



“Elephants are eating our  
money”:  
A critical ethnography of  
development practice in  
Maputaland, South Africa.

Ilana Van Wyk

September 2003

“ELEPHANTS ARE EATING OUR MONEY”:  
A CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE  
IN MAPUTALAND, SOUTH AFRICA.

By

Ilana Van Wyk

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS (ANTHROPOLOGY)

In the Faculty of Human Sciences

Department of Anthropology and Archaeology,

University of Pretoria

2 September 2003

Supervisor: Prof. I. A. Niehaus

## Acknowledgement

No dissertation is the sole product of its writer and this one owes much to the encouragement, assistance and skill of others. To colleagues and friends at the University of Pretoria, I owe special gratitude: Professors Johan Kriel, Chris Boonzaaier and Herman Els and Mrs Inge Kriel have given kind and generous encouragement. I am also most grateful to John Sharp for the faith he showed in my abilities, for the job in his Department and the sustained pressure to finish the thesis. I also thank Catherine Mathers who read sections of this thesis and made useful comments. To Andrea Jordaan goes a big word of thanks for all the copies she made and for the countless occasions that she printed out chapters of the dissertation. I am also grateful to the staff at the library, especially Marieta Buys and Happy Maisela, for their hard work in tracking down obscure volumes and articles for this dissertation. A big word of thank you goes to Criselle Koortzen and Neels Kruger who scanned in countless photographs.

I especially wish to thank Isak Niehaus, my supervisor, whose interest in the subject matter and insights into its interpretation have been unfailing. Isak provided intense intellectual stimulation, expert and detailed comments on the drafts of the chapters and encouragement when I felt like giving up. His help has been invaluable.

There are many people in Maputaland that I would like to thank. On a general level, I am grateful for the kindness and hospitality with which I was received in the area. More specifically, I wish to thank Joan Porter, Ian Porter, Siphon Ngobese, Oom Johnny and all the staff of KZN Wildlife at Sodwana Bay for facilitating my research. I also owe a great debt of gratitude to all the women at the Ubumbano craft market who gave so

generously of their time and friendship. A special word of thanks goes out to Dudu Ngobese who proved to be an expert research assistant and valued friend. At Tembe Elephant Park, I would like to thank Catherine, Matthews and Ferdi of KZN Wildlife for facilitating my stay in the park. To Kehla Ngubane, his wife and all the traditional healers from KwaNgwanase goes a big word of thanks for their support, help and love. I also owe gratitude to the many friends that offered me encouragement and companionship during my fieldwork: Camilla, Sven, Sophy van Katzen, Rob Morley, Rob G, Jason Tarr, Roelie Kloppers, Jude Fokwang, and Jerome Gaugris.

Most of all I wish to thank my mother, Gerda van Wyk, to whom I dedicate this dissertation, for her unfailing love and support throughout the years.

Financial support was provided by the National Research Foundation (NRF), the University of Pretoria and the Center for Indigenous Knowledge (CINDEK). The views expressed in this dissertation do not reflect those of the funding bodies.



## DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree: Master of Arts (Anthropology) at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at another university.

---

Ilana van Wyk

---

Date

## Abstract

**Thesis title:** “Elephants are eating our money”: A critical ethnography of development practice in Maputaland, South Africa.

By

Ilana van Wyk

**Supervisor:** Prof. I. A. Niehaus

**Department:** Anthropology and Archaeology

**Degree for which thesis is submitted:** Master of Arts (Anthropology)

---

Development is often described as a means of eliminating global poverty and raising standards of living or as a tool to perpetuate unequal global power relationships but seldom as the site of ethnographic study. This dissertation provides an anthropological study of the impact that a large-scale government-initiated development project had on people, social processes, land use strategies and power relationships in Maputaland.

During the colonial and apartheid eras, large tracts of land in Maputaland were set aside for nature conservation. In the process, local people lost their land and access to the natural resources it contained. Nature conservation became a highly politicised and violent form of state intervention. Despite the introduction of a land restitution process in the post-apartheid era, nature conservation areas continue to expand. The Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative’s (LSDI) eco-tourism development focus and the declaration of a World Heritage Site in Maputaland legitimised existing nature conservation areas and paved the way for the declaration of more of these areas. Successful land claimants could not move

back onto their land, but they were given shares in the eco-tourism businesses that were planned on their land. This condition established an intimate tie between local people and the eco-tourism development plans for the region.

In the marketing of Maputaland as a tourist destination, developers constructed an essentialist ethnic identity for its inhabitants. The ethnic branding of local people as Zulu was most visible in the craft industry. As such, the LSDI built a multitude of craft markets next to the newly constructed transport routes and “developed” craft producers to make “better” crafts. In the process, the LSDI gained greater control over the crafters and their means of self-representation. The development initiative also forced the craft industry to become increasingly rationalised to cater to the supposed expectations of tourists. This process had unexpected and negative consequences for both producers and consumers.

The insistence on ethnically defined groups of claimants in the land restitution process, and the developers’ ethnic branding of Maputaland, legitimated the renewed claims of traditional local authorities to political power and economic resources. By laying claim to being the “true” representatives of the “tribal” groups that the developers wanted to target, these men ensured their exclusive access to lucrative consultation jobs. Outside the Tribal Authority structures, numerous men remained unemployed as the local labour market “feminised”.

While powerful men served as ethnic representatives and helped plan development in the region, most projects were actually targeted at women. These projects were premised on a Western construction of women as being economically and socially dependent on men. Such assumptions blinded developers to the social and economic autonomy that local women enjoyed. Through the long absence of men, these women had established a gift economy based on female networks. Women were more dependent on other women than they were on men for their economic survival. In the implementation of development projects however,

local men gained control of local women's labour and capital resources. Development projects also corroded female networks.

The relationships between developers and local people, Tribal Authorities and the people whom they represented, and between men and women, were not simply characterised by domination, subordination or by complicity. Even in the context of the large-scale LSDI development project, people found numerous ways to create and defend autonomous spaces.

**Key Words:** Development, Maputaland, Land claims, Craft markets, Chieftaincy, Rationalisation, Resistance, Eco-tourism, Gender, Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative



## Samevatting

Die ontwikkelingspraktyk word in sommige geleedere geprys as 'n oplossing vir wêreldwye armoede terwyl kritici ontwikkeling afskiet as 'n wapen wat ongelyke internasionale magsverhoudings ondersteun. Ontwikkeling is selde die onderwerp van etnografiese studie. Hierdie verhandeling verskaf 'n antropologiese studie van die impak wat 'n grootskaalse staatsgeïnisieerde ontwikkelingsprojek gehad het op mense, sosiale prosesse, grondgebruik strategieë en magsverhoudings in Maputaland.

Tydens die koloniale- en apartheidseras is groot stukke grond in Maputaland opsy gesit vir natuurbewaring. In die proses het plaaslike mense toegang tot natuurlike hulpbronne en hul grond verloor. Natuurbewaring het 'n hoogs gepolitiseerde en gewelddadige vorm van staatsinmenging geword. Ten spyte van die grondhervormingsbeleid in die nuwe Suid-Afrika, hou natuurbewaringsgebiede in Maputaland aan om uit te brei. Die Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative (LSDI) se eko-toerisme ontwikkelingsfokus en die verklaring van 'n *World Heritage Site* in Maputaland het die bestaande natuurbewaringsgebiede gelegitimiseer en het die weg gebaan vir die verklaring van meer bewaringsgebiede. Suksesvolle grondeisers kon nie hul grond beset nie en is aandele gegee in die eko-toerisme besighede wat op hulle grond beplan is. Hierdie stand van sake het 'n intieme band gesmee tussen plaaslike mense en die eko-toerisme ontwikkelingsplanne vir die area.

In die bemarking van Maputaland as 'n toeriste-aantreklikheid het ontwikkelaars 'n essensialistiese etniese identiteit vir plaaslike mense geskep. Die konstruksie van plaaslike mense as Zulu was mees sigbaar in die crafts bedryf. Ontwikkelaars het 'n magdom vlooiemarkte gebou en vele produseerders opgelei om 'beter' crafts te vervaardig. In die proses het die LSDI meer kontrole oor die craft produseerders en hul uitdrukkingswyses verkry. Verder het die strewe om aan toeriste se verwagtings te voldoen, die plaaslike crafts bedryf

gedwing om te rasionaliseer. Hierdie proses het onverwagte en negatiewe gevolge ingehou vir beide produseerders en verbruikers.

Die klem op etnies-gedefinieerde groepe in die grondeis proses en die ontwikkelaars se etniese bemerking van die area het die hernude aansprake van "Tribal Authorities" tot politieke mag en ekonomiese hulpbronne ondersteun. Deur aanspraak te maak daarop dat hulle die "ware" verteenwoordigers van die etniese groepe was wat die ontwikkelaars wou ontwikkel, het hierdie mans verseker dat hulle eksklusiewe toegang verkry het tot winsgewende konsultasie-werk. Buite die "Tribal Authority" strukture het menigte mans werkloos gebly terwyl die plaaslike arbeidsmark toenemend aan vrouens werk verskaf het.

Terwyl gesagdraende mans as etniese verteenwoordigers gedien het en help beplan het aan ontwikkeling, het die meerderheid ontwikkelingsprojekte in Maputaland vrouens geteiken. Hierdie projekte was egter gebaseer op 'n westerse konstruksie van vrouens as sosiaal en ekonomies afhanklik van mans. Sulke aannames het ontwikkelaars blind gemaak vir die sosiale en ekonomiese outonomie wat plaaslike vrouens wel geniet het. Hierdie vrouens het in die afwesigheid van mans 'n geskenk-ekonomie, gebaseer op netwerke van vrouens, geskep. Dit het hulle meer ekonomies afhanklik van ander vrouens as van mans gemaak. Die implementering van ontwikkelingsprojekte het egter aan plaaslike mans kontrole gegee oor vrouens se kapitaal en arbeid. Ontwikkelingsprojekte het ook vrouens se netwerke laat verbrokkel.

Die verhoudings tussen ontwikkelaars en plaaslike mense, Tribal Authorities en die mense wat hulle verteenwoordig het, en tussen mans en vrouens was nie gewoon gekenmerk deur dominasie, onderdanigheid of sameswering nie. Selfs in die konteks van die grootskaalse LSDI ontwikkelingsprojek het mense verskeie maniere gevind om outonome spasies te skep en te verdedig.



**Kernwoorde:** Ontwikkeling, Maputaland, Grondeise, vlooiemarkte, Kapteinskap,

Rasionalisering, Teenstand, Eko-toerisme, Gender, Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	i
Declaration	iii
Abstract	iv
Samevatting	vii
Table of contents	x
List of Acronyms	xiii
Maps	xiv
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction: Exploring development in Maputaland</b>	<b>1</b>
Anthropology's engagement with development	6
My fieldwork in Maputaland	16
Organisation of the Study	23
<b>Chapter 2: Landscape, history and the underdevelopment of Maputaland</b>	<b>26</b>
Theories of "underdevelopment"	28
Maputaland before 1843	30
The early colonial era: Reconfiguring Maputaland as empty space, 1843-1878	33
Maputaland: Penetration of an Impenetrable Space, 1879-1909	36
The making of a black and white landscape, 1910-1948	42
Apartheid: Maputaland as malleable space, 1948-1994	45
Post-apartheid: The Triumphant Green Landscape, 1994-2001	54
Conclusions	60
<b>Chapter 3: Branding Maputaland: Eco-tourism, Cultural preservation and the crafts trade</b>	<b>64</b>
About rationalisation and authenticity	69
McCrafts: Developing a rational craft industry	73
Tourists and their branded expectations	85
Developing poverty: The craft producers	95
Conclusion: Escape from the iron cage	100
<b>Chapter 4: Land claims and corporate imitation: Men brokering development in Maputaland</b>	<b>103</b>
Paradoxical Popularity: Reinventing chieftaincy in Maputaland	107
The complicity of the state and developers	118
The Municipal councillors	120
"Working politics": Regular men	124
Out in the cold: Delinquents and development	127
Conclusion: The impotence of men's politics	129

<b>Chapter 5: Misrepresenting women: Development and the creation of a women's domain</b>	<b>133</b>
Drawing the lines: Male: Female, public: private, dominant: subordinate	137
Embodying gendered assumptions: Development projects in Maputaland	141
How women work in development projects	148
Outside development projects: Showing the developers up	161
Conclusion	166
<b>Chapter 6: Local Resistance</b>	<b>169</b>
Resistance as theoretical construct	173
Capitalising on open resistance: Tribal Authorities in Maputaland	177
Protecting the "domestic": Everyday forms of resistance in Maputaland	184
Conclusion	195
<b>Chapter 7: Concluding remarks: The violent nature of development</b>	<b>198</b>
Consumption as Salvation	201
Gendered spaces, violent clashes	205
Slipping or breaking into resistance	209
<b>Appendices</b>	
1. Survey of Ubumbano craft market	211
2. Survey of Mbaswana craft market	212
3. Observation schedule of tourists	213
4. Pamphlets distributed by CORD (Kosi Bay)	214
5. iLala Weavers brochure- Themba lethu	217
<b>References</b>	<b>222</b>
<b>List of Maps</b>	
1. Fieldwork sites in Maputaland	xiv
2. The Spatial Development Initiatives in South Africa	xv
3. The Zulu Kingdom during the reign of Cetshwayo	36
4. Wolseley's settlement, 1879	37
5. British Zululand, 1887	39
<b>List of Figures</b>	
1. Why foreign tourists bought crafts at the Ubumbano craft market, December 2000	89
2. Why foreign tourists did not buy crafts at Ubumbano craft market, December 2000	90
3. Why domestic tourists bought crafts at Ubumbano craft market, December 2000	91
4. Why domestic tourists did not buy crafts at Ubumbano craft market, December 2000	92

5. The distribution of businesses owned by women in women-headed households across growth categories, Ubumbano craft market, June 2000- December 2000	156
6. The distribution of businesses owned by women in male-headed households across growth categories, Ubumbano craft market, June 2000- December 2000	157
7. The attendance of 297 women at the Ubumbano craft market, July-December 2000	158
8. The attendance of women at the Ubumbano craft market, select days 2000	158
9. Average income per day at the Ubumbano craft market, select days 2000	160

**List of Illustrations**

1. The Ubumbano craft market, December 2000	77
2. <i>iLala</i> paper baskets, December 2000	83
3. Woman producing <i>ilala</i> paper baskets, December 2000	83
4. Woman producing <i>ilala</i> laundry basket, September 2000	84
5. <i>iLala</i> trays, September 2000	84
6. Zulu baskets ( <i>izichumo</i> )	96
7. “Real” Zulu chief, Shakaland	111
8. Young girl helping out at the Ubumbano market, December 2000	150



## List of Acronyms

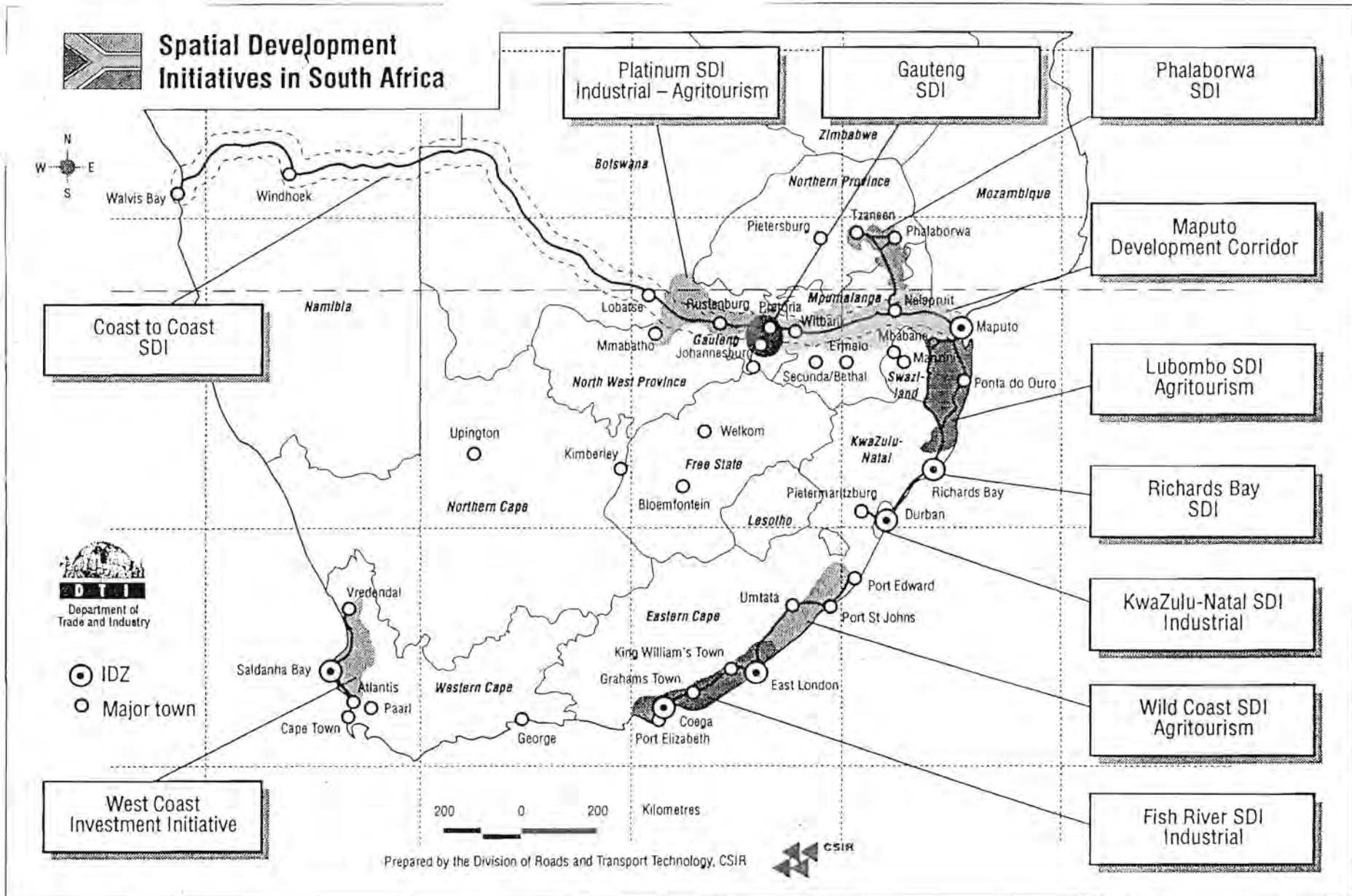
AFRA	Association for Rural Advancement
ANC	African National Congress
CINDEK	Centre of Indigenous Knowledge
Contralesa	Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa
CORD	Centre for Community Organisation Research and Development
CPA	Communal Property Associations
ESCOM	Electricity Supply Commission
ICA	International Cooperation Administration
ICU	Industrial and Commercial Workers Union
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
KZN Wildlife	Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife
LSDI	Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
NNC	Natal Native Congress
PTO	Permission To Occupy Permit
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SANNC	South African Native National Congress
SAPPI	South African Paper and Pulp Industries
SDI	Spatial Development Initiative
TELCOM	Telecommunication South Africa
UDF	United Democratic Front



# Map 1: Fieldwork Site







Map 2: The Spatial Development Initiatives in South Africa

## Chapter 1

### Introduction:

#### Exploring development in Maputaland

*"I don't know when we will be rich... but it seems like these elephants are going to eat all our money"*

- Kehla Mboza on the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative's (LSDI) relocation of three elephants from the Tembe Elephant Park to the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park. Two of these elephants later broke out and walked back to Tembe.

*"My mother has been angry since my father returned two years ago. They fight every day. Sometimes I feel sorry for him but he doesn't want to work..."*

- Dudu Zikhali in 2001 on the situation at home

This dissertation provides an anthropological study of the impact that the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative (LSDI) had on people, social processes and power relationships in Maputaland. The aim of this dissertation is not to ask whether the government's R630 million investment in the LSDI was put to good or bad use, or to speculate about the ability of the LSDI's plan to "develop" Maputaland. Neither will I investigate the dependency relationships created by a project of this size. These questions are best left to students of policy and business administration.

Based on fifteen months of ethnographic research in the LSDI's target area, I argue that in the LSDI's marketing of Maputaland, they constructed an essentialist ethnic identity for its inhabitants. The ethnic branding of the area as Zulu was most visible in the craft industry. As such, the LSDI built a multitude of craft markets next to the newly constructed transport routes and 'developed' craft producers to make 'better' crafts. In the process, the LSDI gained greater control over the crafters and their means of self-representation. The development initiative also forced the craft industry to become

increasingly rationalised to cater to the supposed expectations of tourists. At the same time, the LSDI's insistence on recognisably 'ethnic' crafts extended production times and kept prices for such items to a minimum.

In Maputaland, Tribal Authorities<sup>1</sup> and other ambitious men used ethnicity as a resource to gain access to the various committees that consulted with developers. By laying claim to being the “true” representatives of the 'tribal' groups that the developers wanted to target, these men ensured their exclusive access to consultation jobs. Numerous men however were jobless and were likely to remain unemployed as emphasis was now placed on the service-orientated eco-tourism industry.

While powerful men served as ethnic representatives and helped plan development in the region, most projects were targeted at women. These development projects were largely informed by a stereotype of dependant white, middle-class housewives. However, black women in the region had, through the long absence of men, developed an informal gift economy that accorded them with considerable independence from men. As this dissertation will show, this economy was premised on female networks of patronage and reciprocity that allowed women to diversify and spread the risks of their economic activities. The subsistence-orientated and transient nature of most of these activities however did not allow wealthier women to maintain their positions of patronage for long. At the Ubumbano<sup>2</sup> craft market for instance, the acceptance of patronage roles ultimately impeded wealthier women's ability to expand their businesses further afield or to maintain success. On the other hand, poorer traders benefited from these female

---

<sup>1</sup> Although this term has fallen out of political fashion with the ruling ANC-government (they prefer the term Traditional Authority), people in my research area still used the terms Tribal Authority, Tribal Council and Tribal Courts. I will use the term “Tribal” instead of “Traditional” throughout the dissertation.

networks as they played an important role in securing access to labour and capital. While the craft industry provided large numbers of women with an economic safety net, it trapped women in a low-income activity.

The establishment and extension of nature conservation areas during the late nineteenth hundreds constituted an integral part of the colonial conquest of the Maputaland region. These game and hunting sanctuaries made the colonialists' presence in the area felt and forced local people onto ever-smaller pieces of land. Removals onto land with very marginal agricultural potential propelled men to become indentured labourers in the colony of Natal. When the apartheid government came to power in 1948, it continued to extend nature conservation areas. As part of its economic development plans for the KwaZulu homeland, the South African government also introduced extensive forestry projects in the region. With each nature conservation area established and with each forestry project begun, people staying on the land were forcibly relocated into overcrowded villages, with few social services and hardly any employment opportunities. The poor soil and shrinking size of agricultural plots allotted to each family was not conducive to subsistence agriculture. Consequently, Maputaland supplied the mines of the Witwatersrand with a steady influx of migrant labourers.

After South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, the land restitution process allowed the inhabitants of Maputaland to reclaim the land that they had lost due to forced relocations since 1913<sup>3</sup>. Local land claim committees, often headed by neo-

---

<sup>2</sup> My research on craft markets focussed on this market inside the Sodwana Bay National Park. Roughly translated, *Ubumbano* means to speak together or do things together in Zulu.

<sup>3</sup> The South African land restitution legislation determines that people can only lay claim to land that they had lost due to discriminatory laws, starting with the Land Act of 1913.

development of different 'cultures'<sup>6</sup>, a position that later formed the backbone of the government's apartheid policies (R.D. Coertze 1999). Applied research within this paradigm were often aimed at persuading "target groups" to co-operate with government policies. This ideological orientation placed *volkekundiges* at odds with social anthropologists (primarily based at English language universities in South Africa) who were generally critical of apartheid. Though politically marginalised (Niehaus 2001: 6-7), the detailed research by social anthropologists on black urbanisation called into question the apartheid vision of circumscribed and isolated cultural groups (*emosse*) (See Mayer & Mayer 1961; Reader 1961; Pauw 1963; Wilson & Mafeje 1963).

Internationally, the 1970s and 1980s saw the large-scale return of development anthropologists to the field. This return was precipitated by a new focus in development projects. Due to the miserable failure of, and environmental damage caused by many earlier infrastructure development projects, world-wide legislation forced development agencies to do social soundness analysis on all projects. Development agencies also began to emphasise the basic needs of targeted populations. This movement stressed the importance of combating poverty rather than promoting industrialisation and modernisation. This shift was accompanied by a growing focus in anthropology and the other social sciences on the structural issues of class and gender. In this context, development agencies, such as the United Nations and the World Bank employed large numbers of anthropologists to discover the needs of marginalised people and to help plan interventions that might change their plight (Hoben 1982: 363, 356-362; Ferguson 1990: 11).

---

<sup>6</sup> P.J. Coertze (1960) defined a culture or *emos* as an endogamous, self-conscious ethnic unit with a unique way of life and unique language.

During this time, a large body of literature on anthropological “praxis” in development saw the light (vide Cochrane 1979; Brokensha, Warren and Werner 1980; Barnard 1989; and Carr 1989). Anthropologists in academia often questioned the involvement and co-option of their colleagues in development, and charged those in the service of this industry with “selling out”. Evans-Pritchard’s (1952: 78-79) argument that unlike the missionary and colonialist, the anthropologist is not there to change people’s way of life, but to humbly learn from it, still rang true. Mair (1984) called the applied scholars half-baked academics and second-rate anthropologists. Others drew upon neo-Marxism, dependency theory and upon Foucault to develop a radical critique of the very notion of development. For example, Evans (1979) and Calvocoressi (1985) argued that as a concept development is morally, politically and philosophically corrupt, and suggested that the practice of development creates dependency relations. Their radical approach found some resonance in South Africa, where social anthropologists exposed the contradictory political myths of apartheid, and showed how concepts such as “development” were misused in political rhetoric (Boonzaaier and Sharp 1988; Fischer 1988).

By the 1990s, many development anthropologists outside South Africa worked as consultants for non-governmental organisations (Gardner and Lewis 1996: 107-110). This change to the private sector was in large part due to a shift in development funding from the large-scale state-sponsored projects to local initiatives. Local knowledge, community participation, sustainable development and empowerment became integral components of development anthropology discourse (See Gardner and Lewis 1996: 111-120). In post-apartheid South Africa development studies has gained in importance at

nearly all universities. Increasingly, previously critical social anthropologists act as consultants to the government, development organisations and multi-national corporations. "Academic" anthropologists however continued their criticism of the practice and discourses of development. This critique stemmed from the discipline's increased introspection and focus on the construction and power of discourse (See Escobar 1991, 1995).

Given the contentious anthropological engagement with development practice, recent literature is divided along sharp ideological lines, between those for and those against development. In this debate ethnography is used to prove either that development can or cannot work. This preoccupation with the legitimacy of development practice prohibits thick descriptions of it as a historical process. More recently, anthropologists have treated the institutions, political processes and ideologies of development practice as sites of ethnographic enquiry. These studies tend to fall into three camps:

1) *Pro-development*. In the first camp insiders or sympathetic outsiders see development planning and development agencies as part of a global effort to raise standards of living, fight poverty, and promote different versions of progress in the third world. Harrison (1987) is an enthusiastic exponent of this camp, listing successful projects that might serve as blueprints of future development in Africa. These writers understand development as a tool at the disposal of the planner. Their analyses of development projects serve as pragmatic assessments that enable future projects to perform better, to maximise success and to avoid failure. Ferguson (1990: 10) writes of this approach, "Even the broader and more speculative discussions in this vein remain a

brand of policy science, locating problems and arriving at recommendations addressed to planners within 'development' institutions".

Development anthropologists have identified four main factors that inhibit projects from being successful or that lead to their failure. The first is that development planners do not engage sufficiently with the local target population, and are insensitive to local cultural realities and historical particularities (Cochrane 1971; Akong'a 1988; Bunker 1988; Connely 1988; Hogg 1988; Nindi 1988; Coetzee, Graaff, Hendricks and Wood 2001). According to this view, development planning is simply a matter of "fitting" interventions to supposed local cultural expectations.

Critiques are of the managerial process of development practice rather than of development *per se*. For example, Barnett (1977) warns about the dangers of top-down planning. Chambers (1983) suggests that this problem might be overcome by planning around the priorities and conditions of rural people instead of development agencies. This approach suggested that development 'targets' know what is wrong in their societies but simply do not have the means or know-how to correct it. As such, anthropologists emerged as interpreters, acting as brokers between local people and the various agencies and institutions that affect their lives. Taylor and Mackenzie (1992) even suggested that third world people could initiate development within their own societies. This acknowledgement did not, however, diminish the potential role of development planners in Africa.

Influenced by feminist anthropology, Ester Boserup (1970) points out that most development projects are premised on Western gender stereotypes. She shows that women in the third world often played a central role in agricultural production but were



bypassed by projects that target men as agriculturists. Rogers (1980) shows that the discrimination against women was not only rife in development projects but also within development agencies. This work was the catalyst for an enormous literature on the effect of development on gender relations, “the household”, “the domestic mode of production”, and “the division of labour” (Chaiken 1988; Fleuret 1988; Spring 1988; Cassam 1991; Peters 1995 and Chen 1996). As a consequence of such critique, various development projects were designed around the perceived needs of women.

Lastly, the pro-development faction identified the structural composition and interaction of development agencies with the wider policy environment as possible hindrances to 'development'. Chambers' (1980) focus on 'experts' in rural Africa and Hoben's (1980) analysis of the functioning of the USAID bureaucracy had a large impact on this critique of development agencies. However, despite their anthropological approach, these works remained technical and managerial in focus. Robertson (1984) analyses planned development as a political encounter between people and the state. He argues that development agencies are premised on the need to turn an unreliable citizenry into a structured public and that development interventions are thus the site of contest between people and bureaucracy. Robertson's work is more sensitive to the politically loaded contexts in which development planning may be embedded. However, it too ends up seeing the “development” apparatus as a practical tool for the solution of universal problems. In the end, these writers' only concern seems to be with the directing of or reforming of an institution whose fundamental beneficence they take as a given.

2) *Anti-development*. Anthropologists influenced by dependency theory and Neo-Marxism criticise the pro-development view for its political naivety. They argue that

development was meant to promote imperial capitalism by incorporating new territories into the capitalist market, by mystifying social inequality (between core and periphery, the state and civil society, and between men and women), or by working against radical social change (See Galli 1981 and Williams 1981).

These scholars argue that the concept of development is embedded in neo-colonial constructions of the world, and is a key ideological tool for perpetuating unequal global power relationships. Sachs (1992: 5) even writes of the “ethnocentric” and “violent” nature of development. By all measures, these writers assert that development projects could never be an instrument for “real development”<sup>7</sup>. Escobar (1991) attacks anthropologists working in development for their complicity to the continuation of development practice:

“[D]evelopment anthropology, for all its claim to relevance to local problems, to cultural sensitivity, and to access to interpretative holistic methods, has done no more than recycle, and dress in more localized fabrics, the discourses of modernization and development” (p. 677).

Dependency and Neo-Marxist theorists argue that development projects are not humanitarian attempts to overcome poverty but are important instruments of imperial and class-based control. They do not, however, show how this control is effected.

