon, a self-described charismatic.

4.2. How sociological factors affect structures and social relations

1. **The mix of class and race affects participation:** Blacks and coloureds are described as not "as involved as they could be". The coloured group - and Blacks - are described by parishioners "as involved as they could be", e.g. as ministers of the Eucharist. A white parishioner defended them by explaining:

"Some come just for sustenance, and do not have time, energy, or finances."

For these groups the parish secretary and a long-standing Coloured member have been implicitly elected as spokespersons. The two unofficial representatives play a more active role on behalf of these ordinary parishioners than that permitted for the two official representatives on the Council. So this activism remains hidden, like the proverbial legs of a paddling duck, seldom surfacing in "the public transcripts" of interaction.

Martindale's racial mix is as absent from its structures as its cultural mix is from its Masses. When ethnicity is used as criterion to measure how representative the structures are, Coloured people are under-represented in the Pastoral Council. Of ten people in one meeting only one Coloured person was present. She did not participate in any discussion, except reporting on the St Vincent de Paul Society. This ratio is exactly matched among regular participants in the liturgy committee [committee] - only one coloured serves there. One Indian serves in the St Vincent de Paul Society. According to members of the liturgy committee an attempt was made about two years ago "to get a better blend", but this was very difficult. Even Renew meetings, because of their localised nature, are rarely mixed.

It is probable that at least some form of paternalism and at worst racism persists in Martindale among members. An older parishioner has longstanding friendships across race lines, yet her language reflects the paternalism of a previous era (e.g. "native boys"). Several parishioners have been at Martindale for a very long time. Of the six people involved in the founding of the initial parish, three women remain, said a parishioner. At one Renew meeting discussion centred around the equal opportunities policy of the University of the Witwatersrand, which had allocated 50% of student positions to blacks. Concern was expressed about the "dropping of standards" which will now result. Someone said that this was a reversal of discrimination, inferring that it should be born stoically. A self-confessed politically conservative parishioner replied that previous discrimination meant everyone rode the crest of the high standards wave, now no longer the case.

At a report-back session of this study in 1993 this state of affairs clearly concerned Kotze. He wondered what the racial mix means in terms of the degree to which some are heard, and in terms of the general functioning of the parish. A parishioner said that question of "how real" the mix is needs to be answered

in terms of "how I relate it to my life; and I do not relate to [it] a lot".

Of all structures the "organ" choir represented the ethnic mix best, singing African language hymns and using drums. These expressions of cultural diversity are now not evident, having ceased after conflict on a liturgical point. The clash was about 'political' legitimation, involving different cultural positions, classes, and ideologies (the official sanctioned and spontaneous forms of liturgy). From a race and class perspective the liturgy committee representing the dominant or "top" social layers won out over the "bottom".

Of the readers only two are not white: one is coloured, and the other, Abel Sithole, is black. Of five Ministers of the Eucharist on a Saturday and 12 on a Sunday four are coloured. The catechists are also now 50% Coloured.

Coloureds and other races are not only physically absent, but seem not to exist in the minds of white parishioners as leaders, even potentially so. Only one [white] respondent of the parishioners interviewed (a politically conservative) named one Coloured (none a black person) when asked to name Martindale's leaders. One other did mention two Coloureds who are involved with helping people. This despite the fact that of nine Catechists in 1992/93, four were white, four coloured, and one black. At a report-back session it was also pointed out that since mid-1993 five Coloured parishioners had been trained as Renew leaders.

2. The mix affects social interaction. Despite the mixture in Mass, outside official events few contacts occur, or are expected. Contact is usually a) through formalised interactional spaces implicitly negotiated by the white group (Mass, Catechism, or St Vincent de Paul) where whites dominate; b) usually initiated by whites²³. Renew is an informal space for mixing, but most are all-white and all-coloured groups. Another informal space is tea-time after the Mass, described as "an important part of our Sunday liturgy here at Martindale" (Parish information brochure 1994:12). Spontaneous conversations across colour lines do occur here. But a parishioner described these 10 to 30 minutes as superficial, as not resulting in a deepening of relationships.

The rare instances of interracial interaction happen when e.g. a Coloured family is invited over by a white family, or even rarer, when a white family or individual visits. A white parishioner said that the initiative lay with whites. Her experience was that her visits to black and Coloured friends made them "embarrassed and humiliated". She explained that this was because Coloured families felt that compared to white standards of living their homes were not suitable to receive (white) guests. One of her black friends live with nine others in Soweto; another in a small [servant's] room behind a white person's home nearby. Some contact does occur, and some parishioners have interracial friendships outside the parish, even in those adjoining Martindale. "My own coloured friends go to Bosmont [Catholic Church]," explained

²³. Only one exception was reported.

a white parishioner. Another white parishioner said that his family used to visit a coloured family, but that this fizzled out because "of the differences ... there wasn't enough in it for us".

Several possible reasons may explain this lack of contact. First, the informal relating which happens in Protestant small groups is a fairly recent and still developing structure in Martindale. Second, the gaps in income and education which most find a hurdle too high. "The interracial aspect is now overlaid by education and the standards of living of whites ... people will find it easier to accept one another once there is equal education". Third, because racism or the multi-cultural environment has never been explicitly addressed among parishioners, the dominance of white cultural values in liturgical and other structures remain unexplored. Several parishioners said their lives were too busy when asked to explain why there was so little interaction.

5. SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

5.1. Church participation

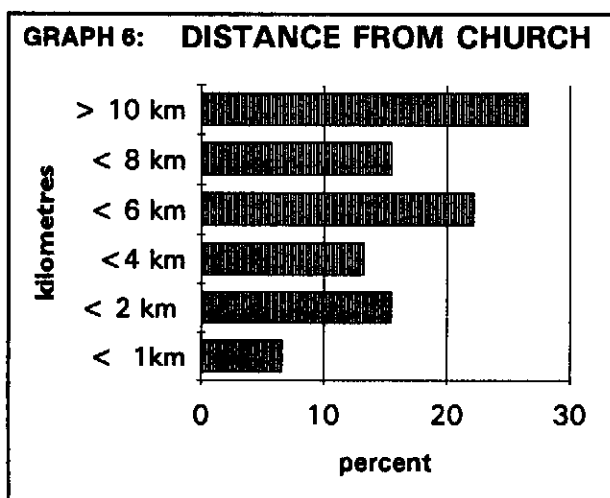
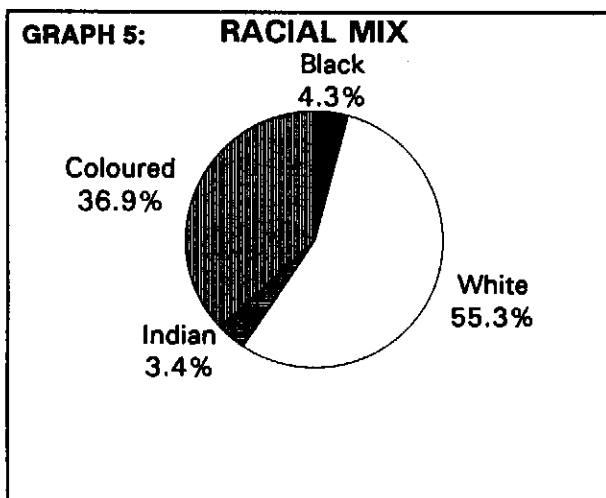
47 persons completed the survey, of which 36 were female, 10 male, and 1 unspecified. The total returns represent about one quarter of regular adult attenders.

5.1.1. Length of membership at Martindale

Less than 2 years	23,4%
2-5 years	27,6%
6-10 ¹ years	23,4%
11-25 years	12,8%
More than 25 years	2,1%
Incomplete	10,6%

5.1.7. How many hours per week are spent on Martindale affairs ?

< than 1 hour	2,1%	1-5 hours	31,9%
6-10 hours	21,3%	11-15 hours	8,5%
16-20 hours	6,4%	More than 20	21,3%
Unclear	8,5%		



5.1.2. Reasons for coming

was invited	8,5%	live nearby	12,8%
racess mix	2,1%	like liturgy	10,6%
Like the priest	17%	feel accepted	17%

5.1.3. Frequency of attendance at Mass during past month

None	2,1%	Once	2,1%
Twice	2,1%	Thrice	6,4%
Four times	57,4%	More than 4	29,8%

5.1.4. Membership of parish groups

Pastoral Council	2,1%	Other	2,1%
Liturgy committee	8,5%	None	42,5%
Catechist	6,3%		
Renew	42,5%		
Junior liturgy	4,3%		
Readers	6,4%		

5.1.5. Membership of other Catholic groups

St Vincent de Paul Society	10,6%
Knights of da Gama	0%
Other	34%
Unclear or no response	26%

5.1.6. Which Mass is attended

Weekday	19,1%	Sunday	72,3%
Saturday	25,5%		

5.2. Membership characteristics

5.2.1. Monthly financial contributions

R5 to R10	12,8%	R41 to R 60	8,5%
R11 to R20	8,5%	R61 to R 80	12,8%
R21 to R30	12,8%	R81 to R100	27,6%
R31 to R40	8,5%	More than R100	14,9%

5.2.2. Age

19-30 years	8,5%	61-70 years	19,1%
31-40 years	21,3%	71 or more	6,4%
41-50 years	21,3%	Unclear	2,1%
51-60 years	21,3%		

5.2.3. Nationality

South African	78,2%
Other African	-
Other	19,1%

5.2.4. First language

Afrikaans	2,1%
English	91,5%
Other European	4,3%
English	91,5%

5.2.5. Marital and family status

Single	25,5%	Married	68%
Separated, divorced	4,3%		

5.2.6. Spouse member of this parish

Yes	36,2%
No	31,9%

¹. Any person attending for more than 5 years was placed under the 6 years category, more than 10 years under the 11 years category, and so on.

5.3. Relationship to the community

5.3.1. Method of transport to Martindale

walk	12,8%	bus	0%
car	85,1%	train	2,1%
taxi	-%		

5.3.2. How long lived in that area

Less than 2	10,6%
2-5 years	23,4%
6-10 years	14,9%
11-25 years	40,4%
more than 25	4,3%

5.3.3. Likelihood of respondent moving within three years

Probably	14,9%
50% chance	10,6%
Probably not	14,9%
Very unlikely	51%
Unclear	4,3%

5.4. Internal interaction

Question	Yes	No
Have you visited others from Martindale?	59,6%	36,2%
Have you introduced yourself to the priest?	96,9%	2,1%

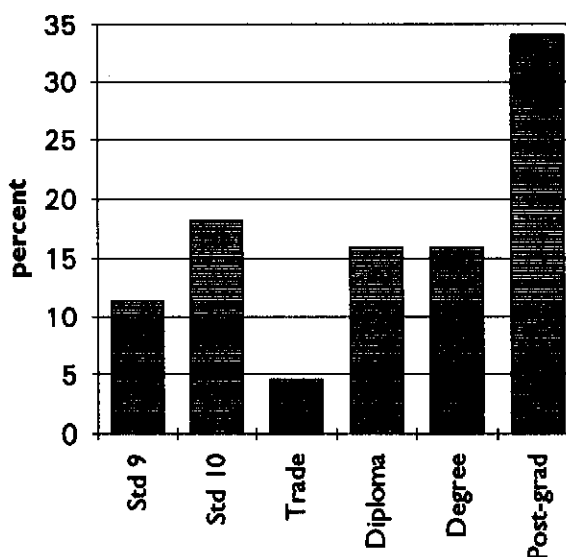
5.4.1. How far from you to the closest Martindale parishioner to you?

more than 1k	36,2%	2 or more	12,8%
4 km or more	19,1%	6 or more	6,4%
8 km or more	4,3%	10 or more	12,8%
Don't know	4,3%	Unclear	4,3%

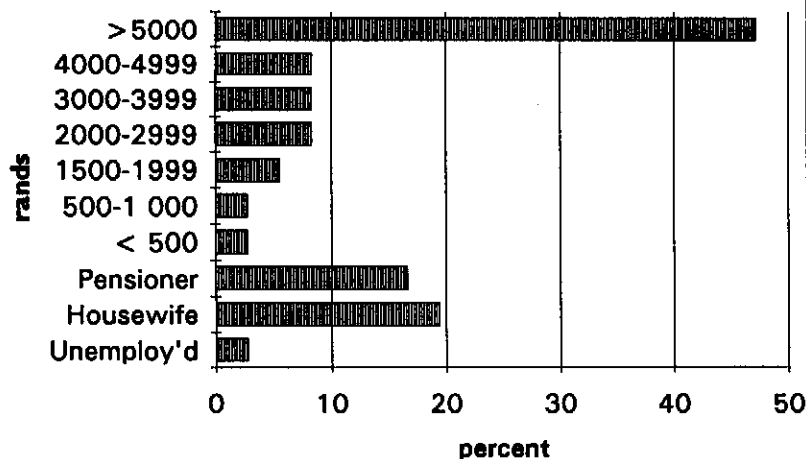
5.4.2. Have you ever visited the Martindale Counselling Centre?

Yes	15%	No	83%
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GRAPH 7: EDUCATION LEVELS



GRAPH 8: INCOME LEVELS



CHAPTER SIX: JOHWETO FAMILY VINEYARD, SOWETO

1. IDENTITY

The Johweto Family Vineyard is an independent charismatic congregation of 40-50 people, which meets in a rented hall in Soweto on Sunday mornings. The name embodies the founding vision of crossing the racial and economic lines drawn by apartheid between (white) Johannesburg and (black) Soweto. The combined name indicates the interdependence of these two cities and all of its races¹. The congregation has a 50-50% black/white mix of 6 ethnic groupings (Afrikaans, English, Sotho, Tswana, Zulu, Xhosa).

1.1. History in context

Soweto was founded as temporary accommodation for the black labour needs of the white city. About a 30-minute drive from downtown Johannesburg, it today accommodates an estimated 3,5 million blacks from more than five ethnic groups. Formal and informal systems of transport represent the only relatively developed infrastructure. Roads were not paved, and houses not electrified until the late 1970s. Whites were legally prohibited from entering without permission until the 1980s, and few will enter it to this day.

Johweto was born out of a challenge in 1983 by Moekete Mpete, a young black man from Soweto to Alexander Venter, a white pastor from Johannesburg, to come and experience life in Soweto. Mpete and Venter met in a student/lecturer context at the Christ for Africa Institute for Bible Study, a bible college. When Venter showed interest in the black context, Mpete challenged the depth of this by inviting him to come and experience township life. They had infrequent interaction in 1984, but from 1985 met on a more regular basis.

Venter had left² the Assemblies of God in January 1982, and went to train under John Wimber, founder of the California-based Vineyard Ministries. Meanwhile the Johannesburg Vineyard, an independent charismatic church with links to Wimber, was started as a home-group in 1982 by Costa Mitchell and Dave Owen. Owen³ had asked Mitchell and Venter for help in bringing Wimber

¹. This interdependence was formalised by 1992 proposals to unite the municipalities of Johannesburg and Soweto, creating common services for both cities.

². Venter was a pastor of the Northcliff Assemblies of God (AoG) until 1981, when he was asked by the Assemblies' executive chairperson John Bond to leave the denomination, a week before he departed for the States. Bond suggested he look for an alternative, perhaps work with Wimber for a while. Discussions had taken place between the Executive and Venter before, as the governing body were unhappy about the changes Venter had introduced to Northcliff's structures. Venter described these as "moving them towards a renewed concept of church", involving more spontaneous and expressive worship (choruses instead of hymns, dancing, clapping, laying of hands). Venter says while the elders were supportive of these changes, but that tensions in the second half of 1981 arose between him and the executive about alterations to the process of breaking of bread, which in the Assemblies is characterised by a time of "open ministry", at which anyone can stand up and contribute a teaching. Venter started encouraging/discouraging some in this practice, which the executive felt was against the values of the denomination (Venter 17/7/94).

³. Owen was then the leader of The Invisible Church, an independent charismatic congregation which first met in Hillbrow before moving to Waverley. In 1981-82 Owen went to the States to train under Wimber (Venter 17/7/94).

to South Africa in 1981 for a series of seminars on church growth. The three became involved in "an intense dialogue about working together" (Venter 16/7/94). Mitchell had resigned from the Krugersdorp Assemblies of God in solidarity over the way in which Venter was treated, as did James Johnson, Venter's friend and a member at Northcliff. At the end of 1982 Wimber and a team of about 70 people returned with Venter to Johannesburg to help establish the Vineyard. Meetings were held at the German School, Parktown, with regular services starting in a rented cinema in Parkview from 1983 on⁴. Venter was a leader in the Johannesburg Vineyard when he met Mpete.

Because of Mpete's desire to become a Vineyard pastor, he accompanied Venter to the USA in 1985 to meet with US Vineyard leaders and to explore various church models. Mpete had started a small Christian group in the house of Mama Marks, the middle-aged woman with whom he lodged in Mapetla, Soweto, which grew to about 60 in June 1985. About 10-15 people started attending the Vineyard in Parkview on Sunday evenings. In turn Venter and his friends⁵ sometimes attended the Mapetla meeting. Whites continued to be part of the Vineyard, following the Vineyard model of local congregations which meet together for celebrations. But after three months tensions had arisen between white Vineyard members and (a) the Mapetla group who were often late because of poor public transport⁶, and (b) Venter, whose sermons were now seen as "too political". The growing realisation that this arrangement had merely repeated in microcosm the South African history of blacks having to come to white areas also fuelled the decision. As in other multi-racial church meetings which were then becoming fashionable, this meant meeting mostly on white "turf", and the Soweto group decided to stop coming to the Parkview Vineyard. These circumstances later contributed to Johweto becoming a separate Vineyard congregation.

A combined group of about 10 people started meeting on Saturday mornings from 1985 at Central Methodist Mission in central Johannesburg. The group comprised Venter's friends⁷ and Mpete's friends, including Johnson, who as a chartered accountant later became the financial driving force behind many of Johweto's projects. Others included Nick Mosupi (1985-1988⁸), an Assemblies pastor; and Raymond Schultz (1986-1987⁹), a businessman, who started employing some of the black Johwetans who were unemployed. By now those in the group had come to a clear understanding that their meeting was separate from the Vineyard, and discussion started on

⁴. A long spell followed in Parkview Primary School's hall, before the church divided into two congregations, of which one is currently functioning in Bryanston.

⁵. For example Mark Stonestreet and Chris Black.

⁶. The habit of not turning up on time continued to characterise Johweto meetings to this day, and are mentioned occasionally in minutes (e.g. Minutes 1989b:1).

⁷. Including Kellern Beard, Mark Stonestreet, John Gosling.

⁸. Masupe eventually left because he wanted to remain within the Assemblies of God, an option on which he was being confronted in the group. No doubt there was some pressure from within the Assemblies as well, given the ill-feeling surrounding Venter's departure.

⁹. The employment experiment did not work, with labour relations souring. Schulz eventually left because of personal reasons.

whether to meet in Soweto.

The political context was one of escalating state repression and counter-violence, with the Government declaring a State of Emergency in 1985. The issues discussed within the group were raw, relating to apartheid, its effects, and the solutions. People felt that they "wanted to break racial barriers" as an expression of solidarity with the black experience and a form of repentance. Another motivation was to have whites experience the conditions under which blacks live. The first year was described as "very emotional, very confrontational". Venter often had to pass through security forces roadblocks in Soweto. In 1985 Venter went to live on a farm near Grasmere, 30 km southwest of Johannesburg, which had been bought in 1981 by Ron and Sandy Gold who knew Venter through the Vineyard¹⁰. Johweto did not have to look far to fulfil its expressed desire to minister to the poor, as about 80 shacks¹¹ sprung up on the border of the farm in 1985, as elsewhere in the vicinity.

The group meeting at Central divided into three smaller groups in 1986, and met on Tuesdays in Soweto homes¹². Initially groups focused in an unstructured way on fellowship, sharing personal stories. People were learning about one another, often through sharing meals together, says white Johwetan Sandy Johnson. Among other things whites were learning about the limited living space available for Soweto people. She recalls "sitting on the bed, eating tripe and take-away chicken" in the single back room in which black couple George and Gontse Moroa lived in Soweto. She described this period as very intimate, with whites "trying to get to know people, to eat their food. There were times when we were very disillusioned: nothing seemed to work, we were so many miles apart" (S Johnson 27/4/92). From January 1986 the group worked on the Gold's farm together on weekends, removing rubble, planting trees, erecting fencing, and converting the existing property into a community centre. A shed was constructed, a garage converted into a dwelling, a vegetable garden planted, and a second borehole sunk.

The Johweto concept and name was born in 1986 out of an intense dialogue around political issues, lifestyle discrepancies between black and white, and violence (Venter 15/7/94). A debate regarding the nature of the group had by then been extensively discussed over two years, sometimes in weekend-retreats, with the options of becoming (a) a discussion group, (b) a para-church organisation, or (c) becoming a church. During a prayer meeting Mpete confessed that blacks were not worshipping the God of the Bible but of Soweto, the god of revenge, of black ideology (Venter 15/7/94). In turn Venter confessed that whites were worshipping the god of Johannesburg; the god of arrogance, of gold and wealth. Out of this repentance "was heard the

¹⁰. The Golds had joined the Vineyard in 1983.

¹¹. The previous owner of the farm, a Mr Weiler, had originally given permission to a worker of his, Simon Leretjebatse, to live there with his extended family. An unprecedented flood of people came to live in such shack communities after the mid-1980s, driven by shortage of formal housing and distances from work.

¹². The Kgaladis, the Moroa, the Michells, the Laars, the Marks, the Slows, the Johnsons.

call of the God of justice, and to reconciliation, unity, and forgiveness", says Venter (15/7/94).

People became aware that the group was already symbolising a unity across various differences. Venter suggested Johweto as a name which reflected the vision of the group "not to recognise two separate cities, separate churches, different worlds of experience, but to bridge the gap, make peace, seek justice, heal the broken, release the oppressed and [letting] 'the two become one' in Christ" (Venter 1989b:1). With the decision came the slow growth of self-understanding as a "church" (congregation). The desire of the three fellowship groups to come together in one meeting also directed this decision.

For 6 months in 1986 the newly-named Johweto met on Sunday mornings at the Funda Education Centre in Soweto. The Funda site at the edge of Soweto was chosen mainly to improve access for whites. A white woman reflected that at Funda the meetings were "very informal, we were about 10-15 people who sat in a circle, worshipped and prayed. Compared to the [Johannesburg] Vineyard it was very relevant". Some of the group attended a seminar on African Literature by Ez'kia Mphahlela and Don Mattera at Funda Centre. In similar fashion some went to hear economist Eugene Nyati speak in about 1988. The meetings at Funda came to an end when the new Centre management no longer wanted to host religious groups (Moroa 16/1/93; Venter 15/7/94).

From September 1986 Johweto began renting a room in the Anglican church's Ipelegeng Community Centre in White City (Jabavu), Soweto, for Sunday meetings. The Ipelegeng period lasted until 1990, and is remembered as a frustrating, unhappy time. The room was small and several other groups met in neighbouring rooms at the same time, so that noise levels were high. Laverty, just returning from a year's travel overseas with her husband, remembers that "everyone seemed very burnt-out". Worship was led by a team, and an overhead projector was introduced¹³ for projecting songs onto a wall. The new meeting place reversed the decision to have a site more accessible to whites, as Ipelegeng is in Soweto's heartland, known as Deep Soweto. During 1986 Venter and Mpete were stopped and their car searched, with Mpete especially receiving a torrent of abusive language and aggressive questioning. Two people had been murdered nearby 20 minutes before by the so-called necklace - that is, having tyres placed around them, which were set on fire.

Soweto residents were not always happy about Johweto: a black church leader - well-known in Soweto - was against the idea of a white-black church starting there. Some were angry with black Johwetans for mixing with whites. This created the feeling that "we are not really wanted in Soweto", says Johnson (Johnson 27/4/92). But not all Sowetans felt that way. Edgar Molefe speaks of the friendly curiosity of his Soweto neighbours when whites visited the Molefe home; they too wanted to have white friends, they said.

¹³. Paton, John Tseole, Pakeng, Gloria, Daphne (Johweto meeting 1988a:1).

Venter and Mosupi left on a one month trip in the United States to attend an international Vineyard's pastors' conference at the beginning of 1987. It was during this trip that first contact was established with Church of the Savior and Reba Place. At the end of that year¹⁴ the Golds made the 16 hectare farm available to Johweto as a reconciliation kibbutz, "the place where our struggle for community work and ministry will be worked out", as well as "retreats and seminars" (Venter 1989b:2). The farm was renamed Kehillah, Hebrew for congregation or community, after a suggestion by Shavaun, the Gold's daughter (Venter 15/7/94). A development program was drawn up and a management team¹⁵ co-opted (Venter e.a. 1986:11; 1987:9). The purposes envisaged for the Kehillah were for black and white, rich and poor believers to live and work together and to have a ministry as a community to the poor while developing "a viable independent business project" and self-sufficiency (Venter 1989a:2; 1989b:2; Observations 1987:1). Some dreamt of establishing an education and training centre, a primary health care centre, and a creative arts outlet (Venter & Johnson 1987:4). In addition there were plans to build 6 three-bedroomed units for community living, and two units for labourers (Strategy 1988:4). These plans were not realised.

The higher profile of Johweto activity also warranted unwanted attention. In 1987 Venter received a call from a white man who wanted to talk about developments on the farm. During the subsequent appointment the man revealed that he was a captain in the Security Branch, and wanted Venter to supply him with information about alternative structures formed to undermine the government - a request Venter refused. Lawyer Carien Engelbrecht was asked in April 1988 to summarise security legislation and its possible effects on Johweto in a document which turned out to be 16 pages long. She briefed Johwetans one Saturday on how they should react when arrested, what their rights were, and which books were banned¹⁶.

"I realised they [the Security Branch] had information about me, and was watching me, because he [the captain] referred to a meeting I had with Beyers Naude at the SACC. I suspected that my post was interfered with ... three banned books¹⁷ sent to me from the States never arrived," recalls Venter. "One Sunday during 1988 plainclothes policemen, probably also Security Branch, burst into the meeting at Ipelegeng, demanding to know 'what's happening here'. I said I would speak to them outside, and told them to contact the security branch captain if they wanted any information."

In July 1988 there were six home-groups¹⁸, including one at the Kehillah and one in Alexandra

¹⁴. The date given in *The Johweto Vision* is 1986 (Venter 1987:5).

¹⁵. Consisting of Johnson, Venter, Mpete, Ron Gold, and Caron Burman (Venter e.a. 1987:9).

¹⁶. In May 1988 Venter submitted to her a list of his books for advise on their legal status and the threats possession of them posed; only one was undesirable in terms of the appropriate Act.

¹⁷. Including "Biko" by Don Woods, "Kaffir Boy" by Mark Mothiabane.

¹⁸. James & George's; Paul's; Alexandra; Glen's; Kehillah's; and John Gosling's.

township¹⁹, northeast of Johannesburg (Johweto homegroup 1988d:1). Each group contained about 8 people, and "there was an eagerness to know each other which has possibly died down ... We were willing to go into Soweto five times a week", remembers Johnson (S Johnson 27/4/92). From 1988-89 a more structured process was introduced for the home-groups which had been functioning with various degrees of success. A new programme was introduced every eight weeks, followed by two weeks of social time²⁰. Apart from Mpete's and the Kehillah group, others expressed degrees of reluctance to the leadership's idea of an outreach/growth focus (Johweto homegroup 1988d:1).

On the Kehillah workgroups of 8-12 people - some from the Vineyard - built²¹, cleaned, planted and fenced the Kehillah property on weekends in 1988. Venter and the Golds were soon drawn into contact with the settlement's people near the Kehillah through weekend fights there, often involving stabbings. Then one weekend in 1988 Venter was asked to bury an old man who had died two days previously. He invited Johwetans along, and so the event opened the settlement to Johweto's involvement. But the funeral also impacted Venter's vision of his own ministry profoundly: "Blood from the decomposing body [in the coffin] flowed over my hands .. I felt God was saying to me that unless I get my hands dirty with the blood of the poor, I cannot talk about, or judge them ... I had to care for them, get my hands dirty" (Venter 15/7/94).

The proximity of informal settlements led to a number of initiatives²² by individual Johwetans during 1988-89, while drawing more people to Johweto. Some people begun visiting the settlement, taking blankets, and praying for others. Dr Steve Carpenter²³ joined Johweto in 1988/89 and started to live on the Kehillah, operating a clinic among the squatters (Minutes 1989a:2). Euan and Lynn Ross-Taylor arrived in 1988 on the with a two-fold vision of working among the poor and establishing community²⁴, so that eight people²⁵ were living together on the Kehillah in 1989, neighbours to an estimated 12 000 people in the huge informal settlement - or squatter²⁶ camp (Johweto proposal 1988:2; Venter 1989a:2). Mpete started a Thursday night meeting at the Kehillah which grew to about 80 before inexplicably tapering off. A Kehillah tap on the border with the settlement still provides the only supply of clean water for the settlement. Many from the settlement were later moved to more formal sites planned for them by the provincial

¹⁹. Led by Venter at David Marobe's in Eight St, Alexandra.

²⁰. E.g. a silent picnic, meal, movie.

²¹. Including a shed, community centre, vegetable tunnels.

²². Kellem started a ministry to the children; a Vineyard women began a school; and a feeding scheme was initiated for children from the school.

²³. Carpenter and Venter had met when the latter held seminars on the kingdom and healing at the Benoni Methodist Church.

²⁴. Ross-Taylor's father had heard about the Kehillah during a visit by Mpete to the evangelistic organisation Africa Enterprise in Pietermaritzburg.

²⁵. Including the two Ross-Taylors, Chris Chaney from the US, Brian and Cheryl Gardner, Mark Johnson, Steve Carpenter.

²⁶. The term "squatters" refers to the illegal occupation of land owned either privately or by the authorities; some regard the term as pejorative, given the failure of previous apartheid governments to provide adequate housing and infrastructures for most black people.

authorities at Weiler's Farm and Orange Farm further south. Others soon took their place.

Meanwhile a nurse, Mary-Ann Lutzky²⁷, had joined Johweto in 1989 and was already living in the Vlakfontein settlement nearby (Venter 1989a:2). Carpenter started a clinic in the nearby Sweetwaters settlement and helped Lutzky at the medical clinic she started in Vlakfontein. In 1989 Carpenter started a medical clinic at the Weiler's farm settlement, for which R20 000 was raised through Johweto's contacts²⁸ (Venter 1989a:2). In 1991 the Carpenters left for the Winterveld settlement. Nurse Zandra Murray, who had helped the Carpenters, now took over the clinic and drew in other non-Johwetans.

Mama Marks started bringing numerous children from Mapetla to the Sunday meeting, and with Kellam Beard started programmes for them. They started bringing the children out to the Kehillah on Saturdays, while also gathering others from the settlement. The children received spiritual input, a meal of high-protein soup and bread, and special events, such as a teddy bear Christmas party. During Beard's absence between 1988 and 1989 the children's ministry was shouldered by Mama Marks and three others²⁹. By 1989 Beard and Mama Marks had relocated the ministry back into Soweto.

Figure 9: Estimated³⁰ number in Johweto's congregation, 1985-1992

1985: 10 CMM	1986: 15 Funda, Ipelegeng	1987: 40	1989: 50
1990: 30 Careers Centre	1991: 35	1992: 45	1994: 53

In May 1988 Johweto became an incorporated association not for gain, with property held in trust (the Kehillah, Mpete's house in Pimville) (Venter 1989b:2). An account was opened for foreign donations (Johweto proposal 1988:3). A house was bought for the Mpetes in 1989 in the Soweto

²⁷. Lutzky married Carpenter and both lived in Orange Farm. Their move to Winterveld was partially motivated by their difficulties with people who were constantly invading their lives. In the Winterveld settlement north of Pretoria this process repeated itself, so that the Carpenters withdrew from living there for a year and half. In 1994 they were living in a house near a clinic run by the Anglican church.

²⁸. Church of the Saviour in USA, Besom Foundation in the UK.

²⁹. Cara, Heidi, Gill Turnham, a UK visitor.

³⁰. Venter maintains that the regular attendances grew to 30 people after which it remained stable at that number. About 20 others come irregularly.

suburb of Pimville, with the hope that it would be "a focal point for ministry and community" (Venter 1989a:2). About R75 000 was spent between 1985 and mid-1988 on Johweto infrastructure and projects (Johweto proposal 1988:5). Meanwhile the search for a more suitable and larger meeting place was on again. After a fruitless eight month quest the option of buying property and building such a place was mooted, but never realised (Johweto proposal 1988:5; Johweto Vineyard 1988c:2; Venter 1998:1). In 1989 the option of meeting in a supermarket near the Pimville house was aired, but did not materialise (Notes 1989f:1).

In 1989 the movement towards becoming a congregation was structurally formalised for the 50 people meeting as Johweto. Venter asked Owen and Mitchell to release him of his Parkview Vineyard responsibilities. By this time there were three Vineyard congregations in Johannesburg: Parkview (Owen), Bryanston (Mitchell), and Johweto (Venter), in addition to a mini-congregation called Doves consisting of young people (Minutes 1989a:2). The separation was cordial, and presently amicable ties exist between Johweto and the local and international Vineyards³¹. Venter's financial support from the other two Vineyards, which he had been sharing with Mpete, was ended. This burden was now shouldered primarily by Johnson, with help from about 6 of the employed whites.

A slow downward spiral of activities and emotions began in 1989, marked by a number of conflicts and a sudden membership attrition rate. By 1989 Beard had developed what Venter describes as "a highly spiritual, gnostic³² ethos", which he voiced in "highly judgemental and condemnatory 'prophecies'" of Johweto's socio-political focus during Sunday meetings (Venter 15/7/94). Beard urged the congregation to worship "'in the Spirit'" rather than fall prey to "'defeatist talk of politics³³'" (Venter 15/7/94). Venter and Mpete confronted him on his doctrine, and forbade further 'prophecies'. By the end of 1989 Beard no longer attended regularly. Meanwhile clashes had occurred between the Ross-Taylors and the Golds on rules for the Kehillah community, and both couples left³⁴. The Golds had been considering relocating to Natal, and the conflict hastened their decision. Steve Carpenter noted during a leader's meeting that Johweto's worship style was mostly Western, and said he would like more Black influence (Notes 1989f:2). The response minuted was cautiously favourable, although "we should be selective in doing this" (Notes 1989f:2).

Of the six 1988 home-groups three remained in 1989; two in Soweto (Dlamini, Power Park) and

³¹. Letters written in 1989 with the Johweto letterhead had the statement "Johweto - in association with the Vineyard Christen Fellowship" at the bottom.

³². Venter defined "gnostic" as an extreme "spirit/matter division", in which the spirit is judged the more important, with earthly matters (e.g. socio-political action) regarded as not falling within the scope of the Gospel (Venter 15/7/94).

³³. Venter believes that Beard personally did not "have a call to cross barriers", but rather wanted a personalised discipleship from him, which Venter was not willing to supply (Venter 15/7/94).

³⁴. Venter believes the clash came about through an imposition of values by the Ross-Taylors, whose lack of maturity resulted in inept handling of relations with the Golds. He says they should have listed their expectations before joining, and themselves could not fulfil their own ideal of moving into the informal settlement.

one in Alexandra³⁵ (Notes 1989f:1). The Mapetla home-group had closed "at the landlord's request because of fear of election militancy" during the coming white general elections. One group closed through a number of reasons, ranging from a marriage crisis, no alternate venue³⁶, and lack of transport (Johweto homegroup 1988:1; Notes 1989f:1). The high number of Blacks who were young and single meant that they could not offer homes as venues for the groups (Notes 1989f:1). Transport problems (few blacks with licences, only three with cars) continued to affect home-group and congregation attendance into 1992.

Events in the wider society contributed to the Johweto malaise, particularly the apparent relentless grip of State President P W Botha on the country, exercised through continuous state repression (Venter 15/7/94). Johwetan Victor Shabalala was attacked on a train by members of Inkatha, while Gideon Sennello saw people hacked and shot to death. About 50% of black Johwetans were unemployed, prompting discussion on how to meet this and other needs through education and job-creation (Venter 1989a:2). A Child Sponsorship and Johweto Education Fund was set up for black Johwetans in 1989 (Venter 1998:2). Johwetans also experienced psychological exhaustion from the intense interpersonal contact, and physical and financial fatigue from travelling over 40km three times a week (Venter 15/7/94). By 1990 Beard had stopped coming altogether³⁷, and three others followed suit (Venter 15/7/94). From 1988 to 1991 the dominant underlying issues in most Johweto meetings were questions of identity, values vision, and sustainability.

The greater political freedom following on the February 1990 unbanning of political parties was a positive experience for the Johweto congregation. Sennello explains that "God is behind that [political changes]" (Sennello 8/2/92). One of the biggest changes in the 8 years of Johweto's existence, said Johnson, is the shift from a strong "focusing on the racial divide to more of an established feeling ... with no particular battle to fight." Black Johwetan Lizzie John interprets the transition as "first we wanted to know who we were; but now we are becoming a church" (John 8/2/92). The following structures were envisioned: a Sunday gathering, fellowship groups, a core group course, and mission groups. The proposal was that the Sunday meetings have alternate formal and informal processes, and that all attending must also participate in small groups of four each for two-and-a-half weeks.

Several changes took place in 1990. In 1990 John Mothiane, a successful Qua-Qua farmer, agreed to a request by Mpete to come manage the Kehillah as a vegetable farm, and to provide employment for others. Despite the farm being in a dry area, Mothiane grows and sells a lot of dhanya (leafy plant used in cooking) to Indian buyers. New Zealander Mike McCullough started a fibreglass factory in a tin shed on the Kehillah, and later erected a factory building there. In the

³⁵. Run by David Khosa (Johweto meeting 1988a:1).

³⁶. An alternate venue was found, but proved impracticable as 16 people were living there (Notes 1989f:1).