More recent work in this tradition deconstructs and problematises the very notion of development by analysing it as a form of discourse which constructs its subjects. Escobar (1995: 7-11, 14) proclaims that the construction of development discourses has led to new power relationships in which “clients” can only manoeuvre within the limits set by the discourse. According to Hobart (1993) this power relationship starts with the attribution of ignorance to the targets of development. This state of “ignorance” is not

simply the absence of knowledge but a state of being which those with power ascribe to those without. Hobart (1993) writes about the ways in which Western “world-ordering knowledge” conceptualises development problems. In his edited volume, several authors note that the scientific and “rational” knowledge favoured by development incorrectly constructs foreign “experts” as agents and local people as passive objects (Richards 1993). In this movement, Foucault’s work has been instrumental in unveiling the implied power in discourses of social reality. The study of development as discourse also borrowed insights from Said’s (1978) analysis of the discourses of Orientalism.

Feminist researchers such as Mueller (1991) and Mohanty (1991) also analyse development as a regime of representation. Mohanty (1991) claims that women in the third world are represented in most feminist literature on development as having “needs” and “problems” but little choice and freedom of action. She maintains that as a result of such constructions, Western women assume a paternalistic attitude toward their third world counterparts. In essence, the “discursive hegemony” translates into unequal power relationships between first and third world women. Through an analysis of discourse and text, writers such as Mohanty and Escobar managed to unveil the mechanisms through which development practice establishes and maintains power relationships. However, their analyses lack ethnographic foundations.

3) *Ethnographies of development.* The schools for and against development basically use anthropological insights to prove either that development is a benevolent force to be reformed or an exploitative manoeuvre to be denounced. There is however a third way to analyse development. Authors such as Beckman (1977), Bernstein (1979),

---

<sup>7</sup> Although these Anti-developers are highly critical of current development practice, they often suggest alternative development aims such as political awareness.

Heyer, Roberts and Williams (1981), and Williams (1986), transcend the focus on evaluating the development industry as good or evil. They attempt to see 'rural development' interventions as real historical events, susceptible to the same sort of political and economical explanations as any others.

Despite the considerable contributions that these writers make to development studies, most of them are too quick to impute an economic function to development projects, and to accept the premise that development projects are primarily devices to bring about economic change. Beckman (1977: 3) for instance claims that development projects serve to force peasants to produce for an external market under bullying conditions of exchange. Bernstein (1977: 65) declares that development projects operate to further incorporate the peasantry into commodity relations. According to them, a development project is fully explained when all the different economic interests behind it are laid bare. Anthropological theory however, shows that one cannot assume that a structure simply and rationally 'represents' a set of objective interests. As Ferguson (1990: 17) suggests, structures are multi-layered, polyvalent and often contradictory.

In 1990, Ferguson's *The Anti-Politics Machine* offered a detailed ethnography of what actually happens when the apparatus of development is brought to bear in a specific social setting. His analysis of the Thaba-Tseka project in Lesotho shows how the deployment of development in Lesotho unintentionally served to further entrench the state and to depoliticise problems. In this regard, Ferguson plots the process through which intentional plans interacted with unacknowledged structures and chance events to produce unintended outcomes. He calls the unauthored resultant constellation of control "the anti-politics machine" (p. 20-21). Ferguson's (1990) study highlights how planned

social interventions can result in unintended but powerful constellations of control that are all the more effective for being “subjectless”.

Although these ethnographies unveil the mechanisms through which development projects 'work', they assume that these structures yield hegemonic control. Furthermore, they tended to naturalise existing power relationships at the expense of looking at what lies beneath the surface. In this regard, it is important to consider the reasons why dominated peoples acquiesce to the demands and power of those that dominate them. Here Scott's (1985) suggestion that power is not absolute and that people find ways to “talk back” to the structure and “resist” its demands is useful. The collective impact of their “everyday forms of resistance” often make utter shambles of the policies dreamed up by their would-be superiors. As such, these techniques are well suited to the characteristics of people often subjected to development projects; a diverse class often lacking the discipline and leadership that would encourage opposition of a more organised sort.

In my own study I will analyse the intentional and unintentional social, economic and political consequences of the LSDI's deployment in the Maputaland region. Following Scott, I will also investigate the ways in which the relatively powerless people in the region talked back and resisted the changes brought to bear on their lives. I will pay particular attention to the different ways in which men and women reacted to and accommodated development projects in the area.

## **My fieldwork in Maputaland**

I conducted fieldwork in the Maputaland region (See Map 1) over a period of fifteen months, starting in May 2000. During this time, I left the field intermittently when I had exhausted my money or food supplies, or when the research routine became just too overwhelming.

I gained entrance to the field through Herman Els, an anthropologist at the University of Pretoria who had launched a multi-disciplinary research project in Maputaland. Herman graciously invited me to work in the Sodwana Bay area. Initially, my research interests were vague and it was suggested that I conduct an anthropological study of the social-dynamics and resource utilisation of the informal traders who sold their crafts inside the Sodwana Bay National Park at the Ubumbano craft market.

For the first two months of my research, I was in and out of the field very often, setting up interviews with various officials. The first people I had to talk to were the Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife (KZN Wildlife) officials who had to approve my residence and work in Sodwana Bay Park. They seemed enthusiastic about the research and offered me cheap lodgings in their research facilities at Sodwana Bay. These facilities were within walking distance of my planned research site, the Ubumbano craft market. Next, I felt it prudent to appoint a local research assistant. With the help of two reception clerks at Sodwana Bay, I set up interviews with ten local young women. I decided on Dudu Ngobese, a young mother of two and occasional vendor at the market. This proved to be a very fortunate choice as Dudu had a large personal and family network at the market and was popular with both young and old. Dudu introduced me to

the Ubumbano craft committee and to the women selling at the market. On my meeting with the Ubumbano committee, they insisted that I introduce myself to the Mbila (Zikhali) Tribal Authority in Mbaswana. Dudu, the chairman and secretary of Ubumbano and I subsequently went to Mbaswana three times before we were given an audience with Chief Sonto Zikhali and his councillors. Dudu introduced us and we were given official permission to do research in the area.

It was only in the third month that I could actually start doing research at the market full-time. For about a month and a half, I worked at the Ubumbano craft market from 7 am to 5 pm each day. In the evenings I conducted interviews and attended several gatherings with tourists and recreational divers<sup>8</sup> until well after midnight. It was an extremely strenuous schedule and started to wear me out. My fatigue contributed greatly to a personal experience that fundamentally changed my research methodology:

I had to leave the field when I started washing my hands compulsively. In the beginning, my symptoms seemed mild and I studiously ignored them since I obtained very interesting information. However, I realised that my little quirk became a problem when I had to break off an interview to wash my hands. The market's tap had run dry and to the amazement of Dudu and the interviewee I cycled four kilometres to the nearest tap. At the time, I realised that my compulsive behaviour was completely irrational, packed my bags and returned home to Pretoria. The symptoms disappeared almost as soon as I left Maputaland. I returned to Sodwana Bay ten days later.

After this episode, I started to take days off from going to the market, drove around the area, and spoke to people not working there. This strategy helped me to contextualise my research and to gain greater depth into the experiences of my

informants at the market and forced me to re-evaluate the focus of my study. It was obvious that the women I studied were experiencing enormous social, political and economical upheavals at home and that my rather narrow focus on what they sold and how much they earned did not really speak to these changes. For instance, a year before I started my research ten thousand male migrant workers from Maputaland lost their jobs on the Witwatersrand due to the downsizing in the mining industry. These men returned home to an area with few employment opportunities and families that scarcely knew them.

In the same year, large portions of the land that local people were claiming in the land restitution process were declared part of the Greater St Lucia World Heritage Site. This meant that even if their claims were successful, the land could not be restored to the claimants. In this context, I realised that my questions on harvesting patterns within nature conservation areas did not take into consideration that these women (and their families) were locked into a battle with conservation agencies over land and natural resources. It is only when I stopped asking naïve questions about harvesting times, locales and volumes that the women started to trust me. They allowed me to go on harvesting trips with them. It was on these trips that I realised that the harvesting of natural resources from nature conservation areas was a site where people could resist an organisation, which seemed unassailable. In various other contexts I also started to see a contradiction in people's outward appearances of compliance to the development projects that were springing up all around them and their actual behaviour towards it.

After about seven months in the Sodwana Bay region, I ran out of money and returned to Pretoria to do various kinds of odd jobs. However, by March 2001, I was back

---

<sup>8</sup>Sodwana Bay is well known among divers as an ideal place to have one's first open sea dive.



in the Maputaland region, this time to work on a project with a group of indigenous healers, again under the auspices of Herman Els's Centre of Indigenous Knowledge. This time, I stayed in the Centre's custom-built research facilities within Tembe Elephant Park, about eighty kilometres from Sodwana Bay (which I continued to visit whenever I had a chance). From March to June that year, I only went to the field for very short stints as the facilities were still in the process of being built. Thereafter, I was based in Tembe until I left the field in September. During this period, I worked almost exclusively with a group of male indigenous healers who seemed to be continuously in meetings with development agencies. At first, I thought that my research on healers and men's experiences with development was a totally new project, because it differed so radically from those of the women. The crafters at Sodwana Bay's only contact with the LSDI or other development planners were during the implementation phases of such projects. I had to re-evaluate this impression when I met the chairman of the Ubumbano craft market and men from Sodwana Bay more frequently at my meetings with developers. I realised that men and women in the region had very different types of contact with the same development projects and that very specific gender roles and stereotypes informed these experiences. I was studying the same process but from different sides of the gender divide. In this regard, my apparently unrelated research "projects" turned out to give me a unique insight into the process through which the LSDI deployed their development projects in the region.

I sought to supplement my fieldwork observations and to reconstruct events that had occurred prior to my fieldwork by relying on archival records, earlier ethnographic and historical studies, life histories and the memories of my informants. I also made extensive

use of newspaper articles and travel magazines to gain an insight into the popular conceptions of the Maputaland region as a tourist destination. By means of trial and error I learnt to settle upon the following research techniques:

1) *Social surveying*. After about a month in the field, I started on a questionnaire survey of 131 of the approximately 297 individuals involved in the Ubumbano craft market (either as owners of stalls or sellers of wares). The survey was designed to give me demographic information about age, household compositions, places of residence, household sources of income, schooling and subsistence agriculture. It also contained questions about the harvesting and buying of raw materials, the purchasing of ready-made crafts and the use of dyes (See Appendix 1). This survey indicated that most craft producers bought their raw materials and finished crafts from Mbaswana. I wanted to know where the traders in Mbaswana harvested and where the finished crafts came from. To this end, I conducted a second survey of 135 traders (twenty men and 115 women) at the Mbaswana craft market (See Appendix 2). This second survey led me on harvesting expeditions to Lake Sibayi and various other (sometimes illegal) harvesting spots. It also took me to informal craft markets all over the area (Tshongwe, Ndongeni, Mkuze, Hluhluwe).

2) *Participant observation*. I collected much information by merely being present at craft markets, tourist haunts and at meetings with developers. Through spending many hours with women at the Ubumbano craft market and tourists at pubs, I learnt about the contradictions between what people said and what they did. Much of my later research was informed by the impressions I gained from my observations at the Ubumbano craft market. Here, older women told me wonderful stories about the origins of craft markets

in the region and about how they endured forced relocations during apartheid. They wove fascinating tales of the trade links between different craft markets and the workings of the craft committee. With women of my own age, I formed friendships that allowed talk about the violence they experienced at home, local gossip and tales about illegal activities. Through these friendships, I gained a deeper understanding of the crafters' lives at home. This understanding constituted the background to my interviews with nature conservation officials, developers and men serving on various local committees involved with development planning.

3) *Interviews.* My formal interviews about development projects, craft markets and nature conservation were mainly conducted with individuals that worked for development agencies, the Land Claims Commission or KZN Wildlife. For the most part, the local people I worked with introduced me to these informants. During the interviews, I relied on note taking. I guaranteed all informants anonymity and promised that I would use pseudonyms in the text. In highly publicised cases however I did not invent names for public officials.

4) *Documentation.* Soon after I started my research, I realised that the majority of traders at Ubumbano craft market did not come to the market each day. Since there were only thirty-three stalls, there was a definite upper limit to the number of women who could sell at the market. The only way for me to get an estimate of the size of the population involved at the market was to keep an attendance register. I could not take a daily register, as this would raise suspicions that I was employed by the Ubumbano committee, whose job it was to collect membership fees. (Many women sold crafts at the market without paying these fees). I thus chose four random weeks during which I noted

who attended the market. Through this, I could determine that approximately 297 individuals were involved at Ubumbano as either owners or sellers. This number corresponded closely to the questionnaire survey I had conducted earlier.

At the Ubumbano craft market I also took inventories of ninety-two stalls. These helped me to estimate the upper limits of women's earnings at the market and indicated the degree of economic stratification within the market. The inventories also enabled me to determine the exact worth of each stall and to compare these to the statements of traders about how much money they made on a daily and weekly basis.

Although the daily incomes and stall inventories gave me an idea of the amount of money that traders made by selling crafts, it was not a reliable measure of a family's total income or economic circumstances. It also did not answer my question about the economic importance of the income from the sale of crafts for the survival of households. To answer these questions, I asked fifteen traders living in male-headed households and thirteen traders living in woman-headed households for their monthly household budgets. All the women selling at Ubumbano craft market were women. Since women in the area were usually entrusted with paying household expenses from a pooled fund, they were in an ideal position to give me information on household budgets.

5) *Daily schedules.* To gain insight into the ordinary and everyday activities of my informants, I recorded what twenty-six women of different ages did on the previous day. These daily schedules helped me to determine the range of economic activities that women typically engaged in and their workload in terms of the household chores. In this regard, there was enormous uniformity in the daily schedules that the twenty-six women recalled.

6) *Observation schedule of tourists.* To corroborate the daily incomes of traders and to see what tourists bought, I drew up an observation schedule for tourists that visited the Ubumbano craft market (See Appendix 3). In these schedules, I noted what tourists bought, how much money they spent at the market and how many of them just browsed. This information formed the background to my interviews and talks with tourists about the reasons why they purchased specific crafts.

These methods enabled me to gain a layered understanding of the crafts trade in the Sodwana Bay/ Mbaswana area. It also helped me to understand the different ways in which men and women in the region become involved in the development projects around them. As such, these methods led me to an awareness of how the gendered power structure in this society was constructed and is constantly being undermined by those who spoke back and resisted the demands of more powerful social actors. My methodology thus allowed an analysis of both structure and fluidity.

### **Organisation of the Study**

Chapter two outlines the historical context of my study and seeks to account for the social and economic marginalisation of people in the Maputaland region with reference to colonial and apartheid government policies. In this chapter, I will pay particular attention to the post-apartheid conditions that tied people to the emerging eco-tourism industry, which the government's LSDI established within the region.

In Chapter three I investigate how the LSDI established an eco-tourism industry in Maputaland. I will pay particular attention to LSDI involvement in the development of

the crafts industry and craft markets as well as the role that they played in the ethnic “branding” of the region. Following in the footsteps of Hoben (1980) and Robertson (1984), I show how rationalisation and control characterised such involvement. With development, the crafts industry became bureaucratised and functioned to deliver predictability, calculability, efficiency and control for the developers and tourists. However, the craft producers were impoverished by the process and lost control over their means of self-representation. My impression that people in the crafts industry would soon be caught in the “iron cage” of rationality was dashed when I noted the unanticipated consequences of development.

Influenced by dependency theorists and neo-Marxist theorists, I sought to explain the crafters' acquiescence to the bureaucratisation process by looking at the complicity of local politicians to development plans. In Chapter four, I will show how the land claims process and the LSDI's ethnic branding of the Maputaland region for the purpose of eco-tourism has fed into local men's political agendas. While I will pay particular attention to the agendas of “Tribal Authorities” and chiefs, I will also look at men who remained at the margins of the development industry. Large portions of the male population in Maputaland were jobless and were likely to remain that way in the light of the emphasis on a service-orientated eco-tourism industry in the region.

Chapter five focuses on development projects that were specially designed to target women. These projects aimed to address the feminisation of poverty in the region and to improve the “status” of women in society. However, most projects were premised on a Western construction of women as being economically and socially dependent on men. Yet, women in the region had developed a gift economy that made them dependant

on other women rather than on men for economic survival. I will also show that the craft industry did not allow women an escape from the subsistence economy.

As I show in Chapter six, people in Maputaland found various ways to resist the intrusions that nature conservation, Tribal Authorities and “development” projects made on their autonomy. In general, politically powerful men turned to open forms of resistance while women and men on the margins of the politics game used what Scott (1990) called the “weapons of the weak”. I explain this difference in resistance strategies in terms of the relative political capital that parties in an arrangement had or hoped to get.

In the conclusion I contemplate how my research findings can inform recent debates on development and control in ways that do not simply condemn or approve of development practice. I will show how an anthropological analysis of development as historical event speaks to debates on dependency, acquiescence, power and resistance.

## Chapter 2

### Landscape, history and the underdevelopment of Maputaland

*“Everyone has the right –... (b) to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that – (i) prevent pollution and ecological destruction; (ii) promote conservation; and (iii) secure the ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development”*

- The South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996:11).

*“Some people tell us that there is a black Government, we do not see it, we do not feel its presence, all we feel is the same old threat of forced removals... But all those who claim to love the environment but exclude black people, they must know that we will never leave this forest. They might as well kill us, keep us in their deep-freezers and feed us to their beloved crocodiles”*

- Baba Msele, Maputaland (Munnik and Mhlope 2000: 31).

My two research sites were situated in the Umhlabuyalingana magisterial district in the former KwaZulu “homeland” (See Map 1). Since 1854, the Ubombo and Ingwavuma districts, now part of the Umhlabuyalingana magisterial district, have comprised an area known as Maputaland. Despite its incorporation into the former homeland of KwaZulu and later the province of KwaZulu-Natal, Maputaland retained its colonial name in both popular use and in literature on the area. The Zulu word for Maputaland (*Mhlab'uyalingana*) means “flat earth” and describes this flat piece of coastal plain where the average altitude seldom reaches more than one hundred metres above sea level (Mountain 1990:1-2; Hamilton 1999:60).

This region is widely celebrated for its virgin beaches, its protected marshes, coral reefs and indigenous forests. The area is also home to rare and endangered species. In 1999 a complex of protected areas in the region covering 239,566 ha was declared a World Heritage Site (<http://www.rhino.org.za> 2002). Parallel to the international



recognition of Maputaland's unspoilt natural environment, runs references in popular literature to the region as a natural "paradise" (Mountain 1990; Larsen 1999b: 23; Moore 2001: 9)

Literature on people living in Maputaland illustrates clearly that they do not live the utopian lifestyle evoked by images of this natural paradise. The poor nutrient retention of soils in the area, the unpredictable rainfall, and diseases and pests (foot-and-mouth disease, desert locusts, and tsetse flies) impede intensive agriculture in Maputaland. There are also no big industries in the region that could provide significant employment opportunities. Due to the marginal agricultural potential of the area and the shortage of jobs, most households suffer some form of food shortage, which is most acute during mid-winter (Taylor 1988:456). Diseases like cholera, malaria and dysentery have ravaged the human population while a recent government report estimates that the HIV infection rate of rural KwaZulu-Natal is close to 40% (Department of Health 2002: 6). Furthermore, few households in this region have had access to clean water, electricity, primary health care and education. The new South African government described Maputaland as one of South Africa's poorest and most underdeveloped regions.

There seems to be two very different descriptions of the same area in the literature, one that stresses natural beauty, abundance and wealth and another in which the poverty, suffering and neglect of local people features more prominently. The former images are associated with "pristine" nature conservation areas, the latter with the surrounding overcrowded human settlements. There is no single description of Maputaland aimed at integrating these two patterns of narration, or contemplating the connection between these scenes. There appears to be a selective amnesia about the

historical process through which people were disenfranchised and relocated from the nature conservation areas of today.

In this chapter I will focus on the history of the Maputaland landscape. I will pay particular attention to the extension of nature conservation and forestry areas and the people who occupied the landscape at different points in time. In tracing the history of the Maputaland region, I will attempt to determine the origins of its people's current economic marginalisation. I also aim to provide a historical background to the eco-tourism industry that the LSDI was developing in the region when I did my research; to the struggles for political legitimacy by Tribal Authorities; and to the women trade networks that operated in the area. I start off with a theoretical discussion of the causes of 'underdevelopment'. I then plot a history of the Maputaland region over the last four hundred years, a history marked by pre-colonial trade, colonial conquest and also the experience of discriminatory land laws, nature conservation and unfulfilled promises.

### **Theories of “underdevelopment”**

In South Africa different theories have been put forward to explain the poverty and dependency of people in the former homelands. Until the early 1970s economic dualism was the analytical model most prominent in explaining African rural poverty. Crudely put, according to this model the traditional habits, customs, religions or social structure of black people somehow impeded the achievement of high levels of economic growth in a way that those of white South Africans did not. This theoretical model posits that South Africa has a dual economy characterised by two discrete sectors: a “static traditional

sector” in the rural areas and former “homelands”; and a “progressive industrial sector” characteristic of white urban, industrial and farming areas. The two economic sectors are inhabited by two distinct societies, each with specific norms, values and cognitive orientations.

The dichotomy between traditionality and modernity has been criticised in much anthropological literature. Bundy (1972) and Murray (1980, 1981) argue that the economic dualist model is ahistorical and fails to take into account the influence of colonial and apartheid state policies on the economies of the homelands. As an alternative conceptual framework for understanding rural impoverishment, they introduced a core-periphery model. In terms of this model, the South African situation can best be understood with reference to a single regional economic system. According to theorists of this school, the southern African economy comprised an economic core consisting of urban, industrial, mining and manufacturing centres such as the Witwatersrand and a periphery encompassing rural areas such as the African homelands. The relationship between core and peripheral areas was one of fundamental imbalance. In this regard, the periphery supplied cheap labour to facilitate economic growth in the core. Furthermore, peripheral areas were impoverished in terms of human resources, as the economically active section of the population left to work in the core. From the perspective of the core-periphery model, contemporary rural poverty is seen as a direct result of capitalist exposure, not a lack thereof.

The latter theoretical approach is increasingly utilised to explain contemporary poverty in Maputaland. Authors such as Makanjee (1989), McIntosh (1991a) and Møller (1996) claim that the “homeland” policies caused unsustainable population pressures on

areas already marginal in terms of agricultural potential. Nature conservation and commercial forestry made further inroads on the land available for agriculture. These processes, and also the apartheid government's labour laws, enforced a system of labour migration, in which the "homelands" were mere labour reservoirs for South Africa's industrial and mining centres. In the homelands, chiefs were responsible for the administration of the migrant labour system, and for ensuring a steady flow of workers

The core-periphery model has proved to be a valuable tool in the analysis of economic "underdevelopment". It emphasised historical processes and power relationships as causal agents for poverty rather than some innate quality of the impoverished. However, with the massive downsizing of mining in the fast de-industrialising South Africa of the 1990s, Maputaland seems to be functioning less as a labour supplying area, than as a location for South Africa's industrial reserve army.

Following the core-periphery theorists, I will trace the roots of Maputaland's economic marginalisation to historical processes and discriminatory government policies. I will however try to steer clear from their mechanical explanations of structural dependency.

### **Maputaland before 1843**

During the sixteenth century, Delagoa Bay was an important trading post between Portuguese traders and indigenous people living in the hinterland. These people supplied the Portuguese traders with animal hides, ivory, meat, fresh fruit, vegetables, and fresh water. In return, they were given trade beads and iron nails (Smith 1969). However, the

Portuguese knew very little about their trade partners and assumed an empty hinterland sparsely populated by bands of people. Survivors from the shipwrecked Portuguese trading ship, the São Thomé which ran aground in 1589, provided the earliest ethnological descriptions of the Mabila<sup>1</sup> people of the Sodwana Bay area (Bruton, Smith and Taylor 1980: 437; Mthethwa 2002: 46). The Portuguese were surprised to learn that their primary trade partners had a higher level of state formation than appeared to be the case with Nguni groupings to the South (Hedges 1978:100-108).

For the next two centuries, descriptions of indigenous people tended to concentrate on those areas that the Portuguese were interested in trading with to the north and south of the Sodwana Bay region. They mention the lively trade between the Tembe-Thonga, the Nyaka and the Nguni groupings to the south (Van de Capelle 1730, in Hedges 1978: 100-154). Other descriptions of local people were by European hunter-adventurers who traversed Maputaland in search of big game during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century (Baldwin 1863, in Bruton 1980: 507). These writers' only concern with the "native" peoples was in their curiosity value and possible threat to the hunting trade. Due to the growing demand for animal hides and ivory from the European markets, the early settlers in Natal found hunting and trading more lucrative than farming. In 1840, the first elephant hunting business was established in Maputaland. Hunters who could penetrate the region's natural defence systems of malaria and sleeping sickness made a fortune from the sale of ivory (Mountain 1990).

Apart from the above-mentioned sources, narratives from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries paint a picture of a landscape filled with wild animals and diseases

---

<sup>1</sup> Skalnik (1988:74-75) disputes the view that distinct linguistic or culturally homogenous groups of people existed in South Africa's pre-colonial past and points to the flexible nature of cultural and political

(cholera, malaria) but devoid of human settlement. Maputaland became a wild thoroughfare for “native” peoples and a temporary resting-place for traders on their way to Delagoa Bay (Mountain 1990:8-9). As an empty space and dangerous thoroughfare, the area “belonged” to no one. The hunters and indigenous traders who went to the Sodwana Bay area invested stock in narratives of an empty landscape, since this made the resources contained in it free.

Subsequently recorded oral histories<sup>2</sup>, which refers to extensive trade networks and bloody battles between indigenous chiefdoms of the Sodwana Bay hinterlands, contradict these narratives of emptiness (Bruton, Smith and Taylor 1980: 435). Cunningham (1987:265) describes how women from Maputaland traded beer baskets, sleeping mats and other woven articles with the Zulu kingdom from the early 1800’s. In 1820, the Zikhali chiefdom<sup>3</sup> arrived in Sodwana Bay from Swaziland to disrupt the Mbila’s peaceful and ordered life. In Swaziland, their leader became involved with a succession dispute and was accused of witchcraft. Hereafter, he commandeered a large group of his supporters and fled south-eastwards over the Makathini Plains. When the Zikhali reached the coastal strip between Mabibi (now called Hulley Point) and Sodwana Bay, they encountered the Mbila, which they defeated in a bloody battle and incorporated in their group<sup>4</sup>. In 1850, the Tembe-Thonga (the Zikhali’s neighbours to the north) drove

---

boundaries between groups of people.

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Indigenous Knowledge (CINDEK) Archive, Ledger 2, Archival note no 31; CINDEK Archive, Ledger 1, State ethnologist 1971:1; CINDEK Archive, Ledger 1, State ethnologist note 13-856).

<sup>3</sup> According to the state ethnologist, the Zikhali originated in Mozambique and moved to Swaziland in the late eighteenth century.

<sup>4</sup> Although the people living in the Sodwana Bay area are still referred to as the Mbila, and their land as the Mbila Tribal area, this is not what the people call themselves. According to a letter which the state ethnologist wrote to the Head of Bantu Administration in Pietermaritzburg on December 14, 1971, the Mbila’s chief and his council objected to being called Mbila, referring to their historical subjugation of that tribe. The state ethnologist subsequently asked the head of Bantu Administration to rectify this mistake by changing the name of the tribe and its Tribal Authority (CINDEK Archive, Ledger 3). In this dissertation I will refer to the people of the Mbila Tribal Authority area as Zikhali.

the Mdletshe group southwards. In their flight, some of the Mdletshe committed suicide by jumping from the cliffs at Lala Neck. The remainder sought shelter with the Zikhali

With the Difaqane of the early nineteenth century<sup>5</sup>, the Zulu extended tributary control as far north as Delagoa Bay. However, due to the high incidence of malaria, cholera and other pests and diseases, the Zulu never invaded Maputaland (AFRA 1990: 48; Mountain 1990:8-9). In the literature, it remained an “empty space”, an area outside of the Zulu Kingdom. On the margins of civilisation, Maputaland became a dangerous haven. It was the impenetrable ‘bush’ that hid thieves and refugees from Shaka’s wrath. Those that fled before Shaka knew that he would not venture into this fever-ridden area but delivered themselves to its dangers. The original inhabitants of the area remained invisible as if the bush engulfed them.

### **The early colonial era: Reconfiguring Maputaland as empty space, 1843-1878**

In 1843, the British established a colony just south of Maputaland. For the first twenty years of colonial rule in Natal, Maputaland continued to be treated as an empty space on the margins of the British colony. It was unaffected by Shepstone’s system of indirect rule<sup>6</sup> or his black location policies<sup>7</sup> since British influence barely extended to the colony’s borders (Marais 1962: 344). In the 1850s, the British could not persuade the

---

<sup>5</sup> The Difaqane refers to the war and turmoil in the South African interior that followed Shaka’s aggressive territorial expansion in the early nineteenth century.

<sup>6</sup> T. Shepstone was the chief administrator of Natives in Natal from 1845 to 1875 and introduced the Natal location policy. He tried to re-establish and foster the tribal system by instituting old chiefs and ruling through them (Bundy 1972:375; Marais 1962: 344).

<sup>7</sup> After the Stanger (1846) and the Boys commission (1849), the British colonial government finally accepted the MacFarlane commission’s recommendation that between 24 000 and 26 000 acres should be put aside for occupation by black people. In 1864 the Natal’s Native Trust was created to administer the land allocations in the black areas (Els 1993: 60).

Africans in Maputaland or in Zululand to work in the colony. This frustrated the white settlers' commercial agricultural ambitions and allowed African peasants in the colony to rent land and become "rich and independent" (Bundy 1972:375-376; Guy 1994: 42-43). Such was the independence of these Africans and the need for labour among the whites that the Natal government was forced to import indentured Indian workers (Freund 1994). The rather paltry colonial performance of the British during the 1840s and 1850s did not impede their colonial ambitions. In lieu of their physical conquest of Africa, they started to lay claim to spaces by naming, documenting and describing them (Sumner Curry 2001: 25, 82).

In 1854, Captain Owen of the British Navy named the area stretching from Lourenço Marques in the north to Lake St Lucia in the South, and from the Pongola River to the Indian Ocean, Maputaland<sup>8</sup>. This name derives from the Mabudhu chiefdom that Owen thought encompassed the vast area (Kloppers 2002: 3). The English word for landscape signifies a unit of human occupation, or indeed jurisdiction, as much as anything that might be a pleasing object of depiction (Schama 1995: 10). By naming the territory, Captain Owen thus also traced the borders within which the Mabudhu chiefdom had jurisdiction according to the British government.

Contrary to the British depictions of Maputaland as an empty landscape on the borders of the colony, the area was bustling with trade: networks stretched to the Zulu in the south and the Portuguese traders in Delagoa Bay. One of the most well known traders of Maputaland during this time was John Dunn, a white hunter-trader with considerable influence with the Zulu royal house. Dunn made use of the tributary relationship between chiefs in Maputaland and the Zulu royal house to hunt extensively in the area (AFRA



1990: 48; Sumner Curry 2001: 82). Other game hunters followed his example. While the British colony did not stretch into these regions, its chiefs were held to their tributary relationships to the Zulu king. For all ends and purposes the landscape evaded direct political control.

In the late 1850s cattle disease precipitated a major resource crisis and affected the brisk trade in Maputaland (AFRA 1990: 48). This was compounded during the 1860s when endemic warfare, drought and famine struck the Delagoa Bay hinterland. The trading triangle was subsequently broken up. This isolated many people in the Maputaland region who were left without trading partners while the poor agricultural potential of the region made subsistence agriculture untenable. Several men from the Maputaland region were forced to seek work on the Kimberley diamond fields and others moved south to work on the Natal sugarcane farms (Bundy 1972: 376). At first, the Zulu king did not allow people from the north to travel through his kingdom. With pressure exerted by the colony of Natal, the king relented in 1872, claiming a portion of each migrant's wages, plus a cash capitation fee from Natal labour recruiters (AFRA 1990: 49).

Throughout this period, more hunters and naturalists entered the 'empty space'. They either hunted on large scale, or tried to record and catalogue the variety and quantity of game in the region, as new resources of the colony (Drummond 1875; Leslie 1975). They did not attribute ownership of Maputaland to the indigenous people.

---

<sup>8</sup> At present the word Maputaland is only used to refer to the area on the South African side of the border.





Cetshwayo's flight to Maputaland set a whole series of events in motion that drew the region into colonial politics. It was no longer simply conceived of as the impenetrable or empty space on the outskirts of the British colony and Zululand.

After Cetshwayo's death in 1884, his supporters were left starving in their hiding places in Maputaland (Guy 1994: 217-221). Due to their weakened position, Dinizulu (Cetshwayo's heir) asked the Transvaal Boer commando<sup>9</sup> to help them in the battle at Etshaneni. In return for the part that they played in the defeat of Zibhebhu, the Boers claimed 800 farms (4 000 miles<sup>2</sup>) in Maputaland as their reward (Mountain 1990:8-9). Soon, growing numbers of Boers from the Transvaal started to claim land in these northern districts. Subsequently, chaos started to reign as dispossessed indigenous people roamed the landscape. By early 1885, the Boers' land stretched to the Indian Ocean and claimed five-sixths of the Zulu territory beyond the Zululand Reserve. Fearing that the Boers now had access to the sea and a means to keep their independence, the colonial government stepped in and drew a boundary that kept the Boers to the West (Guy 1994: 233-236).

To the south, the colony of Natal again experienced a shortage of labour as the indigenous civil war and migration to Kimberley absorbed the energies of young men. The period 1870 to 1886 saw the colonial government introduce new taxes, pass- and vagrancy laws in the Zululand Reserve to stimulate a flow of labourers to Natal (Guy 1994: 231). This flow halted to a trickle when gold was discovered on the Witwatersrand in 1886, occasioning a great outflow of men to the Transvaal. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s severe droughts further enlarged the flow of men to the Witwatersrand (Bundy 1972: 376-380).



virtually wiped out certain species such as zebra, wildebeest and nyala in the colony of Natal. Many species were also rapidly diminishing in the Zulu kingdom (Lawes and Eeley 2000:19). Some colonists became aware of the depletion of game and started to preserve certain species on private reserves (Mackenzie 1991: 22; Yeld 1997: 15-16). They carefully emptied such landscapes of unwanted indigenous people and dangerous animals such as lions. The private game and nature reserves became safe hunting grounds for a socially influential class (Bruton, Smith and Taylor 1980: 440-441). In this regard, the European and American landscape artists had a great influence on shaping the colonists' image of an ideal, safe landscape devoid of people (Kriel 2002: 321). With spaces dedicated to hunting, the discourse about the pursuit of wild animals became very popular. Sport hunters such as Frederick Courtney Selous and George French Agnes<sup>10</sup> were closely associated with the colonial state as their hunting activities affirmed individual, and by extension, imperial authority (Brooks 2000: 2).

Despite the forays that white hunters made into Maputaland, white settlement in the area was curtailed by the high incidence of malaria. The first missionary in Maputaland, Bishop Mackenzie, only arrived in 1887 (Bruton, Smith and Taylor 1980: 440-441). To keep his flock going and to finance the various activities of his church, the bishop and later missionaries depended on their prowess with the gun. Gradually, the missionaries and other white administrators to the area excluded Africans from game hunting and it became the exclusive pastime of the white elite (Mackenzie 1991: 20-21).

It was only in the late 1890s that the British colonial government started to earmark areas outside of the colony of Natal (but under their indirect rule) for nature

---

<sup>10</sup> Agnes shot the first nyala known to western science (Sumner Curry 2001: 82).

conservation (Mthethwa 2002: 145). In 1897, the Lake St Lucia, Umfolozi and Hluhluwe nature conservation areas were proclaimed in British Zululand (Bruton, Smith and Taylor 1980: 451). They were quickly followed by the proclamation of the Mkhuze and Ndumu<sup>11</sup> Game Reserves in Maputaland. However, such was the extent of poaching in the Ndumu Game Reserve that a small police station was erected in 1907 to control hunting in that region (Mthethwa 2002: 145). The landscape was cut up, emptied of people and was devoted to the interests of its conquerors. In the latter regard, these game reserves were closed to anyone but the hunters.

The Anglo-Boer War of 1899 to 1902 slowed down the British efforts to transform Maputaland's physical landscape. The exigencies of the war however dispersed some of Maputaland's population. Meanwhile, the social landscape continued to transform as the colonial government tightened its labour-coercive screws by enacting the Identification of Native Servants Act (1901), the Amended Masters and Servants Act (1901), the Amended Squatters Rent Tax (1903), and the imposition of a Poll Tax (1905) on all males (Bundy 1972:385). In 1903, for instance, the Zikhali had to pay tax on 1 181 huts<sup>12</sup>. Those that could not pay these taxes were forced off the land. Rents all over Natal rose sharply while security of tenure was prohibited by the suspension of all sales of Crown land to Africans in 1904 (Bundy 1972: 385). Another disappointment for black people in the region was that they did not get the expected voting rights after the Anglo-Boer War (Pelser 1968). In opposition to the racist legislation in South Africa, the Natal Native Congress (NNC) was established 1904 (Els 1993: 68-69).

---

<sup>11</sup> Formally however, Ndumu was only proclaimed a game reserve in 1924 (Mthethwa 2002: 145)

<sup>12</sup> State ethnologist note 13-856, CINDEK archive.

As the British government relented in their onslaught on the Maputaland landscape, scientists started to show an interest in the region. From 1899 onwards, various expeditions led by biologists traversed Maputaland in search of unique animal and plant species. These scientists collected vast amounts of plant and animal specimens or sent African helpers into the fever-ridden region to collect specimens for them (Bruton, Smith and Taylor 1980: 446-450).

During this time alternative views on wildlife preservation surfaced within the colony. Dr. Warren campaigned widely for the elimination of sports hunting in the game reserves of Natal, Zululand and Maputaland. He increasingly referred to the fauna in British Zululand not just as “interesting” but also as “threatened” and “defenceless” (Brooks 2000: 23-30). For the first time, wildlife sanctuaries became spaces set aside for the protection of animals from humans. Game reserves all over the landscape were increasingly fenced and guarded.

### **The making of a black and white landscape, 1910-1948**

In 1910, South Africa became a Union. The colonial conquest of its landscape was complete and there were no more independent, empty or unowned spaces on its map. The Union Government then set about ordering this landscape into spaces for nature conservation, agriculture and for black and white occupation. It basically did this by moving black people around like chess pieces.

Through the 1913 Land Act, the Union government reserved certain parts of Maputaland and Zululand for exclusive occupation of African people. The Act also



prohibited Africans from owning or acquiring land outside scheduled areas. In Zululand and Natal, the already established Natal Native Congress (NNC) became a branch of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), which opposed the implementation of this Act throughout South Africa.

With time, more and more pieces of the landscape were seen as unfit for black occupation, and were set apart for the protection of nature and ultimately for the enjoyment of white people. For instance, in 1912 the Province of Natal established the Mkuzi Game Reserve. A year later, the Zululand Annexation Act (of 1913) created more off-limit nature reserves in Zululand (Thulo 2001: 8). In 1917, the new attitude towards animals as aesthetically and scientifically important was apparent in the public outcry that followed when government ordered the killing of seventy thousand head of wild animal species in Maputaland in order to rid the area of nagana (a type of sleeping sickness)<sup>13</sup>. Prominent biologists and members of the public were particularly vocal in demanding an end to the slaughter (Munnik and Mhlope 2000: 32). In 1924, the Ndumu Game Reserve was established in Maputaland, and later also the St Lucia and False Bay Parks elsewhere in Natal. By now resistance to these schemes had become the focus of black people's political attention (AFRA 1990: 36).

Inside the African reserves the Union government perpetuated the British system of indirect rule. Act 38 of 1927 empowered the governor-general to delimit the boundaries of tribal land and to appoint *anyone* as chief, headman or as regent. These conditions required serving chiefs to display loyalty to the government. The Zulu king Solomon kaDinizulu and a group of traditionalists who were friendly to the Union

government, took over control of the Zulu National Congress. At the same time, the Inkatha kaZulu party was established with the support of the Department of Native Affairs to defend the position of King Solomon (Cope 1985: 159, Els 1993: 85-86). This organisation was in direct opposition to the popular Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU). The complicity of Tribal Authorities to the Union government policies was aggravated by uneven economic developments within the reserves. In contrast to pervasive rural poverty, chiefs and headmen controlled vast grazing lands, allowing them to become relatively rich (Mackinnon 2001: 570-571).

Due to its relative isolation, parts of Maputaland remained hunting grounds for white people until the late 1930s (Mthethwa 2002: 146). In 1936, Austin Roberts proposed that tourists be allowed into the area to help finance the conservation of animals and plants inside Maputaland's reserves (Bruton, Smith and Taylor 1980: 452). The Union government gladly relented, and these parks were thrown open to tourists, making accessibility an important feature of financial success (Mackenzie 1991: 24). The financial needs of the nature conservation areas, not of the people who lived in the area, thus created the need to break the area out of its isolation.

Even the government of the United States of America showed interest in developing a tourist industry in Maputaland. The National Geographic Society of America hired a team of South African scientists to investigate the suitability of the area as a tourist resort. Between 1945 and 1947 three "Tongaland Expeditions" were undertaken to Maputaland under the leadership of G.G. Campbell (Bruton, Smith and Taylor 1980: 440-452). Although the expedition leaders were excited about the variety of

---

<sup>13</sup> The government's anti-nagana campaign was based on the faulty premise that wild animals spread the disease. Dr J. S. Henkel discovered that the tsetse fly was actually responsible for the spread of the disease.

plant and animal life, they remained sceptical of the area's tourism potential due to the high incidence of malaria. They also warned that black people living in Maputaland were destroying this unique eco-system with their subsistence farming methods (AFRA 1990: 36). Hence the United States government withdrew from future involvement in developing tourism in Maputaland. However, these reports sparked considerable interest from the South African government in the region (Mthethwa 2002: 153-154). In response to these high-profile expeditions, the South African government established the Natal Parks, Game and Fish Preservation Board in 1947<sup>14</sup>. The expressed concern of this Board was to control illegal poaching, nest hunting of sea turtles and destruction of indigenous forests by black people (Bruton, Smith and Taylor 1980: 451). The Board however lacked the power to forcibly relocate (black) people from declared nature conservation areas and to arrest those that trespassed on such land (Cock 1991: 13, 19-20).

#### **Apartheid: Maputaland as malleable space, 1948-1994**

In 1948, the Nationalist government came to power in South Africa and laid the foundations for the execution of its apartheid policies. These policies saw the creation of the KwaZulu<sup>15</sup> homeland and the forced removals of black people from land earmarked for white occupation or for nature conservation. Moreover, inside KwaZulu various afforestation and nature conservation projects were also launched to foster economic growth. The Maputaland landscape now became even more malleable in the hands of

---

(Sumner Curry 2001: 82-83).

<sup>14</sup> The Natal Parks, Game and Fish Preservation Board later became known as the Natal Parks Board (AFRA 1990: 42).

political powers. Because of the natural beauty of the Maputaland area, large tracts of land were cordoned off as conservation areas. In 1950, the Natal Parks Board established the small-scale Kosi Bay Nature Reserve, the Malangeni Forest Reserve and Sodwana Bay National Parks (Sumner Curry 2001: 85). Two years later, the Coastal Reserve was established along the coastline between the Mozambique border and St Lucia (Bruton, Smith and Taylor 1980: 452). With the declaration of each of these nature conservation areas, people were forcibly relocated without receiving compensation for their lost land<sup>16</sup>. They also lost access to water, grazing and fields, only to be dumped in overcrowded villages next to the conservation areas (Cock 1991: 13, 19-20). By contrast, roads, water and electricity were provided for the parks. Conservation thus came to symbolise a loss of control over resources and was perceived by black people as an elitist activity for the benefit of the white population only (Sumner Curry 2001). Black people were frequently arrested and imprisoned for trespassing on protected land (Turner 2001: 365-366).

The Department of Forestry further curtailed the living space of black people by launching extensive forestry projects in Maputaland and relocating people from such land. Despite large-scale resistance, government established 17 395 hectares of pine forest in the Mbazwane and Manzengwenya regions between 1958 and 1980 (Felgate 1982: 170-175). Small plots of eucalyptus plantations were also established all over Maputaland to create local employment (Mthethwa 2002: 155). The forced relocation of black people had reached such intensity that the Northern Natal African Landowners

---

<sup>15</sup> The KwaZulu homeland consisted of forty-eight official pieces; not counting the one-hundred-and-fifty-odd small black freehold farms scattered through the Natal province (Walker 1981: 2-3).

<sup>16</sup> Such was the extent of these land grabs that the Tembe-Thonga lost 70% of their arable land without receiving any compensation for it (Larsen 1999a: 36; Larsen 1999b: 23).

Association was formed to help people resist these removals. They were however only successful in delaying the removals somewhat (Mngadi 1981: 1-9).

In the 1960s the plantations in the Mbaswana-Sodwana Bay region attracted large numbers of semi-skilled workers and their families from other areas (Mountain 1990:99). This influx caused additional pressure on the small plots of land outside the plantation and nature conservation areas. In the 1970s this pressure was compounded when the Mabaso and Zikhali communities were forcibly relocated from the Sodwana State Forest and the Nhlozi Peninsula to Mbaswana (Khumalo 2001: 2). In and around Mbaswana, the sizes of subsistence agriculture plots shrank while severe drought exacerbated the poor agricultural potential of such land. Men who could not find work on the plantations or nature conservation areas were forced to become oscillating labour migrants to the Witwatersrand. Labour laws such as the Bantu Labour Regulations (Bantu Areas) Act (1968) compelled all Africans living in the “homelands” to register at Tribal Labour Bureaus, which placed them in specific work categories (Unterhalter 1987:153). The Ubombo district, which encompassed Sodwana Bay and Mbaswana, had the largest recruiting station for South African migrant workers to the Witwatersrand gold mines during the apartheid era (De Bruin 1987: 45).

In the early 1970s, the South African government appointed a Scientific Advisory Council to examine the continued viability of nature conservation in Maputaland. The Council echoed the recommendations of the earlier Tongaland expeditions and warned that Maputaland’s unique ecosystem was deteriorating rapidly due to the demands of the increasing human population in that area. They proposed more extensive nature conservation areas and the militant protection of Maputaland’s established parks

(Mthethwa 2002: 155-156). These proposals were met with increased resistance from local people (Sumner Curry 2001:87-88).

In 1977 KwaZulu became a self-governing “homeland”. The homeland government maintained a comfortable relationship with the apartheid government. Prime Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi filled all cabinet positions with prominent Inkatha<sup>17</sup> members (Els 1993: 110-121). Chiefs in the KwaZulu government became the main executors of apartheid policies, regulating labour supplies to the mines and administering the passbook system. From the perspective of government the Zikhali and Mabaso chiefs and their Tribal Councils were very effective bureaucratic administrators. Yet my informants perceived them as decentralised despots who were inefficient, inaccessible and uncommunicative.

The KwaZulu government’s complicity to apartheid policies became clear in 1978 when Inkatha supported the official recommendations of the Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions reports<sup>18</sup>. They also embraced the subsequent “appropriate development strategies” proposed by the apartheid government, which suggested the extension of nature conservation and forestry areas. Fischer (1988) shows that development in the homelands centred on the creation of state symbols (not people) such as nature conservation areas, a cabinet and a nationalist identity. This was certainly true for the KwaZulu government who invested a lot of stock in its Zulu ethnic identity.

---

<sup>17</sup> The IFP is a conservative political party with a strong traditional base. It seeks to uphold the patriarchal power of traditional leaders through emphasising the authenticity of customary law as legitimate indigenous law. As such, they promote the exercise of male power by chiefs and husbands (Serote, Mager & Budlender 2001:165).

<sup>18</sup> The Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions put the underdevelopment of the homelands down to an economic dependency model. In this model, the political aspects of racial and economic divides in South Africa were ignored (Nustad 1996: 62-65).

In 1982, the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources was established as an official department in the homeland government. This body took control of all nature conservation areas in KwaZulu, except for Sodwana Bay Park that remained under the jurisdiction of the Natal Parks Board. Initially, Mangosuthu Buthelezi criticised the Parks Board's attempts to remove chief Zikhali's subjects from Sodwana Bay<sup>19</sup> saying that this proved "white greed" and that black people were merely "pawns" in South Africa (AFRA 1990: 31). His own Bureau promised to compensate local people who were relocated, and to provide them with a portion of revenue derived from tourism and limited harvesting rights (Mthethwa 2002: 174).

Not even a year later however the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources started to extend nature conservation areas in KwaZulu. In 1983 alone, they established both the Tembe Elephant Reserve and the Sileza Nature Reserve (Sumner Curry 2001: 86). The establishment of the former reserve occasioned the forceful relocation of at least thirty-two homesteads. Many of the removed people complained that they were not consulted about the removals, did not receive the promised compensation, and that their access to the park was restricted. In the area to which they were relocated they had no access to water. At the same time, tourism revenues were dismally small. Such were people's unhappiness with the situation that they accused the Tembe chief of colluding with the apartheid government. There was even talk of driving his headmen out of the district. All this was to little effect, as plans for the reserve steam-rolled through and the opposition was quelled. All tourism revenues were channelled to the coffers of chiefs and headmen (Mthethwa 2002: 156-159, 174-175).

---

<sup>19</sup> Together with three other areas, the total population to be removed was 150 000 people (Walker 1982: 14-15).

Rumours also began to circulate that a nature conservation area would be established in Kosi Bay. Out of fear of being removed from their land, large numbers of people started to relocate to KwaNgwanasi (Manguzi) on their own accord. Those that stayed behind waged a drawn-out battle with the KwaZulu government over the establishment of the park (CORD 1991: 66-78). In 1987, the KwaZulu government won out and declared the Kosi Bay Nature Reserve (Mthethwa 2002: 159, 161).

At the same time, the KwaZulu government's Department of Agriculture and Forestry supported projects that extended forestry areas. In 1983 the Department entered into a partnership with the GENCOR Development Fund and with SAPPI (South African Paper and Pulp Industries) to initiate Project Grow (AFRA 1990: 43). The managers of Project Grow first sought to gain the approval and support of local chiefs, and signed a contract with chief Zikhali to develop eighty hectares of Eucalyptus plantations. Despite involving local people as small growers, participation in the project did not provide an alternative source of employment to wage labour. Many growers switched to the more profitable hauling and harvesting contracts. However, living conditions did not significantly change for the better. Firewood, grazing land for cattle and water became extremely scarce resources (Brooks 1999). A competing company, Mondi Ltd.<sup>20</sup> launched a similar project covering seven districts in Northern KwaZulu called Khulanathi. It was no more successful at improving local conditions, but managed to extend the forestry area in KwaZulu even further. The KwaZulu government supported these projects as schemes for economic development and the empowerment of rural communities. In effect, these projects allowed the timber companies access to new land and cheap labour (Brooks 1999: 4-6, 21).



In 1989 the KwaZulu Conservation Trust was established to channel money from the private sector towards conservation. SAPPI pledged R5 million to the Trust, and several other large South African companies also pledged their support to the fund (AFRA 1990: 43). Under the guise of economic development, these projects catered exclusively for the demands of the white domestic tourism market as they extended the large tracts of protected landscape. To cash in on the expected boom in tourism, the KwaZulu government set up the Isivuno Trust to develop tourist facilities in its parks. The Trust also paved the way for partnerships between nature conservation, private enterprise and local chiefs (Larsen 1999a: 36).

Just north of Sodwana Bay, Ovland Timesharing developed an elite tourist resort on the shores of Lake Shazibe in 1988. The resort cost R15 million to build and covered thirty-five hectares of tribal land. In return, the developers offered the Zikhali Tribal Authority a share in its profits. Though an environmental impact study was conducted, developers paid no attention to the fact that Lake Shazibe was one of only two permanent sources of water for the Zikhali people. The scheme also denied local people access to the lake for fishing, harvesting, and for grazing their cattle on the lake slopes (AFRA 1990: 43).

It was thus with some alarm that some of my informants heard about plans to link the Tembe Elephant Park with the Ndumo Game Reserve in 1988. The establishment of the Mbangweni corridor would have required the relocation of up to three thousand people. There were also plans to link the Tembe Park with various coastal reserves. Had these plans come fruition, the entire border along KwaZulu and Mozambique would have

---

<sup>20</sup> Part of the Anglo American group.

been under conservation and closed to human settlement. Fortunately, these plans were abandoned (Sumner Curry 2001: 97).

Two years later, the KwaZulu government indicated its intention to establish a Kosi Lakes Reserve. The Centre for Community Organisation Research and Development (CORD), the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA) and the Mboza project mobilised resistance to this scheme. These three non-governmental organisations built on their experience of opposing apartheid policies, and tried to rally local people into action by distributing pamphlets and holding awareness workshops (See Appendix 4). Though the local Kosi Bay Tribal Authority supported these three organisations, Mangosuthu Buthelezi blamed “white trouble-makers” for stirring up bad feelings and for undermining his government’s efforts to preserve the remaining forests of the area. In the end, the authorities won out and declared the Kosi Lakes Reserve.

Criticism of the KwaZulu government’s complicity to the apartheid system was intense and throughout KwaZulu violence erupted between the supporters of Inkatha and those of the United Democratic Front (UDF)<sup>21</sup>. There were many casualties on both sides and a state of emergency was declared<sup>22</sup> (Kotzé and Greyling 1991: 29, 44, 123; Liebenberg and Spies 1993: 514). The ability of chiefs to maintain a certain amount of popular support amidst these revolts rested largely on their continued control of diminishing communal land in the homelands (CORD 1991: 66-67). The situation was exacerbated in 1986 when the South African government planned to cede Ingwavuma, (a municipal district in northern KwaZulu), to Swaziland. Inkatha launched a politico-

---

<sup>21</sup> Buthelezi claimed that the UDF is a proxy organisation of the ANC and aimed to undermine Inkatha (Kotzé and Greyling 1991:123). Newspaper articles of the time also frequently confused the ANC with the UDF.

<sup>22</sup> This violence continued well into the 1990s.

cultural campaign in the area to ensure the South African government that the inhabitants of Ingwavuma were “true” Zulu and not Swazi or Thonga as the official commissions tried to prove (Kloppers 2002).

For the most part, people in Maputaland went along with the KwaZulu government's plans. They consistently voted for the IFP and blamed the apartheid government for forceful relocations. Many people remained loyal to “their” chiefs, even when the comrades started to question the chiefs’ complicity to the apartheid system. In my research area, people explained their loyalty to chiefs by saying that the chiefs had power to allocate land while the comrades could only give them trouble. However, by the late 1980s the continued onslaught on the living space of local people led to widespread violent protests against nature conservation projects in the area. Local people accused many chiefs in Maputaland of allowing nature conservation programs to dispossess them of their land. In response, twelve chiefs denounced KwaZulu’s conservation policies and threatened secession from the KwaZulu Tribal Authority system in 1990. In political retaliation, Buthelezi accused the twelve chiefs of being UDF allies. Almost immediately, the KwaZulu government withdrew financial support from development projects that had been initiated by one of the chiefs in question. Similar government tactics forced the other chiefs to back down on their position (Mthethwa 2002: 170-171).

The rift between chiefs, the KwaZulu government and regular people deepened shortly before the 1994 elections, when the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly passed the KwaZulu Ingonyama Trust Act. According to this Act, 2.9 million hectares of land in KwaZulu were transferred to the specially created Ingonyama Trust under trusteeship of King Goodwill Zwelithini (Makanjee 1989: 70). It was a final attempt by the ruling IFP

to keep a foothold in KwaZulu. Through transferring land from the Apartheid State (represented by the KwaZulu government) to the Zulu king, the IFP pre-empted attempts by a future ANC government to gain access to the land by abolishing chiefship. In this position, king Zwelithini became responsible for the “orderly release of communal land for development”. However, due to a lack of “administrative capacity” and “infrastructure”, very little in terms of development took place on land administered by the Trust (Payne 1998: 34).

### **Post-apartheid: The Triumphant Green Landscape, 1994-2001**

In 1994 a democratically elected government abolished apartheid and vowed to rectify the spatial and economic marginalisation of black people. Although the ANC won the national elections by a large margin, the IFP still had a lot of support in large portions of the old KwaZulu homeland. With the creation of the province of KwaZulu-Natal, the new ANC government sought to erase the boundaries between the black KwaZulu and white Natal. Throughout the new province, municipalities made up of elected representatives were established. In the former KwaZulu, these municipalities were layered on top of the existing system of headmen and chiefs (Fischer 2000:2-3; Ntsebeza 2001:317).

The new government promised to bring “development” and to redistribute land on a more equal basis. Towards this end, they introduced a land claims process that aimed to restore land to people that lost it due to discriminatory laws and forced relocations since 1913 (De Wet 2001:336). The Act was drafted in the early days of the new South Africa to reassure large numbers of black people that they would get back land that was forcibly

taken away from them. This Act also aimed to take the wind out of the sails of the Pan African Congress, whose policy was to return so-called African land to Africans (Thornton 2000: 3).

In 1995 the new national government introduced the Spatial Development Initiatives Programme (SDI) to rectify the spatial legacy of apartheid and to uplift conditions of life in the former homelands (See Map 2). These projects would supposedly narrow the economic gap between the marginal and other wealthier areas of South Africa (See Gelb and Manning 1998: ii).

With the amalgamation of KwaZulu and Natal, former government departments such as the KwaZulu Nature Conservation and the Natal Parks Board merged. This merger ushered in a new nature conservation philosophy. KZN Wildlife formulated a “nature conservation-based community development approach” to manage their parks. Their new approach was well clothed in the rhetoric of community participation, consultation and equitable development for the poor (cf. Harvey 1999: 37-39).

All of these changes created the superficial impression that the amalgamation of KwaZulu and Natal formed a seamless landscape. This was not exactly true. On the political front, the Ingonyama Trust still owned large portions of the former KwaZulu and the Tribal Authority system still remained. People living in the former KwaZulu also had different problems to confront than those that lived in the former “white” Natal. For instance, the vast forestry schemes initiated in the 1980s by SAPPI and Mondi Ltd. did not deliver on their promises of financial gain. In 1995 this became blatantly apparent after the fall of the Asian market for pulp and paper products when SAPPI and Mondi prioritised their own timber at the expense of the small growers'. In protest, local growers

embarked on industrial action blocking haulage traffic and threatening to burn down weigh bridges and depots in their areas. Their protest did not change SAPPI or Mondi's timber sourcing policies. Apart from the reduced income from forestry, local people also started to feel the environmental effects of the forestry schemes (Brooks 1999:6-11)

The LSDI's economic development plans targeted Maputaland as a politically disadvantaged and economically marginalised region. They planned to deliver economic development by transforming the area into an international eco-tourism destination (Jourdan 1998: 722-723). The LSDI's emphasis on eco-tourism made the continued existence of conservation areas an integral part of socio-economic development in the region.

This placed the government in an ambivalent position. On the one hand, all conservation areas were created during the colonial and apartheid eras by forcibly dispossessing black people of their land. Within the framework of a new government, these people could demand such land back through the land claims process. In fact, land claims were made to every one of Maputaland's green areas<sup>23</sup>. These claims threatened to erase the apartheid legacy of fenced and heavily protected nature conservation (green) areas. On the other hand, the new government, which funded and initiated the LSDI, supported the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park's application for World Heritage status to the United Nations in 1997 (Douglas 1998:21).

People living within the borders of the proposed Site, protested widely against the declaration of the Site and attracted much of media attention. For instance, at Dukuduku, the government's attempts to move ten thousand people off their land near St Lucia were

met with open resistance and point-blank refusals. Residents also refused the government's offer of alternative accommodation on two sugarcane farms. Weeks before the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park's application for World Heritage status, the government declared that the Dukuduku forest was too damaged by the "squatters" to include it in the application (Anon 1998: 12). The rest of the proposed landscape was simply declared a "green" area while the people living there were quietly edited out of the picture. The official application wildly understated the number of people living in the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park. It claimed that there were only six small private townships (Enkovukeni, Kwa Dapha, Mqobella, Mbila, Shazibe, and Hlabezimhlophe) with "a combined total population of approximately 200 families" in the area. In 1999, the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park was declared a World Heritage Site. It incorporated 220km of protected coastline, four wetlands, eight game reserves and many of the small nature reserves in Maputaland (Thulo 2001: 8). As a condition of the declaration, national laws<sup>24</sup> ensured that development would not threaten the "integrity" of the site (Van der Merwe 2000: 43). Hence successful land claimants were prohibited from moving back onto the land

In lieu of the possibility of moving back onto successfully claimed land within the World Heritage Site's borders, the government's land redistribution plan called for

---

<sup>23</sup> It was with considerable alarm that the media reported on the 'onslaught' of land claims on nature conservation areas and the large cuts that government made in its subsidies to these areas (See Anon 2001: 15, Larsen 1999a: 36).

<sup>24</sup> The Park has legal protection under the provisions of the KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Management Act No 9 1997, the Natal Nature Conservation Ordinance No 15 of 1994 (referring to the following component areas: False Bay Park, Sodwana Bay National Park, St Lucia Game Reserve and St Lucia Park), the Forest Act No 122 of 1984 (referring to Cape Vidal State Forest, eastern Shores State Forest, Mapelane Nature Reserve, Ngalazi State Forest, Sodwana State Forest), the Sea Fishery Act No 12 of 1988 (referring to St Lucia Marine Reserve and Maputaland Marine Reserve) and the Sea-Shore Act No 21 of 1935. Coastal Forest Reserve and Lake Sibayi Freshwater Reserve were set aside under the KwaZulu Nature Conservation Act No 29 of 1992 ([http://www.unep-wcmc.org/sites/wh/st\\_lucia.html](http://www.unep-wcmc.org/sites/wh/st_lucia.html) Access Sept 25, 2002, 13:05).

market-based compensation (Grimond 2001: 5). One of the first land claims to be settled on this basis was that of the two communities who once lived on the eastern shores of Lake St Lucia. Initially, each family was promised R30 000, but in the final land settlement, they only received R16 000 (Khumalo 1999: 3). The claimants also received a share of the KZN Wildlife's Community Trust. However, they were no longer entitled to poverty subsidies from government. In the light of the high hopes that the communities had in terms of the land claims process, they were dissatisfied with the outcome. The R16 000 that each family had received was not even enough to build a house and income from the KZN Wildlife's Community Trust remained negligible.

Increasingly, discontent with the sluggishness<sup>25</sup> of the land claims process on nature conservation areas within the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park started to show. Claimants who received cash compensation were also distressed about the inadequacy of their settlements. Subsequently, land claim settlements on nature conservation areas in Maputaland increasingly started to revolve around "partnerships-in-conservation". Although successful land claimants could not move back onto their land, they were given "shares" in the eco-tourism businesses that were planned on their land (De Wet 2001:336). Government and developers alike hoped that this income would be enough to spur economic growth and development in the region.

A good example of such a land settlement was the resolution of the claim on the Sodwana State Forests and Cape Vidal in July 2001. Instead of taking the R50 000 offered to each family, the Zikhali people chose a share in the promised future earnings from eco-tourism in the area (Khumalo 2001: 2). Much was made of the potential of the

---

<sup>25</sup> In this regard, less than 20% of land claims in KwaZulu-Natal were settled by 2002 (Anon 2002: 22 and Sapa 2001: 6).



area to deliver large-scale economic growth (Koch, De Beer and Eliffe 1998b: 811). This optimism was fuelled in 2001 by the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park Authority's announcement that international investors have shown an interest in investing in the site.