³⁷. Sporadic correspondence between Beard and Venter was reported at Johweto meetings in 1991. The conflict around Beard continues to affect some Johwetans who were friendly with him and who said they were saddened by the affair.

same year a decision was taken, after a group discussion, to move to the Careers Centre, next to the Funda Centre. The congregation consisted of about 31 people, eleven white. Venter participated in the Rustenburg Conference of over 80 denominations and 40 para-church organisations, a watershed event which included the biggest gathering of church leaders since the 1960s, and proclamations of repentance from apartheid and forgiveness.

Trevor Ntlhola, who had been a member since 1988, became the trainee pastor after finishing matric. He had joined Johweto after the John Wimber Conference in 1988, and had attended a mini-conference afterwards at Ipelegeng, where he met Paul and Alexander and was invited to the meeting by Faith Masuku. He had completed training at the Full Gospel Bible College in White City Jabavu, Soweto, between 1987-1988, where he was expelled after boycotting class for the reinstatement of a lecturer, Lukas Ngoetjane. Ngoetjane was accused of teaching liberation theology. The students were also unhappy with the anti-sanctions stance of their denomination, about which they and the black majority of the church were not consulted. They made their feelings clear through the media. This was regarded as politics by the church authorities. At the time Ntlhola was a member of a multi-racial congregation in Dinwiddy, Germiston, which he joined in 1986 after a visit by a team to his school, Ponogo High School, Katlehong (Ntlhola 13/9/1994).

Johweto members expressed concern for Ntlhola, as this was a time when many activists were disappearing. He says that this period was very confusing, as his experience with the white principal clashed with the care shown to him. He was attracted to the mix of politics, faith and the Bible he found in Johweto. Ntlhola went into hiding for four months. He turned down the chance of attending the University of Natal because he felt prejudiced against life in university, because he felt that it would compromise his faith. He was approached by Mpete and Venter to come and work with them. He agreed on condition that he be allowed to study further through correspondence with UNISA. He started attending every meeting with them, and was given the task of preparing the venues for the Sunday meetings (Ntlhola 13/9/1994).

In 1991 Johweto leaders initiated a Commitment Process, a six-month group³⁸ discussion of what Johweto was, and where it was going. The name of the course was motivated by the continued dwindling energy, and was started "to sort out where people were in terms of commitment" to Johweto and its direction (Venter 15/7/94). The Process included exercises in the classic spiritual disciplines, like meditation, with discussions regarding various forms of community also on the agenda. During the same year a seminar for singles which addressed sex and how to avoid single parenthood³⁹ was held at Mpete's place in Pimville. In September Venter spent three weeks in the USA for the Vineyard Pastor's Conference in Denver, and also visited Reba Place

³⁸. About thirty people attended, although the size of the group varied from week to week.

³⁹. There are a number of single black mothers in Johweto, not unknown in Soweto. Sometimes this is due to lack of finances by a man to pay the required bride price. A couple will then live together for a while, with the man often abandoning the woman after a child is born. Some male-dominated black ethnic groups believe that a woman has to prove her fertility before marriage.

Church (Evanston) and Church of the Savior (Washington DC). In a newsletter dated September Venter notes that his return coincided with the violent deaths of 127 people in the greater Johannesburg area (The Johwetan 1991:1).

Towards the end of 1991 five families (four white⁴⁰, one black) bought a farm with four houses and a cottage on. Living in geographic community had been discussed between seven married couples³⁹ over a long period. Geographic closeness is a particularly pertinent option for a congregation of whom the majority of members live about 20 km away from the Sunday meeting place. The farm, located about 10km south of Soweto, was at first popularly referred to as NewFarm, and later officially named as Southfield in 1993. Security soon proved a major problem, with the house of the Moroa's repeatedly broken into. The dwelling was separated by some distance from the other three, and was demolished by vandals when the family temporarily moved back to Soweto for their own safety. The Southfield families regularly held community meetings, and later formed a fellowship group. Various uses were discussed for the new property, with suggestions ranging from an art centre, vegetable farming, tea garden, hospitality cottage, home for single mothers, to a retreat centre, of which none has found concrete form. The formation of community brought about new relational structures, with the Southfield families meeting every two weeks to discuss events on the farm, with social get-togethers held once a month.

In December 1991 Mpete and his family left for a one year stay at Reba Place Church in Evanston, Illinois, north of Chicago. Mpete cited mental and emotional fatigue as reasons for this sojourn. One result was that Venter became the controlling partner in leadership, although declining to make major decisions in Mpete's absence. Mpete's departure also had a positive effect; space was created for new worship leaders to emerge, a challenge first taken up by whites⁴⁰, before a worship team⁴¹ slowly formed and eventually was led by blacks. A commune consisting of three people was established in the Moroa's vacated house in Dlamini Extension 2, including Curtis Chang, a Chinese-American visitor⁴², Lizzie John, and Ntlhola. Catherine Wirth, a member of Reba Place (Mennonite) Church, was now stationed on the Kehillah, helping the elderly and the children in the nearby settlement with their pensions and a feeding scheme. The settlement, now containing an estimated 1 000 dwellings and 5 000 people, were blamed by farmers in the area for theft.

The congregation met in a classroom in the Careers Centre for a while. Visitors during this period included Baptist minister Michael Eaton from Kenya, formerly from Alexandra. Eaton commented on various types of racially-mixed congregations and the need to found a church that was truly

⁴⁰. James and Sandy Johnson, Bushy and Gill Venter, Carrie and John Gosling.

³⁹. Including the Moroa's, Lavertys, Venters, Johnsons, Patons, Goslings, and the Mpetes.

⁴⁰. Nic Paton, Debbie & St John Hunt.

⁴¹. The Hunts, Trevor, Lizzie, Teddy Majola, Sibusiso Ntsala, Daphne Kgaladi.

⁴². Chang, a sociology student at Harvard University, had heard of Johweto from David Porteous, then a doctoral student at Yale.

African. Others included Derek Morphew, head of the Associated Christian Ministries network to which Johweto connects, and Sally Schriener of Reba Place. In April 1992 Johweto held Sunday services in the Centre's newly completed hall. Although a small group in a large space, the occupation of the hall seemed to lighten the mood. A communal house was bought in 1992 in the mixed-race Johannesburg suburb of Yeoville, and served as home for a white and a black Johwetan, and as a meeting point for Venter and (briefly) the 1992 advisory team. By March 1992 the congregation had grown to 39 adults (15 black), and 13 children; towards August 1992 the number stood at 45⁴³ (22 black), with about 30 children (10 toddlers). Johwetans such as Trevor Ntlohlala and Lizzie John were given one or two opportunities to take services.

The safety situation deteriorated on the Kehillah in 1992, with gates, fencing and vegetables repeatedly stolen, and armed robberies occurring on nearby farms. Most of the surrounding areas were occupied by squatters. The farming itself was running at a loss of R4 500 per month in August 1991, mostly through lack of stable outlets, and by May 1992 a drought destroyed more than 70% of the crops. In 1992 the Erbach-Adams couple from Kastellaun, Germany, had come to work on the Kehillah. Pia Erbach-Adams helped Wirth, and her husband Jurgen did carpentry, a skill he tried to impart to some of Johweto's unemployed. Meanwhile a numerically strong fellowship group was started by Ntlohlala at Dlamini on Tuesday evenings, with five whites⁴⁴ travelling in to attend. The Dlamini commune tried to actively reach out to their neighbours, and a well-attended party was held.

By January 1993 half of Johweto's members were in some form of geographic community, whether in one house (Yeoville, Dlamini, Kehillah) or one property (Southfield). Locations varied from the two farms south of Johannesburg (Southfield and Kehillah, 8 people each), to Soweto (Dlamini House, 3 people), to Johannesburg (Yeoville House, 3 people). The composition of Yeoville House changed in 1993, with the white marrying and leaving to pursue studies. Two other blacks moved in - one "transferring" from the Dlamini House - so that three blacks lived there. When the Dlamini House was reclaimed by its original owners the Soweto commune moved to Pimville. Services and social events continue to be held on occasion at the Kehillah, such as a baptism service in late 1993 at which Ntlohlala officiated. The McCulloughs left the Kehillah in 1993, after long-standing relational tensions between Mike and some black Johwetans, his own workers, and the Mothianes could not be resolved, despite arbitration by the Johweto leadership. The blacks took exception to some of McCullough's actions and attitudes, but instead of confronting him voiced their concerns to Mpete. McCullough felt that the leadership sided against him, and this, added to his own unhappiness with Johweto's model of being church, led him to withdraw (Venter 17/7/94).

⁴³. An official address list compiled in 1992 shows 49 adult names.

⁴⁴. Ansie van Rensburg, the Erbach-Adams', Heloise Henning, Dawid Venter.

By late 1993 a white and a black family had decided to withdraw from the community project at Southfield. The white family, who explained that community was not for them, has continued relationships and meeting with the congregation. The black family cited (a) increasing financial pressure from the lifestyles of their white neighbours which, they felt, continued an implicit inequality; (b) travelling expenses to and from work; and (c) cultural pressure on their children to value things white⁴⁵ above things black. The latter pressure was experienced partly on the farm, partly in the nursery school their daughter attended with other Southfield children in Johannesburg. This family chose not to continue bonds with Johweto, and their return to Soweto brought to an end the Dlamini commune. In 1993 Mothiane moved on to Southfield, and a white couple did so in August 1994. The congregation's name was changed to the Johweto Society.

Figure 10: Name changes at Johweto

Johweto [Vineyard] 1986-1987	Johweto Family ⁴⁶ [Vineyard] 1987-1993	Johweto Society 1993-present
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1.2. Members of the congregation in their context

The congregation is described by John as people "who wanted more than a meeting" (John 8/2/92). Most live further than 2km from the church, and travel by mini-bus taxi (blacks) or car (mainly whites).

The majority of whites are married in their mid-30s, with children younger than 4. Most whites are graduates in middle to higher-middle income groups with two cars, some fall within the upper income bracket. Most blacks are single and in their 20s, some with children. Some blacks have diplomas, some are high school students, and some are unemployed. The blacks who do work hold lower-income occupations, or entrance-level white-collar middle-income occupations, while only two have a car. Although three blacks are at university, only the black pastor (Mpete) has a degree. Murray says the whites are "very competent, struggling with spiritual life and God, [but] the majority is well-educated"; while the blacks are "a very mixed group - struggling at a more basic level" (Murray 24/2/92).

The majority attend Johweto because of the racial mix. A large number came (a) because they

⁴⁵. The most extreme example is their little girl's expressed desire to have long blond hair.

⁴⁶. The concept had been used since the earliest days; for instance in a document outlining training for homegroup leaders in 1987.

were invited by friends⁴⁷; (b) knew Venter or Mpete. A membership recruitment strategy document spoke of "growing from friendship groups". This bondedness and the stress on relationships make some believe that "Johweto would not break up classically - the relationships will last beyond Johweto". Most Johwetans, like Kathy Laverty, have known Venter or Mpete for more than ten years. Johnson speaks for many Johwetans when she says, "I will never join a white church ... Because we have been separated in the past we have to work at getting together" (Johnson 27/4/92). In 1991 the Lavertys left their Yeoville flat because the landlord would not allow black friends to visit them and stay overnight. White Johwetan Chris Murray said it was important that the church was in Soweto. He was looking for a church which "married the spiritual with the social and the political":

"The major part is the black and white mix, but if it does not draw me deeper into God I could not stay" (Murray 24/1/92).

The leadership strenuously resists the notion of "membership", and resisted being analysed in terms of a "professional" church model. People do not speak of "being a member" but of "belonging". Both among other Johwetans and the leaders the people who have been there as long as - or almost as long as - the pastor are often perceived as the "core" of Johweto; a phrase frequently used in 1991 and 1992. But Murray warns that while the core was "mainly" those who live in the Southfield community, "the core is Johweto", including "the Soweto crowd" and people like Nick and Ann Paton (24/2/92). Yet he conceded that there were those who could be thought of as not being within this core, however widely defined. Laverty though the core was "everyone who is there on Sunday mornings" (Laverty 27/4/92).

Johwetans share a sense of the uniqueness of their congregation in political, spiritual and psychological terms. Murray says "I have not seen any church that meets need like Johweto does" (Murray 24/1/92). Johwetans believe that Johweto has a unique contribution to resolution of racial polarisation, and in varying degrees represents a microcosmic solution for South Africa. Some Johwetans repeatedly speak of their church as a last-chance option. Almost all Johwetans had come from other churches, and a fair number look back on those experience as negative. Murray describes the members who had been there longer as having been disillusioned by previous church experiences, while newer people "came because it is a more whole expression of what church should be in South Africa" (Murray 24/2/92).

White Johwetan Bengt von Veh said that "Johweto is what the church should be in South Africa - multi-racial. I never felt comfortable elsewhere" (B von Veh 24/1/92). A number feel that they could never go back to an all-white church, that "church should be representative of [the racial mix in] the country" (B von Veh 24/1/92). But a black member felt uncomfortable with the implicit assumption that because blacks and whites are meeting, Johweto "is first in the race, with others

⁴⁷. Sennelo was invited by former Johwetan David Mokhoto; Keamogetsi (Lizzie) John by Joseph Kgaladi; Chris Murray by former Johwetan Dave Tredrea; Ansie van Rensburg by Dawid Venter.

following behind ... others have met as non-Christians while we hid [from meeting] behind the mantle of Christianity. Black and white hobos [street people] have better relationships than we [at Johweto] have”.

Figure 11: Johwetans’ denomination of origin

Lutheran (1*)	Swedish Lutheran (1)	Anglican (2)	Dutch Reformed (3)
Baptist (3)	African Evangelical Church (1)	Independent Charismatic (1)	

** Legend: numeral in brackets refers to number of members (total sample = 12 people)*

Figure 12: Denomination prior to joining Vineyard-Johweto

Church of Christ (1)	Anglican (1)	Dutch Reformed (2)	Baptist (1)
Non-denominational (2)	African Evangelical Church (1)	Charismatic (2)	Pentecostal (Rhema) (1)

** Legend: numeral in brackets refers to number of members (total sample = 11 people)*

Johweto’s uniqueness also derives from those who attend, described as “so dynamic and explosive a number of people” (Lavery 27/4/92). Asked to describe long-standing Johwetans, Lavery said:

“The core are all reactionaries; all reacting to different stuff, for instance [the exclusiveness of] the white church ... I will never join a white church ... I would not feel comfortable: I have been involved with black people elsewhere and feel far more at home here.”

Overseas visitors have come to Johweto to learn more about church life in South Africa. In 1992 it was a German couple (Pia and Jurgen Erbach-Adams), a Chinese-American (Curtis Chang), and a woman worker from Reba (Catherine Wirth). The fair-skinned Chang puzzled Soweto residents when he tried to explain that he was not white! The frequency with which overseas visitors come functions as an affirmation of Johweto’s importance; to give the feeling that “we are known overseas”, as Sennelo put it (Sennelo 8/2/92).

Some Johwetans recognize that the congregation’s cohesiveness is a danger for the church; “we are not reaching out to people we do not know”, observed Sennelo (Sennelo 8/2/92). Leadership recognize that mission is and the active bringing in of new people is needed as a balance. Johweto

could just bask in the glories of the past and think it has achieved them. But others must be taken through the same process. Through comfort the congregation could become trapped into a pattern of decision-making.

Most Johwetans come from three geographical areas about 20 kilometres (15 miles) away from the Soweto meeting place: the largest group from two communal farms, with a smaller number from Johannesburg. Sixteen members come from two communal farms to the south; eight from Johannesburg to the north-east, and four from southern Eldorado Park. The dozen or so from Soweto, the fourth major geographical area, are also separated by several suburbs from one another.

Johweto has at least six geographic parameters:

- a) The church meets in Soweto, where
- b) some of its members live (two in a communal house in the Soweto suburb of Dlamini - while
- c) others live on two communal farms south of Johannesburg and
- d) in Johannesburg - three in a communal house in Yeoville -
- e) all of which is ensconced within South Africa
- f) Johweto also maintains overseas links with communities in the USA and Hong Kong and through individual volunteers, e.g. from the US and Germany.

So the immediate context is the Soweto- Johannesburg metropolitan area, in which Johwetans live in 20 separate locations, ranging between the Kehillah in the south to Edenberg in the north; and between Mapetla in the west to Yeoville in the east. The Sunday meeting at a Soweto location implies that there should be a greater involvement here than elsewhere. But no official contact has been established between the congregation and the houses or institutions in the immediate vicinity. Johweto meets in the Soweto suburb of Meadowlands, in the rented classrooms of the Careers' Advice Centre. Its immediate neighbours are two clinics (Koos Beukes Maternity Clinic, Laneledi), a home for the mentally handicapped (Takelani), an educational centre (Funda), and the Diepmeadow Traffic Department. The nearest suburban houses are about 500-600 metres away, although it appears further because of intervening tracts of open land. The entrance to the biggest hospital in Africa, the Baragwanath Hospital, is within a kilometre of the meeting place, and situated opposite it is a large mini-bus taxi rank.

The connection between Johweto and its Soweto context is primarily at the leadership level in a wide range of ecumenical and secular conferences, institutions, groups and individuals in Soweto and Johannesburg. Venter, Mpete and Trevor attend meetings with church groups and pastors in Soweto and Johannesburg. Venter and Mpete are regularly invited to run courses for Youth for Christ and Youth with a Mission. Contact with the wider Johannesburg metropolitan area occur through minister fraternals - such as the Rand Initiative for Reconciliation (RICC), Soweto's Ministers United for Christian Co-responsibility (MUCCOR), or the Yeoville-Berea fraternal - which

also comprises Johweto's interdenominational contact. The exception is the black Johwetan who had joined the local ANC Self-Defense Unit to guard against attacks in his area; and later helped form the Pimville Youth Association.

Through occasional reports-back Johweto is sometimes informed of such contacts, which are not necessarily seen as representing Johweto. Specifically, contact within the immediate neighbourhood was with the directors of the surrounding education centres, the Careers' (Advice) Centre and the Funda (education) Centre. When a congregational member was treated there, Venter established individual contact with the head of Baragwanath Hospital's psychiatric unit. Molefe's expressed desire to initiate a visitation programme to this hospital was not followed through. Trevor - in his personal capacity - works as a volunteer at the Christian social pressure and training organisation Concerned Evangelicals, and represents Johweto at the annual meetings of the Institute for Contextual Theology. He has been to Scandinavia for a South African Council of Churches youth conference.

The weak links to Soweto led to concern among some black members (Trevor, Lizzie) that Johweto should be more involved there, for instance with the civic organisations. In late 1992 Trevor and Lizzie occupied a house in Soweto's Dlamini suburb with US visitor Chang, and initiated a friendship outreach to the immediate neighbours. Laverty had commented in early 1992 "I would like there to have been more black people ... There is not enough penetration into the black community - if this does not happen, Johweto will die" (Laverty 27/4/92).

Johweto is part of the Association of Christian Ministries, a national network of independent charismatic churches, headed by Derek Morphew, a leader of the Tygerberg Christian Fellowship, Cape Province. Every year Venter and Mpete also attend the annual conference for Vineyard leaders in the USA. Links also exist with the U.S.A. through a Mennonite church and the Church of the Saviour in Washington D.C. The latter two have influenced the leaders' vision of community and mission⁴⁸. The leaders also visited the evangelical and drug rehabilitation programme of Jackie Pullinger in Hong Kong, where Johwetan Zandra Murray worked for some time.

1.3. Language which characterises the congregation

The congregation is very closely knit around the dominant constellation of concepts: the importance of relationships, of being a family, of working among the poor, and of living in some form of community. The contents of the latter two concepts are still in the process of being established. Some understand by community living in homes near one another, while a few want to live in the same building, and others think about more extensive common activities. The need for community was also negatively defined in terms of the "tensions between people which have

⁴⁸. Mention of the Church of the Savior as a model occurs in notes prepared by Venter for a leadership camp in September 1988.

not yet been confronted, such as the differences in lifestyles; how we treat one another. We have not exhausted the political questions which arise out of the South African context", said John (8/2/92). A visitor remarked that sermons seldom refer to Jesus by name, but are dominated instead by references to the "kingdom of God" or "rule of God".

Themes recurring in sermons and conversations are crossing barriers, siding with the poor, building some form of community, and supporting one another as an extended family - particularly through creating employment by helping Johwetans start small businesses. Some individuals are supported in academic or work-related study. Skills are also shared, like teaching someone to drive. Johwetans are expected to share meals and conversations during the week, not just to meet on Sundays. One leader often says that "church is what happens outside the Sunday meeting".

Friendships across racial and cultural barriers are important. The leaders encourage Johwetans to be an extended family. Johwetans are expected to become friends who have meals and conversations during the week, not just to sit next to one another on Sundays. A person who has been in Johweto long enough to be a trusted friend can count on others for support in trouble, even if this means food or money, says James Johnson, one of the three founding leaders of Johweto. A newcomer was struck by the genuine friendship that existed between black and white. But despite being there 8 months he did not "really know any black well".

Johweto's all-male leadership is making a noticeable effort to use inclusive language. This is in part due to pressure within the congregation. Some white women (e.g. Lavery, Carrie, Ann) started questioning the sexism and idealism in some leadership expressions, and asked why inclusive words were used for black and white, while women were referred to in stereotypical terms.

Mpete's return from the US at the end of 1992 directly impacted Johweto's language. Mpete had decided to revert to his African name Moekete, rather than use Paul, while his wife now preferred Mamaweng to Nellie. An English name in addition to one's vernacular name are common among blacks, although the motivation was easier interaction with whites, who had difficulty with - or refused to learn to pronounce - black names. A chain reaction followed, with a number of blacks reclaiming their names; Lizzie became Keamogetse, Reggie Sulinama. Eventually even Venter changed from Bushy - a childhood nickname - to Alexander. A counter-reaction started among blacks who said that they were known by their European name even among their family, so that Trevor remained Trevor - as did Patrick.

1.4. Symbols which support congregational identity

Johweto has a strong sense of history. Venter gives a mimetic shape to his leadership role by

strategic retelling of Johweto's birth-story at congregational events ⁴⁹. More than three such retellings were notable:

- * at the beginning of 1991 during a service on Johweto's identity;
- * during the middle of 1991 during a course exploring what it is to be community;
- * on a video news-clip made on the church for CNN broadcasting at the end of 1991.

These retellings usually are more generalised than those offered by individual members. They are reflexive summaries of the church's direction. The retelling also rehearses Johweto's self-understanding of being birthed out of the friendship between church-leaders Venter and Mpete, a Sowetan.

Other phenomena which function as integrative symbols are the name (Johweto Family), the black and white pastoral team, the singing of black and white language songs, and the expressions of joint community. Venter represents Johweto, whether at a structural, functional, or spiritual level.

2. PROCESSES

Up to mid-1992 leadership comprised the pastors (Mpete, Venter), a white who acts as financial resource (James), and a black trainee pastor (Trevor). Venter and Mpete is spoken of as central to the functioning of Johweto. "Bushy [Alexander] and Paul cannot be replaced, because they birthed Johweto; if they were to be replaced Johweto will not be the same," said a white Johwetan.

There is no overt process by which one becomes a leader. Up to 1992 the idea of leadership was "nebulous and undefined" (Murray 24/1/92). The present leadership structure evolved out of friendship. The understanding among the leaders is that you become a leader through (a) people's recognition of how you serve the group, (b) people finding help in what you do, (c) accepting responsibility, and (d) long-term involvement. Apart from this primary threesome, secondary leaders can be identified through their prominence in various meetings. A congregational activity, like the Commitment Process, is thus an important barometer of who the additional leaders are.

The only process by which anyone can become a leader is through invitation extended by Venter to be part of a group of advisors without any executive power. A white Johwetan said in 1992 that the other way was to volunteer; "but this is not always taken up when offered". He noted that there was "no real growing of [black] leaders through encouragement, through placing them in places where they can grow". The extended group was referred to as the core group⁵⁰ in 1988

⁴⁹. But no retelling by the congregation happens: a point strongly argued for in Nelson (1988). The CNN video on Johweto was a solitary example of congregational retelling.

⁵⁰. A name also applied to the original members of Johweto.

(Johweto meeting 1988a:1)⁵¹. An additional administration team⁵² met twice in 1988 and four times in 1989 to co-ordinate setting up chairs for venues, social events, transport, welcoming people, and communion arrangements (Minutes 1988b:1). Between the end of 1992 and the beginning of 1993 a more formalised group was invited by Venter⁵³, which was colloquially known as the Tuesday Group, for the day on which it met⁵⁴. The Tuesday Group helped plan a couple of services, such as a communion liturgy around a massacre of people in the Boipatong township near Johannesburg. In 1993 the structure reverted to its original configuration, with Mpete withdrawing from leadership shortly after his return from the US due to personal problems.

No official membership assimilation process exists. Unofficially the practice until mid-1992 was that someone becomes a member through "being there over a long period of time", as one Johwetan explained. "Belonging" is achieved by length of tenure and by expressing commitment to Johweto privately to the leaders. Leaders frequently emphasise the importance of relationships. The occasional anxiety expressed by Venter about lack of numerical growth over 8 years is countered by the recognition that the high level of interaction would not have been possible if the group was larger.

Relative to the size of the congregation and the limited programmes a great deal of planning happens among the three leaders, as the large number of documents testify, ranging from budgets and schedules for farming in 1991 to vision statements in 1993. Formal records were kept of all meetings between March 1987 and June 1989.

2.1. Decision-making Processes

Johweto - in the words of Mpete - struggles towards consensus, while straddling theocracy and democracy. While no formally constituted decision-making process exists, the informal evolved way is decision-making through discussions - sometimes in the time allocated to Sunday services. This protocol of calling a meeting to discuss issues is regarded as a method which makes it easier to assess and engage people.

Decisions which will influence all Johwetans sometimes occur through discussion, although some are taken by Johnson and Venter with little or no overt input from others. An example of a decision through discussion was that of moving the congregation to Meadowlands, after having met in White City. So was the weekend discussion by about thirty Johwetans in 1986 to talk about

⁵¹. In 1988 the core group included the leaders, Gill venter, Daphne Kgaladi, Dave Porteous, Nellie, Tseole, Edgar Molefe, Beard, Ron Gold, Mark Johnson, Sandie Gold, and Paton (Johweto meeting 1988:1-2); and in 1989 the leaders, Paton, John Gosling, Dave Tredrea, Steve Carpenter and "Pilane" (Notes 1989f:1-2).

⁵². Daphne Kgaladi, George Moroa, Mark Johnson; joined at times by Gill Venter and Glenn Slow.

⁵³. Including Chris Murray, Kathy Laverty, and Dawid Venter.

⁵⁴. A similar configuration emerged in 1994.

whether someone who follows Jesus can be part of a military force, like the South African Defence Force (SADF) or the African National Congress' Umkhonto we Sizwe. Some white men in Johweto refused to be part of the SADF. One did community work in Alexandra instead. An example of decision by leaders only is the selection of the advisory team in 1992, for which no consultation with the wider body occurred.

Consultative congregational decision-making is illustrated by decisions regarding military participation and becoming a separate congregation:

- a) whether individual participation in the military - in the South African Defence Force or the ANC's Umkhonto We Sizwe - compromises the gospel was debated by the congregation. A group of about 30 spent a 1988 weekend on the issue and drew up a response⁵⁶;
- b) whether or not to become a church separate from the town congregation. During this period a regular meeting was suspended. The unanimous decision was to become a church.

2.2. Conflict processes

Dissent is resolved by attending to issues the leadership becomes aware of through their contact with people. There is a recognition that this is made possible by the intimate size of the congregation, and that perhaps this will have to change as the group grows.

A conflict flared up in 1991 over the decision by five families to buy a farm to live in community. The issue at stake was whether the decision should have been discussed at congregational level or not. This issue was not fully resolved at the time, as the families were adamant that their decision was of a private nature. The counter opinion was that if the congregation as a whole were moving towards community, then decisions should more and more be practised at that level. There was also a concern that the isolation of Southfield through distance from both Johannesburg and Soweto - and so from many of the congregation - would not only create an elite in contradiction to the communal ideal, but would also exclude those who could not contribute financially to owning a home. People were given the opportunity to openly express their opinions while a service was suspended one Sunday morning. Murray says that the exchange was "not conflict, but an issue which was well talked through. Conflict can be divisive" (Murray 24/1/92).

In 1993 the issue was partially resolved by a decision among the families for the property to become Johweto premises, and so open to anyone who wanted to come, while the four houses remain private property.

⁵⁶. The response left the ultimate decision in the hands of the individual, who is urged to "dialogue diligently" with other Johwetans (Johweto statement 1988:1). According to Roozen e.a.'s categories, this decision classifies Johweto as a civic congregation - to which the lack of action at a corporate level also bears witness.

3. PROGRAMMES

Johweto at present has projects and trends rather than programmes. The trend in the late 1980s was to develop the Kehillah Farm while exploring community, and becoming involved in the adjoining squatter community. In 1987 eight home leaders was trained by means of a formal programme over two months. Other than Bible teaching no formal training presently exists within Johweto. Informal training in aspects of ministry - e.g. praying for the sick - is considered as talking place through modelling, which is highly regarded. But there is a need to train people in communication skills. The Sunday morning services and two house church meetings (in Dlamini and in Yeovile) most closely approximates programmes for Johweto.

In 1992 there was a high level of concern among Johwetans to open up all aspects of congregational life to allow participation by everyone. At the same time a white Johwetan said that blacks often feel they cannot take a leading role, or feel that they do not have the skills which inevitably - despite the intentions - results in white domination.

Venter and Mpete have noted that a sometimes recurring pattern in Johweto is for moneyless blacks to befriend whites, who then act almost like patrons on their behalf, sharing finances and skills. The issue of continued dependency has been raised in meetings. A white Johwetan said that, at first, blacks had "a 'gimme' feel", but "now things are balanced out". As an example she referred to a young black woman who, after being helped through high school and college by a white couple, was now holding her own in a high-powered firm. The feeling is that friendship should precede resource-sharing, and should not demean either person involved.

Johweto leadership emphasises the provision of employment as a ministry goal. The Kehillah was the centre for this purpose in 1990. Vegetables farming supplied employment for eight people from the nearby squatter camp, and the M & M fibre-glass factory provided work for four people. Attempts to involve unemployed black Johwetans in these two projects were unsuccessful, in part because of the desire of those concerned to have white-collar rather than the manual labour which has for so long under apartheid been reserved for blacks, in part due to personality clashes with the fibreglass factory manager. Johweto leadership and members also help individuals with finances for academic and business ventures. In 1990 some were aided in theological studies (Trevor), a secretarial course (Lizzie), and public relations training (Patrick).

The farm, a fibre-glass factory, a taxi whose purchase was funded by Johnson, and pottery-decoration enterprise were other examples of Johweto-funded small businesses. Money is extended as a loan, of which only the interest is payable until such time that the business provides a salary for the person involved in it. After this point the profits are divided between the business and Johweto.

In 1991 a Commitment Process was initiated by Johweto leadership. This was a discussion-oriented group exploration of what community meant; conducted over several months by means of an examination of members' spiritual life and with emphasis on classic spiritual disciplines. The Process engaged and exposed people's assumptions. People were challenged to examine different views in terms of their own backgrounds, and to reveal their inner selves to one another, according to Mpete.

People on the NewFarm are divided about how to use the property. Venter wants to use it for a retreat centre; John Mothiane wants to grow vegetables. Others have a vague idea of wanting to help people with job-creation.

Most of Johweto's finances are used for the Kehillah.

Fit of programme to needs of members

According to Mpete the needs of members are:

- a) interaction, met by the Process;
- b) for God, security, and belonging; met by empowerment through worship;
- c) material needs, met in business infrastructure, and work on the farm;
- d) a numerically larger congregation, not yet met.

3.1. Worship services

Johweto has one Sunday meeting, which is held in the morning. The congregation is decidedly low-church, to the extent of not meeting on Sundays which coincide with Christian holidays, such as Christmas. Nor is Easter Sunday, Good Friday, Ascension or Advent celebrated in any way. Communion, referred to as "breaking bread together" and consisting of bread and grape juice, is rare. In keeping with the emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, anyone can hold a communion service by themselves at any time.

A typical Sunday meeting

Arriving in time for the 9.30am Sunday morning service is not easy. Entering the concrete interior of the cavernous Careers Centre hall a visitor will be faced with an expanse and a small circle of plastic chairs arranged in a semi-circle near the front of the stage. There are no ushers or stewards at the door. People will sit or mill around talking, with lots of young children scampering about. There is no strong awareness of place, as people will often change seats during the meeting, and children will wander from seat to seat, interacting with different members of the congregation. The dress code is casual, with nothing identifying the pastors as different from the rest. Venter often says that all people are ministers, with some gifted in leading. The congregation wears ordinary street clothes, not suits or smart dresses, and shorts are popular in the summer. The informality

of dress is carried over into the style of the service.

The meeting will slide to an almost imperceptible start somewhere around 9.45am, when Nthlola or another worship leader will strike up a chorus. The choruses are sung either a-cappella or accompanied by a guitar or other instrument. The songs are Sotho, Tswana, and English favourites, with the English ones mostly imported from the United States. Through the encouragement of Keamogetse (Lizzie) John, who sometimes leads worship, more black language songs are now used than before. Some of the songs are original, composed by either Nick Paton or Moekete Mpete.

The words of the songs are projected onto a wall with an overhead projector, and worshippers sometimes dance or clap along to faster songs. Alternately, people will close their eyes and raise their opened hands during quieter songs. Occasionally someone will speak softly in a "tongue". When there is no musical instrument, songs can be started by anyone, which sometimes results in obviously off-key introductions and laughter, before another will restart in the right key. Most of the congregation stand for the duration of the sung worship, or is encouraged to do so by the worship leader or Venter. Some stay seated, or sit down during the worship. In between songs scattered prayers are offered by various people, which sometimes culminate in Venter praying aloud for specific areas of some people's lives. People usually take their seats during the prayers, which often signals the end of worship.

After the songs Nthlola will issue an official welcome, noticing visitors, each of whom receives a polite round of applause. The announcements usually are about events that Johwetans could attend, or that the leaders are involved in, or of a personal nature. The collection will be taken up by individuals nominated by whoever is doing the announcements, and is often delayed by attempts to find a suitable receptacle. A song will be sung during the collection process, which ends with a prayer. The congregation stays seated during collection and during the prayer afterwards.

Then whoever takes the sermon will step forward and face the congregation. A Scripture reading is announced, with the congregation asked to volunteer to take the reading. Noticeably few - usually blacks - have Bibles with them, and on several occasions this led to an encouragement by Venter to bring them.

A 1993 Mpete sermon explained that the gospel is meant to change the lives of those without money, work, or power. Mpete preaches that "Jesus came to bring good news to the poor". The gospel is meant to change the lives of those without money, work, or power. Money was used among the twelve disciples and in the first church at Jerusalem for the good of all. Mpete also talks about a group of poor he saw during a one year stay in the United States of America. They formed an organisation for the poor to work among other poor, to help them to believe in Jesus but also to get work.

Johweto's Sunday meetings are not always the same. Occasionally a congregational discussion replaces the traditional sermon-by-pastor formula. People are allowed to ask questions during the sermon. Or the sermon may be discussed, with everybody being able to ask questions or add a new thought. A discussion can be held instead of a sermon, for instance on whether the Peace Accord is working.

After the sermon an open invitation is sometimes issued for people who want prayer for physical or emotional healing, or other reasons, to identify themselves by raising their hands. Others then gather around and pray for them by laying on hands. At other times Venter will initiate the prayer period by asking specific individuals how they are feeling, or about progress in certain troubled areas of their lives.

What is happening in South Africa is often at the centre of the Sunday service. Venter has preached on the Boipatong massacre; and once a whole communion service was planned to help people bring out their feelings about the violence. On these occasions "Nkosi Si'kel' l'Afrika" is sung as a cry for God to end the violence, sometimes with weeping. The family of some Johwetans have been killed; one, a nurse, during the 1992 hospital strike.

One concern frequently expressed is the extent to which actions characteristic of charismatic churches - "prophecy, laying on of hands," said one - have been lost. This is often attributed to the focus on socio-political awareness. "There is less ministry of the Holy Spirit, less power evangelism⁵⁶, less meeting of people's needs in this way" (Murray 24/1/92). While wanting to recover this, they agree that it should complement the socio-political aspects.

3.2. Youth work

Johweto has from the start manifested an ambivalence regarding youth work. During its early days an older black woman, Mama Marks, started what she termed a children's church, in which she was joined by Kathy Laverty. Later this ministry was lead by a young white man, Kellam Beard, who left Johweto after becoming involved in a doctrinal conflict with Venter. Venter explains that the issue was an increasing movement towards gnosticism. After this event children's work came to a halt. With the increasing number of babies in the congregation, a system of Sunday child-care was devised, shared among the mothers, fathers and volunteers. Up to that point children roamed freely during the service, moving from person to person. In 1992 there was an influx of children into the Soweto service from nearby Power Park, and Johwetan Ansie van Rensburg suggested a more instructive approach. Mama Marks and Morris Mooko joined in, with other volunteers, and numbers grew. Venter was hesitant, as he believed such a work needed long-term commitment, and was not sure that the ministry had enough organic growth to sustain that. This stand

⁵⁶. A phrase used by Wimber to denote any ministry which involves a release of God's miraculous power.

eventually caused the work to grind to a halt, although it was revived in 1993.

3.3. Fellowship groups

Apart from Sundays, many Johwetans meet during the week in four homes. On a Wednesday a number of Johwetans make their way through the slow-moving evening Soweto traffic by foot, by taxi, and by car. About fifteen - five white during 1992 - will crowd into Johweto's house in the Dlamini suburb. Usually there is tea first, then enthusiastic worship, with African-style dancing and clapping. Later, after a Bible study or discussion, white and black Johwetans drive people home. This group alternates Bible study with discussions.