Various authors show that local communities are not empowered by the partnership rhetoric or its token manifestations in practice. In practice, nature conservation areas remain very much the reserve of the authorities (See CORD 1991:66-67; Turner 2001:367-374 and Van den Breemer and Venema 1995: 3-5). In November 2000 this became abundantly clear when a group of divers discovered the rare Coelacanth on a reef just off Sodwana Bay. As the world-wide media attention and scientific interest in the site grew, KZN Wildlife prohibited divers from going anywhere near the fish. They then confiscated the project for their own gain (Bishop 2001a: 2). The find of a rare, almost extinct species in the conservation area of Sodwana Bay buttressed nature conservation authorities' management of the area and also legitimated nature conservation as a land use strategy in an area inundated with land claims.

While I was doing my research, the land area devoted to nature conservation in Maputaland was expanding as various individual developers and non-governmental organisations approached communities with business plans centred on wildlife reserves. These "developers" often echoed nature conservation's economic development promises to local communities in order to secure leases on ecologically valuable land. The trend to the expand nature conservation areas in Maputaland was set to continue as the governments of South Africa, Mozambique and Swaziland were planning the Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area. As part of the plan, previously occupied land would be rehabilitated for nature conservation. The likely forced relocation of these people was

politically justified in the light of the projected tourism revenues for local people. Some literature sources praised the foreseeable relocation and partnership with nature conservation authorities as “innovative approaches to conservation restitution” (De Wet 2001:337). Others were more cautious and noted that the main emphasis of Transfrontier Conservation fell almost exclusively on nature conservation with little emphasis on the socio-economic development of the people living on their borders (Brandon and Wells 1992:560).

## **Conclusions**

The history of Maputaland after 1843 can be divided into two broad phases; colonial conquest and the extension of formal nature conservation. During the first phase, Maputaland was gradually mapped and conquered by the British colonial powers. By 1910, not a single piece of ‘unowned’ or unexplored land existed in the whole region. When the Union government came into power, every inch of the landscape had been demarcated.

The second phase in the history of Maputaland overlapped only slightly with the first phase and benefited from the “ordered” legacy of colonialism. In the second phase, the successive colonial, union and apartheid governments devoted ever-larger pieces of land to nature conservation in Maputaland. With each nature conservation area declared, people staying on the land were dispossessed and further impoverished. People in Maputaland experienced nature conservation as a highly politicised and violent form of

state intervention. In the history of the area, there were numerous cases where local people resisted the establishment of such areas.

The extension of nature conservation areas continued in post-apartheid South Africa despite the existence of the land restitution process. In this regard, a narrative of the destructive nature of people allowed the post-apartheid government to disinherit and forcibly relocate local people. This was amply illustrated by the land claim settlements on land included in the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park World Heritage Site. Here, successful land claimants were prohibited from moving back onto their land by laws that aimed to protect the ‘integrity’ of the site.

In the next chapter, I will illustrate how the LSDI’s emphasis on the development of an eco-tourism industry legitimated existing nature conservation areas and paved the way for the declaration of more of these areas. The primacy of nature conservation as land use strategy in Maputaland also influenced the type of ‘development’ projects that were introduced to local people. One of the main reasons why craft production was selected as a development initiative was because it had such low impact on the natural environment and allowed the authorities greater control over those who harvested raw plant materials in parks.

Like Ferguson's (1990) “anti-politics machine”, development in Maputaland served to de-politicise a highly contested form of land use. Through the mechanisms of development, nature conservation was constructed as a resource in the economic transformation of the area. Local people were intimately tied to the fate of such areas since they were told that eco-tourism would bring economic salvation. The practice of nature conservation was thus disentangled from the violent intrusions that the state made

on the autonomy of local people. The LSDI also negates the historical political process through which the people in the Maputaland region became marginalised. As such, the LSDI hopes to develop the region by making it part of the national and international economy. I have shown in this chapter that Maputaland has in fact been part of the national and international economy since before colonialism. It is precisely this participation that has led to its current peripheral status.

Tribal Authorities played a leading role in the establishment of nature conservation areas in Maputalana, through their complicit relationships with the colonial, union and apartheid governments. Even when KwaZulu gained “independence” as a homeland, nature conservation areas continued to expand under an IFP government. In this regard, I showed how Tribal Authorities benefited from the income from these areas. In chapter four, I will focus on the post-apartheid relationship between chiefs, the land and regular people. I will show that the link between chiefs and the land was not cut and that Tribal Authorities find various ways to capitalise on “tradition”. Sometimes these strategies include the establishment of “community conservation areas”.

In the establishment and extension of nature conservation areas, women were particularly hard hit. Due to apartheid policies, these women could not leave the homeland and had to make do with ever-shrinking subsistence agriculture plots. In chapter five I will focus on the economic strategies that women developed to cope with the long absence of men and the meagre opportunities that subsistence agriculture presented. Women’s linkage to agriculture and food also made them more likely to resist the establishment of nature conservation areas since the competing land use strategies



impacted more directly on them. In chapter six I will look at the ways in which both men and women resisted the establishment and existence of nature conservation areas.

## Chapter 3

### Branding Maputaland:

#### Eco-tourism, Cultural preservation and the crafts trade

*"THEMBALETHU [a "cultural village" on iLala Weavers' premises] is a contemporary version of the traditional Zulu kraal and is typical of the style of homestead found in these North-Eastern [sic] regions of Zululand. An interesting feature of the modern 'Cone-on-Cylinder' (rondavel) style of homestead is the Headman's hut, which is built in the square shape, to differentiate his hut from the others"*

-Source: iLala Weavers Brochure (n. d.)

*"This live-in museum will provide visitors with the opportunity to experience first hand bead working, basket weaving and other crafts used in their daily lives"*

-Source: iLala Weavers Brochure (n. d.)

*"But it is their culture!"*

-A domestic tourist on the living conditions of people in Maputaland.

For more than a century, people in Maputaland were subjected to great brutality at the hands of nature conservation authorities: their land was forcefully taken away from them; they lost access to grazing land, agricultural plots and natural resources; and their movements were severely restricted and monitored. In the post-apartheid era, nature conservation and its twin industry, eco-tourism was touted as the industries that would deliver economic development to Maputaland. Such was the belief among South African politicians that tourism would "bring development" that they proclaimed it as one of the key elements of the so-called African Renaissance (Mokaba 1998: 7). To this effect, the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism launched a R180 million Tourism Action Plan for marketing South Africa as an international tourist destination in 1999 (Moyle

1999:140). In the same year, the National Department of Agriculture initiated the LandCare project which, among other things, promoted more sophisticated craft products for a growing tourism sector (Kotze 2000: 22). Various advertisement campaigns, such as the proudly South African campaign<sup>1</sup>, have also been launched locally to raise awareness among South Africans about the potential of the tourism industry to create jobs and promote economic development. In Maputaland, the large-scale LSDI promoted tourism as a prime strategy to deliver development and macro-economic growth to the area (Turner 2001:374).

As an economic activity, tourism played to the international community's insistence on environmental protection (cf. Dold 1999: 32). Tourism was also portrayed as a growth industry<sup>2</sup> whose economic benefits would trickle down to every level of the economy. This trickle-down effect was supposedly set in motion by the salaries that local people earned in the tourism industry. In the literature it was assumed that these salaries were spent within the local economy and that these spending patterns stimulate growth in such sectors as retail and agriculture<sup>3</sup>. Besides the cash that the tourism industry supposedly injected into local economies, it also promised to expand the consumer market within such economies. It promised to do so by attracting wealthier consumers to the area, thereby increasing the spending power within the local economy, and increasing the money-earning potential of entrepreneurs. This condition stimulated the informal

---

<sup>1</sup> Large retailers such as Woolworths attach a Proudly South African logo to a product if more than 80% of the product was produced in South Africa.

<sup>2</sup> The neoliberal rhetoric allows for the interchangeability of economic growth and development. According to this rhetoric, economic growth trickles down to all spheres of the economy, triggering development in the most marginalised sectors.

<sup>3</sup> In a promotional article about the Shamwari Game Reserve, Cameron (1999: 127) describes how profits from this "project" trickled down to local people. See also Turner (2001: 372) on the supposed positive effects of eco-tourism on local people.

economy and the creation of supposedly lucrative local industries such as the production and sale of crafts.

The LSDI veered somewhat off the path of neo-liberal economic doctrine. In its development plans, it did not wait for the trickle down effect of the tourism industry. Instead, the LSDI intervened directly in the informal craft industry of Maputaland<sup>4</sup>. To this end, they trained crafters and built numerous craft stalls next to the tarred roads that take tourists to their destinations.

Of all informal sector activities that the LSDI could promote it focused on the craft industry. Like other developers, the LSDI were enthusiastic about the fact that craft projects required low capital input, used only locally available resources and relied on traditional skills (Grundy 1984: 11; McIntosh 1991a: 247; and Kotze 2000: 21-22). Furthermore, the craft industry supposedly provided for a wide spectrum of production possibilities: from part-time independent piecework to full-time work on an industrial scale. This, combined with the fact that production was locally situated also made the craft industry an ideal economic activity for women and a unique solution to the supposed feminisation of poverty (Preston-Whyte 1991: 262). Another conceived advantage of the crafts industry was that all tourists supposedly wanted to buy souvenirs of their visits (OECD 1995: 10, 24-25, 29-30). In theory, the crafts industry thus lent itself perfectly to solving some of the economic problems facing Maputaland, namely a large unemployed female population with few marketable skills and no capital.

---

<sup>4</sup> The development fraternity in South Africa has promoted informal sector activities since the 1980s as a means to absorb surplus labour and to provide entrepreneurial experience to the poor. However, many writers are highly critical of this practice, claiming that it plays a key role in maintaining and perpetuating an unequal and discriminatory social order in society as a whole. The informal sector also relieves the state of its welfare obligations (Van der Waal & Sharp 1988: 136-144).



Various other developers and game park owners in the region also became involved in craft projects in Maputaland<sup>3</sup>. Increasingly, craft production was embraced as a fitting companion to the planned eco-tourism business in the area (McIntosh 1991a: 247). To this end, developers continuously stressed the importance of “sustainable utilisation” and controlled access to nature conservation areas. In this discourse, nature conservation officials featured prominently as scientific managers of the resource base. Their monitoring and control of people in parks were justified by the patronising concern they had for the locals’ informal businesses. Thus the management of the resource base took central stage to the success of the craft industry, not the market for the products or its profitability. Developers did survey upon survey to determine exactly how much the crafters were harvesting, where and how often but little in the way of market research and advertising.

Many developers also tried to control the human danger that lurked on the borders of their nature conservation areas through the craft industry. It was often said that the production and sale of ethnic crafts contributed to the conservation of “heritage” and “culture”. Duggan (1997: 31-47) claims that the preservation of certain traditions led to ethnic pride and “cultural revitalisation” among indigenous peoples. Conservationists in Maputaland often depicted local people as degenerate and blamed the loss of their culture on the “reckless” manner in which they utilised natural resources (See Anon 1998a). KZN Wildlife even held education workshops that taught local schoolchildren about their lost “indigenous conservation techniques”. In these workshops, the conservation officials

---

<sup>3</sup> Some of these projects merely provided training workshops for crafters while others aimed to promote the craft products of Maputaland to a wider international market. Still other “craft projects” concentrated solely on the erection of craft markets. Depending on the developer, the craft projects also varied widely in extent

taught children about cultural taboos pertaining to certain animal and plant species, and about sustainable harvesting techniques.

In this chapter, I will investigate the role of developers such as the LSDI in establishing a formal crafts industry in Maputaland. I will pay particular attention to the process through which developers aimed to make tourists' experience more predictable, calculable, efficient and controllable. I argue that the "development" of the craft industry led to increased rationalisation in that trade. I will also look at the ethnic "branding" of the region and at tourists' expectations about the people they visited and the crafts they bought. I will show how ethnic stereotypes affected tourists' buying behaviour and influenced development plans for the crafts trade. Central to such plans were the pressure to get craft producers to make more recognisably Zulu crafts. These development pressures have impoverished local crafters, led to the growing importation of foreign crafts and dehumanised contact between craft producers and tourists. This process has also led to more control over both producers and consumers. I argue that these were the unanticipated consequences of a rationalised trade.

The chapter will be organised as follows. Starting with a theoretical discussion about rationalisation and authenticity, I will move on to an ethnographic analysis of the process through which the craft industry in Maputaland was "developed". I will then look at the supposed expectations about authenticity among tourists. Lastly, I will analyse the effect of the craft industry's "development" on the crafters. By looking at the developers, the tourists and the crafters, I will draw some conclusions about the unanticipated consequences of an increasingly rationalised industry.

---

or size. Some "public" projects like the one at Mbaswana cost millions of rand while others did not even run into four figure sums.

### **About rationalisation and authenticity**

My analysis of the development of the crafts trade necessitates a brief discussion of the concepts “rationalisation” and “authenticity” as they are used in social scientific literature.

The classic social theorist Weber (1947: 333-340) discerned a basic similarity of structure and process in the otherwise dissimilar enterprises of religion, government, education and business. According to Weber, these activities exemplified the characteristics of bureaucratic organisation. First, there was a division of labour in which experts were employed to perform specific tasks, making the organisation as a whole more efficient. Second, they followed a principle of hierarchy in which each position was supervised by a higher authority. Third, rules and regulations ensured uniform performances of every task and produced continuity beyond the lifetime of individual employees. People’s authority within a bureaucracy was based on legal-rational rules rather than tradition or charisma. Bureaucracies were also characterised by their impersonality. Weber wrote that in a bureaucracy, work was carried out *sine ira et studio*, “without hatred or passion”, making it supremely rational. Last, within a bureaucracy, hiring was based on technical qualifications rather than on favouritism. In his analysis, Weber (1947) also noted that bureaucracies had potential negative consequences such as a too strict adherence to rules that could stifle initiative. This pointed to the unanticipated consequences of supremely rationalised processes. Weber was alarmed at the

bureaucratisation of social life and warned that people would one day be caught in the “iron cage of rationality”.

Weber’s work on bureaucracies spawned a deluge of social research on “formal” organisations (Gouldner 1950; Merton 1968; and Udy 1959). In a recent exploration of the bureaucratisation process, Ritzer (1996) focuses on the “McDonaldization” of society. He described the McDonaldized society as a system of “iron cages” in which all institutions are dominated by the production principles of the fast-food restaurant, McDonalds. In this fast-food restaurant, all tasks are broken down to the smallest possible level and are then rationalised to find the single most efficient method for completing each task. All other methods are then deemed inefficient and are discarded. The result is an efficient, logical sequence of methods that can be repeated incessantly to produce the same outcome. This outcome is predictable and all aspects of the process are easily controlled. Additionally, quantity (or calculability) becomes the measurement of good performance. It is a model that universities, hospitals, businesses and other “formal” social organisations have eagerly copied.

In the process of McDonaldization, products are standardised (McDonaldized) and differences between the products of distinct companies are eroded. As more and more companies around the globe take on the characteristics of McDonaldized systems, the consumers have little choice but to frequent these businesses, as fewer and fewer options are readily available. In this context, multinational corporations such as McDonalds have to manufacture a sense of difference (Ritzer 1996). They do this by spending large sums of money on the development of a brand (cf. Klein 2000).

However, Ritzer (1996) shows that like bureaucratisation, McDonaldization has unanticipated consequences that sometimes undermine its goals. For instance, at these fast-food outlets, people often have to wait in long lines for their food. The system of efficiently producing and distributing McDonalized food also creates tonnes of waste and a food cultivation system of questionable ethics.

Whilst social scientists working on development have emphasised the bureaucratic nature of development agencies themselves (vide Chambers 1980 and Hoben 1980), few have considered how development initiatives force bureaucratisation and different degrees of rationalisation onto its target industry. The aim of this chapter is to explore these processes, particularly the McDonaldization of the craft industry in Maputaland.

Another important component of my argument is that the rationalisation of craft markets in Maputaland was driven by the supposed expectations of tourists. According to the literature, the majority of tourists expect to find authentic experiences and objects in their travels to foreign places<sup>6</sup>. Authenticity refers to the degree to which an experience or object seem real (not staged), or to the degree to which such an object or experience conforms to expectations about it. The tourists' obsession with the authentic has been explained on two fronts.

---

<sup>6</sup> Littrell, Anderson and Brown (1993), claim that tourists define the authenticity of crafts based on the characteristics of the object, the craftsperson and the shopping experience. Building on their theory, Harkin (1995) approached the study of authenticity from a phenomenological perspective. He defined authenticity as the fit between an object (signifier), its context (the referent) and the idea of what a "real" object looked like (signified). On a more empirical level, McIntosh and Prentice (1999) studied tourists' search for authenticity in the context of historical parks in Britain and claim that authenticity has as much to do with the reliability of face value as the cultural desire and interpretation of genuineness. In a study of tourists that visited Spain, Waller and Lea (1999) identified four factors relevant to the authenticity of tourist experience; the direct contact with the distinctive culture of the place to be visited, the number of tourists at the site (equating larger numbers with inauthenticity), the level of independence that the tourist experiences and the level to which the place to be visited conformed to stereotypes about it. They claim that shared

First, various writers have indicated that tourists are actually seeking *existential* authenticity. According to these writers, the search for existential authenticity is a post-modern activity born out of a fundamental discontent with modern western life (See Waller & Lea 1999; Wang 1999). This discontent centres on the alienation that modernisation, secularisation, urbanisation and globalisation caused in the West (Nas 2002:142-143). For writers of this timbre, the search for authenticity can thus have little to do with the realness of toured objects or events. Instead, the search for an authentic state of being is facilitated by the liminal<sup>7</sup> experience that tourists have when they are removed from the constraints of daily life (Murphy 1985:130).

Other authors such as Graburn (1979) and Harkin (1995) argue that the quest for authentic experiences and objects is merely a means to an end, this end being enhanced status. According to these writers, tourists seek the exotic because it has the prestigious connection with international travellers and explorers. By being associated with the class of people who go on these exotic travels, a tourist's social standing is raised by his travels (Littrell, Anderson and Brown 1993: 199). In this context, Harkin (1995:653) points out that souvenirs have to be markedly different from things regularly consumed by the collector's reference group because if they were too commonplace his/ her travel expedition will diminish in value, as will his/ her claims to higher social status.

In my analysis of craft "development" initiatives, I have used these insights to show how the craft industry in Maputaland was McDonaldized. Predictability and control became central features of the industry as a result of development. Another feature of the McDonaldized craft industry was that it manufactured and imitated the ethnic brand

---

social representations of authenticity exist and that tourists seek it to some extent. Wang (1999) linked the search for authenticity to the study of liminality.

constructed by developers and advertisers. I will show that this ethnic brand became the standard against which tourists judged their experiences as authentic or not.

### **McCrafs: Developing a rational craft industry**

When I did my research, a large network of craft markets and stalls criss-crossing the Internet connections, tarred highways and dusty roads that took tourists to their destinations in Maputaland. In structure, some of these markets closely resembled modern shopping malls, complete with tenants, hierarchical steering committees, and contracts. Other markets were so transient and short-lived that they could at best be described as “informal”. At these markets, individual craft traders could come and go as they pleased. While stalls and markets varied widely in terms of their structure, appearances and content, there was a general pattern discernible for the degree to which craft markets were rationalised. The rationality or informality of craft markets in Maputaland was reflected in the degree to which such markets catered for tourists. The most informal markets catered exclusively for local people while the most formal market was built to serve as a one-stop craft mall for tourists. To a large extent, the increased formalisation of craft markets was due to the interference of developers who aimed to cater to the supposed needs of tourists.

Perhaps the most informal craft markets in Maputaland were held on a monthly basis at the points where social pensions were paid out. Since a large portion of the adult population in this region was unemployed, state pensions were an important source of income for many households. Numerous traders peddled their goods to the rows of

---

<sup>7</sup> On liminality see Van Gennep 1960 and Turner 1967.

people that waited for their state pensions to be paid out. Although the buying was slow, the craft traders counted on the pensioners' old-fashioned taste to get rid of stock that was out of fashion. Second-hand clothes traders and food peddlers also rushed up and down the queues, tempting the tired pensioners with their wares. Pensioners could queue for up to ten hours before they were paid. At some point, they inevitably bought a drink or some snacks for the irritated grandchildren that most of them brought with. By midday, most of the pensioners and traders dispersed. If it was early enough, some traders moved on to the Mbaswana market to try and sell the remainder of their wares.

After receiving their pensions, thousands of people streamed to Mbaswana to buy groceries at the supermarket and to visit the stalls set up by hawkers a few blocks away. Many craft producers also came to buy raw plant materials such as *ilala*, *induli*, *idambayi*, *iqumbe* and *incema*<sup>8</sup> from the traders who set up stalls a block away from the supermarket. Even traders from other markets frequented the Mbaswana pension market to buy finished *ilala* and wooden crafts. Apart from the trade in raw materials, and in crafts, some women sold second-hand clothing spread out on pieces of plastic. The customers had to arrive early because there was a rapid turnover in the better crafts. Most traders in raw materials and crafts were gone by noon. After the midday heat subsided somewhat, only second-hand clothes traders and the rowdy customers of the beer garden remained at the Mbaswana market. Although women brewed and sold beer in the beer-garden, this space was largely a male preserve. Women were only there in a serving capacity and were seldom allowed to consume beer in public. Men slaughtered cattle near the beer garden, and hung the freshly slaughtered meat up in the trees to benefit from the



coolness of the shade. Customers stepped up and ordered meat, which was cut off the carcass in front of them and then barbecued on a grill next to the stall. As the day progressed the beer garden customers became rowdier and sometimes violent.

The traders selling at the Mbaswana pension market had considerable freedom: there were no organisational bodies or authorities that tried to control their movements or access to the market. This informality and flux allowed traders to maximise their profits. For instance, the traders selling second-hand clothes occupied a spot in the morning that allowed their potential customers to browse, away from the throngs of crafters buying raw plant material. By the time that the beer-garden's customers became rowdy, the second-hand traders moved to the raw plant material spot, which allowed their customers a quick exit from Mbaswana. I never saw a tourist at this market and local white people generally stayed away from Mbaswana on market days.

A multitude of hastily erected craft stalls dotted the sides of Maputaland's dusty tracks at irregular intervals, becoming more frequent as one neared larger villages such as Mbaswana. For the most part, the roadside stalls near Tshongwe, Mphakathini, Mozi and Mozi ZG Camp were flimsy in appearance, often with just a piece of plastic or dead palm leaves on top of a lopsided H-figure construction. Rusty car doors, dead tree branches and old tyres all served to prop up the structures. Most of these stalls sold only wooden crafts like bowls, walking sticks and wooden kitchen utensils. In addition to the main stock of wooden crafts, some stalls also sold 'traditional' Zulu shields made of cowhide. I took inventories of five of these stalls. None of them had more than twenty-one items for sale. In fact, the average number of crafts per stall was at a paltry fifteen. Roadside traders

---

<sup>8</sup> Of the eighty people selling raw materials at Mbaswana, fifty-six of them lived at Mabibi near Sibaya Lake. This was the only place in the area where one could harvest *incema* while other raw materials were

rarely sold their wares to the tourists that drove by at high speed, and received most of their orders from traders at other local craft markets such as Mbaswana and Ubumbano. Generally, a stall was erected, owned and manned by a single family who lived near the road. Outside the confines of the family, there were no written rules or higher authorities to which roadside stall owners answered.

The craft stall at the gate to the Sodwana Bay Park was a bit more rationalised than the other roadside stalls because it had a definite, although egalitarian, organisational structure. Its occupants were unrelated and only allowed talented men to join their ranks. They provided training for new recruits, did quality controls of the displayed crafts and shared money in the off-seasons. The men said that they used the same stall because the combined effect of all their crafts attracted more tourists. As such, each crafter could only produce fifteen items per month, which looked rather sorry when arranged in front of a stall next to a dusty road. Unlike the other roadside stalls, this stall catered exclusively for tourists. To this end, they sold small wooden replicas of expensive four-wheel drive vehicles and fishing boats, complete with diving equipment and rear-view mirrors. On advice from a local developer, the men also made provision for tourists to place orders for specific brands of vehicles and customised boats.

Arguably the most successful craft market in the Maputaland region<sup>9</sup> was located inside the Sodwana Bay National Park. The Ubumbano craft market consisted of a neat U-shaped row of wooden stalls. It was nestled in against a dune overgrown with indigenous flora. Tall trees in the centre of the row gave ample shade to the large

---

also in abundance here.

<sup>9</sup> When I did my research, the Sodwana Bay National Park was the most popular reservation in all of KwaZulu-Natal. On visits to the craft markets in other reservations in the area, it became clear that these

numbers of traders. The craft market was close to the beach and next to the road that led to the campsites and chalets within the Park. Brightly coloured baskets, sarongs, wooden bowls, reed mats and drums were displayed from the dark recesses of the stalls and on the open spaces in front of them. During the tourist high seasons, this craft market was a hive of activity as throngs of tourists browsed its stalls and haggled over prices (See Illustration 1, below).

**Illustration 1: The Ubumbano craft market, December 2000**



Only women were allowed to sell at the Ubumbano craft market. I conducted a survey of 131 traders at Ubumbano and found that eighty-three (63%) of them bought finished crafts from markets in Mbaswana, Tshongwe, Pongola, Manzini (Swaziland) and Durban. Although 113 (86%) of traders at this market still produced some of their own crafts<sup>10</sup>, eighteen (14%) traded solely in goods sourced from other markets. This allowed the traders at Ubumbano to display a large variety of items.

---

markets had very small numbers of visitors compared to those at Sodwana Bay. For instance, when I signed in at Tembe Elephant Park at 16:00 on a February day in 2002, I was only the second visitor for that day.

<sup>10</sup> Only a small percentage of these women harvested the raw material they used in the production of crafts. For the most part, Ubumbano crafters bought their raw materials at the bimonthly market in Mbaswana.

An elected committee of nine members managed the Ubumbano craft market. They comprised a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, vice-secretary, a treasurer and three regular members. Membership was restricted to people over the age of twenty-one and the annual membership fee was R20 per family, including those that did not sell at the market. This arrangement allowed men (who were not allowed to sell crafts) to stand for committee elections. Since the committee's inception, its chairman had always been a man. The committee decided on such matters as the distribution of stands to families, what kind of stands to clump together and on the "development" of the market. All membership fees went towards a communal bank account, to be used for possible future upgrades of the market. In the past, this money was enough to build the plank walls that housed the current market, while donations from SANLAM<sup>11</sup> and TELCOM<sup>12</sup> ensured that the market had a roof. In the allocation of stands, the senior traders tended to get the stalls at the more popular bottom end of the market, closest to the tourist parking lot and the popular pineapple stands. During the off-seasons when fewer people attended the market, traders were allowed to negotiate better stalls among themselves. However, since the LSDI started a pilot craft production project at this market, the Ubumbano committee seemed more eager to stop such informal agreements and to police the payment of membership fees. Although elected, the Ubumbano committee was not autonomous as its chairman answered to a KZN Wildlife official who issued directives and approved committee agendas.

All along the tarred roads constructed by the LSDI, this Initiative built similar-looking craft stalls from which local people could sell their crafts to tourists. These

---

<sup>11</sup> A large South African banking group.

<sup>12</sup> The South African telecommunications company.

rectangular buildings consisted of neat rows of individual stalls and for the most part remained fenced and locked. According to Khumbula Ndlovu, a prominent IFP politician in the area, this was because the LSDI still had to “get those crafters on their books so that they can get their money back”. He suspected that the LSDI would levy a rent on the occupants of these stalls. Another local man, Gijima Zikhali, said that the LSDI would not unlock these markets unless the “community” elected a committee that would take responsibility for the buildings. I could not locate a single LSDI employee who could confirm or deny these charges. What was clear however, was that these buildings offered tourists a very efficient way to get hold of souvenirs.

In 2000, the Uthungulu Regional Council (URC), in collaboration with the LSDI, built a large market building in Mbaswana at great cost. Aesthetically, this was a more pleasing building than the clones on the LSDI roads. The stalls differed in size and were set at angles relative to one another while the whole structure had a thatched roof. A tarred LSDI road would eventually pass right next to this new market, making it accessible to the expected large numbers of tourists. A local committee, consisting of eleven members, managed the new market building and levied rents of R50 per month on individual stalls. According to Godi Mhlongo, the URC did not want to hand the new building over to “the community” without having ensured that there was a proper institutional structure to take responsibility for its maintenance. The subsequently elected committee, of which he was the chairman, had to formulate and enforce rules that would ensure that the building was properly maintained. The majority of tenants in this new building found the rules to which they had to adhere to irksome. One trader, Ncamsile Penarie, complained that she wanted to sublet her stall because she could not afford the

rent. When she told the committee about this, they warned her that she would lose her stall if she sublet it. They later relaxed the rules somewhat and told Ncamsile that her tenants would have to sign a contract with the committee. The potential tenants were suspicious of the deal and decided not to rent space in the building. Ncamsile was so disappointed that she wanted to move to another market but was forced to stay on because of her contract.

Within the ordered cement confines of this new building in Mbaswana, there was limited scope for those events that made the pension market next to it so unpredictable. For instance, one could not hang a carcass off the beams of the new market, as the walkways were too narrow for livestock. The height of the stall counters also forced traders to stand up while serving their customers. In contrast, the pension market was characterised by clusters of talking, gossiping women serving their customers in between breast-feeding babies and serving up food to hordes of children running past. The simple fact that stalls were separated by walls and had built-in counters made these activities, so much part of the vibrant pension market, impossible.

The Ubumbano craft market, the new Mbaswana thatched market and the various LSDI craft stalls were the most rationalised of all the markets in my research area. At all of these markets, “development” money paid for the structures in which the traders were housed. In return for their largess, the developers insisted that elected local committees manage the buildings. As an LSDI developer said to me, “someone has to take responsibility for this structure else we will have to build another one next year”. With the election of ‘responsible’ committees, the developers forced hierarchical structures, bureaucratic procedures and rules onto a trade that was characterised by its informality.

These committees in turn, allowed for greater control of the traders. Craft committees could control access to 'their' markets through levying membership fees. But the committee was not autonomous and had to answer to various developers. The Ubumbano craft market's chairman had to report to a KZN Wildlife official, while the chairman at the Mbaswana market (Godi) liaised with the Uthungulu Regional Council. Godi also had to have their communal bank account audited by outsiders.

From a tourist point of view, the new Mbaswana market, the Ubumbano craft market and the LSDI stalls were more efficient than other craft stalls in the region. Their stable locations ensured that the tourist lost no time in searching for obscure markets. Furthermore, the compact layout of these markets guaranteed that a potential customer would not need to walk far to get what he or she was looking for. As such, the new buildings presented the tourist with a kind of supermarket for crafts where everything was under one roof. For tour operators, such markets presented a predictable way to give their clients a taste of the local culture. The security risks were minimal and few detours needed to be taken. These new markets became increasingly bureaucratised while they functioned to deliver predictability, calculability, efficiency and control for both the developers and tourists (See Ritzer 1996). In this regard, one can definitely indicate a process through which the developers' involvement in the crafts trade has led to the McDonaldization of the industry in Maputaland.

The McDonaldization of the crafts trade in Maputaland made it easier for formal sector businesses<sup>13</sup> to outsource their production to these markets. As such, craft producers in the region were easier to find and contact while their committees exercised

quality control. iLala Weavers, a business enterprise situated near Hluhluwe, outsourced some of its production to ‘informal’ crafters. This enabled iLala Weavers to advertise itself as “a community driven employment project”. iLala Weavers were not merely involved in the consumption of McDonaldized services and products but actively engaged in the invention of ethnic authenticity. The business premises comprised of a gallery and warehouse full of *ilala* baskets as well as a live-in village called Thembaletu, where tourists could observe how “real” Zulu people did beadwork, weaving and other crafts (See Appendix 5). On their 2000 website, iLala Weavers posted photographs and short biographies of “the artists” wearing “traditional” Zulu clothes. The site gave the impression that “traditional” local artists drove the whole project and that the money they generated went toward community development projects. In actual fact, a white man (Jan Botha) owned the business. A large portion of his stock came from anonymous producers at local markets such as Ubumbano. While doing fieldwork, Jan often came to Ubumbano to place and pick up orders. He insisted on paying less than the tourists for crafts and gave deadlines that forced the producers of laundry baskets to work up to eighteen hours a day. Jan only paid R240 (or R11.43 per day) for an order of thirty *ilala* paper baskets that took three weeks to complete (See Illustration 2 and 3, below). For three *ilala* laundry baskets, which took between seven and ten days to complete, Jan only paid R80 (See Illustration 4, below). For *ilala* “trays”, Jan only paid R25 per set. These trays took between two and seven days to complete, giving the crafters between R3.57 and R12.50 per day (See Illustration 5, below). Overall, Jan did not pay the crafters anything near the government’s minimum wage.

---

<sup>13</sup> Afri-can-do, African Baskets and Curios and AfriCult were formal sector businesses that advertised their crafts on the Internet. These businesses outsourced the production of crafts to women in Maputaland and



**Illustration 2: *iLala* paper baskets, December 2000**



**Illustration 3: Woman producing *ilala* paper baskets, December 2000**



---

only advertised, sold and redistributed the wares.

**Illustration 4: Woman producing *ilala* laundry basket, September 2000**



**Illustration 5: iLala trays, September 2000**



Jan allowed little creative licence in the production of crafts and gave meticulous instructions on the use of colours, weaving techniques and designs. In order to ensure that the crafters produced exactly what he wanted, Jan forced them to buy plant dyes from him. These dyes were twice as expensive as the ones on sale at Mbaswana and would not “take” unless a large quantity of it was used. In one case, Jan refused to pay Dumisile Zikhali for an order that she delivered because he could not recall that Dumisile bought her dyes from him.

The easy access to crafters that the McDonaldized craft industry allowed made such exploitation possible. However, this exploitation was fuelled by developers’ promises that locals would grow rich through the sale of crafts. Dumisile meekly accepted Jan’s refusal to pay for the crafts that he ordered from her. She hoped that his next order would be larger and that he would notice her willingness to please. Dumisile did not want to burn her bridges before the expected boom in the trade came.

### **Tourists and their branded expectations**

Whereas the developers and formal sector businesses actively pushed for the rationalisation of the crafts trade in the Maputaland region, tourists were more ambiguous about the process. On the one hand, they wanted easy, predictable access to cheap souvenirs. However, on the other hand, most tourists to the region looked for authentic crafts that did not reflect any of the characteristics of the “McDonaldized commodities” that they could buy at home.

Sodwana Bay was a rather exclusive vacationing spot, known as a good scuba diving and deep-sea fishing destination. But one needed an (expensive) four-wheel drive vehicle to get there, as well as expensive diving and fishing equipment. One either had to own a boat or charter one at great cost from a local business. As such, these activities remained the prerogative of the wealthy. Only wealthy foreign tourists could afford to go to Sodwana Bay, as accommodation in the area was almost exclusively located in up-market game lodges where a night's lodging could cost anything upwards of R1 000 per person sharing. Furthermore, no packaged tours went to Sodwana Bay while many foreign tourists chartered private aircraft to take them to their destinations. Likewise, among the South African tourists that I encountered at Fanie's Island and at Mapelane, Tembe and Ndumu nature conservation areas, there was the general impression that that Sodwana Bay was a "yuppie hangout" for domestic tourists.

Although these tourists had to drive (or fly) past decrepit houses and patchy crops on their way to Sodwana Bay, they were not particularly shocked to see such poverty. I talked to thirty-five foreign tourists whom had visited Sodwana Bay. Three of them were from Germany, two from Ireland, seven from France, three from the United States of America, nine from the Netherlands and two were from Belgium. I could not determine the nationality of the remaining nine foreign tourists. These tourists often referred to the poverty they observed as particular to the people in the area's "culture" and felt that it was part of an authentic experience. Some of them thought of the straw or mud-and-wattle huts as quaint hangovers of a pre-modern era and lamented the "Westernisation" apparent in areas where tin roofs replaced the "traditional" straw. I asked a Dutch woman

if she would live in the houses she described as quaint. Shocked, she replied that it is not in her culture to do so.

I also talked to thirty-three domestic tourists at Sodwana Bay. Most of them were from Gauteng. These tourists continuously contested the presence of “locals” in the park<sup>14</sup>. A man from Johannesburg, Guy Peters, told me that if it were not for the Natal Parks Board’s militant protection of the area during apartheid, there would not have been anything left of the natural environment. According to Guy, the locals were destructive and careless, and had to be controlled. He was vexed that Sodwana Bay was given to the locals and said that nothing good could come of it as “they are not on our level of development”. Some of the other domestic tourists contrasted the local communities’ “parasitic reliance” on nature conservation areas with their own hard work and financial contributions to the upkeep of the parks. On numerous occasions domestic tourists refused to pay the community levy at the entrance to the Sodwana Bay Park. One these culprits retorted that, “why should I pay for them to lie under the trees all day?”

I also found a slight difference between the motivations of domestic and foreign tourists for buying crafts at the Ubumbano craft market. In this regard, I interviewed twenty-seven foreign tourists and eighteen domestic tourists there. On the whole, the foreign tourists were more preoccupied with searching for existential authenticity in their buying experience (See Figure 1, below). For instance, eleven (41%) foreign tourists bought crafts at Ubumbano because they believed that the market had an authentic atmosphere. Four of these tourists were particularly impressed with the fact that women produced crafts where one could see them. This was a far cry from the ‘invisibly’

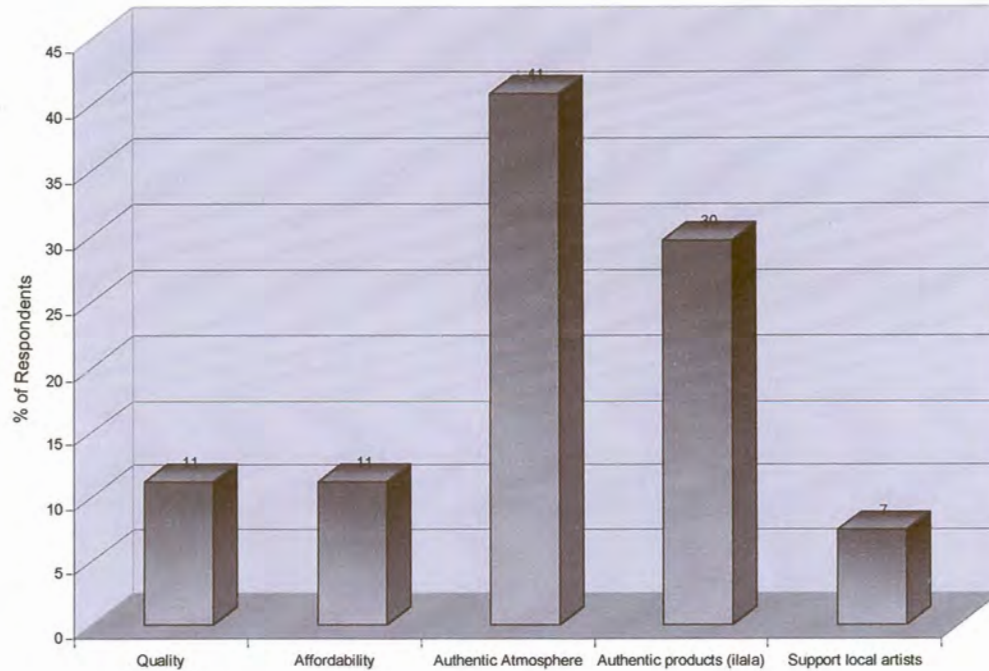
produced factory goods that they usually bought at home and made the experience seem more “real”. One man, Antoine Gaugris, remarked that the Ubumbano market was “unspoilt” because there was no evidence of factory-produced goods from the East. Two other foreign tourists remarked that it was “refreshing” to see the traders smiling and being so friendly to strangers. They told me anecdotes about their shopping experiences in the United States, where shop assistants were often rude to their customers.

Ritzer (1996) shows how the employees of international corporations such as McDonalds are forced to have scripted interactions with customers. Part of this script is a smile and a friendly greeting. Given such mechanical interactions, it is not surprising that the foreign tourists complained that the smiles they receive at “home” were not real. For many foreign tourists, part of their experience consisted of verifying their visual impressions of the market. Most of them tried to interact with crafters. Often, they were delighted to find out that almost no one at the market spoke English. It was a verification that the global village where English is almost the *lingua franca*, did not reach this remote location. They were also pleased when the women refused to have their pictures taken. One French woman remarked to me that they were probably scared that the camera would steal their souls. She believed that these crafters were so isolated in this remote part of the world that they were ignorant of the most basic of technologies, supporting her belief that she was truly away from the world she knows.

---

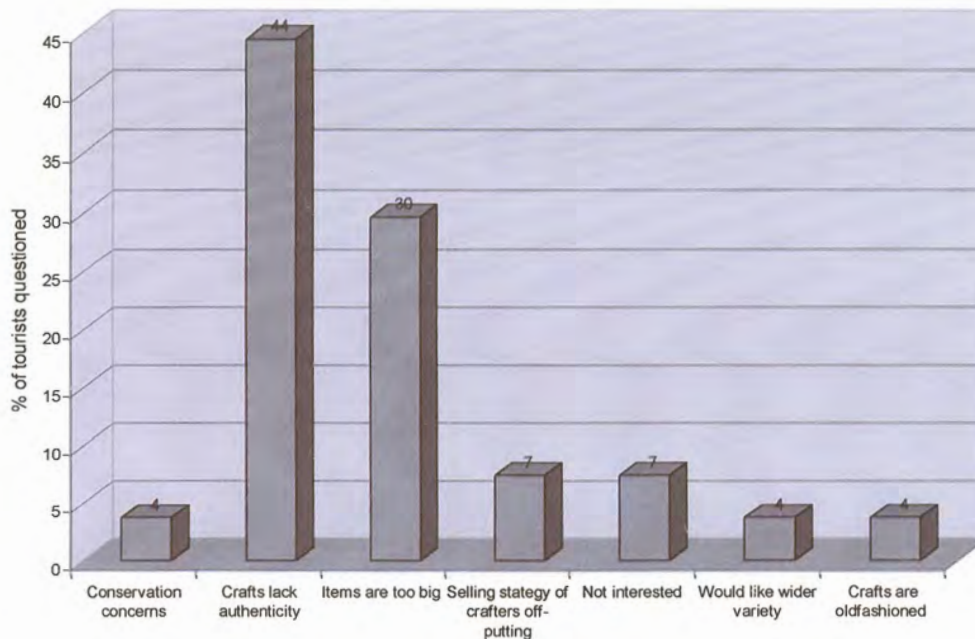
<sup>14</sup> In this regard, Turner (2001, 365-366) shows that domestic tourists in South Africa continuously contest those instances in which local communities receive as part of the land claim settlements, an income from nature conservation or have harvesting access to conservation areas.

**Figure 1: Why foreign tourists bought crafts at the Ubumbano craft market, December 2000**



For the twenty-seven foreign tourists I talked to, the crafts they bought were souvenirs of a liminal experience. Eight (30%) of them only looked for crafts that were small enough to transport while another three (11%) cited affordability as their main concern. However, twelve (44%) of the foreign tourists I interviewed complained about the inauthenticity of crafts at the market (See Figure 2, below).

**Figure 2: Why foreign tourists did not buy crafts at Ubumbano craft market, December 2000**



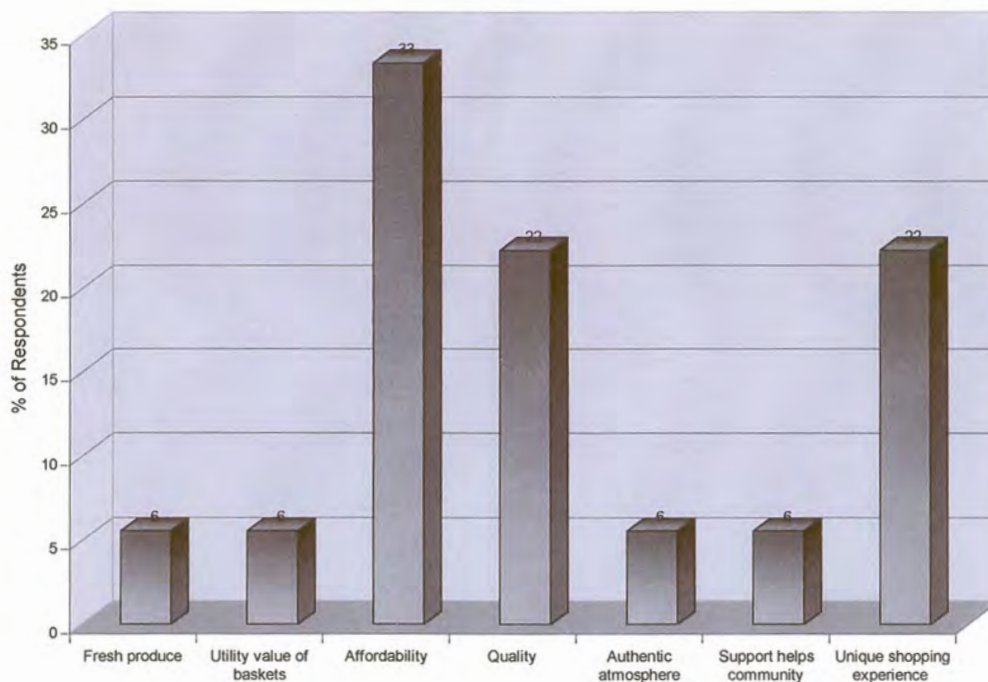
Five of these tourists complained about the plastic linings of some of the baskets. Three others said that the crafts were not unique to the area and would not remind them of the Zulu they visited. One man remarked that he did not like the Nike, Billabong and other commercial logos on the *umhlala* (monkey-orange) crafts that the little boys sold. He suggested that they return to “real Zulu patterns”. These replies seem to suggest that the perceived authenticity of crafts played a large role in the tourist’s decision to buy it. In this regard, souvenirs were reminders of a unique experience (the hustle and bustle or spontaneity of the Ubumbano craft market) and therefore needed to have some kind of resemblance to that experience.

The majority of the eighteen domestic tourists I interviewed at Ubumbano, emphasised affordability, quality, and utility value in deciding which crafts to buy (See



Figure 3 and 4, below). Only one domestic tourist said that she liked the market's authentic atmosphere. Local tourists were familiar with buying crafts in South Africa, and for them crafts were not icons of liminal experiences. These tourists also kept their interactions with the crafters to a minimum. A major complaint was that the traders were not willing to haggle over prices. There was also widespread suspicion that the traders only pretended not to understand English.

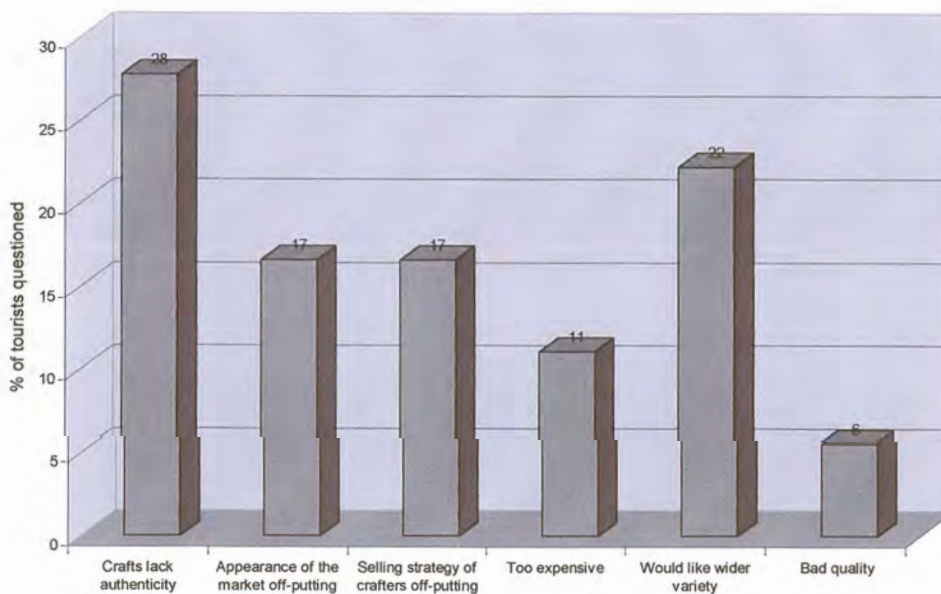
**Figure 3: Why domestic tourists bought crafts at Ubumbano craft market, December 2000.**



Domestic tourists did not explicitly search for exotic crafts such as wooden masks. For example, one woman said that she did not “want that ugly thing in [her] house”. Most of their purchases were destined to decorate living rooms at home. When I did my fieldwork, natural fibres were fashionable in the South African interior decorating industry. The abundance of these materials at Ubumbano made it possible for domestic

tourists to search for cheap alternatives to expensive decorator’s pieces. But for domestic tourists the purchase and consumption of crafts differed from that of everyday commodities. Due to Sodwana Bay’s reputation as an upmarket vacation spot, crafts from this region supported the claim of domestic tourists to higher social status. To own these crafts was a token that one had visited Sodwana Bay. At the Ubumbano craft market, I also saw many tourists with whole lists of things to buy for their friends and family at home. I heard one tourist who was obviously poorer than her companions say to a friend “No, those baskets look like the ones at Durban. They’re going to think I went to Marine Parade [the seafront district of Durban]”. Through her purchase this woman did not want to be associated with Durban- obviously a less prestigious tourist destination. She searched for crafts that would signal to people at home that she went to Sodwana Bay, an up-market resort.

**Figure 4: Why domestic tourists did not buy crafts at Ubumbano market, December 2000**



Thus for both domestic and foreign tourists, the authenticity of crafts sold at Ubumbano craft market was important. The perceived authenticity of such crafts depended to a large measure on the degree to which they conformed to preconceived notions about the producers and their products. Such expectations were largely informed and shaped by the media.

In its advertising of the Maputaland region to tourists, marketers often reverted to the tribal idiom when describing people living there<sup>15</sup>. According to these advertisers, Maputaland was home to the proud Zulu “tribe” where Zulus lived authentic lives according to their own culture (Ross 2001). This culture supposedly reflected a simple self-contained society in which the various families, living in separate kraals under patriarchs, were the basic units (Grossert 1978). As hangovers of a pre-modern era, the Zulu was also said to have very little contact with the outside world and produced what they needed from raw materials that they got from their immediate environment. However, people living in this region wore clothes produced in factories all over the world. The idea of a self-contained society was also shattered by the fact that a large portion of the economically active population of the area had been employed outside it for more than a century. In a survey I did of 129 women at the Ubumbano craft market, sixty-three (48%) were living in woman-headed households. Despite these discrepancies, the Zulu warrior in his loincloth made of animal hides and a spear still remained the defining symbol of the Zulu living in Maputaland today.

Although the area was never home to the “Zulu”, marketers advertised the area as such. Commercial tour operators did not only mirror expectations of the type of images

---

<sup>15</sup> On the depiction of local people as “tribes”, see De La Harpe (1999); Grossert (1978 2, 38), Jolles (1993) and Mountain (1990).

that tourists would want to buy, but also actively engaged in the construction of the identities of people to be visited<sup>16</sup> (Mellinger 1994). Postcards of “real” Zulu were also for sale at most of the tourist areas. In this context, the “Zulu identity” offered the marketer a unique product. It had been “advertised” for almost a hundred and fifty years through the media. Furthermore, this identity proved to elicit strong reactions from the “buying public”. In the nineteenth century the Zulu first came to prominence when they defeated the British army at Isandlwana with nothing more than “primitive” spears. This historical defeat caused a sensation throughout imperial Britain and the rest of the world. When the British later destroyed the Zulu kingdom the Zulu were the subject of much sympathy. The depiction of the Zulu as a noble warrior-nation with a proud heritage had endured until this day (Ross 2001). Movies were made about Zulu warriors and king Shaka, and the exotic Zulu lifestyle was even popularised by the Boy Scout movement. In this sense, the Zulu identity was an internationally recognised brand (cf. Hamilton 1998:8-35).

It thus made business sense to just extend the area in which the Zulu was said to live, and to convince the inhabitants of that area to successfully copy the brand. Developers trained crafters to make more authentic, easily recognisable “Zulu” baskets and local people had to perform “authentic” Zulu ceremonies. I witnessed one occasion where a lodge owner asked “visiting” Zulu dancers to discard their T-shirts because it did not look “real”. Women were expected to dance topless, despite their reluctance to do so. Far from being the revival of a proud tradition, the production of Zulu baskets and staged

---

<sup>16</sup> Mellinger (1994: 759, 777) points to the powerful role that tourist postcards of the period between 1893 and 1906 played in the construction and perpetuation of stereotypes about African Americans. He concludes that the media plays a large role in shaping tourists' expectations about the people and the crafts that they would encounter on their travels.

performances was an invention of a tradition framed by contemporary stereotype and economic interests.

Tourists that visited the Sodwana Bay region searched for authentic crafts that were unique to the area and that did not betray a McDonaldized production process. Ironically, this expectation of authenticity was a result of the McDonaldization of the tourism industry in the region. As such, expectations of ethnicity and uniqueness reflected on the success with which the region had been “branded”.

### **Developing poverty: The craft producers**

‘Development’ changed the relationship between local people and the tourists that visited their areas. Since neo-liberal economists placed their hope of economic growth and community development on tourists, tourists became powerful actors. Tourists’ expectations about Maputaland and its people therefore played an integral part in the marketing and development of the area. Numerous developers have tried to shape local people and their products to better comply with the tourists’ expectations.

Local people were motivated by the expectations of jobs and higher wages in the long term to conform to these expectations. The supposedly secure income that they could derive from crafts and performances would spontaneously flow into the area once local people correctly mirrored stereotypes about themselves.

Developers such as iLala Weavers and the LSDI pressurised crafters in the region to produce more easily recognisable Zulu crafts. They paid much attention to the “revival” of the art of beer-basket weaving and sold beer baskets (*izichumo*) as

items (See Illustration 6, below). However, a finely woven beer basket of 15cm in diameter took five days to complete. This was in contrast to the local baskets, coarser in weave and 30cm in diameter, which only took one day to complete. Developers who commissioned both types of baskets only paid R15 for these articles. Although the “real” Zulu baskets were more time-consuming to produce, the crafters who produced them were not compensated for their extra effort.

**Illustration 6: Zulu baskets (*izichumo*)**



Locals did not simply conform to stereotypical ethnic depictions of themselves because developers had told them to do so. They learnt of these preconceptions and expectations through their own encounters with “guests” in the market. In the literature, there is widespread recognition that “hosts” are generally well aware of the stereotypes or expectations that their “guests” have of them (See for example, Graburn 1979:4-19). At the Ubumbano craft market, these stereotypes were constantly played out and exaggerated. As such, craft producers continuously manufactured more exotic and grotesque crafts.

At the Ubumbano craft market, women went to Swaziland to buy wooden masks that were “roughly made”. These ancient-looking Swazi masks were actually brand new but went through an artificial ageing process. Freshly painted masks were sanded and

were left in the sun for a few days until it had a weather-beaten look. The producers also attached dirty raffia to some of the masks to contribute to the general appearance of decay. In buying these masks, tourists often believed that they were buying priceless “tribal” heirlooms. Instead, they were buying mass-produced and brand-new commercial crafts. Apart from this deceit, these masks were also never part of the cultural repertoire of the area.

Prudence Zikhali was one of the women who regularly went to Swaziland to buy these crafts, and bought some of these ancient-looking masks in Manzini. Prudence did not like these masks and said that their ugliness scared her. However, she had a feeling that these masks would appeal to the tourists who had “strange” tastes. Her intuition proved to be very profitable. Prudence was amazed when tourists who drove brand-new luxury cars bought such ugly old things. Nevertheless, other hawkers at Ubumbano noticed that Prudence’s ugly masks sold faster than the other highly stylised, polished masks from Swaziland. They started buying the “older”, more exotic masks. One hawker even lamented that there were so few ugly, old masks for sale at Manzini and that she had to look somewhere else for them. Thus, the exotic expectations of tourists fed back to the traders and influenced production techniques.

The traders at Ubumbano were also aware of the prices that tourists were willing to pay for crafts. Hence, craft traders in both the formal and informal sector were forced to find cheaper sources of production. They outsourced craft production to ever-poorer sections of the economy<sup>17</sup>. This process happened on all levels, from the shift of production within the household to a shift of production to sweatshops in other

postcolonial countries. Within households, older women required their daughters-in-law to produce crafts until they settled elsewhere with their husbands<sup>18</sup>. A middle-aged woman, Kiphile Zikhali, expressed the wish that her son would get married so that she could retire. She still wanted to sell crafts but did not want to go through the arduous task of harvesting raw materials, dyeing and drying them and weaving baskets. Women without access to the labour of daughters-in-law, cast their sights onto poor, socially marginalised neighbours. These neighbours often included recently widowed women from elsewhere and women with limited access to the female networks in the region. At Ubumbano, Thobile Mlozi told me that she bought crafts from her neighbour, a widow who could not afford to go to the market in Mbaswana. This woman originally came from Jozini and moved to the Mbaswana area many years ago, after getting married. She did not get along with her in-laws and could not make many friends due to all her domestic duties. When her husband died, she was left penniless and isolated. The widow became dependent on the alms of her neighbours. They soon grew tired of supporting her. She decided to start making crafts to sell. Once she had a reasonable amount of finished crafts, the widow approached her neighbours for a loan so that she could go to Mbaswana to sell her crafts. They refused and instead offered to buy her stock. Thobile paid only R9 for a basket that could command between R20 and R30 on the markets. She said that the widow did not have a choice in accepting this measly sum as “she had to eat”.

---

<sup>17</sup> According to the literature, the shift of production to ever poorer and more marginalised people is central to the process of globalisation (Douthwaite 1992; Klein 2000; Van der Waal & Sharp 1988: 136-144).

<sup>18</sup> In the past, women only had to work for their mother-in-laws until they bore their first child. Thereafter, married couples usually moved to a house of their own (Krige 1950). Nowadays, most women have



Many traders at tourist-orientated craft markets such as Ubumbano stopped producing crafts and bought finished products from places such as the Mbaswana pension market. These traders thus shifted the burden of production onto local markets. I took a sample of 129 traders at Ubumbano. Seventy-nine of them bought finished crafts from other markets. Of that number, seventy-four (94%) bought crafts in Mbaswana, seventeen (22%) bought crafts in Swaziland, sixteen (20%) in Durban, one at eMozi and one in Pongola. Two women also bought monkey-orange crafts from small boys in the area<sup>19</sup>. It is thus clear that a large percentage of crafts sold at the Ubumbano craft market was not produced there.

Imported crafts, such as sleeping mats produced in Taiwan, started to replace local crafts. The Taiwanese mats were made from a thin grass-like material, had low-quality prints of elephants, giraffe, and other animals on them and were rounded off with material piping around the edges. Before Ubumbano traders went to Durban to buy these mats, crafters in the region produced their own sleeping mats from locally available reeds and rushes. Since the Taiwanese alternative became available, more and more of them switched over to the imports. They explained that the laborious production of local sleeping mats did not justify the low prices that tourists were willing to pay. The harvesting of raw materials such as *incema*, *induli*, *inhlanhla* or *iqumbi* generally took one whole day (fourteen hours). To dry these raw materials took an additional two to three days. Once the reeds had been dried, it took between one (for the very small mats)

---

children before they get married while economic reasons often restrain couples from moving into their own houses.

<sup>19</sup> Interestingly, the further the market where the finished crafts were bought, the higher the mark-up on that product. Products from markets that were close to Ubumbano such as eMozi, Mbaswana, and the local boys were generally marked up by 141%, while crafts from Swaziland were marked up by 214% and those from Durban by 293%. By buying crafts from Swaziland, the Ubumbano traders shifted the burden of production

and seven (for the large mats) days to make a sleeping mat. In all, a sleeping mat selling for R30 could take up to eleven days to complete, giving the crafter only R2.73 per day for her labour. At the time of my research, this was not even enough to buy a loaf of bread. Of course, this amount did not include the costs that crafters incurred by hiring cars (R20) to get to the harvesting sites, the per-bunch-transport-fees<sup>20</sup> (R5) or the rope (R30) to tie the culms together. Given these expenses, many crafters said that it was more expensive to make sleeping mats than to buy them from Durban. The introduction of Taiwanese sleeping mats considerably lightened the workload of local crafters but alienated the tourists to whom such crafts were generally sold.

### **Conclusion: Escape from the iron cage**

The development of the eco-tourism industry in Maputaland, and specifically the crafts trade, created the impression that crafters would soon be caught in what Weber (1947) described as an “iron cage of rationality” from which there would be little escape. This impression does not, however take cognisance of the many unforeseen consequences that a more rationalised industry has spawned. I termed these consequences unanticipated because they were often at odds with the general aims of the developers and sometimes even undermined these aims. The developers hoped that by “developing” the crafts trade, they would revitalise an old tradition, create an income for craft producers and stimulate the local economy. They also hoped that their branding of the region would attract more

---

to a neighbouring country's poor. This shift was even further for crafts bought in Durban as most of it was imported from Asia and India.

<sup>20</sup> Additional to the car rental, crafters had to pay R5 per bunch of raw materials that they wanted to transport.

tourists and that the easily accessible craft markets and products would enhance the tourists' visit.

Contrary to the developers' expectations, craft producers' incomes have spiralled downwards as local production techniques were making way for the mass-produced crafts from other postcolonial countries. In trying to get the craft producers to make more "authentic" crafts that would supposedly sell better, the developers actually impoverished them. "Real" Zulu crafts were more laborious to produce and did not bring greater profits. This in turn, led local craft traders to outsource the production of crafts to poorer sections of their community and to producers in other countries. Poor women whom were supposed to benefit most from the development initiative, thus became trapped in low-income production jobs. Growing numbers of foreign crafts were also imported to the area, supplanting local alternatives. In no sense was there a revitalisation of tradition.

Furthermore, the branded expectations of Maputaland (created by the marketers of the area) often led the tourists to mistake the authentic crafts they sought with fakes they were presented with. This became apparent when the tourists bought wooden masks which were artificially aged and produced on a massive scale in the factories of Swaziland. Since these staged performances conformed to the expectations that tourists had of the area, they remained blind to its forgery.

Another unanticipated consequence of the ethnic branding of Maputaland was that tourists were not willing to pay more for labour-intensive "authentic" crafts. In this regard, the branded depiction of local people as isolated and self-sufficient hangovers from an earlier age made it possible for tourists to frame the producers in such a way that they could justify paying less for these crafts. First, tourists were duped to believe that

craft production was an idle hobby in which production times were irrelevant. None of the brochures stated that the locals depended on the sale of these crafts for subsistence. The static depiction of locals also allowed some tourists to assume that locals were immature. At the Ubumbano craft market for instance, I often saw foreign tourists hand out sweets to the women as if they were “good children”. I once overheard a Dutch woman tell her husband not to “spoil” the trader by giving her too much money. In a certain sense, the KZN Wildlife’s patronising management of the women also supported this view<sup>21</sup>. Since tourists were duped to believe that local people are not part of the global economy, they believed that these people do not know the value of money.