In such a small group meeting people sometimes talk about the differences between white and black, and the quarrels that come from this. Solutions are not always found: some whites are still unwilling to attend funerals of the distant relatives of black Johwetans, as contemporary African tradition requires, and this is a sore point. But some things are solved: blacks do make more of an effort to telephone and visit after some white complaints that they were not doing their share.

4. RACIAL COMPOSITION AND THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL FACTORS ON STRUCTURES

4.1. Why different races come to Johweto

Johweto is an example of an intentional⁵⁷, integrative, and non-transitional type of racially-mixed congregation. Most members do not live in the neighbourhood where they meet, in a mixed neighbourhood, nor is ethnic transition happening in the surrounding context. Johweto is a commuter congregation, with no ministry links to its Soweto context. Members are uninvolved in their immediate contexts, apart from secondary support to a squatter camp outreach near its one farm. Links do exist on a structural level (ministers fraternals), and individual members are involved in educational and health projects. Despite the disparate social positions of Johwetans a high level of social interaction occur. Johweto presents a rare congregation which has attempted to reinvent its structures in line with its vision, in the process moving from church to sect.

The reasons for Johweto's integration are leadership decision, and the vision which grew out of that. A theological base is supplied through interpreting the gospel as requiring the crossing of racial and economic barriers. The mixed leadership and congregation draws others who have the same beliefs. Johwetans feel their congregation represent an unique microcosmic solution for South Africa, a representative model for the South African church, country. A white Johwetan said her husband would have immigrated had it not been for Johweto. In 1991 this couple left their Johannesburg apartment because the landlord would not allow their black friends to visit. Speaking

⁵⁷. This is stated often in Johweto documents (e.g. Venter & Johnson 1987:4).

for many Johwetans she said, "I will never join a white church ... Because we have been separated in the past we have to work at getting together". The mechanisms used to achieve initial unity were the same as those of the Vineyard in white Johannesburg, and were not particularly radical: living and worked on the Kehillah farm on weekends.

1. The founding vision of a community crossing racial boundaries is the most significant single integrating factor, drawing others who identify with all or part of this theological and political identity. The emphasis on relationship with God, with one another and a strong socio-political awareness ⁶⁸ draws others who feel similar. The vision arise in part from the socio-economic and political bottom of South African society through Mpete's initiative.

Despite the vertical socio-economic and educational differences between Johwetans, horizontally many members existed at the same marginal position in their respective black and white societies. This location was caused by their positive attitudes towards blacks/whites, negative attitudes towards nationalist policies, and the racial exclusiveness of the wider white church and of society prior to Johweto. In contrast with the rest of society in 1985 people "wanted to break racial barriers". Many feel that they will never again join a white church. Blacks chose to ideologically distance themselves from opposition to ethnic mixing, as expressed in some Black Consciousness quarters. Both positions are in line with non-racialism. Johweto's civic mission orientation meant her beliefs would not be translated into corporate programmes of action.

Prior to Johweto some of its whites (Laverty) had refused conscription into the army or opted for non-combatant status (e.g. Murray in the 1980s). Moroa remembers suggesting to black youth groups that they meet with whites (Moroa 16/1/93). Many white Johwetans had prior relations with other blacks before Johweto through various projects. The Lavertys and Poppletons had considered moving into Alexandria and Tembisa townships. Four single black people have moved into a mixed suburb in 1993 - still an unusual experience.

So resources for integration existed in the conflicting ideologies of society. Opposition to government policy (racial or otherwise) and affirmation of blacks/whites existed prior to Johweto's formation, but with no spiritual institution to call home. The theologically-based vision - linked to a replicable experience - pulled individuals across the boundaries of their societies into a single institution, which satisfied their political, social and theological needs. Moroa explained his choice to belong as based on Paul's saying that there is neither Jew nor Gentile in Christ (Moroa 16/1/93).

But even redrawn boundaries may have drawbacks, as perhaps proven by the relationship between the informal settlement and the Kehillah. Farm manager Mothiane mused that the squatters "should have been drawn in" (Mothiane 31/1/93), a sentiment also offered by former Johwetan Euan Ross-

⁶⁸. The politicisation of charismatics in the USA have been noted in Robbins 1988:206.

Taylor, who believes that the fences and the habit of "us" going out to "them" added friction and created something of a siege mentality. Mothiane said that this had been tried, "but it takes more time" (Mothiane 3/1/93).

2. The strong counter-culture identity of the congregation erects strong boundaries, experienced as uniqueness, and concretely enforced by the distance whites travel to Soweto. The boundaries are between Johweto and a) the wider (white and black society); b) white society; c) other congregations; d) the larger South African church. A striking example of the conflict that belonging to a Christian church causes a black person was provided by Sennelo, who told of his decision not to participate in any event at which an inyanga (spiritualist) is called - not an unusual occurrence in Soweto.

Frequent overseas visitors affirms a sense of importance. The geographic location aids and discourages new membership. Whites have to travel at least 35 minutes, demonstrating their choice to identify with blacks. The earlier opposition by a well-known black church leader, and infrequently expressed anger at black Johwetans draws lines between Johweto and Soweto. Some whites feel unwanted in Soweto. This may contribute to the lack of commitment to this local context.

Despite the lack of assimilation-procedures, several covert contracts are entered into when one joins Johweto. A covert membership contract is to replicate the founding experience - to experience Soweto, to form friendships across colour lines. The political stance, the financial cost implied by the distance, and the theological orientation tests commitment and sifts out actual from potential members. Not all manage to negotiate the contract: a newcomer who had come for 8 months did not "really know any black well".

The identity draws whites and blacks. Blacks can feel that they do not belong to an institution that will betray their political cause, while whites are offered the opportunity to work through their guilt and pain - but with no compromise. Some white Johwetans had prior relations with blacks before through education projects, a feeding scheme, health work in a squatter clinic, and an independent national reconciliation and justice programme. A number of whites seriously considered moving into the black areas of Alexandra, Soweto, or Tembisa. At present four single black people are living in a mixed suburb. But for most blacks interaction with whites occurred only through the workplace, as employers.

The boundaries are also negatively enforced by the feeling for many that Johweto is a last-chance option; that if it does not work there is nowhere else to go. Many had spent time in other churches, and a number see those experience as negative. Johwetans share a sense of the uniqueness of their congregation. The frequency with which overseas visitors come is seen as an affirmation of Johweto's importance. Johweto is the last viable option. "I will never join a white church ... I

would not feel comfortable", said one.

3. **Johweto also illustrates an inversion of social roles**, for example the employee-employer role in which most blacks interacted with whites in the workplace. The constant interaction around areas of conflict and the use of different language-songs means that cultural assimilation is resisted to a degree. Yet a pull towards assimilation is evidenced in the dominance of the English language within - and the US roots of - the congregation's structures. "There is still a language barrier which we have to cross," said a black Johwetan. He pointed out that in discussion meetings whites will often distort what a black said, even though this is in the guise of rephrasing by saying "If I understand so-and-so correctly". The example and strength of Mpete as a black leader, and occasional challenges by Nthola, John, and Molefe helped to keep white culture from dominating totally.

4. **Mutual understanding** A lot of energy goes into increasing mutual understanding, whether informally through conversation and meetings. Some attended a Black Consciousness seminar together at Funda Centre in 1986.

The openness of dialogue has brought about the biggest change in the 8 years of Johweto's existence, from a focus on the racial divide to more of an established feeling "with no particular battle to fight", said a Johwetan.

In some small group meetings people talk about the differences between white and black, and the subsequent quarrels. Solutions are not always found: some whites are still often unwilling to attend funerals of the distant relatives of black Johwetans, and this is a sore point. Whites also asked blacks to make more of an effort to initiate telephone calls and visits.

5. **Incorporating the social and the spiritual** Events in South Africa are often at the centre of the Sunday service, e.g. a sermon on the Boipatong massacre. A whole communion service was planned to help people express feelings about the violence. On such occasions the black hymn "Nkosi Si'kel' l'Afrika" is sung as a cry for God to end the violence, sometimes with weeping. The family of some Johwetans have been killed; one, a nurse, during the 1992 hospital strike.

6. **Bondedness and the stress on relationships** Most people come (a) because they were invited by friends; (b) knew Venter or Mpete. Some believe that these "relationships will last beyond Johweto". Most Johwetans have known Venter or Mpete for more than ten years. A person who has been in Johweto long enough to form friendships can count on others for support in trouble, even if this means food or money.

7. There is a high level of concern among Johwetans to open up all aspects of congregational life to all participants. The perception of one white Johwetan is that through their exclusion from

resources blacks often feel they cannot take a leading role, or feel that they do not have the skills - which results in white domination.

8. A means to gain resources: The location of whites in higher income-education brackets and blacks in the lower end of the scale translates into a lop-sided distribution of skills and resources. This creates a measure of dependency, an issue often raised in meetings.

In extreme cases some blacks see friendship with whites as a means to gain resources. The leaders have detected a pattern of money-less blacks befriending whites, who to then act as patrons on their behalf, sharing finances and skills (e.g. driving). Sometimes this produces positive results; a young black woman was helped through high school and college by a white couple, and is now holding her own in a high-powered firm. Sometimes the result is negative: when a person uses the same reason to borrow money from different white members. This is prompted by a desire on the part of black society for the rightful redistribution of resources from which they have been excluded by law. In contrast the leaders feel that friendship should precede resource-sharing, and should not demean either person involved.

As a whole the different social locations create a dependency, e.g. whites possess drivers' licenses while blacks do not. A white Johwetan said that at first blacks had "a 'gimme' feel", but "now things are balanced out". A black Johwetan agreed that "some blacks think the whites will help them".

4.2. How social factors affect structures, relations, and systems

1. Johweto's inside boundaries appear to be relationship, as relationship and length of time are two criteria for being entrusted with function/ministry - the third being proven track record. This creates a feeling that there are two generations within Johweto: the first generation who have been there as long as - or almost as long as - the pastor; and those who have joined more recently, approximately in the last three years since 1989⁵⁹.

But while the inner boundaries - apparently as strong as the outer ones - is formally constructed as relationship with the first generation, a large number of Johwetans feel - including those who have been there the longest - feel that they do not belong to Johweto. Ann Bothwell-Paton pointed out that the first generation also do not always feel like they belong.

The inner boundaries are reinforced by geographical distance and grouping. Johweto has very strong outward boundaries, and it would be difficult for anyone to join who does not know

⁵⁹. This is similar to what George and Logan calls the bucket-berry theory; that there is a power line that divides those who have been there longer than the pastor, and those who have been there shorter. They note that as the newer group aspires to functions, and thus grow in influence, the balance of power starts shifting in their favour. This sets up a power struggle of sorts.

someone within the congregation.

For a church that has functioned for six years there is a remarkable lack of programme. A self-image of powerlessness has often been projected by individual leaders or members. So someone who otherwise thinks Johweto is doing fairly well would tell outsiders that Johweto is "just plodding along". This could be because the members of the group renders themselves functionally powerless by investing Venter with all power - their power. His role appears to be that of gatekeeper of function: no one can have any function without his sanction. His own limits become the limits of the community's shape: the Tuesday morning pastoral team is limited to those who can afford to spend a couple of hours during mid-morning. In other words, those who work full-time is excluded from participation - on the basis of the time Venter has available. If the group met at a different time more people could be included. Venter states that he only has so much time, and that some of that must be spent with his family as a priority. 2seem

Another clue to the lack of programmes could be the stress on bondedness and therefore the high frequency of informal meetings. A white woman said: "I avoid reaching out: I look after my friendships."

2. The class differences, evidenced in concrete differences between white and black lifestyles, causes some tension, especially when seen against community-language and counter-culture ethos, both of which are understood to imply greater equality than attained so far. Such tensions have been part of Johweto since the early days, and is manifested by blacks confronting whites on such issues as the differences regarding:

- a. means of transport: most whites have two vehicles while most blacks make use of public transport;
- b. housing: all whites live in housing which is for the most part visibly more luxurious and bigger than the rooms many blacks live in;
- c. entertainment: many whites regularly attend film-shows, some as many as four times a month, while many blacks live on the breadline;
- d. most blacks are single while most whites are married.

Some blacks have to support large extended families on meagre incomes, which contrast sharply with high quality clothing worn by them - seemingly an inappropriate proportion to whites. Because many black Johwetans are unemployed or part-time employees, when community means buying houses or flats (as at Southfield) this implies financial commitments beyond their means, as well as an embarrassing ongoing dependency on white largesse. A black said of the participants of the Southfield project that "people were chosen because they were liked, or had the finances". The tensions around differences in lifestyle is manifested by defensiveness among some whites, while a number have stated that white "people will have to look at their lifestyles and ambition".

The physical relocation to Southfield suggests to me a withdrawal from the Kehillah as focal point of the struggle for community and ministry, and a coalescence of a new ideology around white economic values with private ownership of property as core. I think that the new ideology combines the desire for a better quality of life (ironically, a reasonably safe space for children to grow up in, access to affordable housing) with that for community. Southfield families have said that they would never have been able to afford living in their present style if they had not moved onto the farm together. The psychological influence of life passages - moving from married couples to parenthood - was another influence.

5. SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Of 45 questionnaires handed out 11 were completed and returned, representing 24%. Conducted interviews with 20 people between December 1991 and February 1993, of which 9 were with whites (4 males, 5 females), 11 were with blacks (7 males, 4 females). A survey was done by handing out 45 questionnaires, of which 11 were returned. This sample represents 25% of the total number actively participating in Sunday meetings towards the end of 1992 (6 were completed by whites, 4 by blacks, with one whose race is uncertain). I did participant observation in 19 church services between January 1991 and March 1993, and attended numerous leaders' meetings.

5.1. Church participation

5.1.1. Length of membership at Johweto

Less than 2 years	36,4%
2-5 years	45,5%
6-7 ¹ years	2,2%

5.1.2. Frequency of attendance at worship service during past month

None	0%	Once	0%
Twice	9%	Thrice	27,3%
Four times	36,4%	More than 4	36,4%

5.2.4. First language

English	54,5%	Zulu	18,2%
Xhosa	9%	Sotho	9%

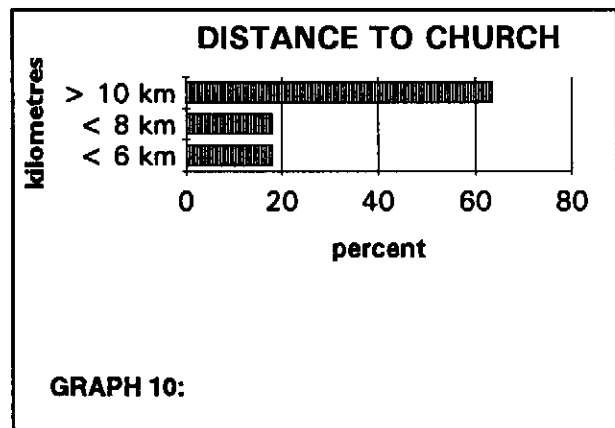
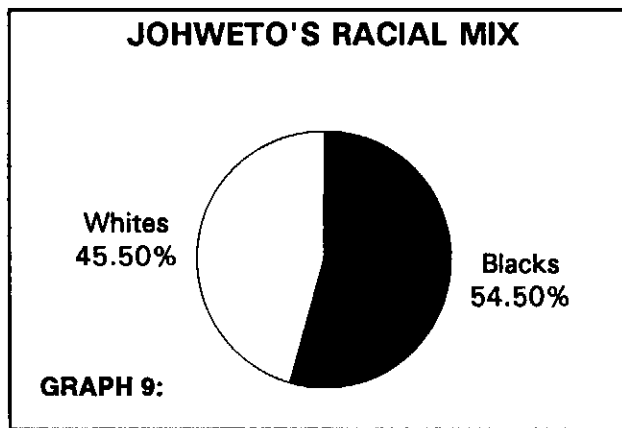
5.2.5. Nationality

South African	90,9%
Other African	9%

5.3. Relationship to the community

5.3.1. Distance from home to church:

less than 1 km	0%	2 km or less	-
4 km or less	-	6 km or less	18,2%
8 km or less	18,2%	more than 10	63,6%



5.1.3. Monthly financial contributions

R5 - 10	18,2%	R41 to R 60	-
R11 to R20	18,2%	R61 to R 80	-
R21 to R30	9%	R81 to R100	9%
R31 to R40	9%	More	27,3

5.1.4. Hours per week spent on Johweto affairs

Less than 1	-	1-5 hours	27,3%
6-10 hours	18,2%	11-15 hours	18,2%
16-20 hours	9%	More than 20	27,3%

5.2. Membership characteristics

5.2.1. Age

10-20 years	18,2%	51-60 years	-
21-30 years	54,5%	Over 60 years	-
31-40 years	18,2%		
41-50 years			

5.2.2. Marital and family status

Single	45,5%	Married	36,4%
Separated or divorced	18,2%	Widower, widow	-

5.2.3. Race group

Asian	0%	White	45,5%
Black	54,5%	Coloured	0%

5.3.2. Method of transport to Johweto

walk	9%	bus	-
car	45,5%	train	-
taxi	45,5%		

5.3.3. How long lived in present neighbourhood

Less than 2 years	36,4%
2-5 years	9%
more than 12	45,5%

5.3.4. Likelihood of respondent moving within three years

Definitely will move	27,3%
50% chance	9%
Probably will move	36,4%
Probably not	9%
Very unlikely	18,2%

5.4. Internal relations and interaction

Question	Yes	No
Have you been visited by someone from Johweto?	81%	18,2%
Would you like to be visited by someone from Johweto?	90,9%	-

¹ Johweto has only been in existence since 1985, and the questionnaire was handed out in 1992.

5.4.1. Distance to nearest person who also attends Johweto

less than 1 km	45,5%	2 km or less	18,2%
4 km or less	9%	6 km or less	-
8 km or less	9%	more than 10km	18,2%

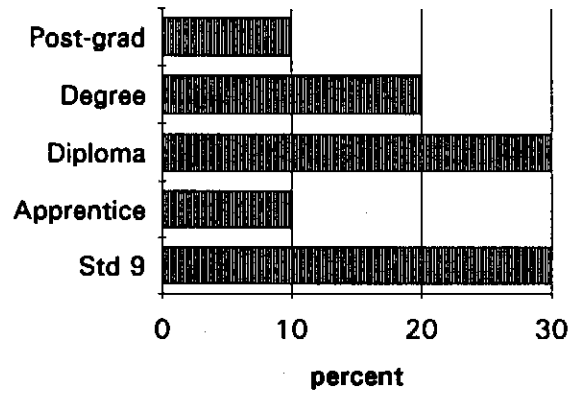
5.4.2. Number of closest friends who also belong to Johweto

None	9%	Three	9%
One	27,3%	Four	-
Two	9%	Five or more	45,5%

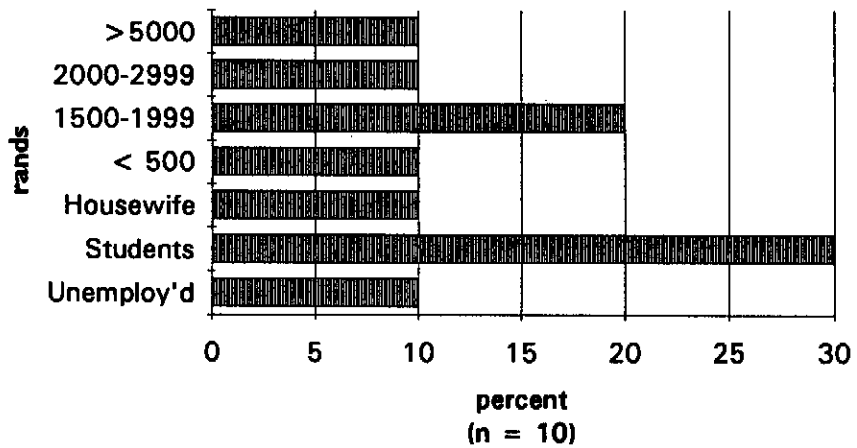
5.4.3. Number of Johweto members visited by respondent in past month

None	9%	Two to four	45,5%
One	9%	Five or more	36,4%

GRAPH 11: EDUCATION LEVELS



GRAPH 12: INCOME LEVELS



CHAPTER SEVEN: A SOCIAL-SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF ETHNO-CULTURAL FACTORS IN NEW TESTAMENT CONGREGATIONS BETWEEN AD 30-70

1. INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

1.1. Purpose: an ethnic re-reading of the New Testament

My purpose in Chapter Seven is to re-examine New Testament texts for evidence of the ethno-cultural dynamics which could have affected the composition, structure, and theology (ideology) of the early churches. I adopted both an extra-textual and intra-textual strategy involving several methodological steps. These were influenced by my need to find an alternative concept for "race", so that I could relate New Testament congregations to the contemporary ones. What race meant in the first century was difficult to establish, and no direct textual evidence exists about the presence of different races in early Christian congregations.

The dominant modes in current New Testament interpretation (exegesis, hermeneutics) seem at worst to justify the segregation of cultural groups in contemporary congregations, and at best not to be particularly helpful resources for moving churches beyond segregation. This is the result of masking the role that ethno-cultural diversity played in the early churches and in the writings addressed to them. Where the prevailing analysis of the New Testament does note the cultural diversity of Greek and Roman cultures, the implications for contemporary ecclesiology are not followed through. This is clear from the works of e.g. Theissen (1982, 1991), and Meeks (1983).

So this chapter is motivated by the desire (a) to uncover a different reality than that noted by most studies; (b) to use the results from the study of contemporary congregations in an interactive exchange with the New Testament texts; and so (c) to produce results that can be used in the last chapter. So in the research design of this chapter, textual analysis is a step within a wider hermeneutic strategy which moves from (a) present experience to (b) questioning the dominant ideological superstructure (of reality, or theology) to (c) exegetical suspicion "that the prevailing interpretation of the Bible has not taken important pieces of data into account" to (d) a new interpretation of Scripture (see Segundo 1988:8-9). Then the circle can begin again, by examining experience in the light of newly-found insights.

The first step was to discover whether any labels existed with which social distance between groups were conveyed, as revealed in the New Testament and in extratextual references. For these I coined the phrase "ethno-cultural", by which I mean cultural, customary, religious, and linguistic distinctives used by ethnic groups to differentiate themselves from others. This phrase helps in pointing out general differences between Roman, Greek, and Jewish cultures, and between these and indigenous cultures in Asia Minor. Ethno-cultural differences function to establish boundary markers between groups just as race does. So through this concept I can cross-fertilise the results from the ancient and contemporary congregations. Ethnic boundaries then (as now) were permeable and existed along a continuum, with many examples of half-assimilated individuals or groups. Yet sufficient differences occur for distinctions to be drawn and for the direction of cultural assimilation to be indicated.

The second step was to show that the ethno-cultural categories had definite negative effects on establishing intergroup behaviour; for instance through ideologies of oppression. By implication these would also affect the churches and so helps to contextualise Paul's express strategy regarding the composition of the churches. The third step was to rehearse the evidence for the ethnic composition of Pauline churches. I also tried to find data concerning the presence of different cultural groups in Roman urban centres to positively support my conclusions. The fourth step was to analyse and to reconstruct the development, structure, and composition of the Pauline churches from the New Testament texts by using ethno-cultural distinctives.

A discussion of the ethnic composition of New Testament congregations is important, given (a) the underemphasis on the function of ethnicity by New Testament scholars which creates the impression that ethnically segregated congregations existed in culturally homogeneous contexts; (b) the acceptance by many Christians of the New and Old Testament texts as bases for social-ethical behaviour; (c) the influence of scholarly interpretation on ministers who are trained in academic contexts on laity; (d) the direct consequences on thinking about congregational and denominational structures. In my revisionist reconstruction of the social influences behind Pauline ecclesiology, the structure of his churches is regarded as an attempt to accommodate ethnic groupings. This will inevitably clash with the dominant ecclesiological concepts of what is normative for present day churches.

The normative mode of thinking about church structures derives from the mostly homogeneous cultural base of academic and denominational circles, whether liberal or fundamentalist. Such scholarship continues to produce primarily segregated congregations through its use in the training of clergy for exclusively homogenous cultural contexts¹. Chapter Three clearly demonstrated that in the USA segregated churches are the still the norm some 30 years after the civil rights movement called for racially-integrated structures. This is also the implication of the few deliberate attempts in South Africa at integrating congregations, despite more than 300 years of lip-service to the ideal by most mainline denominations.

The segregated churches to which most clergy and scholars belong must exercise a powerful social influence on the formation of New Testament norms of interpretation. The effect becomes clear when the interrelationship of academic and denominational structures is considered, and the interaction of laity with both. So segregated experience supports theological theorising, and theorising supports structural segregation. What is accepted as normative in the churches derive primarily from scholars in religious academic institutions, and secondarily from the clergy trained in such institutions. Herzog's comments apply: "In biblical studies research is institutionally attached, and ideologies, biases and power interests, including economic concerns, of those institutions shape the direction of research and place unspoken

¹. Despite opposition from missiologists to the homogeneous unit principle, and much posturing from within academic quarters.

taboos on it. Nor does the elimination of churchly strictures insure objectivity..." (Herzog 1983:112 ², quoted in Vorster 1988:43).

The location of academics and clergy in the dominant cultural and political strata of society must also be considered. This means that generally they will tend to perpetuate the ideology of the ruling political or economic class (Ste. Croix 1981:411). Where the dominant ideology is segregation or cultural assimilation, the implications are clear. Scholars will voluntarily or otherwise tend to support (and legitimate) the ethnic segregation of congregations through their exegeses, theology, and even politics; with exceptions. This explains the violent reactions which greet attempts to locate blacks in the history of Scripture, as Felder tried to. Less simplistically, present experience, dominant political and theological ideologies, and social context ³ function to maintain racially-segregated congregations as the norm ⁴.

From the above an analysis from within the horizon of heterogeneous congregations can definitely contribute to a re-reading of the New Testament as multi-cultural documents. By this means the authors and their congregations can be profiled against a multi-cultural social world. The results would also be of use to contemporary multi-cultural congregations - in South Africa and elsewhere. Texts used by such congregations to legitimise their composition could be shown to rest as much on extra-textual social reality as on intuition. For example, one text often used in mixed congregations is Ephesians 2:14, which refers to breaking down the walls of hostility. Paul's use of it probably rests on a physical reality known to his intended readers/hearers, as argued below.

To summarise: my purpose in Chapter Seven is to re-examine New Testament texts for the existence and the possible effects of ethno-cultural dynamics in the early churches. My purpose implies the units (social data in and outside the texts) and methods of analysis (socio-literary) for (re-)constructing the social relations that are reflected in the⁵ texts. This means having to demonstrate that:

- a) groups distinguished themselves from others, which awareness affected social relations;
- b) a variety of ethnic, cultural, and class groups were included in the same church;
- c) these differences affected the functioning of such churches;
- d) the social stratification of the New Testament world was similar or different to that - actual or proposed - of the text.

². Herzog, W R II 1983. "Interpretation as discovery and creation: sociological dimensions of biblical hermeneutics". *American Baptist Quarterly* 2: 105-118.

³. Although laity also play a role, their social location in the sub-society of the church means that they have less influence on the general interpretation of Scripture, compared to scholars or clergy.

⁴. As confirmed by first hand observation in the United States and South Africa, and by second hand sources from Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

⁵. The sense of "reconstruct" here is not to imply that the social world can be replicated, it remains always an approximation, as Van Staden's warns. For this reason he prefers "construct".

The intention in the methodological section below is to consider the underlying theories.

1.2. Hypotheses: ethno-cultural differences influenced the functioning of New Testament congregations

While I accept that race (visual pigmental differences) did not play a major role in the New Testament world, I believe that ethnicity played a significant role. I intend to show that ethnicity was a strong causal influence on the processes of formation and functioning of the early churches. Restated as a set of hypotheses, what I intend to show is that:

1. ethnicity, culture, religion, class and language were factors which groups used to differentiate between themselves in the urban Greco-Roman world of the NT;
2. such differentiations determined the social distance (sometimes the physical shape of the urban environment) and so the kind of interaction possible between individuals representing these groups;
3. the actions and teachings of Jesus breached (and bridged) some of the norms and values regulating the distances;
4. the first converts to the post-Jesus movement included those who belonged to groups disparate (Greek-speaking) from the initial members (Aramaic-speaking) and, later, from one another (Latin Gentiles vs Aramaic Jews);
5. this meant a growing diffusion of identity-boundaries which elicited at least three theological responses:
 - a) to reinforce the old boundaries (Paul's pride of being Jewish, the clash between Jewish and Greek cultures);
 - b) to enlarge the boundaries of religious (Christian) communities through a trans-ethnic strategy;
 - c) to adjust and legitimate the symbolic universe (neither Greek nor Jew).

Although a linear development between 5.a) to 5.c) seems obvious, evidence suggests more a cyclical progression with recurrent relapses⁶. In terms of my work on contemporary congregations I believe that 5.c) was the transforming ideal (compare Chapter Eight, section 3.4.). But the concrete realisation of some of Paul's ideals⁷ seem to have been largely beyond his capacity, or that of his successors (see Kyrtatas 1987). The ideal of equality of all before God did not succeed in transforming the institutions of the period (e.g. slavery) within the Christian meetings. In proclaiming the lifting of barriers Paul legitimated

⁶. In Paul's life this transformation would have moved from: a) I am Jewish, and being Jewish is important for salvation; to b) being Jewish is not the most important - ethnicity is not the basis of salvation - but faith in Jesus is; to c) God has through the work of Jesus brought about unity in the church between ethnic groups.

⁷. Banks denies that equality before God should be thought of as synonymous with egalitarian.

unity between disparate groups. He himself struggled between affirming and denying the importance of his ethno-religious background. Existing institutions won out in the clash between (a) "the communion and egalitarianism of the Christian ideal" and (b) "the hierarchical reality of the household setting in which the churches were organised" (Blasi 1988:63; Meeks 1983:75-77).

My own assumptions should be clear: that the social world in which the New Testament arose was multi-cultural, and that this world is reflected in the texts. I also believe that many of the metaphors used in the texts rests on material realities and the concrete community setting from which they arise, and were not merely abstract. Even apocalyptic statements regarded as "merely" theological actually reflect a social mode of existence with literary and conceptual dimensions; a worldview, shared by a community, with implied boundaries (Kee 1984:250).

1.3. Methodology: aptness of comparing New Testament and contemporary congregations

I use the results generated by the analysis of contemporary congregations as "sensitizing devices" for an analysis of the New Testament (see Holmberg 1990:13). A comparative enterprise is legitimate because broad similarities in cultural tensions and dynamics were at work. The results from both investigations can be mutually applied. This is not to imply that there are no differences, or that the structures were all the same. I am merely replicating the theological enterprise of moving between ancient texts and the contemporary world and back again.

The tensions found in the New Testament, such as that between different economic classes, at least mirror those in present-day congregations where they are not the same. These were due to friction between:

- a) two interwoven socio-economic traditions, namely denouncement of the rich (the Jesus tradition, Luke, James) versus support for the status quo (pastoral epistles, Paul);
- b) the pressure to conform to the surrounding culture *and* the dynamics of forming a counter-culture (support for status quo vs. inverted social relations);
- c) the household as institutional structure *and* the household as primary (kin) group);
- d) the Hebrew-speaking *and* the Greek-speaking Christians (caused by the growth of the Jesus movement, cultural differences, differing attitudes towards Jewish habits, and socio-economic discrimination) (Tigcheler 1987:35).

Early and of contemporary congregations are similar in that both constructed symbolic worlds, a system of meanings through which the world is known. The early churches shared the language and symbolic universe of the surrounding culture, but transformed these meanings by applying them to relations in the Christian meetings. A symbolic world in literary form is what the New Testament texts represent, constructed from an oral tradition, and replete with in-jokes and nicknames. The oral phase consisted of recollections by the apostles, churches, officials, and the wider community, as Theissen has argued (1991:61,97,115,122). Similarly, contemporary congregations construct symbolic worlds, supported as

much by official documents as by the stories told by individual members. Meetings are important as much for content as for giving the community a chance to hear itself - in its own language (see Hopewell 1984).

Finally, a comparison can help increase an understanding of contemporary churches in the light of ancient traditions, and of the primitive church in the light of contemporary congregations. Such a possibility has long been recognised (see Mackie 1969).

1.4. Literary-historical considerations

In keeping with the literary lens of social-scientific analysis, it is appropriate to briefly outline the historical background, authorship, dates, and order of the New Testament texts used. My focus on the urban centres of Syrian Antioch, Corinth, and Rome requires the use of the Luke-Acts and the Pauline corpus, obviously Corinthians and Romans. The letters to the Galatians and Colossians, and their cities (Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and Colossae), are also important as the addresses for two passages on unity. My choice of cities arises out of the greater volume of archeological and extra-textual evidence available for them, which increases the probabilities of correct analysis. Below I will move from a broader discussion of urban social dynamics to a narrower perspective on three cities.

Luke-Acts has variously been dated to AD 60, AD 70, or between AD 80-95 (New Bible Dictionary (NBD) 1975:756; New Bible Commentary (NBC) 1976:969; Filson 1965:161). Probably Luke's early picture of the Jerusalem church over which the Twelve rule is idealised. The historical reliability of Acts has been debated. Some argue that Luke often conflates events which happened over time into one pericope, so that events from several of Paul's visits are woven together. This does not affect my line of argument, as I want to use Luke's broader description of churches as different proposed models, rather than his chronology or detail.

Thirteen of the 27 New Testament books are attributed to Paul, and were written between AD 50-51 and 61/62. Consensus exists that at least seven letters are genuinely Paul's. Banks assumes that ten are genuine, while others argue strongly for regarding all as such (e.g. Schreiner, G D Fee, D Guthrie, E F Harrison (Schreiner 1990:13,70,74; Banks 1988:12). Six are regarded as pseudonymous: 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians, Timothy, Titus (Schreiner 1990:71).

The following order is probable (see Banks 1988:12):

- 1, 2 Thess:** c. AD 50⁸ from Corinth (NBD 1975:1271)
- Galatians:** c. AD 52 (NBD 1975:448)
- 1, 2 Cor:** c. AD 55/6, 1 Cor from Ephesus, 2 Cor from Macedonia (NBD 1975:257)
- Romans:** c. AD 57/59 from Corinth (NBD 1975:1102)
- Colossians:** c. AD 61, from Rome (NBD 1975:243, Carson 1976:15, NBC 1975:1140)
- Philemon:** c. AD 62/3 if from Rome, or c. AD 55 if from Ephesus (NBD 1975:983, NBC 1976:1187)

⁸. An alternate date (41 AD) and argument - is based on Dio Cassius' date for Emperor Claudius dealing with Jewish unrest in Rome (Blasi 1988: 52, 77 footnote 3; Theissen 1991:231 posits ca. 52).

Philippians: c. AD 63 from Rome or perhaps Ephesus (NBC 1975:1126-7)

Ephesians: c. AD 60/61 from Rome (NBC 1976:1106)

Paul did not establish churches at Colossae or Laodicea, nor all those at Corinth.

Fee (1988) argues that Pauline authorship best fits the historical situation, and that the theology of the Pastorals can be harmonised with other Epistles⁹. In contrast Banks states that the pastoral letters were probably reconstructions of Pauline instructions (Banks 1988:12). Branick's progressive institutionalisation also assumes the Pastorals are non-Pauline. Theissen contends that Paul's letters (e.g. Corinthians) represent social fact: a means of communication which mirrors social relations (Theissen 1982:137).

Paul's theology is "normative and authoritative for today's world" (Schreiner 1990:13). That this was so can be seen from (Schreiner 1990:25):

- a) the very fact of their preservation;
- b) Paul intended them to be read by the whole community and obeyed (1 Cor. 14.37, 1 Thes. 5.27, 2 Thes. 3.14);
- c) some letters were to be passed on to other congregations (Col.4.16);
- d) Paul believed some of his thoughts were the words of God (1 Cor. 14.37-38, see Gal.1.8, 2 Thes.2.13).

Yet normativity has both a past and present reference: it is sometimes modified by the limits of Paul's culture, e.g. the holy kiss (1 Cor.16.20; Schreiner 1990:155). A better approach is to establish the significance of a passage by extracting a principle, which should be weighed up against the whole of Pauline theology on the issue. A final question is whether an issue arises from extraordinary circumstances or not (Schreiner 1990:159).

Paul nowhere specifies the format of church he regards as normative; his writings allow only for inferences about community. Nor did Paul judge earlier communities deficient because of lack of some later structure (Branick 1989:134). An historical study cannot contain value judgements on earlier or later stages of ecclesiastical development (Branick 1989:134). It merely examines historical pressures and restrictions on the possibilities of church forms. Neither development nor form can be regarded as essential definitions for churches. Jesus cannot be thought of as having established "the details of church forms" (Branick 1989:135).

2. SOCIAL DIFFERENTIATION IN THE GREEK-ROMAN WORLD AND THE EFFECTS ON FIRST CENTURY CHRISTIANITY

In order to show that the New Testament churches were mixed, I have to establish the criteria by which

⁹. G D Fee 1988. 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, quoted in Schreiner 1984: 75.

this social fact can be measured. From extra-textual and intra-textual data I intend to show that ethnicity, language, class, culture, wealth, and urban-rural location functioned as indicators of social differentiation. This demonstrates that people consciously distinguished between themselves as groups, and ordered their relations accordingly¹⁰. Together these ethno-cultural factors approximate what is understood today as ethnicity (with the exception of wealth); by themselves they are sufficient indicators of social distinctions for my purpose.

In my discussion I will consider the fact that in the New Testament world neither the sociological, economic, political or religious dimensions remained constant. Historical and organisational variances existed in churches between various periods and various locations. The dynamics of the Hellenistic-dominated cities were different from those in which Romans were prevalent, an effect of differences in social structures, institutions, and governing processes. Theological variations occurred not only between Jewish and Gentile Christians, but also between different churches (e.g. regarding the nearness of the parousia). Blanket conclusions regarding "the early church(es)" are excluded.