Another unforeseen consequence of the McDonaldization of the crafts trade was that the predictability, efficiency and control of the process undermined the perceived authenticity of the tourists’ experience. The structure of the stalls at Mbaswana forced a muted and sterile atmosphere onto the market. This contrasted sharply with the lively atmosphere at the popular Mbaswana pension market. In their effort to deliver crafts to the tourists more efficiently, these developers eroded the attraction of their product. Crafts differed from other commodities and often served as souvenirs of authentic experiences. The stark conformity of the cloned stalls undermined such authenticity. These stalls did not allow the crafters to produce crafts while selling them. This could lead the tourist to (rightly) suspect that the crafts were mass-produced and therefore less authentic. Ironically, the global market created a demand for primitive, handmade, rare and authentic crafts that could not be met through “traditional” production techniques.

---

<sup>21</sup> They decreed that the women may not haggle with tourists over craft prices. The KZN Wildlife officer in charge told me that “it is for their own good”.

## Chapter 4

### Land claims and corporate imitation:

#### Men brokering development in Maputaland

*"Men only talk, talk, talk..."*

-A woman in Mbaswana on the effectiveness of the Municipal Council Meetings

*"If you want [donor] money, you must seat the women in front"*

- A man at the launch of the Ingwavuma Small Business Association on the obvious presence of women at the gathering.

The commercial ethnic branding of Maputaland was echoed in a small but influential group of local men's political claims. It was also reflected in a local upsurge in the popularity of all things 'traditional', including chieftaincy. In the latter regard, many of my interviewees claimed that chiefs were part of the local tradition.

Chiefs were the main executors of apartheid policies in the former homelands (Mamdani 1996: 37). In this regard, a particular version of African tradition, tribal authority and customary law, defined by the state, was central to the apartheid project. The groundwork for this manipulation had already been laid long before 1948. In 1951 the Black Authorities Act established Tribal, Regional and Territorial Authorities for the homelands and meticulously circumscribed the functions of each authority. Each chieftaincy was created by a separate decree mentioning the size of the chieftaincy and the number of councillors in the (newly established) Tribal Councils. Hundreds of laws, by-laws and government regulations gave chiefs wide-ranging powers, making them the "administrative factotums of apartheid" (Evans 1997). In this system, co-operative headmen were made into chiefs while uncooperative chiefs received no official

recognition (Oomen 2000: 72). When the popular revolt which engulfed South Africa in the 1980s penetrated rural areas, chiefs were often branded as collaborators of the apartheid regime (Van Kessel 2000).

Despite local resistance to Tribal Authorities during apartheid, the institution of chieftaincy in Maputaland has shown great resilience in the post-apartheid era. Ethnic identity also remained an important political tool. This was the case in many other rural areas in South Africa where chiefs and headmen still remained in charge of communal land. They continued to play a role in land allocation, dispute settlement and continued to carry out administrative tasks as they had for the past decades. Some areas even saw chiefs growing in popularity despite the establishment of democratically elected municipal councils in 1998. In the post-apartheid situation, tradition and ethnicity thus continue to be dynamic political forces and have proved that they were not merely anomalies of apartheid (J. & J. L. Comaroff 1997: xiv; Oomen 2000: 71<sup>1</sup>; and Fokwang 2003).

The post-apartheid policy environment also protected the position of chiefs. South Africa's new Constitution recognises the institution of traditional leadership in terms of customary law. The Black Administration Act of 1927 still regulates the criminal and civil jurisdiction of chiefs and headmen to adjudicate disputes and offences in 'Tribal' courts. Furthermore, the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act of 1998 ensured that each of South Africa's eight hundred chiefs still receive an annual salary from the state.

---

<sup>1</sup> Oomen (2000) uses the problematic concept of "retraditionalisation" to describe the post-apartheid popularity of chiefs. She argues that after the collapse of apartheid (which sought to despoil and deny Africans their "culture"), people are going back to their roots. This view implies that irrespective of the advent of democracy, Africans still revere the institution of chiefs because it is part and parcel of their "culture".

In general, the South African government showed great reluctance to dismantle the Tribal Authority system and to refrain from engaging in the politics of ethnic identity<sup>2</sup>.

Whatever the case may be for the generic salience of 'tradition' elsewhere in South Africa, this chapter investigates the specific conditions under which Tribal Authorities remained important political actors in Maputaland. I attempt to show that the salience of Tribal Authorities in Maputaland is as much a result of local agency as of nationally imposed policies and the political complicity of the state and developers to this resurgence at local and national levels. I argue that 'development' has created a space in which chiefs could claim to be authentic and legitimate mouthpieces of the 'tribes' that the land claims process redefined. To a large extent, chiefs' claims to political legitimacy were financially very rewarding as it gave them access to large sums of money. However, their claims to ethnic authenticity and political legitimacy put chiefs in direct opposition to regular men in the region who were not part of the Tribal Authority structures. The chiefs' complicity to the 'development' of the region also made them politically impotent to challenge the LSDI's emphasis on eco-tourism and nature conservation as economic development initiatives.

On the margins of the local political scene, regular men had to recycle the current ethnic discourses in ways that would ensure them access to some of the development resources. Of particular concern here, was the ten thousand male migrant workers from the region that lost their jobs on the Witwatersrand in 1999. Many of these men returned home to families that hardly knew them, expecting 'development' and some security in

---

<sup>2</sup> In 1999 Contralesa threatened to boycott the national elections because the government had not ensured their positions through new legislation. Since these traditional leaders were deemed a powerful political body, Nelson Mandela met with the country's traditional leaders and increased their salaries. (Hlongwa 1999:4).

terms of employment. The return of unemployed senior men impacted on local young men's notion that they too would one day go to the mines to earn a living. These young men had to deal with an uncertain future in which experienced men could not even find employment. In a context where Tribal Authorities and older men hijacked the only lucrative employment, these young men were disdainful of tradition.

When I started my research in Sodwana Bay (Umhlabuyalingana district), one of the first women I talked to grouped all local men into the following categories; the Tribal Authorities, the "politicians" outside the Tribal Authority structures and the men that "just walked around". In the course of my research, I tried to dispel this typology by looking at its many ambiguities but found it a useful guide to analyse local men's involvement in 'development'. This chapter aims to explore this typology, its nuances, contradictions and validity with reference to ethnographic material collected from Maputaland.

My discussion is divided into four parts. First, I discuss the post-apartheid upsurge of popular support for chiefs in Maputaland despite the transfer of all communal land to the Ingonyama Trust and the democratisation of local government. In this section, I focus on the agency of the Zikhali and Mabaso chiefs in the land claims process, and show how chieftaincy has been adapted to the exigencies of new political and economical environments. Second, I consider the ways in which chiefs and local politicians connected to the wider provincial and national systems. I discuss the nature of the ethnic identities employed and their strategic importance in the continuing dialectical political process between chiefs, the state and developers. Third, I consider how men on the margins of the political arena "worked politics" and engaged with local-level committees



that seemed to be ineffective pockets of bureaucracy. Lastly, I discuss the experiences of young men whom, by virtue of their age and inexperience could not work politics or hope to be employed in the eco-tourism industry. I will pay particular attention to what seems to be violent reactions to their marginalisation.

### **Paradoxical Popularity: Reinventing chieftaincy in Maputaland**

For a while it seemed as if chieftaincy in Maputaland was doomed to disappear. When elected municipal councils were constituted with the democratisation of local government in 1999, chiefs lost their legal responsibilities *as chiefs* and retained only *ex officio* status (Fischer 2000:ii, 2-3, 9). The Local Municipality became responsible for the delivery of services and for keeping the peace while chiefs were relegated to the realm of “traditional matters”. As such, certain chiefs were automatically included in a Municipal Council before the elections took place, provided that they did not stand for a political party. In terms of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act of 1998, the total number of headmen and chiefs in a Local Municipal Council could not exceed twenty percent of the total number of councillors. The provincial Member of the Executive Council (MEC) identified chiefs who could participate in such proceedings<sup>3</sup>.

My research area fell within the Umhlabuyalingana Local Municipality whose borders were determined by the Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act of 1998. The Umhlabuyalingana Local Municipal Council was constituted of nineteen IFP councillors, five ANC councillors and four politically neutral chiefs. KwaZulu-Natal’s

---

<sup>3</sup> Vorster (2001:121) considered these provisions to effectively terminate the role of headmen and chiefs as local government institutions.

MEC appointed the Tembe, Mabaso, Matshabane and Mbila (Zikhali) chiefs to sit on this council.

On a macro-political scale, the change to democratically elected councils was part of the ANC government's modernisation discourse and presented an onslaught on the province's major political party, the IFP. As a conservative political party with a strong traditional base, the IFP sought to uphold the patriarchal power of chiefs, headmen and tribal councillors through emphasising the authenticity and legitimacy of such institutions (Marks 1978:189-193; Mackinnon 2001:572-575; Serote, Mager & Budlender 2001:165).

In 1994, the material basis of chiefs' power was corroded when all "communal" land in the KwaZulu homeland was incorporated into the Ingonyama Trust, headed by King Goodwill Zwelithini. Legally, the Ingonyama Trust denuded chiefs of the right to grant Permission To Occupy (PTO) permits to subjects or to levy rentals on land traditionally under their jurisdiction<sup>4</sup>. This meant that chiefs' incomes were significantly diminished. Under the new law, all developments on land bigger than five hectares or worth more than R500 000 went directly to the Ingonyama Trust Board for clearance. The Tribal Authorities concerned had to supply letters of consent, while any attempts by these authorities to extract money from applicants landed them in legal trouble. Even in the case of small development projects, Tribal Authorities only supplied applicants with a "consent to grant a PTO", which was then processed by the Department of Tribal and Local Government Affairs in Ulundi for final clearance. Furthermore, land not included

---

<sup>4</sup> The new provincial government levelled increasing critique at the autocratic and "tribalistic" Trust. In 1996 they passed the KwaZulu Ingonyama Trust Amendment Bill to restructure the Trust (Phahlane 1998: 3). However, the "IFP ... objected to the board's administering to the material welfare and social wellbeing of the members of the tribes instead of the tribal authorities" (Anon 1997:2). Despite this objection, the revised Ingonyama Trust Act was accepted in 1998. In terms of the new Act, King Zwelithini still headed the Ingonyama Trust but was assisted by an eight-member committee appointed by the Land Affairs minister in consultation with the KwaZulu-Natal premier (Payne 1998: 34).

in the Ingonyama Trust but “released” through the land claims process was transferred to trusts, not the Tribal Authorities. The end of the apartheid era thus saw the legal and economical basis of chiefly authority in the Maputaland region severely undermined.

Despite the apparent marginalisation of chiefs in formal political processes, I was surprised at the growing popularity of chiefs in Maputaland. Many of my interviewees supported chiefs because they were not “politicians”. After more than a decade of war, local people were growing wary of the violent clashes between the IFP and the ANC. They admired the “neutrality” of chiefs. People in the areas of Mbaswana, KwaNgwanase and Tshongwe also streamed to Tribal Authority buildings whenever the respective chiefs and their councillors held court. Many women at the Ubumbano craft market indicated that they preferred to settle their disputes in a chief’s court rather than at the magistrates’ court. They complained that “no one listened” at the magistrate’s court and that damages were only paid to the court, not to the victims of crime. Chiefs also reached decisions quicker than the magistrates, and endless delays due to technical problems (a lack of legal representation, the loss of charge sheets, the disappearance of witnesses etc.) caused considerable frustration in the magistrate’s court. Even local white businesses preferred to settle their labour disputes in the Tribal Courts since this saved them on legal costs and gave them a public platform to explain their actions, especially if these involved the dismissal of a worker.

At first, I put local people’s reliance on chiefs down to the inability of “democratic” local government institutions in dealing with a rise in crime. I also suspected that the municipality’s inability to deliver on promises of a better life for all made people turn to chiefs who were at least visible and available. In these instances, the

popularity of chiefs was easily explained with reference to the deficiencies of other forms of local governance.

What was harder to explain was the popular utilisation of ethnic discourses and the support that chiefs enjoyed for their attempts to revitalise old “traditions” (See Ill. 7, below). The region saw a revival in first-fruit ceremonies, dance contests and beer festivals under the instigation of local chiefs. These ceremonies became popular social events where traditions were freely reconstructed. For instance, a first fruit ceremony that I attended in the Ingwavuma district, saw gumboot dances (originating from the mines in Gauteng) alternate with church choirs as “traditional” entertainment. In costume, the dancers mixed animal hides with luminous leopard-print sleeveless T-shirts, cowry shells with empty tins, and bullhorns with shrill pennywhistles. Despite this glaring eclecticism, chief Ndlovu claimed that the ceremony replicated ancestral ceremonies to the letter. In his keynote address, he recalled a romantic past when food was abundant and all men had jobs. The revitalisation of “tradition” in this context presented a conscious reclaiming of a (synthetic) past in an alienating present. These movements exhibit De Boeck (1998: 50)’s claim that in the post-colonial world, the individual is cut off from his past while he is at the same time also excluded from the promises of modernity. (He calls this dislocation the “zombification” of post-colonial reality). In Maputaland, the past was but a faint memory while the majority of inhabitants remained excluded from the LSDI’s promises of a better life. Under these conditions, chiefs opportunistically manipulated pre-colonial symbols to ensure their own power and authority.

At the inauguration of Nkosi Mabudu Tembe in May 2001 for instance, various neo-traditional leaders pointed to the way it was before the European-imposed central

government fragmented and marginalised “their people”. They depicted chiefs as leftovers of an authentically African past around which Africans could reconstruct their identities and regain pride and independence. Their speeches were interlaced with references to the Tembe as an imagined community from the past, which faced onslaughts of the present. As one speaker remarked, “The Tembe must speak with one voice to become strong again”.

**Illustration 7: “Real” Zulu chief, Shakaland**



Harder to explain was the preponderance of chiefs, headmen and “tribal” councillors on the democratically elected land claims committees and on the land trusts that were established in the wake of successful land claims.

### **Chiefly agency: The Zikhali land claim and the Mabaso Game Reserve**

As representatives on the land claims committees and land trusts, chiefs showed astute political acumen and enjoyed the support of the state and developers alike. This was apparent in the role of the Zikhali chief in a land claim, and in that of the Mabaso chief in erecting his own game reserve.

In the land claims process, the Zikhali chief went to great lengths to mobilise an ethnically defined group. Land claimants had to prove their adherence to the Zikhali “group” by drawing a genealogy and showing a historical link to the Zikhali land. As leader of the Zikhali people, chief (*inkosi*) S. J. Zikhali founded the Zikhali land claims committee. In 1998, the committee lodged a claim for land on the Sodwana State Forest, the Sodwana National Park, and a portion of Cape Vidal. Three years later, on the 21 July 2001, the land claim was officially settled amidst much local celebration. At the ceremony in Mbaswana, title deeds to land valued at R56-million were handed over to the eMandleni Trust, of which *Inkosi* S. J. Zikhali was the founding member.

The eMandleni Trust was made up of all members of the Zikhali Claimant Community and was managed by a Board of Trustees. In membership, this Board closely resembled the Zikhali Tribal Authority, who comprised the chief, seven non-hereditary headmen (*izinduna*) and six additional members. The land that the Trust managed became “private” once the title deeds were handed over. As such, the land administered by the eMandleni Trust fell outside the jurisdiction of the Ingonyama Trust. All profits, concessions and rent on the land went directly to the eMandleni Trust to be distributed among its members. In essence, the Zikhali Tribal Authority regained control over communally held land by transforming itself into a Board of Trustees.

The land settlement determined that the title-holders could not physically occupy the area but that they would share in the future earnings from eco-tourism to this World Heritage Site. Much was made of the potential contribution of the area to the macro-economic growth of South Africa’s economy and to improve the quality of life of locals. This optimism was fuelled by an announcement of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park

Authority that international investors showed an interest in investing in the Site (Thulo 2001: 8).

The decisions by the Zikhali claimant community not to occupy the area and to enter into partnership with the nature conservation authorities were not unanimous or independently reached. There was considerable contestation within the community before the eventual settlement was reached. At the Ubumbano craft market inside the Sodwana National Park, a group of older women told me about their wish to move back onto the land. Judging from the lush vegetation and the abundance of fresh water, the old women (*gogos*) believed that land inside the Park would be more fertile than land in Mbaswana. They also yearned for the security that a piece of land would bring them. Apart from these considerations, the older women also wanted to move onto the land because they distrusted the communal trust that would manage their investment once the land claim settlement had been finalised. Because the trust excluded women, my informants were convinced that it would only look after men's interests. Women even threatened to squat on the land illegally.

In response, the land claims committee initiated "workshops" to convince the defiant women of the rationality of their proposed partnership with the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park Authority and with KZN Wildlife. Elderly women had to attend countless of these workshops. Outside the workshops, other members of the claimant community laughed at them for desiring nothing more than "cows and goats" and accused them of forcing the locals "back to the bush" with their ignorance. This accusation played itself out against the modernisation discourse of the eMandleni Trust's Board. The Board used a rhetoric that portrayed the older generation as vanguards of tradition and stumbling

blocks to development. In this regard, the eMandleni Board mobilised tradition in their transactions with developers but when dealing with those they supposedly represented, the Board used development as a key rallying device. Workshopped into submission, the women relented. They remained deeply cynical of the Trust but were, according to Lungile Zikhali, “just too tired to listen anymore”.

In the case of the eMandleni Board, community representation was financially very rewarding. Apart from the remuneration for their services, Board members also had the prerogative of deciding what happened to the R5 million that the Zikhali community received from government as consolation for not being able to move back onto their land. The Board also made decision on R22 million given for development within and outside the Sodwana Park, and R4.44 million for the planning of new projects. In addition, they received an annual share of eight percent of the profits<sup>5</sup> generated by eco-tourism within the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park.

In October 2001, the adjacent Mabaso Tribal Authority declared its own 4500-hectare game reserve on communal land. According to newspaper articles, the reserve was established to harness the enormous potential of eco-tourism in terms of job-creation and money-generation for the “community” (Bishop 2001b: 3). KZN Wildlife welcomed the project as a “sustainable development initiative” and donated R331 000 to kick-start the project. The Nedbank Green Trust also donated more than R1 million for this purpose and the Wildlands Trust<sup>6</sup> raised money to construct a fence (Bishop 2001b: 3, Moore 2002: 5).

---

<sup>5</sup> This amount is minimal, but the land claims commissioner involved in the “case”, assured me that their capacity-building workshops would enable the Trust to negotiate a better deal.

<sup>6</sup> The Wildlands Trust is “an independent fund-raising and project management organisation concerned with conservation-based community development in KwaZulu-Natal” (Moore 2002: 5).



Before establishing the Mabaso Game Reserve, the Mabaso Tribal Authority obtained a long-term lease for the land from the Ingonyama Trust, and thereby secured the confidence of the investors. The investors were apprehensive to invest in a venture on communally owned land, where land titles were insecure. To broker the deal with the Ingonyama Trust, the Mabaso Tribal Authority appointed the Uthungulu Resorts and Leisure Company<sup>7</sup>. At the same time, they set up a Section 21 company<sup>8</sup>, Funjwa Holdings, to manage the revenue from the reserve (Bishop 2001b: 3). The Mabaso chief was director of this company, while its other members comprised of Tribal Councillors.

With the creation of Funjwa Holdings, the Tribal Authority “corporatised” its functions. Inherited titles were translated into a hierarchy of corporate titles; from chief executive officer to middle-management posts. This transformation illustrated the political genius of the Mabaso Tribal Authority. As “traditional leaders” they could not apply for a PTO from the Ingonyama Trust, since this would intimate a re-instatement of Tribal Authorities over communal land. However, as a development company, this ethnic corporation had the right to apply for a PTO from the Ingonyama Trust.

Funjwa Holdings became a site of ethnic recycling. It used “old”, “stable” ideas about chieftaincy and ethnicity in a new context, creating the space in which those ideas could be re-evaluated. In this new context, chiefs expanded their area of jurisdiction to

---

<sup>7</sup> Uthungulu Investment Holdings, a “black empowerment company” is chaired by Myeni, a rich member of the Zulu royal family and prominent member of the IFP. As a member of the Zulu royal family and thus intimately connected to Zwelithini, Myeni approached the chiefs in Maputaland and persuaded them to sign over the development rights to the area to his company so that he can broker deals with developers. Myeni claimed that his company “is trying to help the local people get involved in tourism by bringing together the developers and the custodians of the land”. However, the Ingonyama Trust declared the agreement between Uthungulu Investment Holdings and the chiefs null and void. It also reaffirmed its own position as the sole custodian of the land. Myeni then approached each chief individually, promising to secure a lease from Ingonyama and to introduce a developer, for which it will take a finder’s fee (Moore 1999a: 36; Moore 1999b: 11).

<sup>8</sup> A non-profit company under South African tax laws.

include development. The legitimacy of the Board and its director was closely tied to that of the chief and his councillors. The “old” idea that all communal land should be vested in the Tribal Authority was also recycled. Developers welcomed the transformation of chiefdoms into legally recognised “ethnic” corporations because this facilitated auditing practices. The ANC government also welcomed these “democratic” trusts, as indicative of progress and development in the hinterland<sup>9</sup>.

In the above two examples, I described how two chiefs in Maputaland regained their control over communally held land. The Zikhali chief negotiated his position through his recourse to traditional rhetoric in the land claims process. He utilised development rhetoric to convince a group of older people to agree to form a Trust instead of moving back onto the land. As founding member of this trust, chief Zikhali saw to it that his Council was well represented on the Trust’s Board, thus renegotiating the position and importance of the Tribal Authority. The Mabaso chief regained control of land within the jurisdiction of the Ingonyama Trust by imitating the development corporations that acquired leases on the land. He transformed his Tribal Authority Council into a legally recognised company, thus obtaining legal control of the land as a development company.

Actions such as those by the Zikhali and Mabaso chiefs to regain control over land had very definite implications for the definition of citizenship in Maputaland. The apartheid system had made communally held property, in separate ethnically defined territories, the basis of political dependency upon chiefs. This system also laid the foundation for the definition of rural Africans as chiefly “subjects” rather than as citizens

---

<sup>9</sup> The ANC is thoroughly committed to the modernising discourse, which depicts chiefs and chieftaincies as hangovers of a pre-modern era, bound to disappear with modernisation.

able to engage with “civil society” (Mamdani 1996:22). In the new South Africa, undoing the wrongs of apartheid and restoring citizenship rights to rural black people required uncoupling the relationship between chiefs and communally held property. It also required restoring land forcefully expropriated during the colonial and apartheid eras. Land restoration was seen as a means of restoring full citizenship rights to the African population (James 2002:3).

Enshrined at the heart of these debates about political reform was a language of rights rather than property or ownership (James 2002:3). In the Maputaland region, the language of rights has allowed nature conservation authorities to hang on to land to which local people had lodged successful claims. According to the rhetoric of the land claims commission, the Zikhali and Mabaso land claimants’ sovereignty and citizenship was restored when they received the titles to their land. However, the communal nature of the Trusts to which these titles were awarded, opened the way for chiefs to assert their “traditional right to rule” within a new context. These chiefs transformed their offices to become directors while their citizen-subjects were now shareholders. The uncoupling of chiefs and communal property envisioned by the land claims process was thus not been affected. To a large measure, this was due to romantic conceptions of equality and the supposed immobility of chiefs. Since the chief was given the same status as other claimants, it was assumed that this (synthetic) equality would endure in the post-settlement context. For this reason, there were no rules regulating the composition of Communal Property Associations (CPAs) or Trusts. These notions were naively simplistic.

The conception of people in the Zikhali area as shareholders had political, social and economic implications. By co-opting them into the nature conservation business, the shareholders became politically impotent to challenge the practice of nature conservation areas on their land. The promise of future earnings from eco-tourism also placed specific responsibilities on local people. They were expected to be friendly and welcoming to tourists in the area and to conform to ethnic expectations about them. As owners of a nature conservation area, the Zikhali people also had the responsibility to utilise the resources within its boundaries on a sustainable basis<sup>10</sup>. This responsibility obscured the reasons for over-harvesting such as continued land shortage in the communal areas.

### **The complicity of the state and developers**

Chiefs in Maputaland engaged in a three-way dialogue with developers and government officials. The association between chiefs and developers has taken the form of a contest of representation, in which each conformed to the other's style (Werbner 1996: 17). In this regard, government seemed reluctant to disengage from discourses on ethnicity while developers often negotiated with chiefs as sole "traditional mouthpieces" of local people (Ntsebeza 2001). This was much cheaper and far less time-consuming than getting consensus-type answers from a "target community". Chiefs benefited from this deception since they were invited to dinners and to launches of development projects, and received expensive "gifts" from developers in exchange for their "partnership". In one case a developer even took the Tembe chief on an all-expenses-paid two-week tour of the

---

<sup>10</sup> As part of the land settlement, the Zikhali and Mabaso are allowed to harvest plant material within the park.

United States of America. The particular developer wanted to enlarge his existing tourism business in the Tembe Elephant Park from which the Tembe people had been relocated, but KZN Wildlife prevented him from doing so. By befriending the Tembe chief, whom had lodged a land claim on the park, the developer covertly pressurise KZN Wildlife to concede to his demands. The developer frequently appeared in public with the chief and often alluded to his friendship to the “king”. The veiled message to the nature conservation authorities was that if they did not concede to his demands for increased land, he could send the land claims process in a different direction by influencing his “friend”. In the end, KZN Wildlife submitted and granted the developer more land and exclusive business rights to Tembe Elephant Park.

On their part, chiefs interpreted these bribes in terms of tributary gift logic (cf. De Boeck 1996:80). They distorted the interpretation of traditional “tribute payments”, to legitimate bribes and to rally support for their lobby against the power of the Ingonyama Trust. Chiefs claimed that even outsiders recognised their legitimacy and that the Ingonyama Trust should devolve its powers to them, the legitimate trustees of communal land.

In other contexts, chiefs echoed the modernisation and economic growth rhetoric of government and developers. This was the case when the Mabaso Tribal Authority launched a game reserve to ostensibly “bring development” to the people of Mabaso. Donors were eager to fund this venture as it fitted neatly into all the categories so fashionable in development: a community-owned and community initiated eco-tourism venture that aimed to protect endangered species and utilise natural resources on a sustainable basis while ensuring the socio-economic development of its owners. In the

Mabaso case, it became clear that local chiefs were not mere passive victims of larger forces. Neither were they scheming despots, bent on hanging on to their rule despite local and government opposition. Rather, this case showed that a complex dialectics of power was at play, in which both the chief and developers took active part (De Boeck 1996: 80-99).

### **The Municipal councillors**

A widely held perception in my research area was that democratic institutions such as the Umhlabuyalingana Local Municipal Council should be responsible for “development”. Many people judged the success of the Local Municipality in terms of their ability to deliver resources such as running water and electricity. Rather than interpreting democracy as a system of political rules that aimed to ensure procedural fairness (i.e. elections, rule of law, equality among citizens), most people stated that the substantive aspects of democracy (i.e. improving economic conditions) were more important<sup>11</sup>.

In the Mbaswana area, the only visible ‘development’ projects were initiated by the LSDI and by what locals vaguely referred to as “the government”. According to my interviewees, the tarred roads were clearly the work of the LSDI as they posted signs with their logo on at regular intervals next to the road. They were less clear about which government department erected the new craft market or were busy with the housing scheme just outside Mbaswana<sup>12</sup>. However, locals believed that the Umhlabuyalingana Municipality had nothing to do with these two projects. The only ‘development’ project

---

<sup>11</sup> Williams (1999: 8-11) came to similar conclusions for the Mvuzane Tribal Authority in KwaZulu-Natal.

that locals attributed to the municipality was a planned water-supply project. There was widespread agreement that this project was riddled with corruption and that it was heading towards failure.

One interviewee, Zodwa Zikhali, complained that she did not know how to be included in the Mbaswana water supply project even though she lived in the Umhlabuyalingana municipal area. In desperation, Zodwa paid “someone” R500 for water pipes. After talking at some length, it became clear that she had paid for an illegal connection to the main water pipe. After the man had not contacted Zodwa for more than a month, it became clear that she had been swindled. Moreover, Zodwa did not know the man’s full name and surname. Zodwa and her listeners blamed the ineffectiveness and inaccessibility of the local municipality for her “troubles”.

Like many other people I talked to, Zodwa blamed the local municipality, rather than government for the slow delivery of essential services such as running water supplies. She reasoned that the ANC-controlled government did not help people in Maputaland because they “were IFP”. Zodwa said that the five ANC councillors in the Umhlabuyalingana Municipal Council were really government spies, whose sole job it was to report to the government about local activities. These ANC councillors could not ask the government to intervene in the local situation because they would only get in trouble with the nineteen IFP councillors. This suspicion bore itself out against the background of more than a decade of violence between the ANC and the IFP supporters in the region.

---

<sup>12</sup> The Uthungulu Regional Council (the body that comprised of the various District Councils in northern KwaZulu-Natal) was actually responsible for the building of the craft market in Mbaswana.

Another factor that clouded the Mhlabuyalingana Municipality's local reputation was their inability to bring cheap electricity to the area. In this regard, ESCOM, the national electricity supplier, claimed that it would be too costly to extend their electricity grid to the northern parts of KwaZulu-Natal. Instead, ESCOM sponsored a range of "alternative" energy projects (see Dube 1995: 625-636). I was present at a meeting of the Umkhanyakude District Municipal Council<sup>13</sup> at KwaNgwanase where a development company tried to convince the Council to introduce solar electricity panels in the region. However, a group of people from Mbaswana objected that these panels were regularly stolen. After a long discussion, it was decided to put the project on hold until the developers could come up with a way to insure the panels.

In the meantime, locals said that Municipal Councillors "talk, talk, talk all day" while little was done. The fact that these councillors constantly travelled to other districts and to provincial meetings to discuss development did not impress the locals. According to one old man, the councillors always came back with empty promises, "which no one can eat from".

My own experience with Local Municipal Council meetings seemed to confirm the locals' criticism. Overall, these meetings were characterised by tenacious bureaucratic procedures. Literally hours were spent on going through the attendance register, reading the minutes of previous meetings and confirming the current meeting's agenda. During one particularly strenuous meeting, the assembled councillors argued for forty minutes about the correct procedure for handing in a letter of absence. A councillor sparked the argument when he read his excuse for not attending the previous meeting to those

---

<sup>13</sup> The Umhlabuyalingana, the Jozini, the Big Five False Bay, the Hlabisa/ Impala and the Mtubatuba Local Municipalities formed part of the Umkhanyakude District Municipality.



assembled before handing it over to the secretary. After a long debate about his supposed *faux pas*, the official rules were consulted, but could not resolve the issue. In the end, the councillor handed his letter to the secretary who then reread the whole letter out loud.

In these proceedings, the hierarchy of chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and councillors was strictly adhered to. No one could speak out of turn and issues often remained undecided because the head of a task group was not present or had not consulted with his Tribal Authorities (who also sat on the council). In the light of these circumstances it was not surprising that few decisions were taken at Local Municipal Council meetings. Baba Ngubane reflected the opinion of many others when he said that the Local or District Municipal Council should only be informed of local activities once all decisions had been taken “at home”. Many interest groups came to the Municipal meetings to report on local activities as a matter of due course, without gaining any direction from the council.