I will examine the Old Testament and the Greco-Roman urban contexts to understand the forms of New Testament churches as social institutions. In this I follow the work of Belo (1981), Gottwald (1979), Hanson (1986), and Branick (1989). Reasons why such an excursion is necessary are easy to find. The ethno-cultural mix of the New Testament congregations was probably pre-dated in the Old Testament traditions - particularly if the former was deliberate. The Greek, Roman and Jewish institutions provided significant models for the leadership and organisational structures and terminology of the churches (e.g. *episcopos*) (Branick 1989:21, 38; see Gustafson 1961, Stambaugh & Balch 1986, Banks 1988). The New Testament authors appropriated the language of the earlier Old Testament faith-community and applied it to a New Testament house meeting. Terminology was borrowed from the Hebrew cult in references to being priests, living sacrifices, the Temple (Branick 1989:136).

My intent is to show that indicators of differentiation occurred based on especially ethnicity and culture, which were often accompanied by differentiated behaviour. The object is not to establish that racism or blacks were present in the churches. Race (colour) may not have played a major role, but the assumption that stereotypes with corresponding behaviour did not occur at relational or economic levels is mistaken. Prejudice was obviously not the only response open to individuals, and where it did occur was not necessarily the same everywhere. Yet ample evidence exists of differentiated behaviour and of extreme prejudice. Economic status seems to have been the major counter to prejudice; which makes neither less onerous.

2.1. Ethnicity (race) as indicator of social differentiation

I first review some anthropological perspectives on how large groups of people distinguished themselves

¹⁰. Rex has remarked that "there is no known society in which social actors are not categorized ... and these categorizations imply a set of moral duties and a form of social organisation" (Rex 1986:102).

from one another in antiquity, applied to Israel's ethnogenesis. Then I probe the concepts used in the Old Testament to refer to a group identity, particularly "nation" and "people" as the standard meanings of "ethnos". One difficulty in deducing the composition of Greco-Roman cities is how to distinguish between ethnic and political identities, and between ethnic and religious identities. "Roman" is usually a political referent, encompassing different ethnicities. "Jew" in Roman times was shifting from an ethnic to a religious meaning. But often the terms are ambiguous: Galatia refers to both a smaller ethnic geographical area, in which Gauls ruled over Phrygians and Cappadocians since 3 BC. But Galatia is also a name given to a broader political province. This Galatia came into existence in 64 BC, and included the old northern ethnic kingdom as well as parts of Pontus, Phrygia, Lycaonia, Pisidia, Paphlagonia, and Issuaria (NBD 1962:447).

From an anthropological perspective ethnicity is "a function of structural opposition to other such social entities", with self-ascription and boundary maintenance as salient features (Rutledge 1987:360). Ethnicity is a social construct, an interactive concept. Although shared cultural, language, or biological factors are often the external features which outsiders use to identify a group, ethnicity is not dependent on these. Cultural similarities are necessary but not sufficient evidence; they result from group organisation (Rutledge 1987:360). Ethnic identity can result from a counter-culture reaction to e.g. a dominant culture, or develop from the imposition of one culture on another to maintain social stratification (Rutledge 1987:360). In this perspective, borrowed from social movement theory, ethnic identity often entails the search for a new identity or a stabilisation of the old (Rutledge 1987:360).

A possibility that needs consideration is that ethnic mixing in the New Testament churches (Jew/Greek) was undergirded by the example of the situation preceding the late monarchy. Israel's evolutionary origin began with a social revolt. An alliance was formed between Canaanite agrarian peasants and nomadic warriors (the Apiru) against the tributary system of the city-states¹¹ like Jerusalem and Hebron (Gottwald 1992). The similarity between this conceptualisation and Rutledge's understanding of the formation of ethnicity is obvious: in antiquity "race" was not understood in the sense of skin colour or any homogenous criteria based on it. Instead Israel's identity lay more in her opposition to dominant cultures. As Israel probably consisted of a mixture of races, nation at this stage should be understood as "becoming an *ethnos*" - for which "race" would be a simile.

Becoming part of Israel at the beginning would have been like joining a political movement, as illustrated by Rahab's story (Joshua 2¹²). Other examples which illustrate the point are that of Jael¹³ and of the Gibeonites, nomadic metal-workers who betray the city-state Jerusalem to ally with Israel (Gottwald 1992). Anyone could "join" what became known as Israel. According to Gottwald the Danites could have belonged to a different "race" than the rest of Israel. Certainly Moses represented a bi-cultural

¹¹. Belo refers to this as the subasiatic mode of production (Belo 1981: 198).

¹². Bait av, cf. Judges mishpacha - Bethel, Gottwald 1992).

¹³. Jael breaks the hospitality traditions.

(Egyptian/Apiru) background. The formation of group identity through alliance and opposition means that ideology (theology) played a greater unifying role than ethnicity. Theology-as-ideology was used to unite disparate groups (economic and ethnic) in one community. This pattern was repeated later by the Romans in forming their Empire, and in the early churches founded within her borders.

Inter-marriages at the time of the monarchy demonstrate the flux of Israel's ethnic boundaries. In the early monarchy inter-marriage with the Hittites passes without censure (see Bathsheba's husband Uriah the Hittite). Gottwald identifies the Hittites as a separate northern ethnic group who were sworn enemies of the Egyptians. The story of Uriah shows that Hittites served within the Israelite bureaucracy. The stipulations prohibiting conversion (in D and P) into Israel probably stem from the late monarchy, and assume a stable community unlike that of early Israel (Gottwald 1992).

But physical differentiation did have some role as a boundary marker in antiquity, as attested in the 14th century BC Hymn to Aton, which says of Syria, Nubia and Egypt: "Their tongues are separate in speech/their skins are distinguished,/As thou distinguishest the foreign peoples'" (Block 1984: 333). A parallel occurs in Isa. 18.2,7, which connects a people with their physical characteristics: fierce, tall, smooth¹⁴ (Block 1984: 333, footnote 53). Another case is Jer. 13:23: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? [then] may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil" (KJV). As Felder has pointed out, in the Old Testament appearance was not always linked to national and ethnic identity, which were of far greater significance (Felder 1989:43, 1991:127). The shortage of examples in the Old Testament demonstrates that appearance was less important as a signifier of difference.

Language as geographic referent was also used as identity markers between peoples. The name of a tribe often derives from that given to an area, and so describes a geo-political entity used in self-reference (Block 1984: 327, 330). A case in point is Assyrian, the language spoken by someone from Assyria (northern Syria). That a single language existed in Assyria indicates a policy of assimilation of ethnic groups into the dominant culture, as the northern tribes experienced in exile after 722 BC (Block 1984: 338). In line with the earlier anthropological comments, ethnicity in northern Syria then was the result of the imposition of a dominant culture. The greater frequency with which language and origin occur suggests that these markers carried more weight than appearance.

But language by itself need not always indicate ethnic identity or geographic origin. In Southern Syria of the first millennium Canaanite was a language shared among many different people groups, yet this did not bring about a new ethnic identity nor threaten the old (Block 1984: 337). Semites and Philistines alike shared Canaanite (see Isa 19.18), while Aramean was spoken by Assyrians (2 Ki. 18.26), Chaldeans (Dan 1.4/2.4); Persians, Hebrews, Babylonians and Elamites (Ez 4.7) (Block 1984: 327-9). Aramean may have identified a specific nation with the language; but later this connection was lost (Block 1984: 327).

¹⁴. "Smooth" may not have ethnic connotations, as demonstrated by Gen 27:11, in which Jacob identifies himself (as opposed to Esau) as smooth skinned.

According to Felder "blacks" - Cushites, Ethiopians, Nubites, Putites¹⁶ - were interwoven with the Old Testament Hebrew society during this era (Felder 1989:12). Examples include Hagar (Gn.16:1), Moses' wife (Nu.12:1), Ebedmelech (Jer. 38.7-13, 39.15-18), and soldiers in the army (2 Sam. 18.21-23) (Felder 1989:12,43). The Egyptian name Phinehas (Aaron's grandson, Ex.6.25; Eli's son, 1 Sam. 1.3) literally means "the Nubian" (Felder 1989:12). Felder maintains that during their sojourn in Egypt the Apiru became an Afro-Asiatic mix (Felder 1991). He agrees with those who argue that the indigenous Pharaohs from the 18th to 25th dynasty (1500-653 B.C.) were blacks - including Ramses II of Moses' era (Felder 1989:10-11).

In both the Greek (8 to 1 BC¹⁶) and the Roman worlds (2 BC to AD 1453) the existence of ethnic groups was recognised from early on. In the Early Empire¹⁷ (27 BC to 161 AD) ethnicity determined the status of an individual or group, along with "language and place of origin, formal ordo, personal liberty or servitude, wealth, occupation, age and sex" (Meeks 1983:22¹⁸; Alföldy 1988:43,107). The tribe (*gens*) also distinguished Romans, in the second of their three given names.

The Greeks and Romans did recognise colour (race) in descriptions of Africans, which they "regarded as their most characteristic and most unusual feature" (Snowden 1983:7). They even distinguished between variations of black skin colour: "Ethiopian" (*Aithiops*) was a generic term, meaning "'burnt-faced person'", while the variations were described as "black" (*fuscus*¹⁹) used of "white people with dark complexions", or of Berbers, Indians (*Indi*), Moors (*Mauri*), or Ethiopians (Balsdon 1979:217; Snowden 1983:7,74). The latter two names, with Africans (*Afri*), were used of people with negroid features (Balsdon 1979:217). In addition Negroid people were distinguished by skin colour, thickness of lip, "wide or broad noses, woolly or tightly curled hair" (Snowden 1983:17, see 10). But these distinctions did not disallow assimilation into Roman culture, nor did it form the basis of a theory of black inferiority (Snowden 1983:92,108). Poets such as Philodemus lauded blacks as paragons of beauty²⁰, while Herodotus (3.20) described Ethiopians as "the most handsome of all men" (Snowden 1983:77).

But ethnicity coincided mostly with linguistic and cultural - rather than visual - characteristics. By 360 BC being a Greek was thought of as a matter of shared culture ("education and its effects") and attitude,

¹⁶. Jer. 46.9.

¹⁸. Ste. Croix (1981: 8) classifies the Greek world according to Archaic (8-6 BC), the Classical (5-4 BC), the Hellenistic (3 to and - including - 1 BC) periods, and the Roman Empire according to the Republic (2 - 1 BC), the Early Empire (AD 1-284), the Late Empire (AD 284 -1453).

¹⁷. Ste. Croix (1981: 8) prefers the Principate, which he dates from 31 BC (Augustus) to 284 AD (Diocletian).

¹⁹. Referring to Juvenal's *Satires*.

²⁰. Somewhat different to Balsdon, Snowden defines *fuscus* as a dark Ethiopian, distinct from the very black (*nigerrimi*) Ethiopian (Snowden 1983:8).

²⁰. *Anthologia Palatina* 5.121.

rather than race or descent (Ste. Croix 1981:300²¹). Descent remained a major indicator of status for Romans, as demonstrated by the rise to consulship of C Caristanius Fronto in AD 90, a fourth generation colonist from Psidian Antioch (Levick 1967:112).

Ethnicity formed the basis for prejudices between Romans and Greeks. Cicero in 59 BC denigrates Greeks "by calling them Asiatics, Phrygians, Mysians, Carians, Lydians", and describes them as "totally untrustworthy witnesses" (Ste. Croix 1981:310²²). Ethnic differences were also seen as the basis for technological differences: the shade of Anchises (the mythical ancestor of all Romans) in Virgil's *Aeneas*²³ says that metal work, sculpture, oratory, and astronomy should be left (by implication) to the Greeks, while Romans should concentrate on ruling (Ste. Croix 1981:327). The general prejudice of the populace towards the Greek East was also reflected in the behaviour of emperors. Greek and oriental senators were confined to the East until the second half of the first century AD, and not allocated western provinces (Levick 1967:109-110).

Slaves were mostly of different ethnic backgrounds than their masters. The general practice was to appropriate slaves from outside the Greco-Roman world, especially once the enslavement of ruled peoples was forbidden (Ste. Croix 1981:228,230). Evidence suggests that slaves were imported from the lower Danube basin in c. 60 BC (e.g. Romania) and Gaul in c. 50 BC (Ste. Croix 1981:230). Augustus in 25 BC enslaved 44 000 prisoners of war from the Salassi tribe in the western Alps (Alfoldy 1988:138²⁴). One of the last examples of this practice was the enslavement of 97 000 Jews in the revolt of AD 66-70 (Alfoldy 1988:138²⁵).

Ste. Croix and Alfoldy agree that under the Principate the opportunities for acquiring slaves deteriorated, and the intrusion of foreign cultures became visible in the settlement of barbarians, often as colonists. When Vannius in c. AD 50 ceased to be king of the German Quadi tribe, Emperor Claudius settled him with his *clientes* in Pannonia (Ste. Croix 1981:510). This practice increased in the Late Roman Empire. The settlement of barbarians - like the presence of foreign slaves - contributed culturally to the decline of the Roman empire while economically benefitting (see Ste. Croix 1981:247).

Specific prejudices were associated with other ethnic groups, and were stereotyped according to features, clothing or coiffure. Foreigners (*alieni, externi*) could advance in Roman society, but were regarded with various measures of prejudice and discrimination, particularly Eastern provincials (Alfoldy 1988:112-3). Marriages between Roman citizens and foreigners were not recognized as lawful, neither was offspring

²¹. Quoting Isocrates IV.50.

²². Referring to *Pro Flaccus*.

²³. VI.847-853.

²⁴. Referring to Strabo 4.6.7.

²⁵. Referring to Josephus *BJ* 6.420.

regarded as citizens (Ste. Croix 1981:332). Gauls were stereotyped as hotheads, Africans as untrustworthy, Egyptians as "greedy, undisciplined, irresponsible, and unpredictable" (Alfoldy 1988:113). In Petronius' *Satyricon* the lips of blacks are described as possessing "hideous thickness" (Balsdon 1979:217). But prejudice was not of uniform nature: while there is no evidence of upper level Romans marrying blacks, black youths were prized as slaves, and Herodes Atticus had an Ethiopian foster-child (Balsdon 1979:217,219). Both Romans and Greeks assumed that blacks suffered from inferiority complexes because of their colour (Balsdon 1979:219).

The situation improved somewhat after Claudius extended citizenship and admitted foreigners as Senators (Alfoldy 1988:113). But it would take more than 200 years after Egypt became a Roman province before an Egyptian became a senator (Aelius Coeranios). The deep-seated anti-Jewish feelings among Romans prevented Jews from achieving high political or administrative honours (Alfoldy 1988:113). Some virulently anti-Jewish sentiments are expressed in the so-called *Acts of the pagan martyrs of Alexandria* (esp. that of Isidore, Lampon, and Hermaiscus). Dating to the Early Principate, the Acts also condemn the Roman emperors (Ste. Croix 1981:442). Privileges granted to the Jews of that city by Julius Caesar may be the cause (Ste. Croix 1981:442). The internal hierarchy of the senatorial order was determined not by ethnicity as much as by particular offices (Alfoldy 1988:120). Similarly equestrians included various ethnics; the first African equestrian was admitted in c. AD 40, and at one stage there were 162; "of 22 Noricans the first was attested under Trajan", the first Pannonian "at the beginning of the second century" (Alfoldy 1988:125).

Foreigners could be distinguished by the colour, style, or length of their hair or beards. Germans or Gauls were ascribed fair complexions and blue eyes, and were regarded with some prejudice (Balsdon 1979:215). Spartans could be recognised by their distinctive hairstyles, and others by their hair colour: Gauls, Germans were blond, and Germans, Scots, Thracians had red hair (Thracian women were tattooed) (Balsdon 1979:216-217). Hair-colour led to nicknames such as Flavus (Blondie) or Rufus (Red) for auxiliaries in the Roman army, or sometimes for slaves (Balsdon 1979:215). The red wigs that slaves wore in Roman comedy reflects the attitude of Romans towards Northerners (Balsdon 1979:215). Having long hair and/or a beard²⁶ was the mark of Gauls, Northerners and barbarians in general (Balsdon 1979:215-216).

Beards were "the mark of the foreigner", especially when dyed, like that of Indians (Balsdon 1979:216). A beard was thought appropriate only for servants, slaves, or Romans in dire straits (in exile or awaiting execution). Philosophers were the exception (Balsdon 1979:215). Greeks also thought little of the cropped hairstyle, a habit the Romans adapted during the third century BC. A non-Roman with short hair may demonstrate assimilation to Roman culture, and could be scorned by his fellow-townsperson (Balsdon 1979:215). Hairstyle could also signify religious orientation, such as braids worn by (especially Egyptian) boys in devotion to Isis (Balsdon 1979:216). Priests of Isis shaved off all bodily hairs, were tonsured, and

²⁶. Hadrian re-introduced beards in the 2nd century AD (Balsdon 1979:216).

did not wear any clothing derived from animals (Balsdon 1979:216,222).

Clothing formed recognisable ethnic or status markers. Proper Roman wear included shoes, and on formal occasions, semi-circular togas. Senators and equestrians wore purple diagonal stripes on their clothing, shoes of different colour or design (e.g. red for senators). By contrast Greeks wore sandals (*crepidae*) or slippers (*socci*), with square or circular cloaks (*chlaina* or *chlamys*). Romans sometimes wore Greek clothes, for instance when in Naples, a largely Greek city; or at the Greek Games in Rome; or in exile. Officials who dressed Greek while on public service courted severe criticism, as did Germanicus in Alexandria in AD 19 (Balsdon 1979:220). By the 2nd century AD senators dressed in Gallic clothing still evoked surprise (Balsdon 1979:221). Celts, Germans, and Sarmatians usually wore thick wool cloaks (Germans, Sardinians sheep- or goatskin coats), also trousers with braces, fastened at the ankle (Balsdon 1979:221). Gauls, like Parthians, also wore trousers (Balsdon 1979:221). Not wearing a belt - the habit of North Africans - was a major disgrace for a Roman, forming part of the punishment of Roman soldiers (Balsdon 1979:220-221). Such sartorial markers were used to recognise enemies, e.g. during Mithridates' extermination campaign against Romans in 88 BC Asia.

Explicit and implicit attestations to a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic social environment occur in the New Testament. In Palestine of the first century AD blacks were not unknown, as the conversion of the African Ethiopian eunuch by the Hellenist mission illustrates (Acts 8.26-40). Ethiopian was Romans shorthand for blacks. His conversion balances that of the European (Italian?) soldier Cornelius by the Hebrew Christian mission (Felder 1989:13, 47-8). Possibly the early church in Antioch had black members, one interpretation of Simeon Niger ("the black"; Acts 13.1), a prophet and teacher there (Felder 1989:18). Although the name may not have had racial denotation, at the least Niger has pigmental overtones (see Felder 1989:18). In the rest of the New Testament literature other "blacks" are referred to, namely Sheba, queen of the south - an eschatological figure in the mouth of Jesus (Mt. 12.42, Lk. 11.31); and Candace, queen of Nubia (Acts 8.27).

Luke's description of the first Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 2) illustrates first century differentiation between ethnic groups in terms of language and place of origin. Parthians (Persian-speaking) are distinguished from Egyptians (Punic-speaking) (Acts 2:9-10) (NBC 1970: 975). Of the Pentecost groups half would speak Aramaic dialects (e.g. Parthia, Media, Mesopotamia, Syria), and the other half Greek (e.g. Cyrene, Alexandria and the provinces of Cilicia and Asia; see Acts 6:9) (NBC 1970: 975).

The Old Testament distinction based on the family (clan) or tribe was transcended by Jesus' concept of "the neighbour" to include those not related by blood - particularly the socio-economically oppressed. Felder maintains that this understanding underlay Pauline Christianity (Mt. 12.50, see Gal. 6.10, Phil. 2.5-9). Paul's family terms have a broader meaning when applied to *koinonia*, including care by the strong for the weak (2 Cor. 8/9, Rom. 14/15; Felder 1989:18-19). Branick agrees that family and household terminology precedes Paul (Lev. 10.4, Dt. 15.3, Am 5.25, Jer 38.33, Mk 6.10). That Paul uses more terms from this sphere than any other indicates how his own initiative shaped the usages of such terms

in the churches.

2.2. Language differences as indicator of social differentiation

In antiquity linguistic differences were sometimes more important a means of distinguishing groups than ethnicity. Language as referent survives loss of territory, rule, and ethnicity, as revealed in Nehemiah's the reference to the loss of native tongue (Nehemiah 13.23-24, Block 1984: 330): "Moreover, in those days I saw men of Judah who had married women from Ashdod, Ammon and Moab. Half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod or the language of one of the other peoples, and did not know how to speak the language of Judah." But even people from the same ethnic origins could be dialectically distinct; for instance, Judeans and their northern counterparts (Block 1984: 330).

The distinction between Galilean and Judean Aramaic (Acts 2:7,9) shows that language differences formed recognisable boundaries of ethnic or sub-cultural differences, and so were not without significance. Balsdon comments that "there must have been great differences both in accent and vocabulary from one part of the empire to another" (Balsdon 1979:130). Spaniards and Africans were recognised at least from their accents-, as were descendants of Romans who were brought up in these places (e.g. Hadrian)(Balsdon 1979:130).

Not everyone in the Empire was bilingual. Language-ability was not a status symbol, often being the speciality of slaves. The ill-feeling of subjected peoples towards the Greeks or the Romans also played a role. At least five local dialects were spoken in Asia (e.g. Aeolic), and various forms of Greek occurred (e.g. Attic, Koine, Doric) (Balsdon 1979:135). The urban majority could find ways, e.g. interpreters, with which to communicate, but outside the cities local languages or dialects continued. While most Romans could speak Greek, the reverse was not true²⁷; in AD 41 Herod and Agrippa I addressed the Senate in Greek - a concession permitted since the eighties BC (Balsdon 1979:126). Many in the East who held Roman citizenship could not speak Latin. A Lycian who appeared before Claudius in Rome in AD 43 was stripped of citizenship for this reason (Balsdon 1979:132).

Latin was used for official pronouncements and decrees, and in the East were translated into Greek (Balsdon 1979:133). In Italy written and publicly spoken Latin differed in calibre from the everyday spoken Latin, which often contained words borrowed from local dialects (Balsdon 1979:128). In the colonies Latin was the first language, used for official inscriptions (Balsdon 1979:131). But the pressure to assimilate Greek culture was particularly great for descendants of eastern colonists, especially once they married into the native population (Balsdon 1979:131,132). There were also those who assimilated into Roman culture, such as Valerius Probus from Berytus in Syria, at the end of the first century AD (Balsdon 1979:125).

²⁷ Balsdon speculates that Pilate probably could not speak Aramaic, just as Jesus could not Latin; therefore their interchange during the trial was probably in Greek.

In Palestine of the New Testament era Aramaic was the native language as in Syria and Mesopotamia. Koine Greek²⁸ and Latin also featured. Obviously once Christianity spread beyond Palestine, Greek became more important. Some Hebrew was spoken in Judea, but "very little in Galilee", so that Jesus probably preached mainly in Aramaic (Filson 1965: 156; Ste. Croix 1981:427). The effect is demonstrated by the tri-lingual inscription above Jesus' head in Aramaic, Latin and Greek; John 19:20). This also exemplifies the coincidence of geographic and linguistic boundaries. Throughout the Empire legal preambles and court judgements were written in Latin, but the trials were conducted in Greek (Balsdon 1979:133).

Filson (1965: 156) comments: "The future of the church was to be in the hands of those who could speak Greek and deal with the Greek-speaking members of the Empire." The first deacons (Acts 6:5) serve as evidence; as does Timothy, whose mother was a "Jewess and a believer" married to a Greek (Ac 16:1). The linguistic context and admixture were a consequence of Hellenistic and later Roman occupations of the Mediterranean, including Palestine. Greek was the language of the church in Rome as elsewhere in the first two centuries (Balsdon 1979:124).

In this world language could also coincide with economic class, status, and geographic location. The local elite in the urban areas was the first to assimilate to Greek and later Latin. In contrast the rural areas retained local languages. Several linguistic reformist movement came into being in resistance to Roman culture, but differing in nature according to location. In the cities there were several attempts to revive Attic, the dialect of classic Greece; one of which peaked in mid-second century AD. This movement was an attempt by the upper classes to restore language as "linguistic status-symbols". This exerted a pressure on Christianity to produce more and more literary works, evident in the first century corrections in Luke of Mark, in *The Shepherd of Hermas*; and by the second century AD in the apologists (e.g. Justin) (Kyrtatas 1987:110). The rural background of early Christian literature, presented in a form that lacked "philosophical rigour", made it unappealing to the upper classes of the Greco-Roman world (Kyrtatas 1987:99).

Slaves were usually linguistically and culturally heterogeneous from one another and from their owners. In the Hellenistic period this was true of the "barbarian" slaves from Thrace, South Russia, Asia Minor (Lydia, Caria), Egypt, Libya, Sicily (Ste. Croix 1981:146). Between 209 BC to 146 BC slaves flooded the market after each Roman campaign; including people from Tarentum, Africa, Histria, Sardinia, Epirus, and Carthage, many who were sold at the central slave market at Delos (Alfoldy 1988:137). Teutones Marius is said to have enslaved Cimbri, while Ceasar did the same to Gauls (Alfoldy 1988:89). Writers from both the Greek and Roman periods advised masters to obtain slaves who spoke different languages in order to prevent revolts (Ste. Croix 1981:146²⁹). The potential for uprisings was also limited by the fact that

²⁸. Malherbe argues that koine was a sub-cultural dialect of Greek, "developed in the synagogue setting" (Blasi 1988: 52, referring to Malherbe 1983: 29-59).

²⁹. Referring to e.g. Plato's *Laws* VI.777cd; Varro *RR* I.xvii.5.

slaves could not be distinguished by particular clothes (Alfoldy 1988:137).

Although the Romans did not actively eradicate local languages, they did encourage the adoption of Latin or Greek (Balsdon 1979:118). The distinction "barbarian" is used from Irenaeus onwards of those without written language, or who cannot understand Latin or Greek (Kyrtatas 1987:169). But this is already foreshadowed in Paul's statement: "If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner (*barbaros*) to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me" (1 Cor. 14:11 NIV). In the colonies like Psidian Antioch Greek remained the language of the common people, used particularly for religious purposes. By the second century Greek slowly eroded Latin in the colonies of Asia Minor, eventually replacing it (Levick 1967:137-138). The institutions necessary to maintain and reproduce Greek culture, like the gymnasia and athletic associations, were left intact by the Romans. These eventually regained their place in the official machinery of the colonies (Levick 1967:83).

The linguistic difficulties that the variety of languages must have presented to the missionary church are not overtly evident in Acts (Kyrtatas 1987:167). The Pentecost narrative suggests the problems that were encountered. Paul apparently understood the symbolic value of languages, choosing to speak Greek and Aramaic according to the ethnicity of his audience (Acts 21:37, 21:40). Eusebius and Clement claim that Peter had two interpreters (Kyrtatas 1987:168). Whether native languages were used alongside Greek in the rural Christian churches is unknown.

That language was an important issue in church life is demonstrated by differences between the later Greek and Roman churches: the Greek church encouraged translations into native languages (Syriac, Coptic, Armenian) - unlike the Roman church (Kyrtatas 1987:169). This was probably because the Latin church restricted theological discussion and achieved unity through "organisation and discipline" (Kyrtatas 1987:170). The Greek church could not achieve restriction and attempted to achieve unity by doctrinal elaboration (Kyrtatas 1987:170). Separate congregations may be indicated by the myriad later translations of the New Testament. But multi-lingual congregations are also plausible, given the precedent apparently set at Jerusalem, as at Antioch. Some early missionary encounters suggest that locals preferred their native-tongue (see the Lycaonian-speakers in Acts 14:11, and the Punic-speakers of Malta in Acts 28:1-6) (Fornberg 1977:112,115). Many first century Christian would have been at least bilingual (Fornberg 1977:112).

2.3. Class as indicator of social differentiation

Another alternative to race for identifying distinctions is "class". I use class in the sense of an economic relation of exploitation involving more than just ownership, as Ste. Croix has convincingly argued. The upper classes consisted not only of those who possessed wealth, education, and property; but also of those who extracted a surplus from the labour of the non-propertied (e.g. town councillors). In what follows I attempt to note important status factors.

In the Roman world strict rules regulated entry into the Roman upper classes, prescribing rank, title and privilege. The upper stratum (senators, equestrians, and aristocracy) comprised 0.5% of the total population of 50-80 million in the Roman empire, i.e. 10 000 (Holmberg 1990:22³⁰). At the end of Augustus' rule the non-hereditary senatorial group comprised 160, by mid-second century AD about 320; during which time the non-hereditary equestrian order is estimated at 20 000 (Alfoldy 1988:147). Senators could visually be recognised by a broad purple stripe worn on their clothes, while equestrians wore a narrower band. This stratum held a disproportionate amount of land, so that in Roman Africa "half the land was the property of six great landowners in the mid first century AD" (Alfoldy 1988:107³¹).

Wealth decided status and class for the upper stratum, as public office was determined by financial means, property qualifications, and public expenditure. One had to "pay the community a price" for public office. The minimum property qualification for membership of the senatorial order under Augustus was 1 000 000 sesterces; for an equestrian it was 400 000 sesterces (Alfoldy 1988:115). In return an equestrian who held the higher public offices could expect an annual salary of between 60 000 and 200 000 sesterces (Alfoldy 1988:123). In Africa "the price of various offices ranged between 2 000 and 20 000 sesterces, while priesthood cost about 5 000 sesterces (Alfoldy 1988:130). A decurion (municipal councillor) could instead erect a public building, in addition to bearing the cost of most public expenditure (Alfoldy 1988:130). The elite of the cities in the east (councillors, magistrates) numbered several hundred, with the probable number estimated for the entire Empire at about 150 000 (Alfoldy 1988:127). The estimate for Africa is 2% of all adult urban males; i.e. 25 000 (Alfoldy 1988:127). At Canusium the 164 decurions included 39 honorary members, senators and equestrians who were patrons, 25 sons of decurions, and actual decurions 100 (Alfoldy 1988:127). Even among potential senators orientals were socially and culturally divided into two classes, wealthy native aristocracy and Roman landowner colonists, who often intermarried with the local aristocracy (Levick 1967:105-106). The selection of eastern senators favoured those from the most hellenized towns in Asia rather than those from the hinterland of the Anatolian plateau. These western cities, "which were also most open to Roman influence", included Mytilene, (produced senator Pompeius Macer in 15 AD), Pergamum³², Ephesus, and Alexandria Troas (Levick 1967:105).

The lower stratum consisted of all others, inhabitants of cities (*plebs urbana*) and of the rural areas (*plebs rustica*) Holmberg 1990:22; Alfoldy 1988:135). The *plebs urbana* "were despised in more elevated circles" (Alfoldy 1988:135³³). Privileges and rights in the Roman world varied according to a political criterion: whether one was a Roman citizen (*civis Romanus*) or a non-Roman (*peregrinus*)³⁴, for which

³⁰. Alfoldy (1988: 147) maintains "no more than 1 percent" which he estimates as being 200 000.

³¹. Referring to Pliny *NH* 18.35.

³². For instance C. Antius A. Iulius A. f. Volt. Quadratus.

³³. Referring to Tacitus, *Hist.* 1.4.

³⁴. A *peregrinus* could become a citizen after 25 years of service in non-citizen auxiliary regiments of the army or fleet (Ste Croix 1981: 461).

some knowledge of Latin was required (Ste. Croix 1981:454; Alföldy 1988:104,112). By AD 48, 5 984 072 inhabitants of the empire were citizens. When Claudius extended citizenship to all Greeks, Gauls, Britons, and Spaniards, the number increased dramatically (Alföldy 1988:104³⁶). In addition it mattered whether one was a citizen of a free Greek city (*civis libera*) "with greater powers of local jurisdiction"; of a Greek city more under control of a provincial governor; or an ordinary provincial with few and ill-defined rights, dependent on sufferance (Ste. Croix 1981:454).

The poor were regarded with contempt by the rich, an attitude denounced by Juvenal (2.126ff) (Alföldy 1988:108). The conditions of the poor were squalid: in one example in Egypt, ten families lived in one house (Alföldy 1988:108). In one extreme case six families "held a single olive tree as common property"; in another 64 peasant families shared a plot of 2 200 m² (Alföldy 1988:107). Under Caesar the number of poor who received free grain rations was 320 000, but through settling them in the colonies they were reduced to 150 000 (Alföldy 1988:89).

Another important socio-legal distinction was whether one was free born, manumitted (freedmen), or a slave. If a slave survived that long, manumission could usually be expected at the age of 30 (Alföldy 1988:136). A freedman could not usually enter the senatorial order unless he was adopted by a Roman equestrian (Alföldy 1988:112). In some cities a very large percentage of the population were freedmen, e.g. Rome; they often were craftsman (Alföldy 1988:51). In exceptional circumstances freedmen could achieve substantial wealth, through e.g. trade. Freedmen had diverse economic opportunities, and "the financial condition of the freedman really mattered more than his technical legal status" (Ste. Croix 1981:179).

Peasants and slaves formed the two major sectors of the lower stratum (Alföldy 1988:137). The inhabitants of smaller provincial towns were peasants who served on the surrounding estates (Alföldy 1988:98,136). The "overwhelming majority of the population was employed in the agrarian sector"; about 90% "lived on the land and directly from the land" (Alföldy 1988:97-98). In the cities the lower strata had an economic function, as artisans and traders which mostly serviced the agrarian sector through manufacturing, processing, or transporting (Alföldy 1988:98,136). Slaves numbered an estimated 3 million of the total population of 7,5 million in Italy; and one third of the 120 000 inhabitants of Pergammum (Alföldy 1988:137). Possession of a number of slaves was an indication of wealth; senator L Pedanius Secundus had 400 in AD 61. Families of average wealth (for instance a decurion with property of 100 000 sesterces) would be able to afford few, as slaves were priced between 800 and 2 500 sesterces each (Alföldy 1988:137). The highest attested number of slaves in Noricum for one household is six (Alföldy 1988:137).

In the Hellenistic period the lower class was "'always and everywhere anti-Roman and reposed its hopes of a change in the social and economic situation in all who manifested opposition to Rome (Antiochus III

³⁶. Referring to Tacitus, *Annals* 11.25.

of Persia, Perseus of Macedon)' (Ste. Croix 1981:524³⁶). Opposition did not everywhere produce action, due to considerations of prudence. Rome's total destruction of cities and mass enslavements of urban populations served as deterrent (Ste. Croix 1981:524). A skilful politician could also sway the masses, either through oratory as Antony did against Caesar's murderers, or through handouts of food (Alfoldy 1988:83). After 146 BC popular upsurges were few, the most notable being revolts at Athens in 88-86 BC and again in AD 13 (Ste. Croix 1981:526). Smaller scale disturbances continued to evident hatred for Rome, like the burning to death of an official called Petraeus during Augustus' principate (Ste. Croix 1981:526).

The debate regarding the class composition of the early churches ranges from stating that they were composed mostly of the poor (Judge 1960 ^; Fornberg 1977:117,119) to those who argue the opposite (Malherbe 1977 ^, Theissen 1974: 256-257³⁷). Part of the problem lies in fitting slaves into one class; they range from those with least rights (miner or agricultural slaves) to those who belonged to Caesar's household. The latter were qualitatively treated better and had such chances for advancement - e.g. to rank of procurator - that some believe they form a class of their own (Kyrtatas 1987:78). Slaves or freedmen who exploited the labour of others undoubtedly participated in the value system of the upper classes, and so were part of that stratum.

A decision on class composition depends on whether a sizeable number of slaves or peasants were part of the early churches. Fornberg (1977:117) concludes from the many passages directly addressed to slaves that the majority of Christians were "relatively poor" - although there were richer members (see Eph. 6:5; Col. 4:1; 1 Tim. 6:2). Although most names in the New Testament are those of wealthier Christians, this is not sufficient evidence for a conclusion. The majority who are not mentioned probably had limited literacy (Fornberg 1977:117,119). Yet the Christian faith "seems to have spread more rapidly in Syria and Asia Minor than in the poverty-stricken Greece of the 2nd century AD" (Fornberg 1977:119, footnote 27).

Kyrtatas suggests that initially the majority consisted of artisans (mostly freedmen)³⁸, with a small number belonging to the upper and lower classes. Typical Christians (e.g. Paul, Aquila, Priscilla, Lydia) appear to have been artisans of particularly the textile branch, and so relatively well-off (Kyrtatas 1987:73, 122-123). But conclusions regarding freedmen are doubtful; (Egyptian) artisans were poor, did not own a house, and were often in debt. Ste. Croix also maintains that artisans seldom rose above subsistence level. Kyrtatas concedes from evidence of later times that Christians also included the poor and the uneducated (Kyrtatas 1987:121³⁹). Members from the upper classes were gradually recruited

³⁶. Quoting A Fuks 1966, "Social revolution in Greece in the Hellenistic Age", in *La parola del passato* 111: 437-448, p. 445

³⁷. Theissen argues that at least 9 of the 17 persons mentioned by name in 1 Corinthians were from the upper classes (Theissen 1974: 256-257).

³⁸. About 110 different artisan occupations were recorded in the Roman period (Kyrtatas 1987: 122).

³⁹. Referring to Josephus' *Jewish Wars*, Slavonic version.

to the churches, ultimately resulting in modifications of theology, such as the gospel clauses regarding wealth. Clement of Alexandria demonstrated in *The Rich Man's Salvation* how a social commandment came to be spiritualised (Kyrtatas 1987:177). The result was that the rich and poor division was papered over.

2.4. Culture as indicator of social differentiation

"Culture" has been suggested as an alternative to race as distinctive and separating category. Clues are scattered throughout the Old Testament regarding the cultural mix of Israel - submerged at sub-text level - in references to Shamgar, the Kenites, and Jonathan's battle (Gottwald 1992). These remain unexplored because of the dominant Euro-centric hermeneutic employed by scholars (Felder 1991⁴⁰).

During the Hellenistic era Greek rulers emphasised assimilation into Hellenism, in effect devaluing local cultures. As a result the native urban upper classes "mostly spoke Greek, lived the Greek life and shared in Greek culture"; i.e. had a joint value system (Ste. Croix 1981:13). The cities functioned as centres for assimilation into the dominant culture and economic system, sometimes with similar effects in the surrounding rural areas. As in Greece and the Aegean islands, Greeks had been settled in the East for centuries, and even the peasants were probably relatively Hellenised (Ste. Croix 1981:17). In the western and southern coastal regions of Asia Minor native tongues were apparently "entirely displaced by Greek during the Hellenistic period" (Ste. Croix 1981:16). Lydia, Caria, Lycia, Pamphylia, and the Cilician plain serve as examples. In Egypt after 200 BC Greek names were often adopted in cities and villages by indigenous people, as elsewhere in the Greco-Roman world (Balsdon 1979:155; Ste. Croix 1981:17; Kyrtatas 1987:172).

When the Greek East was brought into the Roman Empire, local cultures suffered under a double assimilation process. Greek social, political, legal, and economic structures were assimilated into Roman institutions to various degrees, but the culture and language of the upper classes remained Greek (Ste. Croix 1981:333). Jewish culture, and so ultimately Jewish Christianity, fell victim to this processes (Fornberg 1977:121). From the non-Christian perspective there was no difference between Jews and Christians, and contempt for the one carried over into the other (Fornberg 1977:129,130⁴⁰).

The result of this cultural devaluation was that individual indigenous peoples "sought to raise their social and cultural standing" through becoming more Hellenic (Fornberg 1977:121). Egypt is a prime example of assimilation of the language, religion, and culture of native peoples into Hellenism. Ethnic differences gradually became class distinctions between propertied "Greeks" which included hellenised Egyptians, and non-propertied natives, including impoverished Greeks (Ste. Croix 1981:17).

On the other hand some Greeks had been Roman citizens from the first century AD, and had "utterly

⁴⁰. Referring to e.g. Tacitus' *Annals* 15.44 and Lucian's *Alex.* 25,38.

Roman names" which totally expunged their origin. One example is provided by the Cornelii Pulchri from Epidaurus (Balsdon 1979:155). Consequently names are not necessarily reliable indicators of ethnicity, which makes allocating ethnicity according to names a perilous practice. Several indicators help distinguish whether a Roman name belonged to a non-Roman. In contrast with the three names of a Roman (*praenomen, nomen, cognomen*), the non-Roman usually has a single name and no Roman tribal name. Non-Roman names sometimes had Greek patronymics, or was a nickname usually avoided by Romans. A non-citizen joining the Roman army was assigned two Roman names, as well as a patronymic and tribe; e.g. C. Iulius C.f. Pol. = Gaius Iulius, son of Gaius, of the tribe Pollia. After Claudius, a legionary could choose his third name (Balsdon 1979:153). The same process happened to a foreign auxiliary at completion of his service - usually, like the new citizen, the auxiliary veteran kept his barbaric name, e.g. Tiberius Iulius Sedebdas. Slaves also had only one name, but - especially as freedmen - often took their master's first and second names, but not the cognomen which indicates tribe (Balsdon 1979:154).

Because Christians did not live in ghettos, they were open to influences of the Greco-Roman culture, especially language (Fornberg 1977:121). Urban members of the churches were, like the authors who addressed them, probably bi-lingual. The Epistle of Diognetos speaks of Christians who were in no way distinct from the Hellenised Greek culture around them. The only differences were that "they do not cast out their offspring" and despite their hospitality do not provide "carnal bed" (Fornberg 1977:118).

As dependence on Judaism declined Christians were always under pressure to assimilate "into the pluralistic and syncretistic society of late antiquity" (Fornberg 1977:124,130). Such a danger underlies 2 Peter: the conflict was "cultural and religious, not political" (Fornberg 1977:129). The strength of the dominant culture is also evident in borrowings of Greek terms for Christian structures and beliefs (Fornberg 1977:121,139). Influences of Greek literature can be traced in the New Testament, particularly 1 Cor. 15:33, Titus 1:12 (Fornberg 1977:121).

On the other hand the Jewish rural culture of Christianity presented a major obstacle to conversion for Romans, particularly the upper class. Conversion meant abandoning not only religion, but also "cultural and historical consciousness", as the Roman upper stratum included "men of letters" and philosophers (Kyrtatas 1987:100). The cultural differences between the semi-rural Aramaic-speaking Palestinian (Galilean) and the Greek (and Latin)-speaking Mediterranean, the Jewish and gentile, Jewish and Roman worlds merit attention as indicators of social distance: "Between the Aramaic-speaking peasant society of Jesus and the Greek - and Latin- speaking society of the Pauline mission there existed economic and cultural differences of such dimensions that they left a decisive mark on the origins of Christianity" (Kyrtatas 1987:92, 93). The limited literary education of probably the majority of the first Christians meant that they could be described as "ignorant and foolish" (Fornberg 1977:119⁴¹). Pauline Christianity is a consequence of "translating" the Aramaic country-centred truths of the gospel into a Hellenized urban

⁴¹. Quoting Tertullian's reference to the majority of faithful, *Adv. Prax.* 3.

environment (Fornberg 1977:139).

Apart from religio-cultural differences, historical enmities between Roman and Jew must have caused tensions in the first churches. This antagonism was so great that the Romans recruited an army of non-Jews from Syria and Palestine to be stationed at Caesarea (Samaria) (Belo 1981:67). This would have fuelled antagonism between Jews and non-Jews, which in turn would have affected relations within some churches.

2.5. The rural-urban divide as indicators of social differentiation

The New Testament documents reflect a merging of particularly rural/urban distinctives and "as a whole is, therefore in the nature of a [linguistic, social, cultural, theological] compromise" (Kyrtatas 1987:93). In origin and subsequent development, Christianity moved from the native-language countryside to the Greek-speaking cities.

The Greco-Roman world was urban, and in the subjected areas outside of Italy "it remained largely an upper class culture: those whom it embraced exploited the natives in the countryside"⁴² (Ste. Croix 1981:10). From 5 BC onwards the distinction between urban *polis* (city) and rural *chora* (countryside including villages) achieved a technical sense. The countryside was ruled directly by kings, from whom the cities enjoyed relative autonomy and a republican form of government. Under Roman rule, the cities gradually came to directly administrate the surrounding countryside, which was exploited as main sources for food and labour (Ste. Croix 1981:10,11). By the Early Empire about 1 000 urban areas could be classified as cities, but these contained only about 10% of the total population (Alfoldy 1988:97,104). Most cities had estimated populations of 10 000 to 15 000; medium cities like Pompeii had 20 000. Small cities like Petelia (southern Italy) had 2 000, and larger cities like Pergammum had 50 000 to 100 000. The largest cities were Rome (1 million), Alexandria, and Syrian Antioch (Alfoldy 1988:97-98).

The urban-rural distinction thus coincided with economic exploitation. Urban upper class landlords drew rent from peasants; individuals, municipalities and the state exacted many forms of compulsory menial labour from them; and their produce was bought at low prices and hoarded in the cities, to the extent that country people often starved in dry periods (Ste. Croix 1981:13-15). Countryfolk knew urban dwellers only as landlords, police, or tax collectors (Ste. Croix 1981:13).

In the person of Jesus Christianity originated in the rural villages and countryside of Palestine, outside the influence of Hellenistic or Roman civilisation (Ste. Croix 1981:427,430⁴³; Fornberg 1977:139). While Judea and Samaria were already controlled by Rome, they became Roman provinces only in AD 6, Galilee

⁴². For contrary argument, that some cities depended on selling (not exploiting) services or goods to peasants and travellers, see Engels (1991).

⁴³. Noting the same conclusion by Jerome, *In Esiam* xii.p.507.

and Peraea in AD 44 (Ste. Croix 1981:427). So Jesus' main area of operation was governed by Herod Antipas or by the Roman governor (Ste. Croix 1981:427). He avoided the cities⁴⁴ - with the exception of Jerusalem - such as Sepphoris, Tiberias and Caesarea Paneas (or Philippi) in Galilee; Samaria (Sebaste) between Galilee and Judaea; the Decapolis southeast of Galilee; and Tyre and Sidon to the northwest (Ste. Croix 1981:428). Sepphoris, shown in the revolt of AD 66-70 to be a pro-Roman city, was "only four miles" from Nazareth, while Tiberias was quite close by. Both these cities were predominantly Jewish with Greek civic institutions, while Sebaste was a "predominantly pagan city" (Ste. Croix 1981:429; see Fornberg 1977:139). Pliny maintained in AD 110 that villages and rural districts in Pontus and Bithynia had Christian believers, while a similar situation existed in Phrygia (Fornberg 1977:117,118⁴⁵).

To an extent Egypt was an exception: Greeks settled as much in the countryside as in the cities, which by AD 200 numbered only Alexandria, Naucratis, Paraetonium, Ptolemais, and, after AD 130, Antinopolis (Ste. Croix 1981:17). Coptic was probably used to preach the gospel in rural Egypt (Fornberg 1977:112).

The gap between urban and rural environments was also one of language. While most urban dwellers of Eastern cities could speak Greek, native-language rural people practised the older dialects and culture; in some areas a revival of local cultures and languages was underway (Kyrtatas 1987:150, 167; Ste. Croix 1981:10). In later rival religious movements in Egypt, Persia, and India, people used native barbarous names (Eusebius HE 4.7.7, vol 1, p317, on the Gnostic leader Basilides). They preserved native spells and 'powerful names' (Kyrtatas 1987:171⁴⁶). Punic disappears from public inscriptions after the end of the first century AD, to continue as a spoken language in the rural areas (Balsdon 1979:117). In Asia Minor, spoken Mysian and Issuarian survived "mainly outside the towns" until the sixth century (Balsdon 1979:117).

The illiterate, subsistence-level country-dwellers probably spoke Greek "not at all or at best imperfectly" (Ste. Croix 1981:13). This was the situation until beyond the end of the Greco-Roman Empire, and is revealed in an Edict of Caracalla in AD 215 (Ste. Croix 1981:13; Kyrtatas 1987:167). Paul's encounter with Lycaonian-speakers in the city of Lystra "on the edge of a mountain district in southern Asia Minor" illustrates the case. Lycaonian was an unwritten language, and the event is remarkable for two reasons: it happened in a city, and the social and cultural complex as outlined above strongly suggests that Paul's meeting was with peasants from the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum. This has implications for the debate regarding the social character of early Christianity.

The tensions between rural and urban belief systems occasionally surfaced even until the third century AD, championed by corresponding Weberian-type prophet/priest representatives (e.g. Antony/Athanasius).

⁴⁴. The gospels do loosely use *polis* for various places which should more correctly have been called villages (Nazareth, Capernaum, Nain, Bethlehem etc), except Bethsaida, which was a town (Ste. Croix 1981: 428).

⁴⁵. Quoting Pliny, *Ep.* 10.96.8-9.

⁴⁶. Referring to Origen, *Contra Celsus* 24, 25.

The belief systems condemned as heresies were often rural (e.g. Montanism), while urban systems retained the orthodox stamp (Kyrntatas 1987:95). With reference to the rural district of Arsinoe, Egypt, Eusebius's writings⁴⁷ show that rural believers had more of a thisworldly stance, expecting concrete fulfilments of divine promises (Kyrntatas 1987:175⁴⁸). The prejudices between city-dwellers and countryfolk of the Greek world were projected into theology. Babrius's fables show the simple-minded gods inhabiting the countryside, while the city-gods are infallible and has wide-ranging power (Ste. Croix 1981:18⁴⁹). So theological differences - e.g. literal versus allegorical - masked "class and aspiration" differences between e.g. the villagers of Arsinoe and urban dwellers of Alexandria (Kyrntatas 1987:177).

Kyrntatas maintains that there was a rural, more subversive type of Christianity and a distinct urban form. The latter tended towards compromises with secular powers⁵⁰ and was adapted to the needs and systems of cities (Kyrntatas 1987:92, 95; see Fornberg 1977:119). The extent to which the rural-urban tensions resulted in open conflict between representative factions is debated, with Kyrntatas asserting the negative, and Maynard-Reid (1987) the positive. According to Maynard-Reid the Zealots were rurally based, and their revolt against Rome was in part against the "rich of the city", such as the high priests (1987:23).

2.6. Some functions of social differentiation

For the purpose of this study, I need to show that ethnicity was one of a cluster of concepts used to justify differentiated or prejudicial behaviour between ethno-cultural groups. Ethnicity is here understood as including self-ascription and physical characteristics. For evidence I first turn to the wider Greco-Roman world before narrowing my focus to the New Testament world. In general, it seems fair to conclude that:

"the raw material and the basic attitudes of racial and cultural prejudice existed in the upper-class society of the late Republic and of the Principate. There were well-known techniques for exploiting such emotions if occasion demanded it, and it would seem that the potentially the market, or the favourable audience, was large" (Sherwin-White 1976: 101).

A clear example of the manipulation of racial prejudice is visible in Julius Caesar's description of Ariovistus, the Germanic tribal chief. Caesar had to present Ariovistus in the worst possible light in order to justify his destruction of "an officially recognised ally" (Sherwin-White 1976:13-14). This is done by picturing Ariovistus as an oppressor, and enumerating "the basic vices of the barbarian temperament", namely savagery and "unconsidered action" (Sherwin-White 1976:15). In similar fashion Cicero uses tales of human sacrifice and their appearance (clothes, speech, way of walking) to throw doubts on the

⁴⁷. Referring to Eusebius's *HE* 7.24, Vol 2, PP191.

⁴⁸. Eusebius writes about a controversy Dionysius (ca. 248-265) dealt with in the district of Arsinoe, Egypt.

⁴⁹. Referring to *Fab. Aesop.* 2.6-8.

⁵⁰. In the cities the fourth-century Fathers developed a form of Christianity influenced by Roman secular ideas which made it more palatable to the aristocracy (Kyrntatas 1987:100).

trustworthiness of Celtic witnesses (Sherwin-White 1976:17-18).

2.6.1. The use of the Greek-barbarian distinction to establish an ideology of slavery

Ste. Croix shows that the distinction between Hellene and barbarian (strictly: non-Greek⁵¹) was a critical component in the ideology of slavery (Ste. Croix 1981:416). Plato "took it for granted that it was right and proper for Greeks to enslave barbarians" as they were base, ignorant and would be better off under Greeks (Ste. Croix 1981:416⁵²). Aristotle earlier mentioned similar Greek opinions (such as that of Euripides), that barbarians deserve slavery, as they are slaves by nature (Ste. Croix 1981:416⁵³). Barbarians are conceived of as belonging to different nationalities and speaking different languages (Ste. Croix 637, footnote 1⁵⁴). Cicero identified Jews and Syrians as natural slaves (Ste. Croix 1981:417⁵⁵). Slaves who are not slaves by nature - and so do not deserve to be in that condition - are to be considered not "really" slaves at all. This sentiment seems echoed in Paul (Ste. Croix 1981:108,417⁵⁶). So part of the ideology of slavery was a correlation between ethnicity and negative characteristics to justify this institution (see Ste. Croix 1981:420). The prejudice against barbarians/pagans⁵⁷ was already part of Christian thinking by the fifth century. The Christian poet Prudentius said that the distance between Roman and barbarians was like that between humans and dumb brutes, similar to that between Christians and pagans (Ste. Croix 1981:417⁵⁸). Alongside evidence of earlier prejudice cited above, Prudentius's comment makes Paul's desire to include barbarians and Greeks in the same believing community the more radical. This remains true whether one sees in Col. 3:11 and Gal.3:2 a "mere" spiritual union (Ste. Croix 1981:419), or believe (as I do) that this occurred in reality. The echoing of the Greek and Roman notion that some slaves are not "really" slaves suggests that Paul conceived of an ideal of equality which he could not quite realise - or at least not consistently so. In this he was conditioned by the acceptance of slavery in the Old Testament as much as by his social environment.

Ste. Croix argues on the basis of the male/female slave/master opposition that the relations in Col. 3:11 and Gal.3:2 are not seen "as needing to be changed", and so did not introduce better attitudes to either

⁵¹. Ste Croix uses barbarian to refer to both the Greek and Latin term, although recognising that this may be technically incorrect (1981: 416).

⁵². Referring to *Menex.* 242d, *Rep.* IX.590cd; V.469bc, 470bcd.

⁵³. Referring to *Pol.* I.2, 1252^b71-9.

⁵⁴. Referring to *Laws* VI.777cd.

⁵⁵. *De prov. cons.* 10.

⁵⁶. Quoting *Pol.* I.6, 1255^a25-26.

⁵⁷. *Pagananus* originally meant countryfolk (Fornberg 1977: 118).

⁵⁸. Referring to *Contra Symmachum* II.816-19.

institution (Ste. Croix 1981:419; for a more modulated view see Blasi 1988:65-66⁵⁹). This is hard to refute. Christians continued slavery, and the church fathers warned that slaves "should not wish to be set free at the public cost" (Ignatius, *Epistle to Polycarp* IV.3). Paul's sentiment can be seen to be functioning as part of the ideology of slavery. This also shows the close correlation between the Pauline churches and the dominant classes of the Greco-Roman world, which became even closer during the period of the church fathers.

In some Christian circles there was a sense that slavery was evil in principle, but not that it should therefore be rejected (Ste. Croix 1981:420,423, quoting Augustine, *The city of God* XIX.15-16, 21). The opinion that slavery is contrary to nature⁶⁰ goes back to c. 5 or 4 BC (e.g. Aristotle⁶¹) and also occur in the first century AD, in the writings of Philo, a Hellenised Jew from Alexandria (Ste. Croix 1981:422⁶²).

The Romans also mobilised ethnic prejudices in their own conflicts, one reason why Octavian used Romans and Gauls against Anthony, whose army included Egyptians and Ethiopians (Balsdon 1979:219).

2.6.2. The distorting effect of wealth on the structures of the church

An irresistible social force that affected the early churches was the need of the dominant class to maintain institutions "upon which their whole privileged position depended, and which they were not willing, or even able, to forego" (Ste. Croix 1981:425). Like other social institutions the churches became sites of the class struggle. The result, argues Ste. Croix, was compromise on those original ideas which were hostile to the all-powerful propertied classes in order to prevent a "fatal conflict" (Ste. Croix 1981:426,433,437).

The presence of the dominant classes of the Greco-Roman world in the churches had several effects. These included an increasingly tolerant attitude to property (wealth), further institutionalisation of offices and ritual, and the concept of almsgiving as atonement (see Ste. Croix 1981:435⁶³). Charity could now morally justify the privileged position of propertied individuals in the churches, while preventing an overthrow of the status quo through superficial relief of poverty (see Ste. Croix 1981:438). Later the allegorical interpretation would legitimate the practices of the wealthier Christians. Attitudes to wealth sometimes were a deciding factor in who were heretics (often condemning wealth) and who orthodox

⁵⁹. Blasi points out how Paul's advice regarding women conformed to Diaspora Jewish culture (covering their hair) or Hellenistic Greek cultures (encouraging women to ask religious questions at home) or conforming to both (high regard for celibacy) (Blasi 1988: 65-66, following Aloys Funk 1981).

⁶⁰. This line of thinking continued in some Roman lawyers from AD 2 onwards, e.g. Florentinus, compare *Inst.J.* I.ii.2.

⁶¹. Aristotle, *Pol.* I.3, 1253^b20-23; 6, 1225^a5-12.

⁶². Referring to Philo's *Quod omn. prob. liber* 79, 37.

⁶³. Referring to Clement of Alexandria, *Quis dives salvatur?*

(condoning wealth).

The exception is Irenaeus, who expressed sympathy for minor theft by a person under forced labour (Ste. Croix 1981:436⁶⁴). [what about resistance to emperor cult and its consequences?]

2.6.3. The use of the Jew-Gentile distinction in the creation of an ideology of enmity

Both the gospels and the epistles reveal an awareness of the derogatory uses of ethnic distinctions. Matthew shows awareness of ethnic distinctions which in the time of Jesus result in social distance and slurs (Levine 1988:274). Four anti-gentile statements are reflected in the gospel: Matt. 5:47, 6:7-8, 6:32, 18:17, while Samaritans are classified with the Gentiles (Levine 1988:32, 54). 2 Peter 2: 2-3, 10-18 provides an example of Christian polemic in which adversaries are disparagingly stereotyped as dissolute Gentiles, even though in all probability they were not immoral (Fornberg 1977:104-105, see Rom.1: 18-32, 1 Cor.6: 9-11, Eph.4: 17-19, Col.3: 5-10, 1 Pet. 4: 3-4).

The tension between Jews and Greeks in Palestine churches corresponds partly to pressures to assimilate to the Hellenistic culture and resistance to that (Blasi 1988:29). The question of behaviour while on evangelising journeys relates to the behaviour of Jewish ethnics while among non-Jewish ethnics (Blasi 1988:29, 32). From the late 40s AD to 66 AD Zealots exterminated impure heathens, and so reinforced cultural-ethnic separation from Gentiles. The ripple-effect this had can be observed in congregations in Antioch and Galatia, especially in the Judaizing believers who promoted separate table-fellowship from uncircumcised Christians in Galatia (Blasi 1988:69-70; Gal. 2: 11-13). In this context the circumcision of Gentile Christians became an issue for especially the Jerusalem church, prompting a meeting in about AD 47 (Blasi 1988:69,71).

"Aggressive prejudice" also existed on the side of Gentile inhabitants of Palestine and Syria, arising from "economic dependence, political expansionism, and cultural distance" (Theissen 1991:77). Hellenistic cities like Tyre and Sidon economically exploited the many Jewish settlers in the surrounding countryside and in the Decapolis (Theissen 1991:68). Tyre was dependent on its hinterland and on the rural northern Galilee for produce, which in times of food crisis would get short shrift (Theissen 1991:74-75, cf. Acts 12:20). The Hellenisation of the Syro-Phoenician urban elite would have contrasted strongly with the cultural conservatism of rural areas⁶⁵, particularly for Jewish settlers (see Theissen 1991:70,72). The precondition for a non-Greek ethnic to become a Greek citizen with full rights was education in the gymnasium (Theissen 1991:72). Mutual hostilities were displayed during the Jewish war, when Tyrian Jews were attacked by their fellow townspeople (Theissen 1991:77). Syrians displayed their anti-Jewish fervour as Roman auxiliaries during the war of the 60s (Theissen 1991:77-78).

⁶⁴. Referring to *Elench.* IV.30.1-3.

⁶⁵. Although even in Palestine Greek was known among the lower classes of e.g. Nazareth, where an inscription in Greek forbade grave robbing (Theissen 1991:71).

The relation between Greeks and Jews in the Greek cities of the east exhibited racial prejudice "at full strength" (Sherwin-White 1967:86). Like Blasi, Sherwin-White believes the roots to be in resistance to assimilation into Greek culture and civil life (Sherwin-White 1967:87). Greek author Diodorus⁶⁶ under Augustus described Jews as possessing a dislike of strangers, and Josephus⁶⁷ quotes Arion a century later to similar effect (Sherwin-White 1967:87). Prejudice sometimes had economic and political roots. The Romans extended cultic freedom to the Jews in Greek cities during 49-32 BC, which enabled them to collect money for Jerusalem, settle their own affairs, and assemble for religious purposes. All of these had been in the hands of Greek authorities before, who had suppressed aspects of Jewish life in Miletus, Parium, Sardes, and Ephesus (Sherwin-White 1976:89). The general Greek feeling seems to have been that "the Jews enjoyed more official favour from Rome than did the somewhat disloyal and anti-Roman Greek population (Sherwin-White 1967:93).

Hostile views towards foreigners are expressed in prophetic sayings. This is true for the Old Testament (cf. Amos 1:9-10, Isaiah 23, Jer. 25:22, Ezk. 26-28) and the New: Mt 11:21-24 compares Chorazin and Bethsaida to Tyre and Sidon in a way that presupposes repugnance on the part of the reader (Theissen 1991:78).

2.6.4. Adaptations to literary convention to convey panethnic unity

Probably to represent his belief that Greek and Jew had equal standing before God, Paul's letters christianise the Hellenistic greeting *charein* (greetings) into *charis* (grace). He also includes *eirienie* (peace), the equivalent for the Hebrew greeting *shalom* (Schreiner 1990:27, referring to Gal.3.28-29, Rom.1.16, 15.7-13).

Mark, probably written from Syria, contains deliberate strategies to convey the need for trans-ethnic unity. Theissen argues that Mark uses apophthegms (Mk. 2:1-3:6) to "forge a distance from Judaism". Believers do not observe the barriers that separate Jews and Gentiles in everyday life (meals, fasting, Sabbath practice) in the same way. The basis for this liberalness is the authority of Jesus, established by logic (doctors visit the sick) rather than by a more theological reasoning (Theissen 1991:117). Miracle stories often have the function of transcending barriers between Jews and Gentiles (Mk. 5:1-20; 7:24-30) (Theissen 1991:116).

2.6.5. Multi-cultural structures and leadership

In the churches at Jerusalem ethnic tension existed from the start between Grecian Jews and their Aramaic counterparts. That the oldest extant literature points to Greek as the language of preference indicates that "the church attracted mainly Greeks and Hellenized individuals" (Fornberg 1977:112).

⁶⁶. Diodorus, 34.fr.1.1-4 in Sherwin-White 1967:87.

⁶⁷. Josephus, *Apionem* 2.11 in Sherwin-White 1967:87.

For this reason the deacons were chosen from the Greeks (Acts 6:5). That some hostility possibly existed between the groups can be inferred from the comments regarding Gaius and Diotrephes in 3 John 1:9-10 (Branick 1989:25). The question whether the position of deacon was an inferior one to that of the apostles is a related issue. Whether this office implies a subordinate position for the Greek-speaking group is not answerable from the evidence. The group of deacons also included the proselyte Nicolas from Antioch.

The circumcision of Timothy shows that Gentile Greeks were initially subjected to cultural domination and emasculation (Acts 16:3). This assimilation model of intergroup relations was for long the rallying point of the Judaizers, and corresponds to that experienced by South African tribal peoples under Western missionaries. Later the sheer numbers of Gentile converts probably caused a shift in this practice, as shown by Titus' non-circumcision (Gal. 2:3).

The multilingual context also to some extent determined the choice of leaders. Paul may have chosen Timothy for the journey through Lycaonia because Timothy spoke or understood Lycaonian (see Acts 14:11), the language of the region of his hometown, Lystra. Because his mother was a "Jewess and a believer", married to a Greek (Acts 16:1), he probably also spoke Aramaic and Greek.

2.6.6. A cross-ethnic theology: removing ethnic barriers and establishing a universal church

Paul's concept of the universal range of the Church indicates that the early Christians were "not to think of ethnic limits" (Branick 1989:31). That Paul thought of a church beyond the city/church is clear from his use of "churches" for the faith-communities of Galatia, Asia, Macedonia⁶⁸ (1 Cor. 16.1, 16.9, 2 Cor.8.1) (Branick 1989:28). This indicates a thinking across ethnic limits (Branick 1989:31). But an ecclesial union of Jews/Gentiles (Eph. 2.11-22, Gal.3.28) did not prevent Paul from believing in an eschatological ethnic salvation of Israel (Rom.11; Schreiner 1990:27) .

The idea of a universal salvation transcending ethnic boundaries is not unique to Paul, but also occurs in Matthew (Levine 1988:274). Levine argues that Matthew's understanding of salvation is cross-ethnic; neither Jews or Gentiles are saved nor rejected on the basis of their ethnicity, but through faith demonstrated by action, not ethnic origin (Levine 1988:274). For Matthew elites who abuse power will be rejected (Levine 1988:32, 274). Ethnic distinctions are to be eliminated (Matt. 10:18, Levine 1988:274).

3. ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF NEW TESTAMENT CONGREGATIONS, WITH REFERENCE TO ANTIOCH, CORINTH, AND ROME

⁶⁸. The exception is 1 Cor. 12.28, where church refers to "a generalised situation extending beyond" the local church (Branick 1989: 29).

The discussion so far allows me to return to the question whether New Testament churches included people of sufficient ethno-cultural and class differences to affect their functioning. For an answer I would like to look at the ethnic composition of the Roman cities, where two dimensions crucial to this discussion overlap: (a) the composition of the household - with special reference to slaves - and the city-wide meeting of households; (b) references to the removal of ethnic barriers, such as between Greek and Jews. In this section I make use of works which comment on the existence and structure of house churches, like that of Brown & Meier (1983), Banks (1988), and Branick (1989).

3.1. Ethnic composition of the first century urban contexts

The boundaries of the symbolic universe governing the urban contexts of 1st century Palestine were formed by race and purity, as exemplified physically by the temple (Belo 1981:79). In this world a Jew had to prove his Jewish origins before he could exercise civic rights (Belo 1981:65). The mingling of races in Galilee - especially with non-Jews in trade - created the suspicion of legal impurity in eyes of Judeans (Belo 1981:61).

Some of the cities in the Roman empire contained ethnic or native-speaking suburbs, where e.g. Jews lived. The same was true in the villages. In Egypt the Greek-speaking population (1/6 th of the total population) remained largely separate from the non-Greek speaking peasants, even though they intermarried with them (Kyrtatas 1987:167). Fornberg contends that the Epistle to Diognetos indicates that Christians did not live in separate ghettos, but as living in "both Greek and barbarian cities" (Fornberg 1977:105,118).

Cities under Roman rule clearly contained several ethnic groups as demonstrated at Lystra, which combined a sizeable Latin-speaking population with non-hellenic, Jewish and Greek sectors (NBD 1962:761). Augustus had settled a citizen colony of Roman veterans there (Ste. Croix 1981:16). The Roman port city Puteoli "had a large mixed population", including Ethiopians. There were so many Ethiopian men, women, children that Nero could fill a theatre with them for his guest Thiridates, the Parthian (Balsdon 1979:218). In Strabo's time at Cibyra in Lycia four ethnic groups could be distinguished according to language: Pisidians, Solymi, Greeks, and Lydians (Balsdon 1979:117).

Colonies were also mixed; the result of Roman disregard for geography or ethnicity, as the creation of the Asia Minor province of Galatia proves. Galatia's name refers to descendants from Gauls, who with Phrygians, Greeks and Romans inhabited the area (NBD 1962:447; Levick 1967:120,122; Blasi 1988:68). This mixture was reflected in the cities, and so probably mirrored in the churches, for instance at Colossae, which had Jewish, Greek and Phrygian residents (NBD 1975:242). The same is true for the churches in the Lycus Valley of Asia, which met in the houses of Nympha, of "the brothers", and of Philemon (Col. 4:15). The Roman colony of Pisidian Antioch was surrounded by the "lands of the Phrygians, Lycaonians, and Pisidians" (Levick 1967:122). Inscriptions at Pisidian Antioch demonstrate how race and class were aligned in the colonies. The lower classes here were Phrygians who could not write or speak Greek properly; the upper class Latin-speaking Italians (Levick 1967:137). Levick concludes

that the Roman distinction between *honestiores* and *humiliores* were "backed up in the colonies by a class consciousness that would by no means diminish", even when intermarriage whittled away its basis (Levick 1967:137).

Colonies were of two major kinds: those belonging to the Emperor, ruled by a imperial legate and consisting mostly of army veterans; and those allocated to the Senate under a proconsul. Colonies were founded as protective buffers, partly by assimilating the local population into Roman culture. In reality assimilation also went the other way, depending on whether: (a) no other towns had existed before, or had been obliterated; (b) Romans were superimposed over existing inhabitants; (c) minor cities were granted the title without any imposition of veterans (Levick 1967:190). In the first instance the assimilation into the surrounding cultures was minor (Levick 1967:190). Colonies were modelled after Rome, duplicating its institutions (magistracies, priesthoods, citizen body) and wards (*vici*), and also its "admixture of non-Italian elements" (Levick 1967:190-191). Because of the physical and cultural distance from other colonies, and because of intermarriage, non-Roman elements were taken up into Roman society (Levick 1967:191).

The relationship between Roman settlers and native inhabitants varied from colony to colony, although theoretically regulated by law. Natives were either physically excluded, or integrated into a single society. Old institutions could be abolished or retained, albeit as Roman institutions bearing the old Greek names (Levick 1967:72). Colonisation could mean loss of property and expulsion (forced selling or expropriation), citizen rights or none at all, parallel existence in separate communities or full integration. In Italy at Circeii parallel Roman and native local government institutions existed, as at Minturnae, but here the two communities were physically segregated. At Carthage the locals were wholly incorporated with a core of 3 000 Roman settlers (Levick 1967:69). A town in Spain illustrates an evolutionary development, from walls separating Greek, Roman, and Spanish inhabitants to mingling together by Livy's time (Levick 1967:70⁶⁹). "In all cases there can be no doubt that provincials who had been given the citizenship formed a unifying bridge between the two communities" (Levick 1967:72). The business community was also usually keen to integrate into local communities through intermarriage (Levick 1967:69).

To understand how the first century church accommodated the various ethno-cultural and economic groupings, a survey of the founders, leaders, tensions and solutions, are indicated. Attention will be given to localities where a plurality of house churches and internal tensions are indicated. Branick, and Meeks, maintain that two or more distinct churches can be identified in the New Testament at Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Rome, in Galatia, and at Colossae. According to Branick (1989:25) there were at least two house churches at Jerusalem. Hellenists may have met separately at the house of John Mark's mother, Mary (Acts 12.12-17, see 6.1; Gal.2.11-13). In what follows I want to suggest that churches in cities with mixed populations were likely to attract other ethnic groups. As slaves, foreigners or freedmen they fit Meeks' profile of status inconsistency, and so would have been attracted to Christianity.

⁶⁹. Referring to Livy 304.9.iff.

Did the church at Puteoli on the bay of Naples (Acts 28:13-14) have Ethiopians in it? And were there local natives among the Christians at Ostia, Pompeii, and Herculaneum (see Brown & Meier 1983:147) ?

3.2. The composition of the churches at Antioch between AD 40-70

Evidence regarding the first century churches at Antioch can be deduced from the writings of Luke, Paul, Matthew and Ignatius (Brown & Meier 1983:13). No archeological evidence survives for the first Christians there. But I and II Maccabees, Philo, Josephus and "rabbinic material" offers insight into the life of that Jewish community (Brown & Meier 1983:30). The dates in this section's heading stem from my use of the writings of Luke (Acts 11-15) and Paul (Gal. 2:11-21) rather than other sources. Matthew can serve as evidence for the Antiochene churches between AD 70-100; Ignatius for after AD 100 (see Brown & Meier 1983:28).

Syrian Antioch was founded by Seleucus I Nicator in c.300 BC, who built walls between the Greek and Syrian veterans of his army (Stark 1991:196). Physical ethnic separation also occurred based on religious considerations. This is evident from the Jewish suburb of Daphne, which still existed in the first century AD. Antioch became the capital of the province Syria after the Roman conquest of 64-63 BC (Brown & Meier 1983:31). Synagogues in the city and at Daphne served the numerous Jews, who were estimated as numbering 22 000 during the reign of Augustus (Meeks & Wilken 1978:8; Brown & Meier 1983:31). The Jewish presence dates back to 300BC, when Jews would have been disenfranchised, but like the Syrians of Seleucia able to rule themselves through special bodies (*politeumata*). In the first century this consisted of a council of elders who represented the synagogues (Meeks & Wilken 1978:2,9; Ste. Croix 1981:305; Brown & Meier 1983:30,31). According to Josephus many Greeks were attracted to Jewish religious ceremonies (Brown & Meier 1983:31⁷⁰). Whether physical evidence of the Greek and Syrian separation survived up to the period under discussion is uncertain. Walls also separated segments of the population at Jerusalem and at Minturnae ((Rohrbaugh 1991:134⁷¹; Levick 1967:69).

The first church was founded here in about AD 40, and Antioch's mixed population in all probability translated to a mixed church (NBD 1975:40; Blasi 1988:65, 79 footnote 22⁷²). In any case the church at Antioch comprised people from all over the world: Paul from Tarsus, Barnabas from Cyprus (Acts 4.36), Lucius from Cyrenaica, and Menahem from Jerusalem/Rome (Acts 22.3) (Meeks 1983:62). Theissen argued that Antioch in AD 30-70 was home to the wandering charismatics⁷³ (apostles, prophets), who formed the highest authority in the early church (Theissen 1978:9, Branick 1989:19-20). The Jews of

⁷⁰. Quoting Josephus's *War* 7.3.3.45.

⁷¹. Disappointingly, Rohrbaugh does not support his arguments archaeologically.

⁷². Blasi argues for a mixed church, without providing proof.

⁷³. Theissen posited a threefold division of the earliest Palestinian Christians: the bearer of revelation, wandering charismatics, and sympathisers (Theissen 1978: 8). The charismatic role is understood as non-institutional, the result of a calling over which the recipient had no control (Theissen 1978: 8). Theissen's characterisation depends on whether the early church can be described in terms of a twentieth century definition of "institution".

Antioch were subject to riots and murders in AD 66 and AD 71 during the Jewish War, but were not expelled from the city (Brown & Meier 1983:32).

Contrasting opinions exist about the composition and structure of the churches here. Most agree that "the first determined mission to the Gentiles which did not require circumcision did take place at Antioch" (Brown & Meier 1983:33 and fn 78). Branick argues for two separate house churches around Jewish and Gentile groups (Acts 13.1ff; Branick 1989:24-5). In contrast Felder (1989:48) maintains that Antioch had a racially pluralist leadership, which points to mixed churches (referring to Acts 11:26). Given the example at Jerusalem, the initial segregation was possibly overcome by a joint multi-cultural leadership (see Felder 1989:48).