To a large extent, the Municipal Councils’ (in)action could be attributed to their emphasis on procedural fairness. This was not only illustrated through their bureaucratic adherence to rules and hierarchy, but also in the emphasis that they placed on gender reform. Although women remained largely underrepresented in the Umhlabuyalingana Municipal Council<sup>14</sup>, a lot of lip service was paid to the need to include and “empower” local women. Where women were included as municipal councillors, they inevitably filled the roles of secretaries and caterers. At one public municipal function I attended in kwaNgwanase, the large number of women in attendance puzzled me. Before I could remark on this, Timothy Mbuli laughingly remarked to me that if one wanted money, one

---

<sup>14</sup> See Budlender (1998: 679-687) and Serote, Mager & Budlender (2001: 166-167) for precise figures on the gender composition of local councils.

just had to “seat the women in front”. At this particular occasion, the municipal council wanted to impress a group of donors so that they would fund an entrepreneurship programme.

Williams (1999: 6-10) shows that people in the Mvuzane area south of Maputaland identified chiefs as those people who solved “problems” of the community, while elected councillors were responsible for their development “needs”. To a large extent, this distinction also held for people in my research area. Although the municipal councillors stuck doggedly to democratic procedures, they often sought the permission of the four “undemocratic” chiefs to proceed when decisions were made. On the one hand, this was a function of the IFP majority in the council who emphasised the importance of “cultural traditions”. On the other hand, the municipal councils consulted with Tribal Authorities because these Authorities regularly sorted out “problems” in the region.

#### **“Working politics”: Regular men**

As I stated earlier, ten thousand men returned to Maputaland in 1999 after they lost their jobs on the Witwatersrand mines. Unemployment was a hard blow to these men. In a survey I did of 129 households at the Ubombo craft market, twenty-five households (19%) indicated that they received remittances from men living in other areas. Only five of these men worked outside KwaZulu-Natal. Four migrants still worked on the mines. Thus, only three percent of the sampled households still relied upon the remittances of migrant mine workers, the source of income that had been the mainstay of many households only fifteen years previously.

Since employment was scarce, many men were supported by the meagre earnings of their wives and older children. The gendered division of labour prohibited many men from taking up female occupations such as agriculture, trade or basket weaving. Official politics (a male domain) could absorb only a fraction of all the men who returned to Maputaland.

Despite these limitations, many local men were “working politics”. Maputaland saw a proliferation of local-level committees and task-teams, all headed by entrepreneurial men. Any group of people working as a co-operative (or something resembling it) at an activity that might be loosely construed as a “development project” could utilise the rhetoric of “grassroots representation” and form a committee to look after their affairs. I met representatives of “youth living with AIDS”, “vegetable growers” and “people testing for cataracts”, to name but a few.

Men took great pains to keep politics a male domain, and sometimes even assumed leadership positions of women’s groups. This was the case at the Ubumbano craft market where John Mlambo was elected as chairman of the committee even though no man was allowed to sell at the market. Apparently, a man had always chaired the Ubumbano committee, even when they were corrupt. For instance, the previous chairman of the craft market never showed up for any meetings and illegally used almost R30 000 in the Ubumbano bank account (save R150) and still served his full term. John’s leadership had some ruinous consequences for members of the Ubumbano craft market. For instance, in December 2001, John approved plans to open a privately owned curio-shop on the beach. Many tourists bought their hats and curios from this stall rather than walking to the craft market behind the dunes. Crafters at Ubumbano complained that their

income for the December holidays (traditionally the tourist high season) was considerably lower than in other years. Some women even made more money during August (mid-winter) than they did during the December holidays.

Men like John Mlambo chaired a whole range of such committees and showed extraordinary activity in attending meetings and “networking”. These men were not paid for their services. Most micro-level committees could not even cover their representatives’ transport fees to meetings in neighbouring districts. However, in attending enough committee meetings over a wide enough spectrum, individual men built up political capital and large networks of mutual obligation. A man’s commitment was often measured in terms of the amount of money he spent on attending a meeting. The hosts of meetings often took note of the distance attendees travelled and the difficulties they had to overcome to attend the meeting. These inventories of hardship were expressed during the obligatory sessions during which attendees had to introduce themselves and state where they came from. The meetings were characterised by resolute bureaucracy. I did not attend a single meeting where the minutes of a previous meeting was left out or where those present were not noted on the roster. While attending countless of these meetings, I gained the distinct impression that the contents of meetings were not as important as their attendance.

When a particular project received money from donors, leaders usually commissioned someone within their network to help them set up a business plan or to help them organise more funding. Such partnerships promised large financial returns for the commissioned man. However, in order to secure potential commissions like these, one had to “get around”. Kehla, a well-connected local politician, called it “spreading the

gospel". On their part, the developers did not object to working with local men on projects earmarked for women.

Despite the disastrous decisions that men made on behalf of women and their self-interested politicking, women seldom spoke of men as the source of their oppression. At the Ubumbano craft market, everyone praised John for his efforts to "develop" the market and none of the women campaigned for the position of chairperson. It was also taken for granted that the next chairperson would also be a man. This was not because the crafters were apolitical or that they were blind to the effects wrought by a *chairman's* decisions. Rather, many of the women felt that politics was an impotent male domain, where things seldom got done. Women like Jatula Ngobese said that they would rather do the work and leave the "rest" up to the men. The "rest" referred to that domain where things were endlessly discussed. Most women remained deeply cynical of men's ability to actually change things with their "development".

### **Out in the cold: Delinquents and development**

By virtue of their unpopularity or age, a large group of local men did not serve on any local committees. Young men were generally regarded as unsuitable for leadership positions. These men were truly left out in the cold. They were unemployed and were likely to remain that way in the light of the LSDI's emphasis on the development of a service industry traditionally reserved for women. Even manual labour for men in the region had dried up as developers started to employ women. Local contractors were starting to use women in jobs that were widely considered to be "men's work". The

contractor that built the last stretch of the LSDI road to Mbaswana used female workers in two of his construction teams. On questioning one of the engineers about this, he replied that women worked harder than men because they had children to feed. Women were also less likely to strike or cause trouble. It was a sentiment that I heard from many employers during my research. As women were entering the female-friendly service industries, male workers were becoming obsolete. As their economic potential to earn wages decreased, local men became less and less desirable as long-term sexual partners or husbands.

In this context, it was not surprising that large numbers of young men who were “up to no good” roamed the countryside. According to women at the Ubumbano craft market, these men were organised into gangs and made money through illegal activities such as gunrunning, selling *cannabis* to tourists), theft and muggings<sup>15</sup>. The gangs were widely feared, and they were known for the extreme violence that they perpetrated against their victims. Gangs of young men regularly raped women and assaulted elderly people. A group of women in the Mbaswana area were so fed up with crime that they asked the Zikhali Tribal Authority to do something about the matter. In response, the women were told to wear longer skirts and to walk about in groups. The women were not so much outraged at the answer, than they were at the blatant impotence of the Tribal Authorities (or for that matter, any other authorities) to deal with the “problem” of delinquent men. For their part, the gangs were disdainful of the Tribal Authorities and derided the committee chairmen for “scratching in the ground like chickens” for money.

---

<sup>15</sup> Since they were viewed as extremely dangerous, I did not risk doing an intensive study on these men and most of my information was second-hand.

At the Ubumbano craft market, teenage craft traders remarked that there was a growing trend among young boys to follow in the footsteps of their older delinquent brothers. Dudu and I interviewed a small group of runaway boys at Sodwana Bay who made a living by begging and stealing from tourists. These boys did not attend school because they “did not learn anything there” and none of them had any plans for the future. Socially, the boys did not keep in contact with their families and lived in a gang with other boys. As a gang, they shared their daily income and looked after one another. They could not tell us exactly where they stayed and Dudu guessed that they lived “in the bush”.

Delinquent men targeted the most vulnerable members of society; pensioners, women that lived on their own, and individual harvesters. Gangs frequently mugged pensioners just as they collected their state pensions. Crafters were especially afraid of the gangs who raped women at harvesting sites. These attacks were an assault on the reproductive capabilities of women, in an environment where a lack of employment opportunities and strict gender role prescriptions hampered men’s abilities to be productive members of society.

### **Conclusion: The impotence of men’s politics**

Chiefs in the Maputaland region did not present primordial or uncontested political realities. In this regard, the institution of chieftaincy was fundamentally challenged in the 1980s when people in the region protested against the chiefs’ complicity to the apartheid system. Some writers even claimed that South Africa could not be democratic without the

summarily abolishment of the whole chiefly institution. The history of the region also bore witness to constant succession disputes. In my research area, the cases of chief Zikhali and chief Nxumalo illustrated the extent to which the chiefly position was dependent on the individual agency of chiefs. The political importance of both chiefs is partly attributable to their individual ability to adapt and participate in discourses with the wider provincial and national political arenas. However, development projects and the land claims process created a space in which local chiefs and other Tribal Authorities could act as brokers between developers and local communities.

It was in this position that chiefs were often politically emasculated. In the developers' language, "representing" people often meant merely being present at meetings. Chiefs became empty tokens of the developers' notions of "community representation". In development planning sessions for instance, the mostly white development fraternity spoke English. For most chiefs, this was a third or fourth language. Apart from the basic communication problem, developers often outnumbered chiefs at the planning sessions. Chief Ndlovu also complained that development plans were often drawn up by the time that the "community" was consulted. This was the case with the LSDI's tarred roads and the Uthungulu Regional Council's erection of a craft market. The enormous amounts of money that some chiefs received for their "cooperation" also forced them to sedately accept whatever the developers proposed. As such, most chiefs were forced into a precarious position. Chiefs were not in an economic position to resist "development" while their "official" political marginalisation meant that they could not contest the legitimacy of developers in the "democratic" domain. The



chiefs' ability to talk back to the developers was thus often stymied in a one-on-one situation.

Whilst chiefs had little influence in their encounters with developers, they offered valuable resources to local people. Here, chiefs' courts were often an effective alternative to the magistrate, and chiefs like Petrus Nxumalo promised to bring development where the municipal councils failed to deliver on promises. However, chiefs' impotence in this arena was also showed up. For instance, chiefs lacked the power to address the problems of escalating crime and the growing numbers of delinquent youth. Very often, the arrangement between chiefs and subjects whom they claimed to represent precluded chiefs from intruding on people's autonomy. Ordinary people were often extremely cynical about politicians. They considered politicians to be as inevitable as taxes and death. There was also an acceptance that chiefs would look after their own interests first. As long as these interests did not interfere with the locals' daily lives too much, people were content to subscribe to the fiction that the chiefs "represented" them.

In the eyes of local people, municipal councillors were even more impotent. In their emphasis on the procedural instead of the substantive aspects of democracy, these councillors represented just another forum in which men spoke all day long. They seemed unable to change people's lives and were therefore useless. Unlike the chiefs, these municipal councillors did not even have political capital in the form of "tradition". In this regard, democracy had a different meaning for people in Maputaland than for the councillors. Democracy was "something to eat from", not just the "opportunity" to be vaguely "represented".

In the cracks between the spheres where municipal councillors, chiefs and developers met, some local men started to “work politics”. They created networks of local men who identified and filled situations where local people “needed” to be represented to outsiders. In this capacity, men often imitated the rhetoric of municipal councillors and chiefs. Unlike the municipal councillors, local people did not even expect to “eat” from the representation that these men promised them.

Despite the apparent “illicit cohabitation”<sup>16</sup> between chiefs, the state, municipal councillors and developers, local people were not “zombified” through their arrangement with politicians (cf. Mbembe 1992: 4). They maintained a world apart from politics in which things were “done”. When the autonomy of this world was threatened by the ambitions of the developers, local people resisted. They have not given over to the hollow pretence and the fatalistic banality that characterises Mbembe (1992)’s postcolonial world.

---

<sup>16</sup> In the postcolonial state the relationship between the state and its subjects is fraught by the fact that the commandement and its subjects have to share the same living space (Mbembe 1992: 4).

## Chapter 5

### Misrepresenting women:

#### Development and the permeation of the women's domain

*"When I'm grown-up I don't want to be like my mother. She suffers too much. I want to be a nurse and make a lot of money so that I can come home and look after them all [her extended family of 15 members all live in the same house]. Then my mother can rest"*

- Young girl [10] selling crafts for her mother on her dreams for the future.

*"Last night my boyfriend came to visit. He brought some food for the house and a recharge voucher for my cellphone. He also gave me R50 "*

- Dumisile Zikhali boasting about her boyfriend.

Although developers negotiated almost exclusively with local men, most development projects in the region were actually targeted at women. After the LSDI had spent R630 million on infrastructure and eco-tourism projects, the Initiative established several smaller-scale projects aimed specifically at women. Through craft training projects the LSDI aimed to commercialise local women's informal businesses. Smaller developers promoted projects such as the establishment of centres for childcare and teaching local women how to care for terminally ill AIDS patients. For the most part, these projects claimed to address the "feminisation of poverty" in the region<sup>1</sup>.

By implementing development projects geared to the specific needs of different genders, developers reinforced the public private dichotomy and created two separate spheres of interaction for men and women. Nature conservation and politics became exclusive male spheres. Men's projects involved enormous expenditure on infrastructure,

taught men skills that they could use in the marketplace, stressed the use of imported technology, and helped them gain access to employment opportunities through building and promoting networks. For example, men were involved in all the negotiations by the LSDI and by Nature Conservation Authorities to establish new nature conservation areas. As such, development projects dealing exclusively with men had to do with the core business of the eco-tourism industry, namely land. Without it, the whole LSDI and Greater St Lucia Wetland Park World Heritage Site might as well have closed down.

On the other hand, the crafts trade, agriculture, nursing and all things "domestic" became a women's sphere. Women's projects emphasised activities that could be done from the home, the supposed nexus of women's lives. Very few of the skills taught in women's development projects could be translated to the formal labour market. Rather, these projects placed a great deal of emphasis on local skills, local materials and appropriate technology. Such skills and activities seldom led to an income sufficient to support a whole family. Moreover, the projects played but a complementary role in the eco-tourism industry. In this complementary role, women were expected to consume and reproduce the ethnic identities constructed within the male sphere. Women, by virtue of their employment in the service industry and their confinement to craft production, thus represented difference and otherness to tourists. In Maputaland this role had dire financial and social consequences for women who became "fetishized" by the market.

In this chapter I will show how development projects in Maputaland were informed by Western gender stereotypes and assumptions about women's economic contributions. As such, most development projects treated women like middle-class

---

<sup>1</sup> Development literature reflected this notion that women, by virtue of their supposed universal subordination to men, were economically worse off than other sectors of society and needed to be

(Victorian) housewives and concentrated on keeping women in the "home", safe from the outside world. Decisions were made for and about women and very little attention was paid to the income-generating potential of "women's projects". This was despite women's harsh socio-economic circumstances, their long history of considerable activity outside the home, and women's significant organising abilities.

The contradiction between developers' assumptions and the reality of women's lives played itself out in development projects. Here, it became clear that women were more dependent on each other than they were on men and that they were highly organised. Independent from men, women had established female networks of reciprocal help. Contrary to the developers' expectations, women did not confine themselves to single economic activities but expanded their activities into a wide range of informal enterprises. Establishing networks and diversifying enterprises were necessary survival mechanisms in an area where most women's projects generated very little cash and where incomes were often tied to the fluctuating tourist seasons. This was a fact seldom noted by developers when they lament that women did not attend the craft market (or other development projects) often enough to make a profit.

Many of the stereotypes that developers harboured about local women were at best fictitious. Women were far from slavishly subordinate to men as the developers assumed. In Maputaland women showed considerable economic and social independence. Even in cases of domestic violence, women were not passive victims but often gave as "good as they got". They had a sense of pride in the fact that they were able to feed their families and "do" something about their poverty. Women also disdained

---

targeted by development (See Suliman 1991; Chen 1996 and Fischer 1998).

politicians who promised them better lives as they were convinced that men could do nothing without the working power of women.

In this chapter, I will argue that development projects have undermined the economical and political independence of women. Through the mechanisms of development, women were increasingly forced to "settle down" to single economic activities such as craft production. At the Ubumbano craft market for instance, women were discouraged from doing anything but craft production since that would cost the developer more money in terms of training. However, most economic activities that were seen as suitable for women were only complementary to the eco-tourism industry and did not provide year-round or fixed earnings for women. In this manner development projects restricted the effectiveness of women's mechanisms of coping with rural poverty, and undermined the independence of women's networks.

I will develop this argument first by critically considering feminist theorising about the supposed universal subordination of women, and about the public-private dichotomy that is so frequently drawn in the literature. Second I investigate how craft production projects and community-based nature conservation projects embody gendered assumptions. I will also show how assumptions about gender and class were reflected in health projects. Third, I point to the contradiction between developers' assumptions and the reality of women's lives, and how these contradictions played themselves out in the context of development. My emphasis will be on women's networks and how these created an independent domain for women and a safety net against destitution. Fourth, I concentrate on the relationships between men and women outside development projects and on women's perspectives about their own position.

### **Drawing the lines: Male: Female, public: private, dominant: subordinate**

Feminist literature contains different arguments about gender relations in non-western societies. From the perspective of ethnographic liberalism, contained in the writings of Mead (1928), "native women" often enjoyed greater status than "Western women". This argument highlighted the complaints by women in the colonial world that Western feminism often depreciated non-western gendered practices, and failed to attend to the varying ways in which women perceived their situations. However, this argument had little impact on development literature, which continued to assume that women were universally subordinate to men.

Other feminist anthropologists have sought reasons for the universal subordination of women. Drawing on Lévi-Strauss's structural dichotomization of human thought into the categories "raw" and "cooked", Ortner (1974) asserted that throughout the world women were associated with nature and men with culture. Women were supposedly closer to the earth, whilst men transcended earthly bounds through cultural creativity. Rosaldo (1974) focussed on the universal separation of domestic and public domains. She showed that cross-culturally there was a cleavage between the world of household, reproduction and maintenance of children and adults; and the world of extra-household labour, citizenship, public culture and the state. Rosaldo (1974) argued that societies with very rigid public-domestic distinctions such as Victorian Europe would devalue and disempower private spheres and thus the women with whom they were associated.

Other feminist anthropologists turned to Marxist evolutionist models, explaining female subordination in terms of the emergence of private property. Writers such as Leacock (1978) and Sacks (1975: 211-234) reject the arguments that women's status was directly related to the functions of childbearing and childrearing and that the domestic/public distinction is a cross-culturally valid framework for the analysis of gender relations. Based on historical data, they showed how women's subordination was connected to the development of monogamous marriage, the nuclear family, and to the development of private ownership of the means of production. They systematically linked kinship to the economy, and made the "personal political". However, ethnographic records divulged many counterexamples to the evolutionary model that started with sexually egalitarian small-scale societies. Some Native American societies such as the Seneca and the Pueblos were historically characterised by relatively high female status as evidenced by female political influence (Benedict 1934: 73-76; Albers 1994). Furthermore, Moore (1988: 77) showed that men as well as women suffered under colonialism and asserted that attention should be drawn to the changing nature of gender relations and sexual divisions of labour under capitalism.

Finally, two groups of feminists shunned the grand-theoretical search for key explanations of women's lower status. Following the Weberian tradition of interpretative sociology, scholars such as Wolf (1974) wrote as closely as possible from inside the minds of their female informants. Others emphasised historical and political-economic contexts of the women's lives. In the latter vein, Albers (1994: 175-225) describes how federal domination and the creation of reserves impacted on the status of women. Sioux men were drawn into becoming wage labourers on government farms, and they gained



exclusive control over commodities on which their families' livelihood in part depended. Sioux women on the other hand, contributed to their families' survival through producing food and handcrafts for subsistence. However, the dominance by Sioux men over women was far from secure. From the 1920s Sioux men have generally been without jobs while women have emerged as important sources of income (Albers 1994).

I have generally found universalist explanations less valuable than ethnographic studies on the cultural construction of gender that are sensitive to the very particular historical and political economic circumstances of women's lives. For example, Goheen (1996)'s ethnography of the Cameroon grassfields questioned the supposed independence of the public- domestic spheres and the subordination of women due to their inclusion in the "domestic" sphere. In Nso society, men fill the public political roles while women are relegated to the "domestic" sphere of agriculture. However, contrary to the expectation that women in Nso society would be devalued, Nso women proved to be secure in the knowledge that their productive and reproductive labour underwrote men's power and status (Goheen 1996). In my research, people in Maputaland drew a clear distinction between the (public) world of men and the (domestic) world of women. Like Goheen (1996), I found that this cleavage did not necessarily lead to the devaluation and disempowerment of women, as the relationship between the two worlds was more complex.

The approach that I adopt differs fundamentally from the assumptions about gender that inform development practice. The predominant emphasis in development literature is on the "feminisation of poverty" as an economic fallout of the supposed universal subordination of women (Suliman 1991).

For the most part, development literature assumes the existence of strict public-private dichotomies in economically marginalised societies. In targeting these societies, developers often emphasise the need to equalise the access that men and women have to technology, capital and education. Underlying this emphasis is the assumption that, by virtue of their greater access to resources, men devalue women's work (Rogers 1980: 40-41; Warren & Bourque 1991: 278-284). Development practitioners often aim to "develop" women's domestic domain through the use of appropriate technology and resources. These developers hope that by increasing women's productivity, they would have more time for other obligations (Warren & Bourque 1991: 284).

Rogers (1980: 81-91) criticises development practitioners for applying a Western concept of domesticity to women in the third world without attempting to understand their work beyond the domestic contexts. According to Rogers (1980: 29), Western developers assume that the problems experienced by women in the third world are attributable to their "status" in traditional society. This perception legitimises the attempts to increase women's status by involving them in development. However, these conceptions ignore the enormous variety of situations in which individual women may find themselves.

In this chapter, I will attempt to highlight how the universalistic assumptions about gender contained in development practice could serve as self-fulfilling prophecies, and how these assumptions are contradicted by local ethnographic realities in Maputaland.

## **Embodying gendered assumptions: Development projects in Maputaland**

In Maputaland, developers typically tailored nature conservation, commercial agriculture and business training projects for men; and tailored craft production, small-scale agriculture, nursing, sewing and hospitality training projects for women. The emphasis on typically male and typically female "projects" embodied Western gender stereotypes. A case in point was the differential strategies used by the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge (CINDEK) to 'developing' local men and women. In consultation with local men, CINDEK planned a large-scale community conservation project in the Ingwavuma district in 2001<sup>2</sup>. The emphasis in this project was on the potential cash income that nature conservation would generate for the "local community". Through their participation in the project, men on the committee gained valuable experience in the preparation of business plans and in negotiating with local and provincial authorities, skills that were easily transferable to the formal labour market.

Parallel to this project CINDEK started a very small-scale agricultural development project aimed at women. This project was low-cost (the initial capital expenditure was less than R400), relied heavily upon the labour of women and local resources, and was run by a CINDEK employee, Jacobus Knocker. Jacobus handled all negotiations with the "outside" world and oversaw the sale and distribution of the communal harvests. Central to this project was the utilisation of "appropriate technologies" such as planting seedlings in empty two-litre Coke-bottles filled with enriched soil. In this project the emphasis was not so much on the cash income that the

---

<sup>2</sup> During my fieldwork, CINDEK estimated that the project would cost in the region of R5 million.

sale of the agricultural produce would generate but on the ability of the women to feed their own families.

CINDEK reinforced the distinction between the public sphere of men and the domestic sphere of women. Men were encouraged to participate in local politics whilst women were "managed". Furthermore, the agricultural project kept women confined to the domestic sphere by emphasising skills that they could use in and around their own homes. Contrary to men, women's skills were not transferable to the public sphere of formal employment. The emphasis in the women's project on their care responsibilities towards their families, rather than a cash income, reflected the idea that women were "naturally" domestic. In contrast, the men's project did not even mention the responsibilities that men had towards their families. The emphasis was on a cash income, the medium of a (public) market.

In the distinctions that it drew between men and women, CINDEK's development project was very typical of other development projects in Maputaland. Most development projects did not only create "suitable" spheres for men and women, but also aimed their projects at what Burke (1996:56) classified as "the respectable, club-going, Christian wife". This aim was illustrated in the LSDI's craft training project for women.

In February 2000, the LSDI singled out fifteen women from the Ubumbano craft market for training in craft production and business management skills. The course stretched over three weeks. During this time the trainees came to Sodwana Bay each weekday from 9 am until 3 pm. After the first course the women had a two-week break. The second course followed immediately after, was two weeks long, and followed the

same routine. Five additional women from Ubumbano craft market joined the second course.

Apart from the lectures on price determination, raw material procurement, quality control and customer care services; the course also included a workshop on household budgets. In this particular workshop, women were told that they had to budget for essential household expenses first before they considered capital expenditures on their businesses. These essential expenses included food and clothes for other household members. Like the CINDEK project, this project emphasised women's domestic care responsibilities.

At the beginning of the course, women like Nomvula Zikhali were very excited about the prospect of receiving training. Nomvula believed that her "certificate" would help her to get a more profitable job elsewhere<sup>3</sup>. If this failed, she hoped that the LSDI would bring her into contact with possible clients that could place regular orders for crafts. Her hopes were widely shared among the group of trainees. To a certain extent, the LSDI did fulfil their hopes and took on the role of patron in their subsequent contact with the trainees. In June 2000, the LSDI instructors told John Mlambo (chairman of the Ubumbano craft committee) and the trainees to meet them in Durban with as much of their produce as they could carry. John and five women managed to borrow enough money for their bus fare to Durban. On arrival, the group's travelling expenses were refunded and they were provided with food and hotel accommodation for their whole

---

<sup>3</sup> It is a widespread practice among developers in the region to issue certificates at the end of training workshops. I even sat through a ceremony where a local man was awarded what he thought was a doctoral degree by a developer. Among the plethora of certificates and qualifications now in circulation in the area, those awarded by developers affiliated to Universities and large development groups such as the LSDI carried the most weight. Many locals believed that these certificates would impress prospective employers and give them an edge on other people applying for a job.

stay, courtesy of the LSDI. The women sold everything they brought with them at the Durban beachfront. They were ecstatic about their success. At this point, the two LSDI instructors informed the women that they would not organise similar trips in future. The trainees said that they could not return to Durban because they did not have money for transport or accommodation. For example, Jabu Mdluli remarked that “the money of transport and hotels will eat the money of the crafts. It is better to sell crafts at Ubumbano”. They were quite right, as their entire income for the trip would not have covered the transport and accommodation for one night in Durban.

As mediator-patrons, the LSDI later secured orders for the twenty women trainees in urban centres such as Durban and made sure that the clients paid on time. Adam Mthetwa, one of the LSDI instructors, placed new orders by phoning one of the trainees at Ubumbano. She then had to see to it that the order was given to the other nineteen crafters. On an agreed deadline date, Adam collected the crafts at the market and delivered them to the clients. At no point did the crafters come into contact with the consumers.

Apart from the unsustainability of the LSDI’s patronage, the craft training project was poorly suited to the needs of the crafters at the Ubumbano market<sup>4</sup>. For instance, the crafters could hardly use the price determination skills they were taught. If they were to take into account the cost of raw materials, equipment, transport and production times, their baskets would have become prohibitively expensive. In the context of fierce competition within the Ubumbano market, these women would have been severely disadvantaged if they implemented the LSDI’s pricing strategy

---

<sup>4</sup>In its emphasis on skills training the LSDI conformed to the prescriptions of much development literature (McIntosh 1991a: 252).

Furthermore, the LSDI's hope that the twenty women they trained would in turn train other crafters at the market was not realised. Adam placed exclusive orders with the trained crafters, ensuring them a safe income and the potential of a constant stream of future orders. If the twenty crafters were to train some of the other women, they would relinquish their competitive edge in a market saturated with crafters who all had pretty much the same skills. The first trainees were very aware of this fact and jealously guarded the (largely useless) information they got from the workshops. Since this information was kept secret, many of the other crafters believed that it must have been very valuable and professed that they would gladly go to future LSDI workshops. The LSDI's training workshops thus accumulated credence not because they answered the practical needs of crafters, but because of the status associated with these workshops. In this regard, Simmel (1950) notes that the content of a secret is not as important as its function. He claims that all human relationships contain elements of secrecy and that individuals manipulate the sharing of secrets to connect with other people.

Given the warnings by various authors about the suitability of low-skill craft projects for women, one could suspect callousness on the part of the LSDI<sup>5</sup>. But this was not so. In part, the LSDI failed to relate to the lives of local crafters because their projects were tailored to Western stereotypes about the needs and attributes of the middle-class housewife. Central to this project was the assumptions that women in the area made insignificant cash contributions to the household, could not manage their own affairs, and were dependent upon men.

---

<sup>5</sup> Various authors have warned of similar pitfalls in development projects aimed at women. Many point out that where income-generating activities such as craftwork are introduced, they are usually additional to women's routine work and add significantly to their workload. Furthermore, almost all craft work

First, the LSDI and iLala Weavers' decision to select fine craft projects as suitable for women reflected Western gender stereotypes about women's supposed higher aesthetic sensitivity. These projects were earmarked for women regardless of the fact that men traditionally produced the finely woven beer baskets and snuffboxes. In an almost Victorian manner, the LSDI patrons shielded female crafters from the ravages of the market. Adam and other "developers" mediated between the crafters and consumers, assuming that they could ensure fair play. As one developer said,

If it wasn't for me, they would get even less than they currently do for their crafts. Some consumers force the crafters to give them a discount if they buy in bulk. I do not allow that sort of thing when I take orders on their behalf.

Apart from being heavily invested with gender stereotypes, the LSDI's craft training project also projected a definite class bias. The project seemed to expect upper-middle-class behaviour from women they classified as the "poorest of the poor". For instance, the project was organised around tea-times (at 10 am and 2 pm) and lunches (at 12 am) every day for which the LSDI provided refreshments. For the participants, this was a strange way to organise one's time since the majority of them only had one meal a day. Nomvula could also not understand why she was expected to take only one cookie at teatime. "I will not get full on that," she complained. When I asked why she could only have one cookie, she said that the instructors gave her dirty looks if she loaded her plate. In this subtle way, the developers tried to cultivate adherence to middle-class rules of etiquette. Less subtle was their insistence that the participants should contribute

---

projects are geared to a very limited and unreliable market (Rogers 1980: 87, 95-98; Moore 1988: 89-91).



something to their own training. This demand was informed by the middle-class adage that one would have greater commitment from participants if they had invested *something* (either free labour or personal capital) in the project. Depending on where they lived, the LSDI gave each woman either R2.50 or R3 per day for transport. This was only enough for a one-way journey. The participants had to pay the other half of their transport fares. This was a considerable demand, especially since the participants could not earn an income while they were on the training course. Nomula remonstrated that:

The SDI people think we are rich- how are we supposed to get to the community centre and back home everyday? We have to sit there and listen to them talk, talk, talk and they do not even pay us. While I am there I cannot even go to the market to sell the little crafts I have. My children are hungry at home.

Zodwa Ndlovu (from Ubumbano craft market) had a very similar complaint in October 2000. When I met her, she was clearly vexed. "These people want me to go to the AIDS workshop to learn how to work with patients but they do not want to pay me". To middle-class sensibilities this sounds like a strange complaint, seeing that the training was free and the developer would have covered all costs<sup>6</sup>. However, this complaint illuminated middle-class perceptions of volunteers and charity, assuming that women would volunteer their services free of charge for the "good of the community". In reality, most women juggled a multitude of economic activities and did not have the luxury of "free" time to do community service.

Almost in every development project, women in Maputaland were treated like middle-class housewives. They were expected to conform to middle-class etiquette, to

want nothing more than to look after their husbands and children and to spend their time at home. The majority of these projects were not geared towards creating an independent livelihood for women, and seemed to drag women into low-productivity jobs rather than to help them find more productive and remunerative employment. At the postnatal clinic in Mbaswana for instance, nurses often told women to take control of their reproductive capacity and to “plan for children”. The nurses assumed that having more children was always an unplanned mistake which women tried to avoid. However, such advice did not take into account the harsh social and economic contexts in which women had multiple sexual partners, and had children with economically "safe" men. Many local development projects designed for women welcomed the intrusion of local men. The developers believed that these men took a healthy interest in women's affairs.