The united front at Antioch was threatened with the visit of Jerusalem Christians who insisted on circumcision and kosher laws. Peter, who up to then presumably had met with Gentile believers in their homes, now withdrew, and Paul opposed his actions. The result was a delegation to Jerusalem, and confirmation that circumcision was not required. Either at the same time, or soon afterwards, the dietary obligations for Gentile believers were modified to comply with that binding on resident aliens in Israel, thus enabling the churches to remain united (Lev. 17-18, Brown & Meier 1983:43). Perhaps Peter, who seem by now to have been resident at Antioch, played a modifying role as well (Brown & Meier 1983:41,43). Meanwhile Paul had left Antioch.

Ultimately the united meeting pattern seems to have continued. Matthew and Ignatius know only of one Christian community combining Jews and Gentiles, which is opposed by synagogues and dissidents (Brown & Meier 1983:40). So the Antiochene churches included culturally more conservative Jewish Christians, Greek Christians, and culturally more liberal Hellenised Jewish Christians. The presence of Hellenised Jews also bound the churches together, as they would have sympathised with the Gentiles, while actually being part of the former group. Brown speculates that at this time James and those claiming allegiance to him ("the James party", Gal.2:11-12) were in ascendancy at Jerusalem and elsewhere. The more conservative Jewish Christians would have found some sympathies here, and both they and the James party were active in recruiting Gentile converts (Brown & Meier 1983:44,46).

Paul's own theology was shaped by these events, and perhaps contributed to overcoming the problem elsewhere outside Palestine. Significantly, not anywhere in Paul's writings does he envisage two Jewish and Gentile separate churches, or segregated meetings in homes (Branick 1989:32).

3.3. The composition of the churches at Corinth between AD 49 to 57

Both Pauline and non-Pauline churches existed here; the leaders included Crispus (1 Cor.1:14), Stephanas (1 Cor.16:14) and Gaius (Rom 16:23; Meeks 1983:76). Corinth was a Roman colony, a centre of government administration founded in 44 BC on the site of the razed Greek city (Blasi 1988:56). In 146 BC L Mummius had destroyed Corinth and sold its inhabitants into slavery. Some continued to inhabit the

ruins until the founding of the new colony (Ste. Croix 1981:525). The colony's population included a large number of freedmen. The primary language was Latin, while a growing commerce (including banking, crafts) meant Greek residents and the predominance of that language in the economic sphere (Blasi 1988:56). Non-Jewish Christians in such cities probably had no knowledge of the Old Testament except that which appeared in Christian teachings (Fornberg 1977:120).

From the writings of Paul the ethnicity of believers can be deduced from their names, their hairstyles, and behaviour around meals. Behaviour at meals and house ownership also hint at the economic class of believers. The churches had poorer believers, of whom slaves are the most obvious example (1 Cor. 7: 20-24). At the other end were people like Gaius and Crispus, a leader of a synagogue. Gaius's house was large enough for all the churches in the city to meet in it (Blasi 1988:57).

Both ethnic and wealth differences would have contributed to the schisms at Corinth. Blasi suggests that Latin and (Aramaic-speaking?) Jews grouped themselves around Peter and Apollos; which Paul attempted to pull together in a mixed group (Blasi 1988:66-67, see pages 61,63). Gaius and Crispus were probably Latin-speakers (see also Lucius, Fortunatus, Erastus). Some may have been gentile, some Jewish, and Greek names also occur (Stephanas, Jason, Sosipater) (Blasi 1988:57-58). Phoebe, a Greek-speaking female deacon lived at Cenchrae, Corinth's port (Rom.16: 1-2) (Blasi 1988:58). Blasi believes that the cross-currents of Greek and Latin culture caused status inconsistency. While people could easily be converted "from their prior weak commitments", the chance of "winning them over to a common religiosity was not so great" (Blasi 1988:56; see Meeks 1983:54-55). Paul's arguments for the behaviour of women indicates a mixed Jewish and Greek church (Blasi 1988:66). In covering their heads they were conforming to Jewish culture; in discussing religious questions at home the Greek (Blasi 1988:66). Greek and Macedonian women did not attend meals with men (Theissen 1991:91,92⁷⁴).

Blasi suggests the possibility that these congregations found it hard to accommodate one another, and that Paul's solution was a third pan-ethnic congregation (Blasi 1988:67). At Corinth the higher status Latin-speakers could have formed an Apollos-congregation⁷⁵, and seldom mixed with the lower-status Jewish Peter-congregation. The Latins would accept meat offered to idols, female cultic participation, be indifferent to Greek religion, and find no fault with unequal distribution of food. They would struggle with Paul's lowly status and his advice regarding eating meat (Blasi 1988:66). Corinth also contained likely Jewish candidates for the Peter-congregation, who "would be uncomfortable with idol meat, celibacy, tongues, women speaking out and even showing up without head coverings, and unequal portions at banquets" (Blasi 1988:67). Perhaps the external threat of the "Judaizers" provided the impetus for unification (Blasi 1988:67, referring to 2 Cor. 7:7). The precedent for the pan-ethnic unity of mixed congregations was set by the practice of the congregation at Antioch in view of the apostolic decree at Jerusalem (Blasi 1988:67).

⁷⁴. Quoting Cicero's *In Verrem* 2.1.26.66, Herodotus' *Histories* 5.18.

⁷⁵. Blasi does not say why the Latin-speakers would have been happier in an Apollos congregation.

The schisms around the Lord's supper at Corinth were then as much the result of socio-economic (wealth vs. poverty) and socio-cultural (traditions, attitudes of different ethnic groups) as theological differences (Theissen 1987:123,124). Of twelve⁷⁶ people connected to the churches in Corinth, 4 were Greek-speaking (Stephanas, Jason, Sosipater, Phoebe) and 8 Latin-speakers (Gaius, Fortunatus, Crispus, Achaicus, Lucius, Erastus, Quartus, Tertius) (Blasi 1988:57-58). Of these at least Crispus, Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater were Jews (Blasi 1988: 58). Chloe's people and possibly Fortunatus, Achaicus, Tertius belonged to the lower classes, while the status of Sosipater, Lucius and Jason cannot be determined. The rest belonged to the higher classes ⁷⁷, (Theissen 1978:95; Blasi 1988:57).

Despite the class and income barriers at Corinth, rich/poor, presumably also slaves/masters, Paul strongly encouraged believers to meet together through the imagery of the body (Branick 1989:122). For Paul "the body" connects together the bread, the Lord's Supper and the church. While worthy eating depends on unity, the meeting cannot occur without the Supper. Those who partake are one; if they are not one then they cannot partake without incurring judgement (Cor.10.17 & 11.29, Branick 1989:110).

The cult of Isis occurred at Corinth, and is pertinent to this discussion as the cult often included women and men, and blacks and whites. The name Isis was used by Ethiopians, and "blacks played an influential role in the spread of the Isiac rituals". Blacks appear in Isiac frescoes from Herculaneum, dated to the first century AD (Snowden 1983:97 and figures 60-61). That Christianity in Alexandria included blacks is clear from Origen, who thinks of the faith as encompassing among others Scythians and Ethiopians - classical examples of physical diversity (Snowden 1983:99).

3.4. The composition of the churches at Rome between AD 58 - 65

The primary evidence for the churches at Rome and the periods they refer to are (a) Acts, Paul's letter to the Romans (AD 58); (b) the letters to the Hebrews (AD 70) and of 1 Peter (AD 80-90); and (c) the letters of Clement (AD 96) (Brown & Meier 1983:90). The approximate dates above are suggested by Paul's arrival at Rome and his death, which occurred between AD 64-67 (see Brown & Meier 1983:89).

Rome has been described as "a melting-pot", with a population numbering over a million at that time (NBD 1962:115). As in other Roman cities, the poor crowded together in the equivalent of modern slums (200 people per acre). Population density was alleviated by designating a quarter of the city as public areas (Branick 1989:42, 43). There is little evidence for regular hired labour in Rome, and so some of the free poor were dependent on wealthy patrons for hand-outs, becoming their clients (Ste. Croix 1981:192). Most of the *plebs urbana* were artisans, shopkeepers, transport-workers, or traders (Ste. Croix 1981:192).

⁷⁶. Theissen lists 16, including Prisca and Aquila, Titius Justus, and Sosthenes (1 Cor.16:9, Acts 18:7, 1 Cor.1:1); but doubts whether Sosipater or Sosthenes were from Corinth (Theissen 1982: 95).

⁷⁷. The criteria Theissen uses to decide status are references to people who hold offices, own houses, render assistance, and travel (Theissen 1982: 73).

Ethnically Rome was mixed, with substantial numbers of Syrians, Cappadocians⁷⁸, Egyptians, and Jews (Alfoldy 1988:113). Rome must have had black slaves, "considerable numbers of them after Petronius' defeat of an Ethiopian army early in Augustus' principate" (Balsdon 1979:219). The Ethiopians were forced to be prostitutes, actors, domestic servants, boxers, charioteers, soldiers. A hundred fought beasts at Games organised by the aedile Domitius Ahenobarbus (Balsdon 1979:219, see Snowden). The mix was partly the result of military service, slavery, trade. Foreign children were sent to Rome for education, like the Parthian prince Vonones, who returned to his homeland in AD 16 (Balsdon 1979:118). In AD 69 the Praetorian Guard included German-speakers from the Rhine region (Balsdon 1979:119).

Jews were present from at least 139 BC, probably as sojourners and merchants (Brown & Meier 1983:93⁷⁹). Pompey's conquest of Palestine in 61 BC added more as captives, so that by the first century AD an estimated 40-50 000 Jews⁸⁰ lived there, most in the Trans-Tiber area (Brown & Meier 1983:93, and fn. 193). The Roman attitude to Jews was ambivalent; ranging from prejudice (Horace, Cicero) to sympathy (Poppea, Nero's second wife) to intimacy (Titus' relationship with Berenice, the upbringing of Herodian princes in the imperial court) (Brown & Meier 1983:94-95). Two expulsions of Jews occurred, in AD 19 under Tiberius and again in AD 49 under (Brown & Meier 1983:94-95). Between 11 and 15 synagogues existed in Rome (11 in the Trans-Tiber region), but there was no overarching council. Synagogue meetings were probably held in houses (Brown & Meier 1983:101 fn. 210, 108 fn. 223; Stambaugh 1988:95).

The presence of the first Christians at Rome probably dates to the early 40s, and no later than AD 49, when Priscilla and Aquila were among those expelled by Claudius. The expulsion was connected to disturbances which somehow involved Chrestus (Brown & Meier 1983:100-102). From the practice of this husband and wife missionary team elsewhere, they probably had established a housechurch at Rome in the 40s. Priscilla and Aquila hosted a house church at Corinth from about AD 49-52, at Ephesus from about 52-57, and returned to Rome in about AD 57 to do the same (see Brown & Meier 1983:107-108). Two churches are mentioned there, in which the majority were Gentiles (Rom.16.5, 14-15, so Branick 1989:14; but Meeks 1983:75 thinks three). After AD 49 Jewish Christians were probably not welcome in some of the synagogues. But the lack of overall synagogue leadership meant that this would not have been the case everywhere (see Brown & Meier 1983:108). Meier speculates that the Christians at Rome were in the main moderates of the James party-school. Paul's letter to them rephrased the gospel in more Jewish terms to find acceptance for his planned visit there, and to Jerusalem which he wanted to visit in between (Brown & Meier 1983:118,119,123). Meier also thinks that a branch of the ultraconservative Jewish Christians which had dogged Paul in Antioch, Galatia, Philippi, and probably Jerusalem was present at Rome. He speculates that they betrayed Paul and Peter to the Romans during the persecutions

⁷⁸. Whom Juvenal - see 7.14f. - and Martial - see 10.76.1ff - disliked.

⁷⁹. Quoting Valerius Maximus, *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium* 1.3.2.

⁸⁰. Jews made up an estimated 4,5 million people across the empire, and more lived at Alexandria than at Rome, filling two of the five districts there.

under Nero, causing their deaths (Brown & Meier 1983:124-125).

Whether the slaves and freedmen in the household of Caesar belonged to any of the churches at Rome is unclear (Meeks 1983:21). But their example shows that some likely did, as the greatest number of freedmen in the Empire was concentrated in Rome (Ste. Croix 1981:132). Of the 25 names mentioned in Romans 16, 6 are Latin, the rest Greek; "many are typical of slaves and freedmen, and thus may represent Jews and non-Romans who had employ in the great Roman houses. Clearly those whom Paul calls 'kinsmen' (Andronicus, Junias, Herodion) are Jews" (Brown & Meier 1983:108 fn. 224).

3.5. Ethnic composition of the household churches, with special reference to slaves

The concept "church" (*ekklesia*) refers to a gathering (1 Cor 11-14), and is a dynamic image. Originally, *ekklesia* referred to a meeting of free citizens who voted on issues concerning their own welfare. The *ekklesia* came into existence with the meeting, and ceased to exist when the meeting stopped (Branick 1989:27). The phrase occurs in e.g. Acts 2:1-2, and was used in the Septuagint as a translation in Dt. 23:3,8 for the "assembly of the Lord" in the desert (Brown & Meier 1983:153).

The Greek assemblies were the major institutions through which democracy was exercised in ancient Greece, and the means through which the poor - the *demos* - ruled themselves⁸¹. Given the ratio between rich and poor the majority was poor by definition. Examples of assemblies and so of this form of rule persisted in the Greek East until relatively late. The rich ruling class always opted for and invariably enforced oligarchy - the reason why the function and the meaning of the assemblies shrivelled under Roman rule (Ste. Croix 1981:72). A city was usually ruled by assembly, council, and magistrates (Ste. Croix 1981:466).

In this light the use of *ekklesia* to describe Pauline churches indicates a desire for egalitarianism, and hints at the economic class of most of the original members. This interpretation would make sense if Paul was appealing to the lower classes who under Greek democracy had some measure of protection against exploitation (see Ste. Croix 1981:315). The name could have had quite a subversive appeal to Greek-speakers, given the disappearance of the assemblies. Associations (*collegia*) "among the lower orders in the Greek East" held the potential "to take on a political character and lead to disturbances", the reason why Trajan was nervous about them (Ste. Croix 1981:319⁸²). This possible explanation is completely ignored in discussions of the existing structural options from which the early churches could be copied. The patterning of lower strata institutions in imitation of those of the upper strata has a precedent in the structure of the associations (Alfoldy 1988:134).

Branick contends that until the 2nd century AD a church was either a gathering together in a house of

⁸¹. Compare Aristotle's *Pol.* iii.8, 1279b16 ff., especially 34-80.

⁸². Ste. Croix deduces this from Trajan's prevention of organised fire-brigades in Bithynia (Pliny, *Ep.* X.33-34).

members of that household; or of several households in someone's home. "Household" includes persons and property: immediate family (husband, wife, 2nd wife, sons, daughters), dependent relatives, possessions, wealth, tools, and for the well-to-do also servants, attendants, slaves, and cattle ⁸³ (Branick 1989:21, 36-7). That not all members (and not all slaves) of households converted to Christianity can be deduced from the case of Onesimus (Branick 1989:22). To own a house with space for about 30-40 people to meet meant considerable wealth ⁸⁴, in Rome up to 15 times the monthly earnings of a day labourer ⁸⁵ (Branick 1989:42). This caused great difficulty for the poor to house a church, who for this reason had to associate with a wealthier family to attend one (Branick 1989:43, 121). So the gathering of believers (churches) depended on people wealthy enough to have large houses, and who invariably owned slaves (Barclay 1991:176 ^).

Neither the idea of religious gatherings in houses nor the terminology used was new ⁸⁶, but the inclusion of slaves and their new relation to their masters in the church was. Among specialised workers (craftsmen, merchants, ferrymen, fishermen, moneychangers, gardeners) associations were mostly burial clubs, and with exceptions (in late AD 2 at Ephesus⁸⁷) did not act as modern trade unions (Ste. Croix 1981:273). Greco-Roman voluntary associations were mostly homogenous, and class was not abandoned but reproduced (Branick 1989:48). This is also true of the only notable exception, the cult of Dionysius which included both slaves and wealthy senators. The same reproduction of traditional roles occurred in the cults - e.g. that of Isis - where women could play a major role as priestesses.

A large group of freedmen made up the majority of the churches' population - Kyrtatas refers to one hundred examples, which include a high percentage of slave names (Kyrtatas 1987:73). This would have particularly applied to Corinth. The status "freedman" lasted only for one generation; his children born after his manumission were considered free (Ste. Croix 1981:179).

As slaves belonged to different ethnicities, the inclusion of slaves in the house churches as part of the household presupposes an ethnic mix in the churches, (Kyrtatas 1987:29⁸⁸). The inclusion can be deduced from references to slave/master relations in e.g. Ephesians and Philemon. The presence of slaves

⁸³. See Est.2.3, Gn.50.8, 36.60, 15.2-3, 14.14, 17.13-27, Ex.20.17.

⁸⁴. Based on a dining room of 36m² (20 people) and courtyard 55m² (50 people), with separate sections for the head, women/children, slaves (Branick 1989: 38).

⁸⁵. In Rome 3% occupied in 1/3 of all residential space; the masses huddled in small apartments (cenaculum) in huge blocks (insulae) for 40 denarii, a denarius being roughly a day's wage for an ordinary labourer. More spacious lodgings could be found on the 1st floor at 625 denarii per month. To rent a estate (villa, land) in Egypt cost 10 000 drachmae per year (equivalent to 10 000 denarii) (Branick 1989:43).

⁸⁶. The Hebrew and Greek worlds containing examples of households as basis for the cult around household gods and rites (Branick 1989: 43-6, 49).

⁸⁷. The governor had to interfere in a tumult by the bakers who refused to bake sufficient bread.

⁸⁸. Citing Tacitus, *Annals* 14.44.

in the Corinthian houses of Chloe, Stephanas and Gaius are also suggested by "household"⁸⁹ (Barclay 1991:165-76, see Theissen 1982:83-87, 92-4; Meeks 1983:51-73). But the actual number of slaves in the New Testament churches was probably small. Kyrntatas has argued convincingly that the early Christian movement had its biggest recruitment success among self-employed artisans and the upper class (officials). Recruitment was least successful in the rural areas, especially among agricultural and miner slaves (Kyrntatas 1987:47).

4. CONCLUSION: THE ETHNO-CULTURAL BASE OF STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS IN PAULINE CHURCHES BETWEEN AD 30-70

I have not come across any work specifically aimed at defining ethnicity or its relevance for the New Testament. This implies that much work is required on primary sources to outline the structural relations between ethnic groups⁹⁰. As such a study lies well outside the scope of this section, I will confine myself here to what can be gleaned from the New Testament. Given the paucity of concrete evidence, I conclude with some considered hypotheses, which must be weighed against their (a) plausibility as explanations or reconstructions of textual evidence; (b) fit with further evidence when it emerges. This depends partly on its success as a competing paradigm within the wider community of New Testament scholars - should they hear of it.

Groups which differed from one in terms of language, ethnic and religious, as well as socio-economic factors, existed within the early church. That they affected the structures and functioning of the early churches can be deduced from Acts. This likelihood is increased where ethnically-mixed urban contexts existed. Even cities which contained Greeks and Romans would still affect the composition of early Christian meetings (churches). Although these two cultures were assimilated into one another they often retained some cultural distinctives, such as dress. The exception would be rural areas, or churches in quarters primarily occupied by a specific ethnic group. Absence of data on the geographic locations of meeting places and of maps indicating where ethnic groups lived frustrates any further speculation. Mixed meetings are even more likely where household slaves were included, as they were unlikely to be from the same ethnic backgrounds as their masters⁹¹.

Before the arrival of Christianity, the inhabitants of Greco-Roman cities would have been subjected to assimilative forces which eroded ethno-cultural differences. The dominance of both Greek and Roman cultures forced different ethnicities to relate to one another through establishing common languages,

⁸⁹. Compare Acts 16:15; 1 Cor 1.11,16, 16:15.

⁹⁰. Balsdon's book comes closest to providing a glimpse at the different ethnic groups of the Roman empire, but cannot give any help as regards the ethnic composition of the cities. This work concerns the relations between Romans and Greeks, and between the Romans and other ethnicities.

⁹¹. For the opposite opinion - that Romans preferred slaves who could speak Latin - see Balsdon 1979:124, note 48, 279; quoting Cornelius Nepos (*Att.* 13,4), Aulus Gellius' *Noctes Atticae* (4,1,6).

culture, economy, and institutions. Urbanisation ⁹² would also cause degrees of interaction between institutions representing different interest groups within the same local environment. Perhaps Christianity had such impact on the cities with its mixture of cultures exactly because of the relational possibilities its unifying ideology offered to diverse groups. This would include those identified by Meeks as suffering from status-inconsistency. The composition of the churches provided an alternative - albeit in modified form - to the patronage system, enabling contacts between wealthier and poorer members of society. The reverse would be true for rural areas which usually are more ethnically uniform and resistant to assimilation into the dominant culture.

Ethnic differences complicated the functioning of Christian meetings of the 30s⁹³, causing discriminatory behaviour towards the Grecian Jewish widows "in the daily distribution of food" by Hebraic Christians (Acts 6:1). Discrimination continued to plague the functioning of the later (e.g. Corinthian) church of the mid-50s. Social differentiation (status) and economic discrepancy (class)⁹⁴ which marked the wider society were carried over into the meetings. In the complex status system of the Greco-Roman world the landless foreigner was near the bottom. This means that some connection (albeit tenuous) between ethnicity and class cannot be ruled out in analyses of the Corinthian conflict. Cultural factors - not just differences - also played a role in the resistance from within the churches to Paul's ideas, and his resistance to their interpretations. Ethno-cultural differences which would have caused friction if present among members of a house church are language (e.g. Galilean vs Jerusalem accents); dress (e.g. hairstyles), and religion (pagan or Jewish).

The effect of ethnic friction among Jerusalem believers in the AD 30s was the structuring of the "church" along ethnic lines, based on existing Jewish institutions. The leaders (apostles) of the newly formed Jewish sect followed the pattern set by temple and synagogue. While all Jews attended temple, some residents from other ethnic backgrounds could attend a synagogue catering for their language group. Greek-speaking Jews could go to the Synagogue of the Freedmen. Similarly all Jewish Christians continued to attend temple together (Acts 2:46⁹⁵, see Acts 3:1; 5:21,42), and probably continued to attend ethnically differentiated synagogues. Saul's proposed manhunt in Damascus implies that Christians continued to participate in synagogue-life (Acts 9:2). Greek-speaking Jewish Christians like Stephen probably attended the Greek-speaking synagogue, and persisted to do so after his "conversion" (see Acts 6:9). In addition the first Christians met outside the Jewish religious institutions in house meetings (Acts 2:46; 5:42).

⁹². The assimilative effect of urbanisation would not affect everyone equally, as demonstrable from contemporary experience in SA.

⁹³. Theissen's dating of Stephen's persecution to the 30s, and the persecution which led to James' death in the 40s seems reasonable (Theissen 1991:231).

⁹⁴. Compare James' epistle, and the friction class caused at Corinth.

⁹⁵. Acts 2:46: "Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts". (NIV)

So the structures of the Jerusalem model allowed for ethnically separate participation and ministry - intra-ethnic caring, synagogue attendance, and perhaps house meetings (see Branick 1989). The sect's inherited theology and structures provided precedent for such differentiated structures. The primary focus of the early evangelists on Jews or on Gentile converts to Judaism - a prominent strategy also for Paul - required little adjustment to Christianity's Jewish base. But the separation should not be seen as total. Joint meetings in the temple are hinted at in references to Solomon's Colonnade, which was in the Court of the Gentiles within the Temple and so accessible to women and non-Jews (Acts 3:11). Linguistically-similar Jewish and proselyte believers could have attended synagogue together. The Aramaic-speaking leadership apparently circulated between the different meetings, if I understand Peter's visit to the Greek-speaking (?) meeting at the house of John Mark's mother (the only one named in Acts 12:12) correctly.

Once Christianity started formally incorporating non-circumcised Gentiles sometime in the 40s, the existing theology and structures for meeting became inadequate and had to be exchanged for other forms. Existing theology could not provide adequate resources for transcending ethnic and status differentiation, as the Acts 6 incident demonstrated. The assumption behind the synagogue-institution was assimilation into Jewish culture in terms of dietary and cultic requirements. Proselytes attending synagogues met on Jewish turf, within an environment structured around Jewish regulations, which ensured that Jews would not be ritually defiled.

The incident that illustrates the dilemma facing the young Jewish sect is Peter's visit earlier to the Roman centurion in Roman Caesarea, a city not visited by Jesus. In Luke's writing this is the "official" encounter between the early church and the Gentile world⁹⁶, demonstrated by Peter's words and the reaction by members of the Jerusalem church. And also the point where the division between circumcised and uncircumcised believers, which would continue to reverberate throughout the early churches, breaks into the open (Acts 11:3). Earlier attempts at non-Jewish mission, represented by Philip's excursion to Samaria and his encounter with the Ethiopian (Acts 8:27), are noted by Luke. Yet in his mind these seem to have been "unofficial", dependent on "official" ratification through visits by Peter and John (Acts 8:5, 14). The ideological justification for taking the gospel to non-Jews was already present within the teachings and actions of Jesus; e.g. towards Samaritans and Syro-Phoenicians.

The conversion of non-circumcised Gentiles (like Cornelius) and the subsequent friction around interaction with them caused some theological adjustments within the churches. But structural or institutional changes were not necessary. The increasing association with Gentiles threatened a loss of the cultic boundaries which determine impurity or uncleanness (Acts 10:28). Circumcision, dietary laws, and the physical separation at the Temple were important markers of who belonged as Jews and who did not, and their potential loss implied anomy and threatened the social order. The impression that Paul "brought Greeks into the temple area and defiled this holy place" was the reason for the riot during the late 50s

⁹⁶. Peter's function as officially representing Jewish Christianity in the book of Acts is shown by the status differences Luke draws between him and Philip. Although Philip is acknowledged as the first to deliberately reach out to Gentiles, his attempts with the Samaritans has to be sanctioned by a subsequent visit by Peter and John. A similar "endorsement" probably lies behind the confrontation with Paul in Galatia.

(Acts 21:28-29). Peter objected superficially to interaction with Cornelius - unaccompanied by concrete actions - and so post-facto did his brethren (Acts 10:28,11:3⁹⁷). The roots of the new theology-of-Gentile-inclusion probably took root quicker in the ranks of the Greek-speaking Christian Jews than in the Aramaic-speaking sector⁹⁸, where it also had its proponents (most notably Peter, the first to claim to be an apostle to the Gentiles, Acts 15:7).

Members of the fledgling movement at this point still assumed assimilation of Gentile converts into Judaism, as demonstrable from the actions of the circumcised brethren. Because the encounter with Gentiles was outside of Jerusalem - e.g. with the Ethiopian eunuch - no immediate challenges were perceived to the structures at Jerusalem. Granted, some theological adjustments had to be made to acknowledge that God's salvation now extended to the Gentiles. The same goes for the Samaritan believers, who presumably would meet on their own turf. Other effects of Peter's visit to Cornelius and the subsequent conflict with "the circumcised brothers" were: (a) the concession that other ethnicities did not have to adopt certain aspects of Jewish culture; (b) the "official" sanctioning of a more deliberate and vigorous strategy towards converting gentiles, put into effect during the persecution (Acts 11:20); (c) changes in the official theology to justify the inclusion of Gentiles; (d) other cultural groups found it easier to become believers, especially those synagogue-attending God-fearers who balked at circumcision. Perhaps Stephen represented a line of thought beginning to emerge which did not assume this ⁹⁹.

Cornelius' inclusion now officially cleared the way for contact between Jew and uncircumcised non-Jews. But the problem for the churches outside Palestine was to find a place instead of the synagogue where believers from different ethnic and religious backgrounds could meet¹⁰⁰. Outside of Jerusalem Gentile converts were not at a comfortable social distance. Gentiles had to be met on their turf, if believers were to stay true to the pattern of house meetings set at Jerusalem. The Pauline correspondence exemplifies Paul's structural solutions to this problem, based on his own experience of the Antioch model, which he wanted to duplicate. Joint regular meetings between the uncircumcised non-Jews and circumcised Jews in the houses of non-Jews were to lead to a definitive break between the Christian sect and ethnic Judaism. This is a reminder of exactly how exceptional Paul's structures were in contrast to known

⁹⁷. Respectively, "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean", and "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them".

⁹⁸. Meier posits four groups emerging around attitudes of Jews and their Gentile converts, ranging from strict observance (Pharisees, priests) to discarding any observance (Hellenists), maintaining that Christ had replaced the obligation to keep any Jewish cultic requirement. In between are those who insisted on observing diet (claiming James as leader), and those who did not (loyal to Paul). Both the Paul and James groups denied the necessity of circumcision. Paul's own actions suggest that he kept some Jewish feast days and placed a high value on the Ten Commandments, and perhaps expected the same of other Jewish Christians (Brown & Meier 1983:2-9) .

⁹⁹. But there is no evidence from Stephen's recorded speech that he did not assume assimilation into the synagogue; only that he did not see a role for the Temple and was convinced that Jews would ultimately reject the Gospel.

¹⁰⁰. I am trying to forestall argument here that meetings between circumcised Jews and uncircumcised non-Jews could happen; while in extreme situations this is probably true, it does not seem to hold for continuous casual contact on Gentile turf. Otherwise how are the reactions to Peter's Caesarea visit, Paul's temple visit, and the incident between them at Antioch to be explained? To view these incidents as an ideological construct to justify such meetings retrojected by Luke into his narrative does not change anything, as it still indicates that such meetings were an obstacle which had to be overcome.

Jewish institutions.

At Antioch a different structural model and a more radical theology¹⁰¹ developed in the 40s, based on lower cultic standards for Gentile believers, which proved uncomfortable for some Christian Jews. Non-circumcised Gentiles were allowed into the churches, as apparent from the objections of Christian Jews from Jerusalem (Acts 15:1). Non-Christian Jews would object violently to this, as it implied meetings of believers held in "defiled" Gentile houses. This is clear from the earlier charges in the Sanhedrin which led to Stephen's death. Stephen was reported as having said: "'Jesus of Nazareth ... will change the customs Moses handed down to us'" (Acts 6:14). Distance from Jerusalem functioned to attenuate culture; -the reason why Jews in the diaspora could make greater compromises around cultic regulations, e.g. like attend theatres. Distance also enabled Christians to make more radical structural adjustments.

Within the synagogues ethnic Judaism was in a superior position over other cultural groups, and within Jewish society the Way was merely one among other sects. The decision of the "council of Jerusalem" meant that Gentile believers could retain their identity without assimilating completely into Jewish culture. This would ultimately result in the ascendancy and domination of non-Jewish cultures within the churches outside Palestine. But these implications were not understood until after AD 62, judging from the measure of sympathy from the Pharisees even then for the movement (Theissen 1991:230¹⁰²). Up to that point the Antioch model as well as Pauline churches were seen as deviations to be corrected. Until then segregated congregations were the norm, as is apparent from the elements Paul letters, at Corinth in the 50s, in Galatia in AD 55/6, and at Colossae in c. AD 61.

Increasing pressure on Paul's integrated churches to conform to Jewish cultic requirements coincides with raised tensions in AD 39-41 between Jerusalem believers and Jewish leaders. During this time Gaius Caligula had attempted to install a statue in the city (see Theissen 1991:291). Successful popular demonstrations against Gaius would have contrasted sharply with the ambivalent attitude to the Temple of many Christians. Later this would contribute to the persecutions in the 30s and after 41 under Agrippa I (see Theissen 1991:230-232¹⁰³). Pressure was exerted on Jewish believers to align more strongly with Jewish traditions, peaking during the Jewish war of 66-74 when the Temple was destroyed. Jerusalem believers would feel obliged to escalate attempts to get all members of the sect to prove allegiance with Judaism and solidarity with the nationalist cause. Events during the 70s would add a nationalist flavour to the opposition by some Jerusalem believers to the practises of the Antiochene churches. The use of Syrian auxiliaries (e.g. from Tyre) and Vespasian's removal of cherubim from the Temple to Antioch's

¹⁰¹. I am tempted to connect the Greek-speaking Philip the apostle, the deacon Philip, Stephen, and Nicolas the convert to Judaism from Antioch, with the move to evangelise (Greek) Gentiles; and to draw a line from this to the structures which developed at Antioch.

¹⁰². Theissen quotes Josephus's version in *Ant.* 20.200-201 of the incident involving the high priest and James as corroborative evidence.

¹⁰³. The emergence of James, the brother of Jesus, as leader at this time may be connected with the better relations that came about between believers and the Pharisees, which enabled a measure of protection (compare Theissen 1991:232).

gates would be especially incendiary (see Theissen 1991:78). Consequently the Antioch/Pauline deviation was seen more and more as removing Christianity from its Jewish roots, and endangering the Jerusalem believers in a context of nationalist fervour.

Structural innovations at Antioch and the influx of uncircumcised Gentile believers led to a subsequent Jerusalem meeting. Here the leaders decided that Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia had to abstain from "food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality" (Acts 15:23,29). No mention is made of circumcision - a major concession and defeat of the slogan: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1).

The changes apparently initiated at Antioch meant that synagogues - and the temple - could no longer function as meeting places for Christians of mixed ethnic backgrounds. Within the synagogues ethnic Judaism was in a superior position over other cultural groups. The decision of the "council of Jerusalem" that Gentile believers could retain their identity, without assimilating into the Jewish culture, would ultimately result in the ascendancy and domination of non-Jewish cultures within the churches outside Palestine. The latter factor also helped remove Christianity from its Jewish roots. The evidence suggests that the church at Antioch had a mixed Jewish and gentile composition. This can be deduced from Acts 11:19-20, in which the distinction is drawn between the first evangelists there who spoke of the gospel "only to Jews"; while the second wave - "men from Cyprus and Cyrene" - spoke "to Greeks also". The names of the leaders are Aramaic (Barnabas), Latin (Lucius of Cyrene), and Greek (Manaen), as well as the enigmatically named Simeon the Black (Acts 13:1).

I believe that Pauline Christianity can be explained in terms of Paul's attempts to find solutions for relational oppositions within the churches, which were rooted in ethno-cultural and economic factors in Greco-Roman society. Paul's solution was to construct a theology of equality which opposed the existing divisions between male and female, between slave/master - as well as rich/poor, as implied from his reactions to the Corinthian conflict. Paul also had to find a social space in which these envisaged altered relations could be practised, and in which people from different backgrounds could meet. He looked to the household structures of the Greco-Roman world for the answer.

Paul's theology-of-unity contained a strongly integrative dynamic at internal and external levels to overcome ethno-cultural differences. The internal factors which supported this transcendent social world included:

- a) eschatology; which enabled the community to maintain a position over against the wider society;
- b) rituals, such as baptism, which transferred and confirmed a new status within the Christian community to women and slaves, while disrupting the old status [and pneumatology];
- c) a "diastatic cohesion", in which different strata of society was accommodated (Theissen 1992: 213, 215) [similar to multi-ethnic churches drawing in different races *because* they are multi-racial]

The supportive factors external to the churches included

- d) the inconsistent status (relative deprivation) suffered by both Jews and non-Roman Gentiles in terms of the wider society (Meeks). The pairs in Gal 3.28 (Jews, Greeks, slaves, freemen, women) had no or little direct say in the political governing assemblies (ekklesia) of the cities of the Roman empire, but were now incorporated into God's ekklesia (Theissen 1992: 218);
- e) external cross-regional structure of inter-church relations, as when representatives of different congregations met in Jerusalem, ca. 40 AD (Theissen 1992: 216).

The unique aspect of Paul's structuring of the churches around houses and households lies in the final combination of structural components he selected from the existing models within his social context. Religious meetings in houses were not unique in either the Jewish or Roman worlds; nor in the Greco-Roman society were social gatherings between rich and poor, or masters and slaves. Paul's Jewish background provided the synagogues of the exile as the religious model for house meetings. In the synagogues of his own time Jews and other ethnic groups met, provided acceptable degrees of religio-cultural assimilation existed on the non-Jew's part. For a meeting between slaves and masters the models were more limited, with the voluntary association as obvious choice. Roman meals included rich and poor, as public confirmations of status based on patron-client relationships. The functioning of the head of the household as patron of the church was based on the client-patron institution of Roman society.

On the positive side the use of households for churches provided a meeting place for groups which had limited access to one another elsewhere. At the same time Paul attempted to provide an alternative for the patronage system as a form of control of the rich over the poor. A clue as to how Paul thought the internal dynamic should function is found in his choice of "ekklesia" from the Greek political institutions as the name for his proposed structures. In my opinion this indicates that the opposing tensions of ethnicity, social standing, economic class, and gender roles, were supposed to be balanced out in the church-as-voting-assembly. Paul's inclusion of women in the meetings of believers around meals went further than the Greek or Roman meals or the Jewish synagogues of his time¹⁰⁴.

Paul's solutions developed implications which he could not control, and which caused further tensions between the richer and poorer members. Paul's option for the household as meeting place meant that he had to accept the relational structures that went with it, namely the domination of the male as head and as master. Paul's attempt to dissolve the slave/master relation foundered on the cultural and economic forces within Greco-Roman society, which proved to be tenacious for the wealthier members of the churches to overcome. In particular the incorporation of the wealthier classes in the churches resulted in the system of equality eventually failing. It may be that his ideas of unity found more fertile ground in some congregations than in others, and that the concepts were harder to enforce over congregations which he

¹⁰⁴. In pagan - including Greco-Roman - religious institutions women had some role, mostly as temple prostitutes, or priestesses. Paul's inclusion of women goes further than the first (not dependent on sexual functions), but not as far as the second, a factor perhaps best explained from his opposition to the pagan-ness of such religions.

had not founded. So the household setting of the churches in itself caused tensions with and some compromises around his ideology, for Paul as it did for the members of the churches.

That Paul himself struggled with the implications of his ideology can be demonstrated by his reactions to the interpretations women and - by implication - slaves attached to it. Ultimately Paul's theoretical (theological) dissolution of gender roles could not be carried through because of the hold of his own cultural background. At Corinth - and elsewhere? - women (probably from Roman backgrounds) started to claim the equality that Paul's theology seemed to hold out. This caused contradictions within Paul himself, because of his Jewish-Greek background. The solutions he offered on the issue of head-coverings were partly taken from the Roman religious institutions around him (covering heads). His command on silence for women stemmed from his Greek and Jewish background, in which women did not participate in religious and social activities such as meals - unlike Roman women. In the final analysis his own patriarchal background led him to enforce the priority of male leadership over that of females. The contradictions in Paul himself is clear from his decision to forbid women to speak at Corinth, and yet to allow them to prophecy elsewhere with head-coverings.

Paul eventually had to refute interpretations of his ideology by women and Christian slaves, partly because of his own inability to bring his ideals to their logical conclusion. The internal frictions also threatened the continued existence of the Gentile church. Women demanding a say threatened the availability of meeting-places for the churches, because of the males-dominated households on which the meetings largely depended. Men would hardly want to belong to an association which gave them lower status than that which they had within the surrounding society. Similarly, householders (whether male or female) who were slave-owners would hardly want to loose this source of labour - upon whom they had grown dependent - and of status. Paul's solution to ethnic and status strife was to locate the meetings of believers within the households in houses. Combined with his own background, this forced him to honour the patriarchal and slavery institutions on which the households were based. For Paul, as for other believers, there were compromises in areas where they could not subdue their cultural instincts to the implications of their faith. Members of the early churches experienced a tug of war between their old culture and their new Christian beliefs, inevitably resulting in some compromises in both arenas.

But belonging to the Way did not just involve compromise; there were sacrifices as well as advantages. For Jews their exclusion from the synagogues meant a painful exclusion from the social interactions that being a member provided, although this would differ from place to place. For Gentiles the dietary requirement of abstention from the public occasions when meat was available also meant a curtailing of social contacts. There would be economic consequences for both Jew and Gentile. Christians therefore had their old social relations seriously disrupted. On the other hand the church structures now offered new opportunities for belonging. Those excluded from having a say in the urban Roman world could now even attain status as a leader.

How does my reconstruction of ethno-cultural factors as social formative causes of the structuring of the

churches measure up against other explanations ? Previous interpretations hinge on either (a) accepting that Paul only attached spiritual meaning to his statements, or (b) assuming that he wanted social interactions to change. The second interpretation cannot adequately explain why there is a lack of - intra-textual or extra-textual - evidence to support this view. This in itself was no mean achievement, and demonstrates that he did not merely have spiritual interpretations in mind, as is so often declared.

First, my reconstruction can explain the contradictions between Paul's words (ideology) and his practice in a way that (a) takes into consideration the historical development of churches as institutions in relation to social factors, (b) allows for free interactions by Paul and members of his churches with his ideology, while (c) highlighting tensions within those churches resulting from different interpretations. I would say that Paul had changed relations in mind, but his own cultural background - like that of his church members - caused him to struggle with its implementation. Cultural differences based on ethnicity set up the very tensions that he was trying to prevent. Tensions arose between himself and certain sectors of the churches, namely women; and between enfranchised and disenfranchised economic classes within his church, namely masters and slaves, men and women.

A second advantage is that the structures of the Pauline churches can be explained in relation to the Greco-Roman context and its institutions. Paul's decisions regarding the form of leadership structures and social relations within the churches are placed in their social context. The historical development of the churches can be described in relation to the potential number of structures modelled by other institutions of the time.

A third advantage of my analysis in terms of ethno-cultural differences is that it can be combined with social location concepts (class). Then both ineffective implementation of ideology, and the hierarchical church structures which arose later¹⁰⁶, can be explained. Once Paul had decided on the household as social base for his meetings, it meant deference to owners of houses (and often of slaves) who generally became leaders or patrons of the churches. Now the suggested equality between master and slave became largely unenforceable, given the danger that many from this class would then be reluctant to join, or to offer their property for use by the Christian movement. My impression is that the ownership-classes gradually came to dominate the churches, and so the interpretation of the gospel. Their position in the hierarchical structures of the patristic churches now duplicated the social structure of the paternalistic household system and that of Greco-Roman society.

From a Marxian perspective neither Paul nor his successors could ultimately move beyond the class system. The choice to initiate a new religious institution in which women and slaves either had partial or complete control proved ultimately to be beyond his grasp. Paul did manage to unequivocally establish two altered social relations. In the Christian meetings people from different ethnic groups and from different economic classes (and, perhaps, different statuses) gathered together.

¹⁰⁶. Similarly teaching becoming more and more abstract to allow the rich their position, and also to retain Christian slaves. There is no evidence from the antiquity that slaves were released once they became Christians; exactly as happened in the US and SA.

CHAPTER EIGHT: PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE FUNCTIONING OF RACIALLY-MIXED CONGREGATIONS

In this chapter my concern is to construct a theory about the formation and functioning of racially-mixed congregations, using the results of the study. The theory is to be based on the influence of sociological and anthropological categories such as class and ethnicity on the interaction between groups in mixed congregations, which I present in section 5. Along the way I present a model built around two major social causes of formation, namely non-intentional (contextual, inclusive) and intentional causes (3.1 to 3.2.). These causes can also function as strategies, the second featuring prominently in two of the South African congregations (Central, Johweto). I am also aware of ministers who are located in integrating neighbourhoods and who intend exercising a non-intentional option, and so want to point out the consequences of both strategies (3.2.4.).

A second task in this chapter is to deal with possible objections to my conclusions. On the one hand my critical stance towards those racially-mixed congregations in the study raises the question whether such evaluation is warranted, theoretically grounded, or merely subjective? On the other hand objections could be raised to my own stance in favour of mixing, given the rareness of racially-mixed congregations, and the difficulties involved in their functioning. Does their rarity, added to the apparent inevitability of assimilation, not weigh heavily in favour of segregated congregations? I discuss these issues from a sociological perspective in 4.1. under assimilation, and in 4.4., under a theological perspective on the normativity of mixed congregations in South Africa.

A third task is to outline some practical strategies from the results of the study for segregated congregations considering the incorporation of other racial groups.

1. EVALUATION OF GOALS AND METHODS

1.1. Effectiveness in achieving research goals

An evaluation of whether my research goals were met also requires attention to the intended methods by which these were approached. Deviations from goals and methodology must be noted, as well as the availability or lack of evidence which caused them. The exploratory nature of the study means that effectiveness should ultimately be measured against the extent to which sufficient information was produced to construct hypotheses, and to generate models and theories. Primary goals function largely to give direction to the research.

1.1.1. Goal One: isolating factors which play a role in the formation and functioning of contemporary mixed-race congregations

The first goal was achieved through an empirical qualitative study, successfully, as sections 2 and 3 of Chapter Eight can witness. The real test of whether these theories are accurate can only be measured against further study. The success of the methods used varied, in part because of the instruments

themselves, and partly because of the way they were used. A too insignificant minority of black, coloured and Indian people responded in two of the congregations for quantitative analysis. The validity of the overall analysis rests on my interpretation, interviews, and on feedback to the congregations themselves.

Success also depends on whether preferred methods could successfully be applied. The questionnaire derived from the Parish Profile Inventory caused most difficulties, increased by the responses of congregations to it, particularly by the way I had to use it at Central. These difficulties can be grouped as follows:

- a) the high visual literacy required caused great problems among members of the congregations and rendered it almost unusable, except as a source for demographic information. People had trouble in understanding the phrasing of questions; and a translated questionnaire could have produced better results. Pre-testing the questionnaires among samples of the leadership at Central and leaders and members at Johweto beforehand did not seem to make any difference to the outcome;
- b) failure to get sufficient black, coloured and Indian respondents in Johweto and Martindale, which meant that the survey was unrepresentative of the congregations as a whole;
- c) in-depth quantitative analysis was ruled out by the fragmentation of the questionnaire into four portions at Central;
- d) an increasing resistance to completing the questionnaires, evident in a decline of completed questionnaires at Central.

The semi-structured interview was the method which yielded most information. Its shortcomings were in the selection of questions that I made from those available. When grouped into the fourfold framework of process, programme, identity, context, the gaps in the semi-structured interview become obvious: of 21 questions (a) 13 deal directly or indirectly with identity (1-7,11,13,15,16,17,19); (b) four with process (14,8,12,18); (c) one with context (20) and (d) one with programme (21). The weak emphasis on context was carried over into the analysis of the congregations, but the omissions of questions regarding programme were compensated for.

In practice the fourfold framework proved difficult and inflexible as narrative forms for describing congregations. Many categories and methods suggested in the *Handbook* overlap: context occurs by itself and as a method for establishing identity; so do demographics. Part of the problem lay in the way that the *Handbook* was set out; while giving readers many options, there are perhaps too many. Selecting methods from the myriad suggestions were difficult.

While programme, process, and identity received relative equal weight in my research, more attention could have been given to the urban contexts. A particular gap is the lack of interaction with other institutions in the immediate neighbourhood. For instance, what connection exists between Martindale and the Philips electronics factory virtually opposite its gate? Or the big police station down the road? Context seems to have been considered only in terms of historical and denominational dimensions. At the end the availability of written material directly affected the quality and length of the historical sections,

as a comparison between Central and Martindale shows. Limitations of time were vital in what could or could not be done, and I underestimated the cost in time and energy of analysing three congregations.

My biggest difficulty was to keep description and interpretation separate in writing up the information gathered on the congregations. My biggest concern was the relation of the congregations' stories to the one which I told. During feedback sessions to the congregations after the study was completed, members resisted certain interpretations, particularly where my conclusion differed most from their version. Not surprisingly, their aversion was greatest where my interpretation placed them in a negative light. A three-fold narrative structure would have alleviated the dilemma a little by providing for the official story (published documents), the people's story (identity), and my story (analysis of conflict, process, and sociological factors). The experience of observation is like being a voyeur, and I struggled whether to reveal conflicts. In the end I included the descriptions of conflict as containers of information on the congregation's identity and processes. I suspect that this decision and my descriptions of conflict are equally revealing of my own agenda.

1.1.2. Goal Two: determining deviation or continuity of contemporary congregations with Christian arch-forms

The second goal was achieved through comparing the results from the empirical study with those from the socio-literary study. Before this goal could be worked on, the third had to be completed first (see 1.1.3. below). The findings of the third goal enabled me to conclude that contemporary mixed congregations are in continuity with its arch-forms.

The difficulty with this part of the study was finding an explicit method which would legitimate crossing over time and between cultures. This was made possible by the overlap of social-sciences (particularly anthropology), history, literature, and a theology of story, so justifying the worth of multi-disciplinary approaches. These methodologies enabled me to focus on both contemporary and ancient congregations as stories expressing worldview, and to match them through similarities in that worldview. My own bias towards mixed congregations both hindered and helped research; but my latent utopian perspective was countered by the real struggle of such congregations towards a more complete incarnation of their visions.

1.1.3. Goal three: determining whether first century congregations intentionally included people of different race and class

My third goal involved a socio-literary examination of the source documents of Christianity to discover the composition of the early churches (Chapter Seven). The New Testament research in my mind succeeded in showing that the formation of ethnically mixed congregations was a definite strategy pursued by Paul in the first century. But this portion of the study also forced me to deviate somewhat from my original set method and goals.

Success here could be measured if the following sequence could be completed: if (a) a definition of race could be constructed from criteria within the New Testament world, for determining (b) the race of various leading figures, (c) the racial composition of the cities of three first century congregations, and (d) the racial make-up of slaves - my assumption was that the household churches which contained slaves would probably be mixed.

The first major deviation from my intended methodology was to replace race by ethnicity as analytical category in the New Testament research. This change was caused by a growing awareness that race did not feature as primary category for deciding social behaviour. The broader concept ethnicity proved more fruitful, as not only could sufficient criteria but also evidence of their affect be found. Information about the ethnic composition of cities was vague, but sufficient to suggest major ethnic groupings.

Insufficient data were available for determining the exact ethnic group of New Testament figures. Yet general indications could be found of who were Greek-speaking or Aramaic-speaking, and who were probably Jew or Gentile. The problem is particularly severe in the case of slaves, as almost no information is available on the ethnicity of slaves in various cities, (apart from Rome see Traggiari 1969:5,246-249). Apart from Chloe and Philemon, no information is available from the texts about which household had slaves, nor on their ethnicity (compare Onesimus). All one can say is that these household churches were probably mixed.

My use of social-science textual analysis confirmed the difficulties of achieving to any measure a concrete result. Ultimately this tool seems useful only in terms of generating theories, which should be verified as far as possible against other evidence. The biggest advantage seems to be the provision of alternate windows from which to view the New Testament world.

1.2. Suggestions for further study

The success or otherwise of my study should also be measured by the extent to which unanswered questions can be produced by the shortcomings to spur additional avenues of research. Broadly speaking further research is needed on this type of congregation, particularly to answer the following questions:

1. Which of my findings result from the configuration of a specific congregation within a particular denomination, and which are general to many mixed congregations? For instance, what role does the geographically-bound pattern of the Catholic church play in mixed or segregated Catholic parishes?
2. What are the differences or similarities between mixed congregations initiated by whites and those initiated by blacks? What are the differences or similarities between the formation of white/black congregations and those formed between other major ethnic groups elsewhere?
3. Can my argument that members of segregated congregations are less prepared for inter-ethnic interaction be proven empirically? And the argument that members of segregated congregations are far more likely to harbour prejudicial attitudes than those in integrated congregations?

4. Can a theory of institutional development be combined with assimilation theory to throw more light on the emergence of racially-mixed congregations? Can a ranking typology of institutions be compiled and the place of mixed congregations indicated?
5. Is there any empirical evidence for a link between an ideology which favours integration in a society, and whites who join mixed congregations (such as non-racialism in South Africa)? How can the premises of such an ideology be transposed into questions to measure the strength of attitude among members after the manner of the Bogardus social distance scale?
6. How can the results of study of mixed congregations best be used to help other congregations?

2. TOWARDS A PRAXIS-STRATEGY FOR INTEGRATING CONGREGATIONS

For a study like mine to be of value, it has to yield not only theoretical implications but also practical applications. In what follows I interact from the perspective of the study with commonly asked questions about mixed congregations, obtained from clergy. To save time and space I will present the discussion as recommendations to a minister in a white congregation which is on the brink of intentional integration. The presentation may seem too theoretical, because actions which occurred spontaneously in mixed congregations are abstracted from their practical settings, served up as principles, and applied to a generalised hypothetical situation. That is why these practical suggestions should not be regarded as cure-alls.

2.1. Can integration happen in a way that is not artificial?

Artificiality (structuring for mix) is probably inevitable in a society like ours which have been divided along geographic, race, educational, and economic lines for so long. Most methods of getting people from different races to mix will seem forced in such a context. From a sociological perspective the desire for "natural" developments stems from the alienation of individuals from the amount of human planning, effort, and structure required in events or relations, for instance in a courtship.

The measure of artificiality can be tempered by a network of ideas that support integration (see those discussed under preparation, section 2.3., below). Pointing out that in the South African context what seems to be artificial is in fact undoing a work of evil may be powerfully effective in mobilising Christian action. In mixed neighbourhoods the church buildings can be made available for issues that concern the target group. Appointing mixed staff, and devising programmes aimed at the needs of the target group are other ways of drawing people who are different from "us". The most that can be said for the wait-until-the-neighbourhood changes approach is that it is closer to an organic model.

A strong emphasis on building relationships will act as a counter to the artifice involved. One way of achieving this is for the leaders to model the priority of relationships, by themselves seeking to establish friendships across ethnic lines, after the example of Johweto.

2.2. Clarifying assumptions regarding multi-cultural mixing

Anyone who wants to integrate a congregation, or wants to encourage such a process, should first understand the theoretical and practical implications of the task. I outline some below which strikes me as significant. Many are obvious, and seem somewhat banal, but all need serious attention so that integration will have positive effects. My own assumption is that cultures should be enhanced rather than totally assimilated; that the road to equality of all cultures must lead through the valley of conversion from racism or plain cultural insensitivity. This means that cultural colonialism and racial representativeness must first receive attention before a situation can be created in which they no longer play a role. A word of caution is appropriate: my comments have been abstracted from the various examples in this study and require local adaptation. Although my presentation targets a white congregation which faces integration with blacks, I hope the comments may be helpful for other ethnic configurations as well.

1. *Integration brings to play power dynamics, which coincide with and affect cultural boundaries.* If different cultures are not recognised and allowed for in the structures, liturgy, and social interaction, inevitably one will dominate the others, especially where culture coincide with class. This implies that the functioning of different cultures should be known, and be represented, in the programmes and processes of the congregation.

People from the receiving culture in an integrating congregation may show an overt or covert tendency to retain control of the congregation's structures and processes within their cultural group. People may also restrict entry into the structures to those who have become like them, who have assimilated their cultural or class values. These responses have several roots, but is linked to inter-ethnic interaction. People may feel threatened as they confront their own stereotypes. The presence of the incoming group may stimulate the defensive functions of their culture. This calls for a covert recognition by the dominant cultural group that integration means at least a sharing of power. The possibility of yielding power totally should also be faced, that they could eventually be in an organisation controlled by another ethnic group.

Practically the composition of structures has to be continuously monitored, to note which group is constantly dominating the processes. An audit of cultural symbols used in a building can also be helpful, along with questions regarding the culture (and so which power structure) that they represent. If necessary the symbols can be altered, for instance some of the pale faces usually found in stain glass windows can be coloured brown or black. Another issue which such South African congregations have to deal with is the dominance of male structures blacks, whites, and others.

2. *The negative effects that integration has on cultures must be understood.* The price that has to be paid for integrating different cultures is that cultures will not survive intact, and that some aspects of culture will be lost. Members of an ethnic group should negotiate among themselves which aspects of their culture are peripheral, and which not. The conclusions must be suitably cross-cultural, and not favour one culture above another.

This calls for discussion in an open forum, and negotiation about which means can be used to halt or reverse the direction of assimilation. I am hesitant to introduce the concept, but acculturation, when linked to multiculturalism, can be of help in understanding what is desired. Acculturation is a process of mutual cultural adaptation, while assimilation eradicates cultural differences in favour of the dominant group. The desired effect is some mutual cultural adaptation within a context that recognizes the significance of each culture.

Measures must be found and introduced to enhance the positive image of each cultural group. Very important is that the effect of white Western symbols on black people must be recognised, in a world dominated by the ideals they represent. Practical means of countering a negative effect could take the form of language and culture education, in which members of a congregation are linked for a specific period. Other measures include celebrating important events from different cultures which would be acceptable to all, such as birthdays of leaders; using material written by specific groups which include symbols from their culture, such as pictures of blacks in Sunday School material.

2.3. Preparing a receiving congregation for integration

A two-fold strategy is envisaged, aimed at the congregation at large and specifically at the leadership. In general the impending or occurring integration process must be accompanied by honest and open discussion forums throughout. This gives people the opportunity to express their views, and helps to identify problems as they occur. Guidance regarding the real effects is crucial, to avoid ill-feelings when they do appear.

Clergy or lay preachers can introduce the topic of integration from a theological perspective a number of times in sermons. Discussions between leaders from a congregation that is already mixed with their counterparts in a prospectively mixed church can help resolve questions regarding structure and process.

The mindset of the members can be broadened by visits from clergy from mixed churches, accompanied by a mixed team to do presentations on some of their activities. A study group can pay a return visit to such mixed churches and canvass their members for more information.

As part of these preparations a declaration of intent which explains the practical implications as far as possible is helpful, particularly if most people are involved in formulating it. Actions can later be initiated which are seen to support that declaration, like creating racially-mixed leadership structures in which all races are represented. Some congregations have found that people from the congregation who are adept at building bridges between cultures¹ play an important role in the functioning of such structures. During the early stages leadership should monitor that all races are serving on all structures.

¹. In an ethno-political context Eriksen (1993:130) labels such people as "interethnic brokers", and notes that they usually belong to the elite - generally not true in South Africa, but borne out at Central.

Another vital aspect is to raise the awareness among people of the functions of culture. An openness should exist to explore and accept the different styles of singing unique to each culture, perhaps by singing the same songs twice, led by members from the different culture groups. At some point the visible accommodation of various cultures in church services and special programmes must be negotiated. Programmes can be introduced that function as symbols of awareness of different groups' needs.

Programmes that can help people to achieve cross-cultural interpersonal relationships are a good idea. But much thinking and effort should go towards enabling interpersonal informal contact outside church gatherings. Perhaps members from both cultures can be approached to host informal meals; such events could also follow from a Koinonia programme. Situations can also be created in which social roles assigned to white and black can be reversed. An outside organisation with the necessary expertise can help soon after the start of the integration process with programmes to get different race groups to meet in social settings. Koinonia Southern Africa is one such an organisation.

2.4. Dealing with opposition

Some opposition to creating a mixed congregation is inevitable, and the initiating leadership should discern whether such resistance is racist or not. For opposition to be openly aired and addressed is probably healthier than to maintain a veneer of resolution, and as opportunities to discuss and present alternatives to dissent. Pastoral care should be extended to all believers as long as possible. But if people are motivated by racism this should be pointed as sinful, and should not be allowed to dictate the direction of the church's development. In extreme cases in the US, clergy initiating congregational integration have found it necessary to replace lay leaders. It is often difficult for older leaders to adjust to the in-depth changes that have to accompany the process. Some may actively work against the change or desire to continue white domination.

A factor not often discussed is that starting a mixed congregation is often accompanied by membership losses (e.g. 200 in the case of Central Methodist). Where integration processes are accompanied by celebrations of diversity, membership attrition resulting from a fear that identity may be lost is reduced.

2.5. Dealing with a variety of languages

The diversity of languages should be reflected in the liturgy at least. Different language hymns can be sung, and a variety of worship styles used. This is particularly effective where a worship team containing people from the different cultures can be involved. The sermon could be presented with translation, although simultaneous translation is preferable to the alternating style. Translation devices can be introduced or adapted from current technology such as the hearing aids which are still present in some congregations. Members from the congregation who are adept at translation could also stand or sit at various points in the congregation, and translate softly for those around them. Such measures should ideally be backed by encouragement of members to learn different languages, or to offer their skills in

creating such opportunities. There is no reason why whites or Coloureds should not be expected to adjust linguistically as far as possible to their fellow black believers.

2.6. Effective ministry according to different constituencies and to the need for unity

Changed constituencies mean changed needs, and failure to address these issues often leads to uninvolvement by members of the incoming group. Needs analysis should happen, whether formally or informally. The processes, particularly those of entry into programmes, should be explained carefully, and if needs be, renegotiated. Unity can only be created where there is sharing of tasks, information, and social life between groups. A renegotiated common vision is another way of creating unity. New members should be given the opportunity to own the story of the congregation, perhaps through an event in which the church's time-line is explored together. The Catholic concept of assigning "sponsors" to incoming people could also play a positive role. A conscious effort should be made to consider whether processes, programmes, and structures are representative and affirming of races.

Effectiveness in ministry also depends on the measure to which leaders and others are aware of the dynamics of including different races in processes, especially as these are influenced by socio-economic factors (education levels, income). Processes also tend to have different meanings for different groups, determining who are allowed to speak, what is polite, who controls meetings. Increasing the cultural awareness of leaders and members can help diminish friction around these issues. A decision-making style in which all can participate regardless of education levels is important. Leaders must develop an awareness of the possible effects of decisions on different income/education levels. A decision to hold a church camp may not only be beyond the conceptual reach of some, but also beyond their financial means.

Existing programmes often present difficulties, as they are often not "owned" by an incoming group, who then remains uninvolved. In such a situation an option is to discuss in an open forum the scrapping of existing programmes, and to design new ones with the congregation around their needs, skills, or desires. This will help build ownership by as many from different races as possible. Cross-cultural interaction within programmes should be monitored in case negative effects develop, e.g. conflict, exclusion, or a focus too exclusively tied to one group. Members with special skills or an outside consultant can be asked to put together programmes to eradicate racialism and paternalism within the congregation.

The use of symbols during services is important means of creating unity. A particularly powerful symbol within the South African context is the commemoration of past or current injustices on or near the dates that they occurred (e.g. the Sharpeville massacre). Special committees appointed by and involving the different groups can develop a creative programme to extend commemoration into a positive action. Similarly, a committee can be appointed to create liturgy for special occasions in collaboration with the congregation.

3. TOWARDS A SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY OF HOW MIXED CONGREGATIONS FORM

3.1. Transition and non-transition as paradigms for describing mixed congregations

Up to now the dominant paradigm for describing the formation of mixed congregations has been influx into a neighbourhood by an ethnic group different from the dominant one. This is seen as causing a complete transition in a specific context and so inevitably also in a local congregation. Both neighbourhood and congregation will eventually be composed only of members of the incoming group.

But the examples of Central, Martindale, Johweto, and from the US show that non-transitional types can also be recognised alongside transitional congregations. At least three types of ethnically-mixed congregations can be isolated based on causation, as I outline below. "Transition" here is used only in the limited sense of ethnic demographic shift, while "non-transition" is synonymous with "stable", combining two concepts: (a) a neighbourhood where transition (total ethnic change) is not happening, or (b) one in which the ethnic ratios have balanced out with minimum fluctuations (compare Davis & White 1980:102). In either instance total transition is unlikely within the immediate future, and "stable" contexts are not pre-transitional or transitional.

The historical context out of which the transition paradigm came is the ethnic urbanisation patterns in the US during the 1950s-60s. The focus was on the effect of the more than 50% increase of African Americans in cities during that period (cf. Wilson & Davis 1966:15; Wilson 1968). Several objections can be raised to the paradigm. For one, it functions with an older institutional model of church, with congregations located in geographic parishes (compare Ammerman 1993:2). This means that the recently developed non-geographic conception of congregations cannot be accommodated. At the same time the diversity of mixed congregations, which are not causally linked to their immediate neighbourhoods, fall outside its conceptual framework. The paradigm can have racist overtones if the emphasis is on the link between ethnic transition and neighbourhood decay. Lastly, the transition paradigm contains an implicit valuation in which homogeneous congregation is the norm (Porter 1992:53). These reasons suggest that the transition paradigm clarifies only a specific, transitional type of congregation, and the evidence outside its scope requires the search for additional types.

Two major assumptions underpin the transition paradigm. The first is that ethnic transition equals total change, which links ethnic mixing to transition. Racially-mixed congregations are seen as always produced by ethnic change in neighbourhoods. This assumption has passed from observed phenomena of the 1960s to presupposition. As a result analyses of racially-mixed congregations are forced to comply with it. The second assumption is that ethnic mixing is a late stage in the assimilation of different ethnic groups into the dominant culture. In this functionalist theory all social institutions work to divest other ethnic groups of their cultural values and practices, and to socialise them into the dominant group. Churches, as social institutions, are seen as sharing this assimilative function. This concept overshadows theorising about the existence and desirability of racially-integrated congregation-types in the US, to the extent that I will

return to it below. The suspicion is that ethnically-mixed congregations fail to rise above assimilation, and so are considered politically and ecclesiologically incorrect, with segregation as idealised norm. Four presuppositions follow from the dominance of these two assumptions:

- a) segregated congregations are the only true type;
- b) non-transitional congregations are the ideal;
- c) transitional congregations are a non-type;
- d) discovery and description of different types of integrated congregations are obscured.

The transition paradigm fails to recognise that all churches and all neighbourhoods are in some form of transition if viewed over a long period (Porter 1992:53). Neighbourhoods can also be stable in a post-transitional phase. In 1993 at New York Theological Seminary a workshop was held for racially-mixed congregations. In the neighbourhoods of three of the participating congregations ethnic transition from white to black had been completed in the 1950s-1960s. Since then other ethnics had poured in to produce the present mixed context. Parkchester American Baptist Church's East Bronx neighbourhood was white in the 1940s, became black in the 1960s, and is now multi-racial, including Spanish and Caribbean Americans (Gaston 1993:1-2). Following a similar time-lapse, Church of the Intercession's 550 West 155th Street context changed from white to African American to an increasingly Spanish-speaking and Caribbean-American area. Parkchester and Intercession support Hadaway et al's 1984 study. With Philadelphia's University Lutheran Church these congregations provide further examples of relatively stable mixed neighbourhoods. Similar residential patterns to those mentioned are found in South Africa, for instance in Johannesburg (Berea, Mayfair, Yeoville, Malvern, etc).

Mixed congregations in neighbourhoods which are post- or non-transitional require the modification of the paradigm. Complete ethnic transition cannot be regarded as the ultimate stage, as stable mixed congregations show. With no clear time-boundaries, the concept "transition" has limited application. The need to reinvent the old paradigm is also demonstrated by the New York workshop and Foster's studies. Racial-ethnically mixed congregations which do not fit the transition paradigm have been noted for some time (Davis & White 1980:102; Leonard 1983:130; cf. Brightman 1984; Schaller 1989; Porter 1992; Stark 1993). Mixed congregations also occur in ethnically-mixed or -unmixed stable (non-transitional) neighbourhoods.

As an alternative to transition I suggest a non-transitional paradigm, which shows that mixed church can exist as relatively permanent institutions in neighbourhoods not undergoing transition. In addition the distinction enables two causes for ethnic integration in congregations to be isolated: primarily involuntary, affected by population shifts (transitional); or primarily voluntary, as result of deliberate decision (intentional). Under the non-transition paradigm I include two types: "intentional" and "inclusive". "Intentional" congregations use a conscious strategy to establish a mixed congregation, and, as is evident from the examples available to me, occur in a non-transitional neighbourhood (mixed or unmixed). Ethnic factors are allowed to play a role in the processes and structures of intentional type congregations, which I discuss as Type C, below. The inclusive type is unintentional, as mixing happens because of an attitude

among members which does not focus directly on race. Nor do people in this type of congregation actively set out to establish a mixed congregation, as I refer to under Type B, below. Both types B and C recapture a sense of the voluntary nature of these institutions, and acknowledge the members as active agents in determining the shape of their congregations. The two types have distinctly different internal dynamics, as I indicate below.

In the nature of models, the non-transitional types can only be arrived at through some measure of reductionism, and so are neither definitive nor all-embracing. They are heuristic classifying devices, which hopefully will help isolate and show the correlation of major formative factors with the internal dynamics of racial-ethnic congregations. As models the types must not be confused with the complex reality which they abstractly reflect.

3.2. Identifying types of racially-mixed congregations according to causes of formation

3.2.1. Type A: Unintentional formation in transitional neighbourhoods (contextual)

These mixed congregations are caused by neighbourhood transition, occurring as follows: (a) ethnic demographic shifts occur in the neighbourhood, eventually (b) affecting the composition of a congregation, and ultimately causing (c) a complete ethnic transition in both neighbourhood and congregation. Descriptions of examples are found in e.g. Wilson & Davis 1966; DesPortes 1973; Davis & White 1980; Yon 1982; Leonard 1983; Kwan 1990.

The transition process has been described as occurring in distinct sequences. According to Davis & White (1980:54-58) in (a) pre-transitional neighbourhoods some whites leave, no visible change occurs; in (b) early transition visible change occurs in the institutions, more black families move in; in (c) late transition the "tipping point" is passed and flight occurs, with financial institutions limiting investment; in post-transition black institutions fill the voids of their predecessors (cf. Bonner 1982:19-20; Madinger 1989:155-158).

Options for congregations in a transitional neighbourhood are to (a) relocate and sell to a black church; (b) stay and accommodate new neighbours; (c) stay, and remain a white middle class institution (Wilson & Davis 1966:35; Porter 1992:51). Faced with these choices, most congregations decide to relocate and sell (a); or to stay and remain white (c) (Gratton 1989: 2). Those who opt for (c) commonly become commuter congregations (Wilson & Davis 1966:2,13). Those who choose (b) - to adjust - usually expect to go through full transition from white to black (Gratton 1989:2; Davis & White 1980:70,71). Schaller outlines different outcomes for options (b) or (c), according to whether this is accompanied by switches to white or black ministers (Schaller 1989:4²).

². Schaller omits (a) the joint white and black (or other ethnic) leadership evident in Central Baptist, Hartford (Gillespie-Scott), and in Madison Avenue Christian Reformed Church in the early 1980s (Algera-Sherow); and (b) the multi-cultural multiple staff configuration of e.g. First Baptist, Flushing.

Transition remains a functional explanation and accurate description for the genesis of many mixed congregations. Representatives from six of the eight congregations at the New York Theological Seminary (NYTS) workshop said that neighbourhood transition played a major role in the original integration of their churches. The Emory studies show that in three Atlanta congregations ethnic transition played a role (Foster 1993:10,31,54); as it did in two (in Boston, Atlanta) of four congregations with a white/black membership mix around 70%-30% (Ammerman 1993).

3.2.2. Type B: Unintentional formation in non-transitional neighbourhoods through an inclusive stance (inclusive)

Inclusive congregations are formed almost as a side-effect of a more diffuse inclusive focus, of which race is just one category. The ministers and members advocate a welcoming attitude towards people of all races and whatever their sexual preference, but do not actively seek to be made up by people from these categories.

The non-specificity of this stance results in structures in which racial ratios are not necessarily reflected, and where the processes gloss over the diversity of cultures. Inevitably this situation tends to favour assimilation into the ethnic culture characteristic of that denomination (embedded in the language and style of the liturgy, homiletics, and music); or of the dominant culture group within the congregation, whose position is supported by the influence of the denomination's culture. Little social interaction occurs between members. The leadership is not distributed among the ethnic groups, and racial attitudes vary across a wide spectrum. Mainline or Catholic, these congregations pioneer denominational innovations (e.g. Vatican II). In short, this type "looks different from those more homogeneous congregations ... but it 'feels' similar" (Foster 1993b:5).

Examples of such congregations include Martindale locally, and University Lutheran Church in the US. University Lutheran Church (ULC) in 1983 exemplified an integrated congregation in a non-transitional mixed Philadelphia neighbourhood, although the study in which it occurs is not framed to highlight intentional or inclusive causes. Such evidence supports a 1984 survey which identified member-residence in a mixed neighbourhood as a causal factor for mixed congregations (Hadaway et al 1984: 212,215). University Lutheran is described in a study of the consolidation of 26 Lutheran congregations in transitional Philadelphia neighbourhoods (Leonard 1983:130). Class probably also played a centripetal role in the formation of this middle class congregation. A similar congregation was identified by Davis & White (1980:102). While not going completely beyond a context as primary formative cause, University Lutheran's case illustrates a more intentional cause, as many members joined simply because the congregation was integrated (Leonard 1983:130).

Central (American) Baptist in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1993 was located in a stable unmixed neighbourhood, integrated around an inclusive ideology. Not one from its commuter congregation comes from its immediate context, but is drawn from across a wide urban area. These factors point beyond the

scope of contextual causation. The Jamaican and Anglo pastors of Central Baptist describe their congregation as "radically inclusive" - of economic differences, and despite people's sexual preference. They believe that there is no specific reason for the racial mix of their congregation, except the culture of the church, expressed in an emphasis on inclusiveness and community. No intentional attempt is made to recruit specific ethnic groups.

3.2.3. Type C: Intentional formation in non-transitional neighbourhoods (intentional)

Intentional congregations use race as a political-theological ideology to establish racial-ethnic unity, and racial issues are more explicitly worked through. The ideology, like the racial mix of the congregation and its ministers/pastors, draws like-minded people. Racial-political attitudes converge within a narrow spectrum. All racial groups participate in programmes, and ethnic differences are positively affirmed in the processes. A relatively high degree of social interaction occurs between members outside 'official' activities. Denominationally these congregations are either independent, or tend to move at the edge - or outside - of denominational constrictions. Both major South African examples had a lower-income and -education ethnic group mixed with a high-middle income and education one³. This type repudiates cultural assimilation strategies, and attempts to "shift the power dynamics among the congregation's racial and cultural groups from one of hierarchy and dominance to one of interaction and mutuality" (Foster 1993b: 5).

Both Central and Johweto originally were intentional congregations within unmixed non-transitional neighbourhoods; so was East London's North End Presbyterian Church. An example of a mixed congregation in an unmixed neighbourhood in the US is Lawndale Community Church, Chicago, IL. Lawndale's composition is directly affected by the expressed intention of being an integrated faith-community, and all white members who join are asked to live in the immediate black neighbourhood.

The Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples in San Francisco is regarded as the oldest modern example of a congregation formed around the express intention of being ethnically-mixed. Founded in 1944 its members included African-Americans, Anglos, Hispanics, and Asians (Thurman 1959; Porter 1992: 2,35-38). Context played no role in its founding (Porter 1992: 38), and so primary causation is not contextual transition.

Nancy Ammerman⁴ has suggested that my intentional integrative and inclusive congregations are similar to her advocacy and integration congregations respectively (e.g. First United Congregational, and St Matthew's Roman Catholic Churches, Long Beach California). Advocacy congregations attempt to mobilise and transform their society and themselves around a specific issue, while integration refers to

³. This may be a remnant of a dimension of racial prejudice which results in the greater ease with which some whites establish relationships with illiterate and half-literate blacks than with educated blacks (Oosthuizen 1990: 111).

⁴. Interviewed at Emory, Atlanta July 29, 1993.

a strong desire to be generally inclusive.

3.2.4. Evaluating inclusion and intention as formation strategies

My evaluation of these strategies is bound to be biased through my conviction that mixed churches are more contextually and incarnationally relevant than segregated congregations. My aversion to assimilation biases me towards favouring the intentional approach. The intentional approach takes the discrepancies of power as it relates to culture seriously, and tries to redress any imbalances in its own structures. A platform is provided for tackling issues of racism and undoing its effects. As such it can contribute models of inter-ethnic interaction and understanding to the wider society, just as other non-religious institutions with similar compositions can.

But the intentional strategy is not problem-free either, particularly not regarding long-term prospects. Both Johweto and Central, like some US examples, initially required strong initiatives by leadership. This top-down approach in the end hinders the development of more horizontal, mutually accountable processes. In sociological terms there seems to be an inability to move from organisational structures built around charismatic leaders to those more adapted to the needs of the congregation. An important question is whether an intentional focus can sustain long-term existence. In a more constrictive political context, the anti-status quo symbolism of gathering across ethnic lines is a powerful incentive. But this makes the prospect less attractive once the political context is positively altered. The mixed Sakhisizwe Christian Ministries in Port Elizabeth are apparently finding that whites are less enthusiastic to travel into the black areas in the changed political climate. A mixed congregation has to continually broaden its focus to include those related non-political issues in which race can be expected to function, such as housing, health, and justice. An example is provided by John Perkins's Voice of Calvary organisation based in Jackson, Mississippi, which developed reconciliation teaching and urban development arms.

The strength of the inclusive strategy is its broadness, which means it will appeal to more people and so have a wider support base. From the examples I have observed, this approach seems accompanied by more horizontalised power relations, in which conflicts generally occur between interest groups rather than between individuals. But the evidence I have is that where no conscious attention is paid to assimilation as potential side-effect, the negative aspects of the process are enhanced. I am unsure whether this is the result of the strategy as such, or whether other factors are involved.

3.3. Two typologies of racially-mixed congregations

The first typology demonstrates sequences during the formation of a transitional congregation (Figure 13 below), and can help illustrate the differences between transitional and non-transitional congregations. Racial-ethnically-mixed congregations occur between sequences 2-5 in Figure 13. If the ratio is shifting significantly over a short term period (five years?) they should not be considered non-transitional.

Figure 13: Sequential model of ethnic transition as cause of racial-ethnically mixed congregations

Direction of transition	Racial/ethnic interaction (contact) and integration (mix) as it affects the congregation through :				
	<i>membership</i>	<i>leadership</i>	<i>worship</i>	<i>program</i>	<i>social contact</i>
1. uni-racial	only a	only a	culture a oriented	only a	only a
2. dominant race = a, other race = b	a > b	* # none or little	culture a oriented	* b excludes d	* # none
3. a = dominant b = significant size	a > b (+20%)	* high # some	perhaps some difference	* fair inclusion # some	* # none or little
4. balance	a = b	shared	affirms all cultures	* highly including	* # extensive
5. transition	b > a	a declines	affirms all cultures	a declines	* # decreases
6. uni-racial (1. reversed)	only b	only b	b oriented	only b	only b

> indicates "numerically larger than" = indicates "numerically equal"
 * indicates integration (mix) # indicates interaction (contact)

The second typology (Figure 14 below) is developed around the distinctions non-transitional and transitional, and intentional and inclusive. Figure 14 groups these distinctions into three causal types. Non-transitional and transitional mixed congregations are here differentiated according to context, cause, and general membership attributes. Type B is defined by the lack of representation that the non-dominant culture has in the leadership, worship, and programme of these congregations. Perhaps this is a function of the dominant group's implicit attitude towards race. In some Type B congregations non-dominant

cultures are accommodated to varying degrees, for instance within peripheral leadership, without being allowed to affect the other categories (e.g. music). Type C pays more explicit attention to these issues. Such a typology is useful in generating further hypotheses regarding the functioning of mixed congregations. My asymmetrical division, of Type B according to mixed/unmixed contexts and Type C according to an unmixed neighbourhood, reflects my data. Probably an inclusive congregation in a mixed context exists, but I have no first-hand knowledge of such an example.

Figure 14: A Typology of racial-ethnically mixed congregations according to causation

TYPE	CONTEXT (neighbourhood)	CAUSE	MEMBERSHIP
A : Transitional congregations	transition (e.g. white to other)	contextual change	neighbourhood residents
Non-transitional congregations B : Intentional	* mixed (e.g. whites with others)	intentional decision: race is explicit	residents, hi/low income & education mix
	* unmixed (e.g. only whites)		commuters, hi/low income & education mix
C : Inclusive congregations	* unmixed (e.g. only whites)	inclusive attitude: race is implicit	commuters, hi/low income & education mix

* Non- (not pre- or post-) transitional: total ethnic transition is unlikely

Two hypotheses regarding such congregations follow from Figure 14: (a) that the policy (intention, inclusiveness) directly affects internal structure and dynamics; (b) that the context (mixed, unmixed) determines type of membership (residents, commuters). A triangular connection can be posited for such institutions between internal structure, policy, and immediate context. For instance, inclusiveness determines structures in which little attention is paid to ethnicity, which enables it to exist in a potentially hostile segregated neighbourhood. Location in such a neighbourhood requires that some of its members must commute; particularly those who do not belong to the same ethnicity as neighbourhood residents.

My observations suggest that the types may be fluid: a B may slide into a C after some time (say a decade). A transitional A-type may become an inclusive B-type if the members want to maintain a racially

or ethnically mixed congregation in a context of ongoing transition. Similarly a B-type could move from a liturgy which was culturally-dominated by whites, to one in which all cultures could be expressed; so becoming an intentional C-type. Possibly some could oscillate between types over time. Chicago's now-defunct Circle Church attempted to move "all aspects of the church" (Ortiz 1991: 8, 9). This means that my categories should not be considered as too discrete. University Lutheran is an intentional (C) type - but the class of members differs from those typified as attending the inclusive B-type above; perhaps a Ba variation? (compare Leonard 1983:130).

The potential for support or hostility in the immediate context is important for determining the policy and structure of a mixed congregation. Similarly, the members of an intentional church would find it difficult to operate in a segregated context, and such a congregation would find it difficult to attract resident members. Commuting members pose no threat to the residents. Only where the neighbourhood is mixed can membership of either type be expected to be resident; that is, when relocation is not part of the congregation's ideology. At Martindale there is an inverse relation between the upper class white commuters and the lower-middle class context of the church building. There would be little attraction for commuters to move into the area, particularly as no impetus exists within the congregation's worldview to justify relocation.

The warnings mentioned elsewhere concerning reductionism apply here as well. The above typology is an opening statement which I hope will be surpassed or at least refined. Additional types are needed to account for more racial-ethnic congregations. The proposed types need further verification against more examples for greater descriptive accuracy.

3.4. A model of formation through centrifugal-integrative social factors

The functioning of a mixed congregation can be explained by means of a dynamic model, in which I assume that the presence of different ethnic elements poses a potential disruption to an integrating congregation⁵. The ethnic/cultural differences have a centrifugal, outward momentum like a potter's wheel, and can interfere with relations inside the congregation, or with the wider society, to its own detriment. A similar idea underlies Meier & Brown's proposal of a centrist position which functions to transcend theological differences and conflicts in the first century churches (compare Brown & Meier 1983:215).

The centripetal dynamic necessary to overcome the centrifugal affect of ethno-cultural differences can be supplied by a unifying ideology with accompanying symbols. Theology can also function as a more or less explicit ideology of unity, whether phrased in personal or political terms. The centring force has to be applied at internal (ideological) and external levels, and takes the form of a negative (assimilation) or positive dynamic (opposition to segregation). The centripetal force carries its own threat, obliteration of

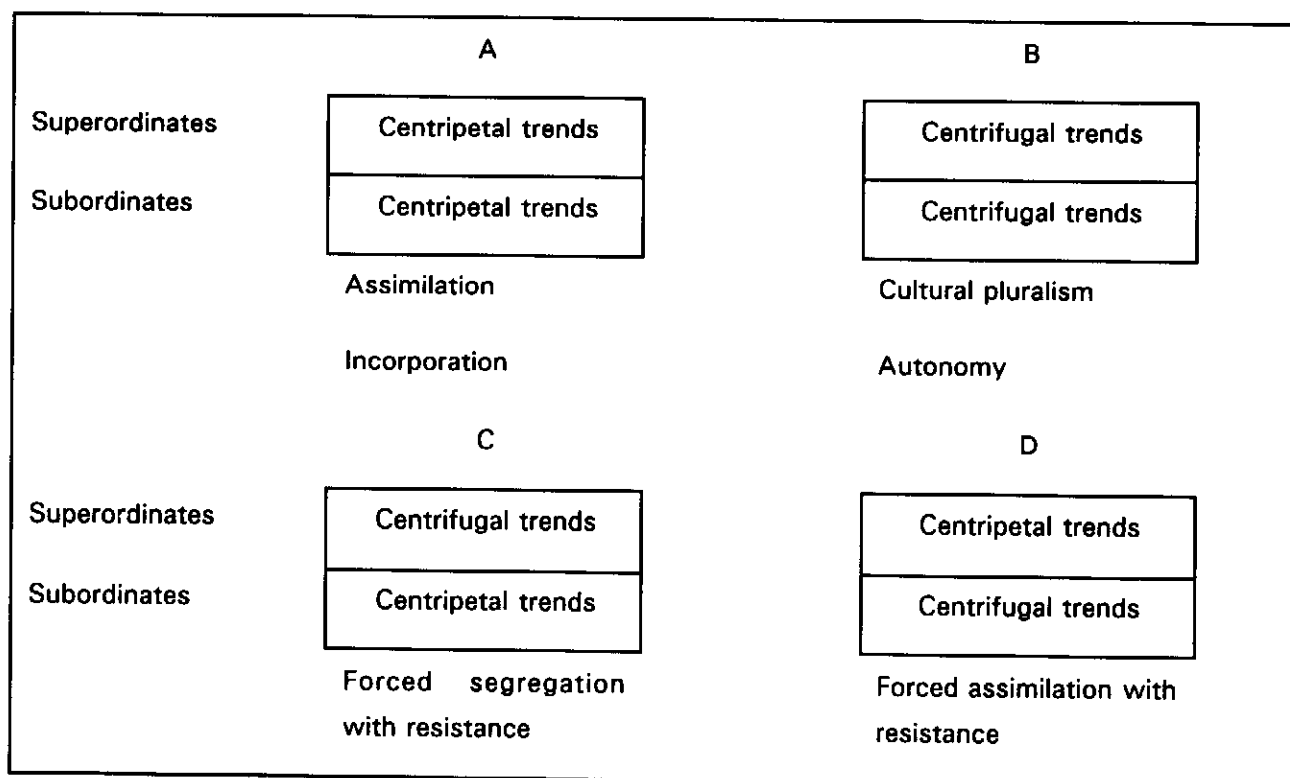
⁵. This need not be the case in a mature congregation which has learnt to appreciate the enriching potential of differences.

diversity (cultural assimilation), which in turn has to be countered through structural balances and adjustments to the ideology. A symbolic universe, constructed from symbols and ideas to form a supportive network, is another form of centripetal force.

This model seems most applicable to congregations where the level of interaction is sufficient to raise awareness of ethnic/cultural differences and so to introduce tensions. Where the differences are not great (e.g. white/coloured) and interaction relatively low, a centrifugally acting ideology of unity (theology) is still present, but its potency will correspond in degree to that of the disruptive forces.

Schermerhorn (1970) also combines the paired concepts of centripetal and centrifugal tendencies with culture and social structure in a model I discovered after I had constructed mine.

Figure 15: A typology of centrifugal and centripetal trends after Schermerhorn (1970:83)



His model also examines the subordinate/dominant positions of ethnic group. This allows for a configuration in which the attitudes of the upper and lower groups can differ or coincide⁸. Although he stipulates that the model is applicable only to two-group situations (Schermerhorn 1970:85), there is still much heuristic value for my purpose here.

Centripetal forces encourage increasing co-operation, while centrifugal tendencies "foster separation from

⁸. Schermerhorn (1970:82) believes that even where both groups favour centrifugal policies, this still requires some integration.

the dominant group or from societal bonds" (Schermerhorn 1970:81). Centripetal forces are then both (a) cultural assimilation in which occurs "cultural trends such as acceptance of common values, styles of life", and (b) structural incorporation. Incorporation entails "structural features like increased participation in a common set of groups, associations, and institutions" (Schermerhorn 1970:81). Centrifugal forces then take both the form of (c) a cultural pluralism which attempts to retain and preserve distinctive traditions in language, religion; and (d) structural requirements, which allow "endogamy, separate associations, and even at times a restricted range of occupations" (Schermerhorn 1970:81-82). Schermerhorn believes that nearly every ethnic group will assume centripetal or centrifugal tendencies as mode of interaction (Schermerhorn 1970:82). In this model integration is "satisfaction of the ethnic group's modal tendency", whether towards autonomy, assimilation, or full incorporation (Schermerhorn 1970:82). "Integration" here is not synonymous with "centripetal" or "centrifugal" (see Figure 17).

4. TOWARDS A THEORY OF HOW MIXED CONGREGATIONS FUNCTION

4.1. Appropriateness of ethnic assimilation for evaluating the functioning of racially-mixed congregations

My use of assimilation to object to the potential devaluation of black cultures in racially-mixed congregations raises the question whether:

- a) the underlying concept is not a too rigid, static notion of culture, which fixates on protective functions to the exclusion of the adaptive;
- b) my objection is rendered invalid by the numerical superiority of blacks in South Africa, and should rather apply to minority groups (white, coloured, Asian) as is done in the States;
- c) assimilation is not implied by non-racialism, and so desirable in South Africa.

All three objections imply affirmative answers, which needs to be qualified against the origins of the assimilation paradigm. Assimilation is the process through which an ethnic group is absorbed into a host society (Francis 1976:254). The process works to dissolve ethnic groups, and to prevent mobilisation for social action by an ethnic group through rendering ethnic categories ineffective (Francis 1976:254). Assimilation was considered the final stage of inter-ethnic relations by Robert Park, who studied continuity and change in ethnic identity in the 1920s and 1930s (Eriksen 1993:19-20).

The paradigm arose in the context of the so-called melting-pot ideal, in which it was thought that all ethnic cultures in the United States would dissolve into a common, unitary, English-based culture. But the melting-pot dynamic implicitly devalued other ethnic groups, in the process stripping away other cultural norms. The realisation dawned that this loss of identity would not be accompanied by greater civil rights or access to resources. In practice the melting-pot dynamic guaranteed continued dominance to the majority white Anglo-Saxon culture. Assimilation was seen in a negative light, and segregated institutions as the (only) means of avoiding the consequences of assimilation. Another option is to establish segregated caucuses within integrated institutions.

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The paradigm arose in the context of the so-called melting-pot ideal, in which it was thought that all ethnic cultures in the United States would dissolve into a common, unitary, English-based culture. But the melting-pot dynamic implicitly devalued other ethnic groups, in the process stripping away other cultural norms. The realisation dawned that this loss of identity would not be accompanied by greater civil rights or access to resources. In practice the melting-pot dynamic guaranteed continued dominance to the majority white Anglo-Saxon culture. Assimilation was seen in a negative light, and segregated institutions as the (only) means of avoiding the consequences of assimilation. Another option is to establish segregated caucuses within integrated institutions.

My rigid concept of culture is somewhat justifiable in a context where most institutions are controlled by the dominant cultural group, as in the US and South Africa. This situation leaves other groups no option but to assimilate or to segregate. Segregation is here a means of defense. Can the same argument be used by e.g. white churches (or political groups) in South Africa? Given the dominance of white (especially English) cultures in the wider society I cannot agree. There is a strong trend in South Africa towards increasing Westernisation, which is unlikely to abate, given this country's interaction with Western governments. Where South African institutions are not controlled by whites, they are by blacks who have assimilated the values of white culture.

Yet it is true that constant inter-ethnic interaction does stimulate the adaptive function of culture, making complete resistance to assimilation impossible (compare Kgatla 1994: 76). Dominated cultures tend to assimilate into the dominant culture. Is this similar to non-racialism? Some agreement exists between the intent of non-racialism and the effect of assimilation, both which aim to render ethnic categories ineffective (compare Francis 1976:254). The difference lies in the goal of non-racialism, which is not assimilation, but equality. Yet non-racialism can also be problematic, when the desire to do away with race so that persons can be treated equally is not accompanied by steps to correct existing structural imbalances in social institutions such as churches. Put simply: not thinking about the colour of a person can function to disguise the continued exclusion of an ethnic group from resources, power, and decision-making. The end result will be the same as that of assimilation: entrenching white cultural and class values.

I believe that mixed congregations should wrestle with culture more consciously, in an open and equal forum where every ethnic group can say how they want to express their culture. Such a strategy would acknowledge the reality of white domination, and honour the rights of other ethnic groups. My argument is thus based on social (human rights) as well as theological convictions, the latter which I will discuss below. I propose that to the degree to which a congregation resists total cultural assimilation it will have integrity in integration. My study shows that integration does not have to mean total assimilation. Where the cultural diversity of members is consciously acknowledged in an integrated congregation, different forms of worship and Scriptural interpretation can evolve which avoids cultural domination (compare Carrington 1988: 18-9).

In a multi-ethnic society like South Africa, with dominant Western institutions and languages, the question is not whether cultural assimilation takes place, but how it can happen without completely obliterating other cultures. A measure of acculturation is necessary to successfully negotiate the dominant cultural and economic system and to avoid exploitation. The issue is the degree to which assimilation happens; its direction (multi- or unilateral), and the possibilities of resisting the dominant group's ideological manipulation.

4.2. A typology of racially-mixed congregations in terms of internal organisation

What motivated me to construct this typology is the difficulty of racially-mixed congregations to establish

FIGURE 16: A typology of mixed congregations according to internal organisation

	Internally differentiated structures (4.2.1.)	Internally united structures (4.2.2.)		
	Calvary RI, Hartford	Johweto	Martindale, Central	Flushing NY
Leaders	joint team	joint team	joint team or individual minister	joint team
Services	segregated meetings for some groups	joint Sunday meetings	joint Sunday meetings	joint Sunday, segregated week meetings
Worship	one cultural style	two cultural styles	one cultural style	many cultural styles
Sermons	one language used	two languages, with translation	one language used	two languages, with translation
Programmes	[inadequate information]	joint outreach, mostly joint home groups	joint outreach, some segregated home groups	joint outreach, segregated home churches
Pastoral care	by group-specific laity or clergy	by joint team	by joint team or individuals	[inadequate information]

a form of church in which (a) the need for functional unity is balanced with (b) the obligation to maintain cultural diversity. Various internal options have been evolved within such congregations, some familiar to South Africans from denominational organisation structures. A curious correspondence can also be traced between such patterns and existing structures for governing multi-ethnic states, which can provide further clues.

4.2.1. Types with internally differentiated structures

This type displays unity at top level and segregation at lower level within the same congregation. The examples I refer to are both congregations from the United States with a relatively large Asian group. The characteristic I focus on is separate structures which express care for specific ethnic groups under a joint

leadership of clergy or laity level. With this in mind the typology can be outlined noting relevant variations (see Figure 16 above).

The type will be better understood against the concrete examples from which it was abstracted:

a) At Calgary American Baptist Church in Rhode Island, four ethnic groups meet in the same building: African-American, Anglo, Liberian, and a relatively large Asian group, the Hmong. A Liberian part-time minister does pastoral care specifically among the Liberians, although also involved in facilitating joint fellowship groups. The Hmong group functions as a separate congregation, with their own pastor, but share the same building.

b) At Central American Baptist Church in Hartford, a congregation with similar composition meets, with Spanish-speakers and a large Haitian section. The full-time ministers include a white and a Liberian-American. A Vietnamese-American lay leader looks after the Vietnamese, and French-speaking Haitians meet separately in the building during the same time as the English language services. On special occasions the diversity of cultures is recognised in some way; for instance the Scripture portion will be read in all the languages represented in the congregation.

4.2.2. Types with internally united structures

This type presents a unity at top level and lower level in the same congregation, but a variety of cultural modes of expression during services and in programme structures. The concrete examples from which the type was abstracted come from South Africa and the United States:

a) Johweto has a joint black/white leadership, and all its home meetings - except a segregated meeting in Soweto - are also mixed. A recent innovation is the use of Sotho-language sermons, translated into English. Worship is marked by the variety of cultures and styles, but English is still favoured. Outreach programmes, usually lectures by the pastor elsewhere, are normally mixed.

b) Central Methodist has a joint leadership of black and white clergy, and white, black and coloured lay leaders. The two home groups are segregated, but the outreach programmes are mixed. Martindale has a white priest overseeing a coloured and white congregation. Lay leadership and outreach is mixed, some home groups are segregated and some mixed. In both the services are in English, with Western worship styles.

Obviously there are variations within and between these two types, and pure types will be the exception. Some of the half-way between examples included here are:

c) Reba Place Fellowship in Evanston, Illinois, where a predominantly white Mennonite Church with a Cambodian group has recently appointed an African-American co-leader. The Cambodians, who do not speak English well, join the service at the start until worship finishes. Then they have a meeting by themselves. A joint white-black Sunday morning service is sometimes taken by the African-American leader. Sunday evening services are aimed at African-Americans, and have an African-American style of worship, with visiting African-American choirs performing. Reba has a joint white-black choir which

performs at both services;

d) First (Conservative) Baptist Church in Flushing NY, where an unique approach to multi-cultural ministry developed. Spanish- Portuguese- Chinese- and English-speaking cultural groups have their own language services during the week and meet in more than 30 small groups of 15 each. But everyone participates in joint activities and a joint Sunday service;

e) The Baptist Church of the Redeemer in New York City held separate language meetings on Sundays, with occasional joint worship services in all four languages - English, Chinese, French, Spanish (Leeds 1974: 149). Aspects from the various cultures were included in the worship and preaching styles and joint social events (Leeds 1974: 149).

4.3. Why segregated churches are not normative

In commenting on segregated congregations in South Africa I take into account that these particular church forms will continue outside certain urban areas in the medium-term. But in the long-term the greater proportion of blacks to whites implies that most white congregations will have to integrate. I address my remarks to segregated churches in general, then to those that are white, and finally to those that are black. These thoughts should be compared to the cautions outlined elsewhere in this chapter.

Segregated congregations are, I think, further removed from the Scriptural and ecclesial ideal than their opposites. To my mind a segregated congregation appears incapable of producing positive contributions to a racially-mixed, unitary society. First, the dynamics of uni-racial congregations cannot help prepare their members for positive interaction with other races. I would argue that they seem capable only of reinforcing past stereotypes, of bolstering the defensive functions of group-identity. Secondly, a segregated congregation within a multi-ethnic context can make few if any ethical contributions to such a society, because it is undermined theologically and socially. Theologically, as such a congregation lacks concrete witness to the unity of races in Christ, to which the wider church confesses. Such a congregation lacks a practical understanding of the social dynamics of inter-ethnic relations. Levels of understanding adequate to comprehending or responding to the daily experiences of other ethnic groups remain closed to its members.

The continued segregation of white congregations in a context of past injustices, which included forced separateness, serves to remind people inside and outside it of that oppression. Their white exclusiveness serves to model an insensitivity about prejudice and its material effects, and may reinforce false premises of racial purity and the need to preserve it.

My general theological and social comments above also apply to black churches, but have to be qualified by three other remarks. The first concerns my discomfort about commenting at all, given that I am "white", which makes it easier for me to comment on white congregations. The second is that while all white South African congregations will have to face integration with blacks, this will not be the issue for all black congregations due to the larger number of blacks in South African society. Some black

congregations will remain segregated solely because there are too few whites to go around. But such congregations should still reflect on the implications of multi-culturalism for their own members from different black cultures. My third remark is to note that the formation of black churches had different historical and sociological roots than that of segregated white churches. Chapter Three showed that black churches were formed because of the racism of white churches, and so cannot be considered as part of the same phenomenon.

Apart from the issue of segregation, the link between most establishment churches and *Western culture* (e.g. in liturgy) in which they are embedded should also be considered.⁷ Through this connection the colonial mindset of the 19th century, which equated "civilized" with "white, Christian," has been transferred to the contemporary structures. As a result even those English-speaking South African churches which opposed apartheid ideologically still supports Western culture. Western aspects of liturgy (e.g. musical rhythm) and processes (e.g. formal committee procedures)⁸ are enforced, and African cultures can only find expression in segregated congregations. Their function within the wider society is to assimilate other cultures into the Western one, even when they are racially integrated. Where they are segregated they serve to maintain the inferiority of the segregated cultures over against the dominant Western culture. As a result the dominance of white Western values in society and in the churches are legitimated as ideals.

4.4. A theological perspective on the normativity of racially-mixed congregations

The issue of normativity relates to a major goal of this study, namely to indicate the continuity or deviation of contemporary mixed congregations from first century forms. Against this background the discussion here will be of (a) the normativity of mixed congregations for (South African) churches; and (b) the theological grounds for my own stance, which is critical not only towards segregated, but also towards racially-mixed congregations. The discussion has to refer to the role ascribed to the literary traditions of Christianity, their authority (inspired, human constructs, or both?); and their structure (a unity or diversity of traditions?). In turn this leads to the hermeneutic difficulties of how these first century texts are to be interpreted. I have to weigh my own stance against possible charges of subjectivity. The only way to do that is to ask whether my critical viewpoint is merely personal or objective, shared by others, or embedded within the written traditions? Normativity ultimately concerns the interpretative loop from ancient forms of Christianity to current expressions and back again.

Clearly the inclusion of Gentiles within first century Pauline churches was a deliberate strategy to include converts across ethnic boundaries. The congregations of the era concretely embodied the resolution of

⁷. The extent to which South African churches resisted political ideology ranged from support to opposition across an ethnic spectrum that generally corresponds to white and black churches. Most churches were compromised in the middle, as Villa-Vicencio (1988) has shown.

⁸. The Britishness of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa caused their leaders to fear for "our language" during the Boer Wars, and its ministers retreated "home" without much concern for the legitimacy of the war.

ethno-religious barriers in Christ. This practice drew on past and contemporaneous habits of including foreigners in Israel, but goes beyond that by not requiring cultural assimilation, as was usual for converts. The movement is rooted in the actions of Jesus towards non-Jews, a tradition reflected by most of the New Testament authors (Matthew, Luke, Paul), and later became a major trend in the early churches. Beyond the first century the trend was upheld as a Christian ideal - even in this country from the 18th century to the present.

So I do think that the first century ethnically-mixed meetings of believers should be normative for churches today. Naturally there are many ways of approaching the normative question. The most obvious is to accept that normative means "what is normal practice". The norm for local churches measured against the practice of most congregations today must then be racial segregation, despite the amount of lip-service paid to integration as ideal. But for Christians who maintain that what is seen as normative has to be measured against the canon of Christian Scripture, such an option is excluded.

My own version of what is normative is based on Wright's critical realism, which uses worldview as the most basic epistemological component for drawing conclusions about historical literary texts (Wright 1992). Wright argues that stories are crucial articulations⁹ of worldview (a grid to answer basic questions about the world). This epistemology differs from that of positivism and phenomenism with their objective/subjective dichotomies, which assumes either that only empirically observable objects/events are true, or that all observations are sense-dependent and so incurably subjective. Critical realism operates on the assumption that what can be known has both private and public dimensions, with corresponding internal (what I think makes most sense) and external referents (events, New Testament texts, what others agree makes most sense). This is the epistemological perspective from which I will argue, coupled with story as articulation of worldview.

What is normative for today can be seen as that interpretation (story) which makes most sense of the ancient texts, and which can be tested for historical alignment against the worldview of those stories. Such an interpretation is public knowledge (concerns texts which others can read), but is also subjective. Applied to the New Testament, scholars first have to uncover the worldview current in first century Palestine, particularly prior and after the public impact of the Christian story. The worldview before AD 30 related in story form the election of Israel by a God who acts in history to restore Israel's fortunes. The New Testament writings retell this story in a way that undermines it by extending the concept of Israel beyond ethnic boundaries; or as I would argue from Gottwald's work, redirects it back to an earlier tradition.

My interpretation that the composition of New Testament congregations is a deliberate strategy is in line with the way that the Gospel's retell Israel's story to include Gentiles in a new way, and so can claim to be normative. In addition, ethnically-mixed congregations are normative in the following ways:

⁹. Other elements include symbol and praxis.

- a) as explanation for the formation of early Christian churches it best explains Paul's insistence on there being neither Jew nor Gentile;
- b) from within the Protestant framework Christians are bound to accept Paul's theology of ethnic unity in Christ expressed in structural form as revealed truth;
- c) from a more Catholic perspective, even should the revelation to Paul regarding the churches' composition be based on circumstantial conditions (the multi-ethnic mix of urban centres), it is still revelation and normative;
- d) either way churches today are obliged to accept Paul's stance as normative;
- e) the motivation that led to the formation of segregated churches in South Africa was in essence prejudice;
- f) segregated areas, used in an explanation which justifies segregated churches, are not "natural" or God-given and cannot be called normative - they are the result of deliberate social engineering based on extreme prejudice;
- g) lastly, racially-mixed churches are normative in mixed contexts, where they serve as local incarnations of the totality of God, their diversity revealing God's multi-dimensional nature and inclusiveness far clearer than segregated congregations can.

Where does this leave an exclusively English congregation in a white suburb; or an exclusively Tswana church in a black suburb? I believe neither is normative. But my hypothetical situation should be challenged: in South Africa there are probably few if any white suburbs, outside the self-proclaimed white homeland of Orania, which do not contain many blacks, usually domestic workers. From a different perspective, failure to incorporate diversity is a failure to live up to the norms of the Christian traditions. The church forms of early Christianity clearly insisted on the principle of deliberate diversity which encompasses either ethnic (Jew/Gentile) or economic (rich/poor) types.

So my critical stance is based on a comparison of current Christian practice with the worldview of the early Christians. Segregated congregations fall short of the norm of ethnic inclusivity. Ethnically-mixed churches are prone to fall short of a second norm which flows from the first, demonstrated in Paul's battle against the circumcisers: the validity for converts to retain their ethnic-cultural identity, as long as it does not overrun ethical norms. The social impetus towards maintaining group-identity and group-preservation cannot be elevated to the position of only norm, so as to justify exclusive congregations. Only when both inclusivity and affirmation are acknowledged in the structures of a congregation can these social dynamics be overcome. Otherwise they run contrary to normative Christianity at individual as well as corporate levels. The purpose of any critical theology is exactly the retelling of the original story, so that our current versions can be measured against it. The intention of restating the ideal is to draw us beyond our current weaknesses. Paul's wrestling with the contradictions caused by his understanding of God's resolution of barriers, illustrates why a critical stance needs to be maintained towards structural expressions of Christianity. No-one and no form of church is above the constant renewal-through-conversion required by the ideals set in tradition, which has goal the perfection of believers in their relation to God and others. Even mixed churches need to engage in self-examination.

5. AN INTEGRATED THEORY OF THE FORMATION AND FUNCTIONING OF RACIALLY-MIXED CONGREGATIONS

The factors that I isolate are not attempts to explain all causation, but to outline the social web guiding or making possible individual or group actions and decisions. In the formation of racially-mixed congregations the role of individual leaders is vital, and their initiative is not meant to be devalued. The absence of theological statements in this section is because of the social focus; theological comment is confined to section 4.3. and 4.4. above. Finally, my conclusions should be regarded as tentative, given the non-representative sample (e.g. all white-initiated) from which the conclusions are drawn. Verification or falsification would be aided by comparison with black mixed churches, or by black-initiated samples.

From a sociological perspective the formation of racially-mixed congregations can be ascribed to (a) ethnic change in the neighbourhood around the congregation, which results in people from other ethnic groups slowly joining (like osmosis); (b) intentional attempts at integration (like a skin graft); all of which takes place within (c) wider dynamics current in society (political ideology, assimilative forces, common culture). The functioning of mixed congregations does not seem especially different from other congregations. A mixed congregation is similarly affected by (d) the internal dynamics of the congregation (socio-economic status, role of leadership, use of buildings, theology). But while the structural dynamics are similar, their forms have different implications, as will be discussed.

The South African examples suggest that the formation of a mixed congregation is helped by the presence of a political ideology or economic necessity in the wider society, which drives towards inter-ethnic co-operation. In South Africa the "unbreakable thread" of non-racialism (Frederikse 1990) provide such an ideological impetus. Most white individuals in the mixed congregations seem bound together in an alliance based on this external ideology. On another level a correspondence can be shown to exist between this external ideology and the internal theology-as-ideology, articulated in sermons and discussions.

A second prerequisite is some proficiency in common languages and culture by at least one involved group, as is required for communication with the others. The social mechanism which provides such access is assimilation into white cultures through institutions defined and dominated by whites. Assimilation in this way aids integration within white-dominated institutions (such as congregations). A social context with a dominant group which draws all groups into greater commonality usually exists prior to the formation of mixed congregations. Obviously in South Africa acculturation by definition goes both ways, as seen from terms adopted from black and Malay languages (e.g. indaba, bobotie). But when the high proportion of blacks who can speak white languages and negotiate white cultural forms is contrasted with the small number of whites who can do the same, the direction of assimilation becomes clear. To prevent assimilation from being a one way process and to make it something more of an even exchange, fairly high levels of social interaction seems necessary.

In other words, racially-mixed congregations represent a stage within a wider three-dimensional

assimilative process, of which this church type, involuntarily or otherwise, is a part. Similar to the process within other institutions (education, legal, entertainment) which entrenches white culture, degrees of interaction within mixed churches aid assimilation into white culture. This is the significance of e.g. the liturgy or structures in the Methodist churches which supports English as dominant culture. Previous levels of Christianisation among blacks is also important, because in South Africa this process is always accompanied by a transmission of European culture, as noted in Chapter Three. The urban location of all examples of mixed congregations also seems significant. Cities provide a local environment where all residents are subjected to several assimilative forces which erode their ethno-cultural heritage. In Johannesburg the differences between black and white would generally be decreased in favour of the white culture. In Soweto tribal traditions would slowly be lost, decreasing differences between ethnic groups, even allowing for sporadic retribalisation. The predominance of white European culture, the absorption-process within white-dominated institutions, and the loosening of cultural ties, forms three dimensions of assimilation which aid the formation of racially-mixed congregations.

Any assertion that congregations are assimilationist in function is extremely undifferentiated, and needs to be tempered by the evidence for counter-status claims in sermons, teachings, and activities. In South Africa these worked against assimilation into the dominant political ideology of the wider apartheid culture, as illustrated by Central's stance against the government and police; or by Johweto's position against conscription and white domination of church events. Compared to the racial segregation prevalent in the wider society and in most churches, these congregations had a strong political counter-culture identity, and see themselves as representative of what non-segregated society should be. A far likelier possibility is assimilation into the dominant culture of the denomination. Central Methodist has not found a way around the Englishness of the worship style, just as the denomination has not in training of clergy. Similarly, the dilemma of European cultural hegemony in mixed congregations still needs to be solved. From the U.S. experience it should be clear that assimilation into one (white) culture is not the ideal. But neither is remaining in a cultural ghetto, which through the divide and rule effect functions to support white domination.

Various strategies evolve in mixed congregations to deal with the fact that integration requires some social interaction. One is to implicitly limit interaction to highly structured and formal events (i.e. services), with little informal interaction expected outside church settings. The measure of common understanding then need not be high, and even informal social interaction can be mediated through "official" church events, such as after-service tea sessions. Unity between races is here manifestly understood as shaped by formal settings, and little or no attention is given to ensure the integration of all structures. Events where the potential for informal social interaction is higher are avoided through implicit segregation (e.g. home meetings). This mirrors relations within the wider society, where integration is limited to formally structured settings (e.g. the workplace), and interaction happens mainly around tasks, with little mingling between higher and lower status groups. Because non-racialism in some form is a conscious ideology in such a church, class rather than race determines representation in power structures; again reflecting the dominant ideology current in wider society. Both Martindale and Central conform to this strategy, despite

Central's intentional start. Where the initial integration process is not worked through consciously, assimilative consequences seem more severe.

Another method is to place a high premium on social interaction inside and outside "official" gatherings. The attempt is made to have all structures and some aspects of the liturgy reflect the ethnic composition of the congregation. Social roles are extended, and in some instances reversed (blacks giving advice to whites, liturgy led by blacks). A church such as Johweto which integrated through interpersonal relations between the founders, and between members, is structurally bound to continue emphasising this ideology as means of reinforcing identity and as recruitment mechanism. But there is a latent danger in stressing individual relationships: the function of class as it affects group relations (e.g. in decision-making) or determines ideology (values, principles) remain hidden. The danger is more acute in a mixed congregation with an overt ideology of care for the poor; this can disguise the real discrepancy in class relations between low/high income groups. The present differences between race groups in class, in skills and in economic resources could serve to maintain relations of dominance and dependency in a mixed congregation.

In sum, the functioning of racially-mixed congregations is complicated by class factors which either (a) overlap with race categories to exclude black, coloured, and Asian individuals at leadership and other levels, or (b) function to draw whites and blacks from the upper status group together as leaders in a way that excludes most of the incoming (black) group. In all the South African examples, whites who join or are part of such congregations usually come from the higher income/education sectors. Recruits from other races generally belong to the lower sectors, although some are upwardly mobile. In Atlanta a situation apparently contradicting this, where upwardly mobile blacks joined a lower status white church, actually proves the rule (compare Foster e.a. 1993). Where the different ethnic groups are equally proficient in the common language (e.g. coloureds or Indians), their cultural expressions are ignored.

Several social factors which affect the internal dynamics of the mixed congregation also became visible in the study. Here I must return to the role of the minister/priest referred to above, which is vital in paving the way for integration, especially in previously all-white congregations. Actions, sermons and initiated programmes contribute to, or express, an ideology of unity. Sometimes the minister/priest had prior exposure to black-white relations, a factor also present among some individual members. Porter (1992:8) has pointed out the value of bridge-builders, sensitive to other cultures or who are themselves "dually-acculturate". They fulfil integrative, transformative and mediative tasks in the formation of ethnically-diverse congregations (Porter 1992:4). The prior socio-political history of the congregation plays a role in drawing in black groups, and often involves the use of plant as a space in which concerns for the incoming group are displayed. The effect of socio-economic status has already been referred to above.

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