### **How women work in development projects**

The developers' assumption that women in Maputaland were sheltered, dependent "housewives" stood in sharp contrast to the reality of women's lives. This contradiction played itself out in the working environment of development projects such as the Ubumbano craft market. At Ubumbano, it was clear that women were more dependent on each other than they were on men. The women were also highly organised<sup>7</sup>, and had a long history of contact with the outside world from which the developers tried to shelter

---

<sup>6</sup> I could not get the name of the organisation from Zodwa. Subsequent enquiries from other women also did not bear any fruit. All they knew was the name of the man who had invited them, but not his telephone numbers or other contact details.

<sup>7</sup> Tripp (1994) shows how similar associational activities between women in Tanzania were fostered by their exclusion from formal political and economic spheres, resulting in a preponderance of small and informal women's organisations. A characteristic of women's associational activity in this country was that women preferred to be in groups with other women (p 163).

them. Contrary to the LSDI and other developers' expectations that women would engage only in craft production under the auspices of a manager such as Adam, women obstinately continued with their other informal activities.

Women in Maputaland had a long history of economic activity outside the 'home'. According to Cunningham (1987: 265), women from Maputaland have traded mats and baskets with Zululand 200 years ago. Apart from the trade with people outside the region, women had been trading at local markets such as Mseleni, Mbaswana and Tshongwe long before the first tourists came to the area. Furthermore, during the hundred years that local men had been migrating to the mines on the Witwatersrand, women were responsible for meeting their households' subsistence needs. Experience taught many women that men's remittances from the mines were often irregular. Women could not afford to be fully dependent on their husbands or male family members and had to secure an independent income for themselves. Through farming and other subsistence activities women undertook responsibility for the daily reproduction of their households. In this context, men did not feature prominently as household breadwinners.

This spirit of independence among women survived into the present. Women were still the major traders at local markets and subsistence agriculture (albeit on a small scale) was still the domain of women. It was common for most women to juggle a multitude of economic activities and to enlist the help of very young children in the performance of household duties (See illustration 8, below). A few women also gained access to formal wage labour as the LSDI extended its operations into Maputaland.

Women's activities 'outside the home' were seldom formalised. Women used various informal social networks to gain access to capital, labour, raw materials, markets

friends and cognatic kin. For the most part, a woman's networks continually contracted, expanded and intersected as she moved from one activity to the next. Through gift-giving women extended their existing networks and secured 'dormant' ones.

**Illustration 8: Young girl helping out at the Ubumbano market, December 2000**



The case of Jabula Zikhali (Dudu's mother) illustrates the multiple activities and informal networks that women participated in. Jabula had a temporary job at Sodwana Bay Lodge as a 'domestic worker', grew vegetables at home, had five children to look after, sold crafts at the Ubumbano craft market, produced bricks and sometimes sold sweets and cold drinks from her home. She secured the job at Sodwana Bay Lodge through her family network. Her sister, Lebo Mdluli, worked at the Lodge three years ago and asked her manager to hire Jabula after he had fired someone for stealing. In this manner Lebo repaid Jabula for taking in their younger sister after their mother had passed

away. At the time of their mother's death, Lebo could not afford to look after her younger sister although it was her responsibility as the eldest sibling.

While working at the Lodge, some of Jabula's co-workers asked her to join their stokvel (rotating credit association)<sup>8</sup>. Lina Mlambo vouched for Jabula's honesty and reliability, an important requirement in considering people for membership. Although there were no written agreements between these stokvel members, none of them would dream of breaking the stokvel chain. This was because membership to a stokvel allowed people with limited access to formal financial facilities the chance to quickly raise interest-free capital. None of the women whom I interviewed obtained starting capital for their small businesses from a bank or other formal lending agency. Few of the women entertained this idea as a remote possibility. By becoming part of the stokvel network, Jabula was able to raise enough capital to buy crafts that she could sell during the December holidays.

Jabula asked her second daughter to sell these crafts at the Ubumbano craft market and obtained a stall from her neighbour who owed her a favour. A few months earlier, Jabula had given her neighbour some cabbages after a stray goat had destroyed the neighbour's garden. The neighbour agreed to help Jabula by introducing her to one of the committee members of the craft market and vouched that Jabula would adhere to the market's rules. That December, Jabula was able to send her younger daughter to the market to sell crafts. Jabula even had a good location within the market. Dudu asked her boyfriend, a taxi driver, to take her sister to and from the market daily. This ensured her

---

<sup>8</sup> A stokvel is a type of credit union in which a group of people agrees to contribute fixed amounts of money to a common pool weekly, fortnightly or monthly. Depending on the rules of a particular stokvel, members may draw their contributions or portions of it either in rotation or in times of need (Lukhele 1990:1-2 cf Lubell 1991: 13).

safety and made her presence at the market independent of the cash she generated from the sale of crafts. Jabula's participation in the craft market proved to be a very successful venture and she was able to send all the children to school with the money she generated from craft sales. Jabula could even buy some new seeds for her vegetable garden. The original vegetable garden started with a gift of seedlings from Jabula's sister-in-law.

In addition to these activities, Jabula also had a brick-making business at their home. She bought the equipment with money she received from the stokvel. Jabula's own children were too young to produce bricks and she worked during the daytime. She could not just appoint anyone to help her in this endeavour as giving someone a job entailed a large favour and the expectation of even larger repayments. Jabula offered a job at the brick-working plant to Lina's daughter. She also employed her sister-in-law's second daughter who lived in Matuba. This contact meant that Jabula's informal network extended beyond the boundaries of the Mbaswana area. A few months later, her sister-in-law let Jabula know that she heard that the trade in crafts in KwaNgwanase was very brisk. On this advice, Jabula sent Dudu to KwaNgwanase with some crafts. Within a month, Dudu had sold all the crafts that she was given.

Jabula used various informal networks to gain access to capital (through the stokvel), labour (through friends at work, the stokvel and her family), raw materials (through her family), markets (through her family and neighbours) and employment opportunities (through her family). Each time she extended her personal network, she had to go through gatekeepers like the neighbour whom had introduced her to the Ubumbano craft committee. With each new contact made, informal rules of reciprocity were established. For instance, Jabula felt obliged to employ Lina's daughter in gratitude

for having introduced her to the stokvel network a few years previously<sup>9</sup>. At no point did Jabula sign any formal agreement with other women and in the majority of cases she did not discuss explicit 'rules of conduct'. However, the wide social network of women in the area ensured that gossip, news and information spread quickly. Should someone for instance default on a stokvel payment, the news would get around that such a person was unreliable. The person in question would then have difficulty establishing new contacts and would face severe social pressure from other women in her personal network. This could severely inhibit someone's economic activities and consequent chances of survival.

Jabula's connection to various networks made it possible for her to operate several economic activities, even though she had a full-time (although temporary) job. The social network she established in this way also gave her constant feedback on her activities and this information helped her to branch out even further.

Despite deploying these strategies, Jabula's economic activities were not very profitable. However, her networks allowed Jabula to spread her risks more evenly in a harsh economic environment. Her family's survival was thus not fully dependent on Jabula's ability to keep her job at the Lodge. For many women, these social networks were important sources of security in times of hardship. They were also more stable than relationships with men. One could 'bank' favours with a social network to claim at a later stage. For this reason, women would often forego responsibilities towards their husbands and boyfriends in order to meet the requirements of their network of family and friends. Women seldom refused requests to help other women and sometimes even volunteered their time and resources to wealthier women without having been asked for it. These

---

<sup>9</sup> Bähre (2002) argues that stokvels establish trust in informal settlements. In my research area, stokvels grew out of established networks of trust.

organisations outside the home created an independent ‘domain of women’, characterised by informal rules of reciprocity and obligation.

In the crafts industry, the growth of women's businesses was largely determined by the access that individual stall owners had to social and financial capital. From a content analysis of 131 businesses and the histories of fifty-four businesses at the Ubumbano craft market, it emerged that businesses generally followed roughly the same patterns of growth. With each new stage, the capital required and the distance travelled to expand a business, grew. Generally, most stall owners started their craft businesses by harvesting raw plant material (*ilala*, *ikwwane*, *isikhonkho*, *ulozisi*, monkey oranges, *isundu*) and producing crafts from it. At this stage, the production process was generally very time-consuming. Production included harvesting, the refining of raw materials, and also the actual weaving process. Businesses reached a second stage when stall owners started buying raw materials (commercial dyes and plant materials such as *ilala* and *induli*) from the market in Mbaswana. This allowed women to bypass the arduous harvesting process. During the first two phases, stall owners did not employ anyone to sell for them. Businesses reached a third stage once stall owners started buying finished crafts from local markets such as Mbaswana, Tshongwe, Ndongeni and Mkuze. A large majority (96%) of these stall owners continued to produce some crafts to sell. At this stage, stall owners generally started hiring young women to sell for them at Ubumbano. The next step for many stall owners was to buy pineapples from Hluhluwe. This activity required access to private transportation. Women who sold pineapples often continued to produce crafts but stopped harvesting their own raw materials. A business reached a fifth stage once its owner started buying crafts from Swaziland. Some women extended their



businesses further by travelling to Durban to buy crafts and other ready-made products there. They usually combined these products with ones they bought locally. Finally, two women extended their businesses even further by starting tuckshops at the market in addition to the stalls they already owned. Widely viewed as the most successful woman at the craft market, Elsie Mamlambo, had a tuckshop, a craft stall, and a pineapple stall. She employed four women to sell her goods at the market.

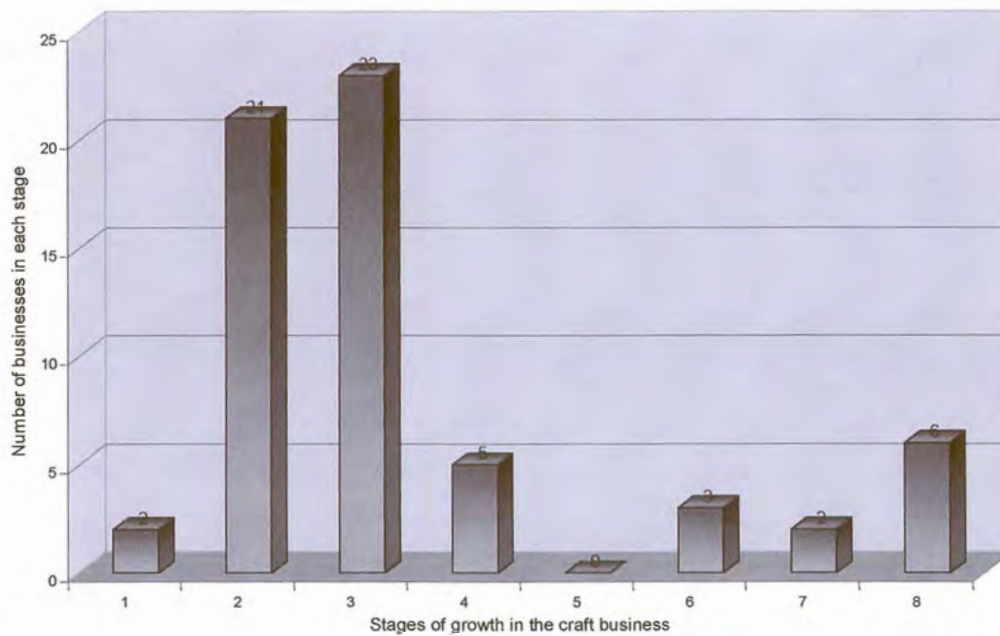
This pattern reflected the actual growth of many businesses and also the way in which women talked about their business histories and plans for the future. For instance, when Lina Zikhali told me about her business, she referred to a particularly bad period at home that forced her to revert to harvesting her own raw materials after she had been selling crafts from Mbaswana and Swaziland. These ‘stages of growth in a business’ roughly overlapped with success and income. I controlled my findings on the ‘stages of growth in a business’ with analyses of daily incomes and profit margins of 368 stall-owners over thirty-two random days. My analysis consistently showed that traders who sold crafts bought in Swaziland and in Durban had higher incomes than traders selling their own products or locally-produced crafts. The profit margins on crafts bought in Swaziland was also considerably higher than on crafts bought in Mbaswana. Furthermore, the inventories of twenty-nine stalls showed that there was a significant relationship between the stage a business had reached and its total worth. Thus stalls in the higher categories were worth more and had the potential to earn more than stalls in the lower categories.

Contrary to the literature and developers’ expectations, my analysis shows that businesses at the Ubumbano craft market run by women in women-headed households

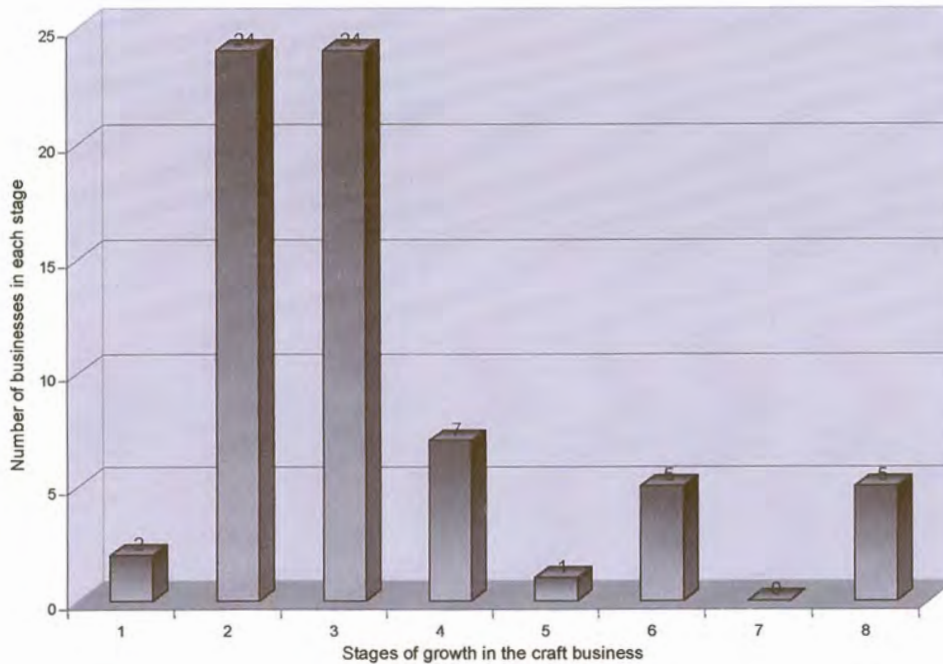
were just as likely to reach the higher stages of growth than those run by women in male-headed households. This provided further credence to the idea that women in Maputaland were more dependent upon their female networks than they were on men. It is precisely because single female household heads had wider access to social networks outside the household than married women, that their businesses were more likely to grow (See figure 5, below). In fact, women who stood at the head of their households owned the two most successful businesses at the craft market.

On the other hand, the bulk of businesses owned by women in male-headed households were represented in the lower growth categories (See figure 6, below).

**Figure 5: The distribution of businesses owned by women in women-headed households across growth categories, Ubumbano craft market, June 2000- December 2000.**



**Figure 6: The distribution of businesses owned by women in male-headed households across growth categories, Ubumbano craft market, June 2000- December 2000.**



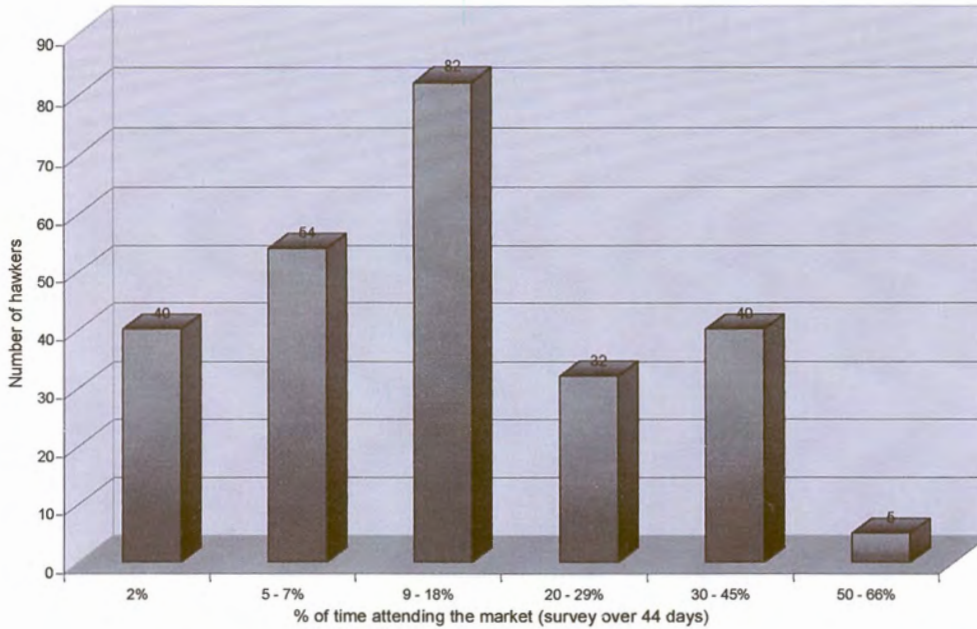
Contrary to the developers' expectation that women would come to the market more often since they started their project, I found that women actually came to the market very seldom. I took a daily attendance record of 253 women selling at Ubumbano craft market over forty-four days. These days included the following periods in 2000; July 20 to August 3 (the tourist low season), August 14 to August 26, September 22 to October 7 and December 17 to December 21 (the peak tourist season). Overall, individual women came to the market only 15% of that time (See figure 7, below). This was because many women were the sole breadwinners in their households and could not afford to take part in a development project that only promised them R240 per month<sup>10</sup>. The number of

<sup>10</sup> This was the amount that women who produced crafts for iLala Weavers received for an order that took a month to complete. Although the LSDI paid slightly more for crafts, the women could still only produce a limited number of crafts per month.

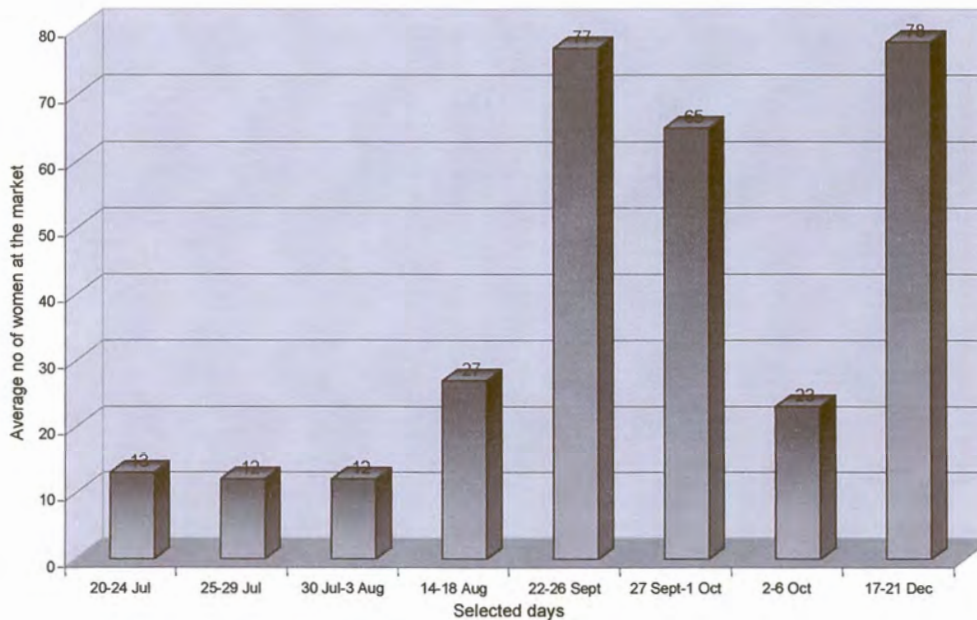


traders at the market was also not much higher than during October (See Figure 8, below).

**Figure 7: The average attendance of individual women at the Ubumbano craft market, July –December 2000**



**Figure 8: The attendance of women at the Ubumbano craft market, select days 2000**

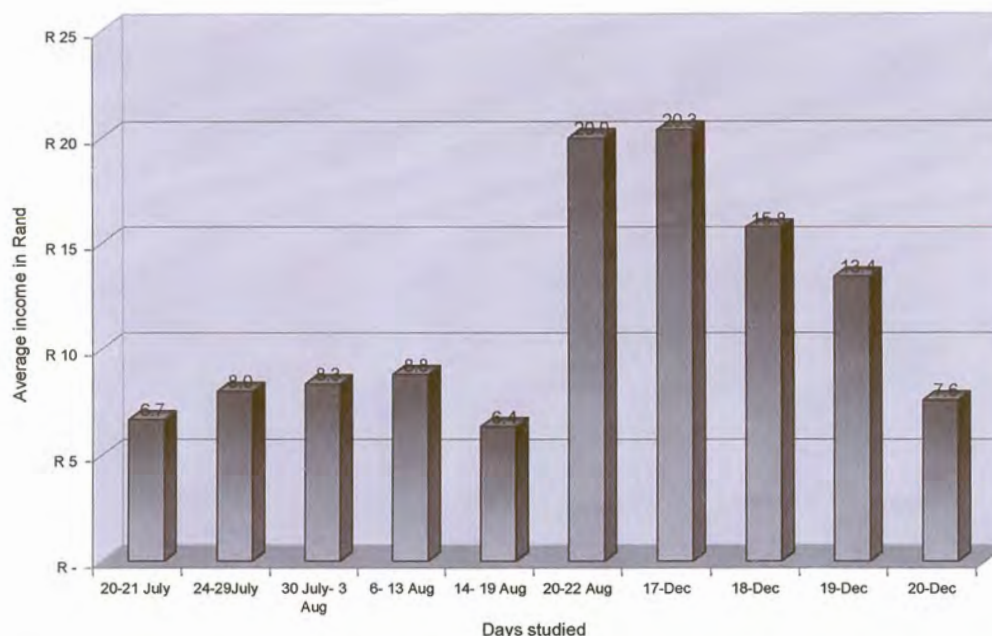


During the tourist high season, many lodges, diving schools and other "formal" businesses offered part-time jobs to women. Tourists also employed women to clean their camping sites and to look after their children. Although these formal businesses and tourists seldom paid more than R30 per day, it was still more than the average income (R10.61) for crafters at the Ubumbano craft market (See Figure 9, below). Therefore, many women opted for the steady income of a temporary job rather than going to the market.

Evidence also contradicts the expectations of developers that the craft industry would lead to a redistribution of income outside the household. Most women traders employed family members just as soon as their businesses showed real growth. The salaries that women paid their workers often undermined their success, forcing them into cycles of growth and poverty instead of the envisioned linear growth projected by economists. At the Ubumbano craft market, wealthier women were forced into positions of patronage and were expected to employ younger family members at their stalls. Such traders had difficulty convincing their families that they could not afford to employ another person, especially if they stopped producing crafts (which was an indication that a business was successful). Salaries paid to young women generally ranged from R300 to R900 per month. At most, successful traders received a bruto income of about R2 000 per month. The bulk of this income went towards household expenses. Less than 40% of the total income generated by a stall was used in the capital or running expenses of businesses. Salaries thus made large inroads on business capital, forcing successful traders to cut down on their acquisition of ready-made products. Since successful traders had to provide year-round patronage, they had to expend more money than poorer traders

during the off-seasons. Eventually, such traders had to "let their help go" and started their businesses afresh, making crafts and buying a few locally produced ready-made crafts.

**Figure 9: Average income per day at the Ubumbano craft market, select days 2000**



Some of the developers I talked to about these cycles of growth and poverty at the market attributed it to local people's "tradition" or to a "community-orientated" (but fundamentally irrational) worldview. They insisted that this "orientation" corrupted businesses. Findings, such as that presented above, were taken as evidence of this. What they did not take into account was that the women were not wholly dependent on the income from the craft market, but also relied upon a multitude of other activities. Economic survival depended upon a woman's ability to spread her risks. Thus, after a relatively successful business collapsed, its owner was seldom left destitute and could claim favours from those whom she had employed. As I showed in Jabula's case, these favours were seldom paid back in kind. As such, different counter-favours often helped women expand the range of their informal income-earning activities. By spreading their

risks and setting up multiple enterprises, women were able to meet the daily consumption and cash requirements of their households.

### **Outside development projects: showing the developers up**

Outside the realm of the craft market, the stereotypical images of women and their families also informed other development practices. Women in Maputaland did not fit the picture of loyal and submissive housewives waiting at home to fix supper for their husbands while their well-fed and scrubbed children were tucked up in bed.

Despite being associated with the domestic domain, women showed considerable social and economic independence. Women's economic independence stemmed from the fact that any crops they planted and harvested were considered to be their property. Thus, women did not depend on men for their most basic subsistence needs. At the Ubumbano craft market for instance, 121 (92%) of 131 traders planted food at home. Ninety-eight (75%) of the 131 traders also kept chickens. Within the household, women had the right to deny their husbands or other male relatives food. Men rarely interfered in the running of the household as this was considered a woman's job. In this capacity, women made decisions about the education of their children and organised female household labour. Women also catered for the subsistence needs of household members. Women were free to decide in which economic activities they would participate. Husbands who interfered with the affairs of their wives were referred to as "*makoti*" (married woman). Unmarried young women at the Ubumbano craft market showed the same kind of independence in their relationships. Unless a boyfriend had enough money to shoulder all household expenses, he had very little say in what they did during the day.

It was with weariness that some women interpreted “men’s work”. They complained that men spoke all day and accomplished little. The development money that men and women vied for did not improve women’s lives. Dudu was twenty-three years old, unmarried and lived with her two children at her parent’s home. Her mother bought food for their family of nine, clothes and school uniforms for the five children in the household and paid school fees and pocket money for each child. Dudu’s mother also paid a builder to build an extra room onto their house. Three years ago, Dudu’s father lost his job on the mines in Gauteng and returned home. On his return, he could not find employment. Dudu said that this was just an excuse because her father had turned down many offers of road construction jobs by the LSDI, claiming that this was “women’s work”. The growing numbers of women on the road construction teams in the Mbaswana area were conspicuous. Dudu said that this was because the developers had realised that unlike men, women were strong, able workers in her “culture”. Dudu contemptuously exclaimed that her father only wished to “talk politics” with other men all day long. Dudu only dated men from other areas because she did not want her son to grow up as lazy as the men of Mbaswana.

Women were content to subscribe to the legal fiction of male dominance and left public political power in the hands of men, secure in the knowledge that men’s status had been underwritten by women’s labour. As one woman remarked with a smug expression, “let them talk, we’ll see if anything happens”.

Even in cases of domestic violence, women were not passive victims. When women at the Ubumbano craft market spoke about domestic violence, they often recalled how they had retaliated by using kitchen utensils, brooms and sticks. Some boasted how



they had almost “broken a man’s head” or “chased him out of the house”. On one occasion, a group of crafters at Ubumbano pointed a man out to me, whom they called umChunku. There was general merriment as they recalled how a group of them had beaten umChunku to within an inch of his death after he had stolen food from one of the women. UmChunku suffered brain damage because of the beatings and could not work again. He wandered about in the area, picking up papers. Laughing, Elsie exclaimed, “Now he asks very nicely if he wants something- even the old pineapples that we throw out. He won’t steal from us again!” The average woman in Maputaland did not fit the middle-class stereotype of a submissive housewife meekly accepting her husband or boyfriend’s beatings.

Women’s marriages also differed substantially from the middle-class ideal envisioned by the developers. Sexual exclusivity in a marriage was not the norm and marital relationships were characterised by hostility, suspicion and mutual antagonism. On the one hand, employed men saw themselves as struggling to survive in a world where they were surrounded by a sea of ever-needy women<sup>11</sup>. Kehla lamented that “all they want is just money, money, money”. At the Ubumbano craft market, this was certainly characteristic of young women’s motivations for going out with men. Women like Dudu were often saddled with childcare obligations from an early age and could not afford to have purely “romantic” relationships. Their decisions to start or break off a relationship with a man were by necessity heavily influenced by the economic contribution he could make to the household. On the other hand, many men lost their jobs

---

<sup>11</sup> Ferguson’s (1999: 166-206) study of urban mineworkers on the Zambian Copperbelt showed that women’s dependence upon the remittances of male migrant labourers caused resentment among men. In this context, the family became a site of political struggle and the locus of micro-political contestations

and were likely to remain unemployed. These men were often dependent on women's earnings. Their wives and daughters became resentful of these men and called them lazy.

The LSDI expected that the women they targeted in the Ubumbano craft project lived in "stable" households. This made it possible for the LSDI to claim that they were developing a "community". The fiction of a stable, harmonious community living some distance from the craft market, informed the LSDI's notion that the trainees would in turn train others. Supposing that the women formed part of an integrated community of stable households, the developers believed that the women would want to "develop" others in that community so that all of them would benefit. The LSDI also believed that the skills they taught at their workshops would become part of the bank of local knowledge, which could be supplement in their future workshops.

In reality, a large majority of households at the Ubumbano craft market showed considerable flux in both composition and location<sup>12</sup>. A survey of 131 households at the market found that thirty-six (27%) comprised of a husband, wife and their children; twenty-two (17%) were composed of a woman and her children; and seventy-three (56%) could be classified as extended family households. This seemed like a neat categorisation. However, in subsequent interviews, I found that most households were in perpetual flux, with the composition of their members changing frequently. For instance, when I asked Philisiwe Mdluli in June 2000 about her household, she was living with two brothers, a sister-in-law and her children, her mother and her own two sons. Six months later, one of Philisiwe's brothers had moved to Pongola, leaving his wife and children behind.

---

between wage-earning men and others making claims on their wage-earning potential (Ferguson 1999: 192-206).

<sup>12</sup> Spiegel et al (1996) question the supposed naturalness of nuclear households and points to the actual fluidity of household compositions in Cape Town.

Philisiwe's one son went to live with his grandmother. In December 2000 another change took place when Philisiwe's brother returned home from Johannesburg.

Due to the harsh economic conditions in the region, the volatility of male-female relationships and the ravages of AIDS, many households dispersed their dependants over large family networks in times of crises (See Spiegel, Watson and Wilkinson 1996: 7-30). This strategy required that the boundaries of the household remained permeable, allowing household members to move in and out of the house, as economic and social conditions required.

For instance, when Philisiwe's brother returned from Johannesburg with AIDS, he required much care and attention<sup>13</sup>. Since he came home, they slaughtered two cows, seven goats and many chickens in rituals aimed at healing him. They also paid consultation fees for a herbalist and three western doctors. Apart from the financial cost, Philisiwe's burdens of physical care and household duties increased considerably. She had to contend with visitors at all hours of the day that wanted to talk to the sick man or pray for him. Few of these visitors brought food and Philisiwe had to constantly carry tea and refreshments to them. In anticipation of these financial burdens, Philisiwe sent her son to live with his grandmother "to look after her". The boy collected firewood and water for his grandmother. In return, she fed and clothed him and also paid his school fees. To help pay for some of the bills, Philisiwe's brother went to work in Pongola. The household was thus "shuffled" so that it was geared towards the sick man's care. Similar shuffling took place in situations of dire economic need. In these circumstances, it was usually the children in a household that were placed with other family members. Other

times, a family member with a job from another household was placed in a household with no wage-earning adults.

Thus most households showed considerable flux and "movement". In a certain sense, my findings about Maputaland conforms to Moore and Vaughan's (1994: 225) argument that the household is a nexus of overlapping interests and activities, whose sometimes temporary coherence is an achievement rather than a pre-given fact.

In this context, the LSDI's conceptions of a community and the dispersal of knowledge were fundamentally flawed. They were not working with stable "households" combining their efforts to achieve common goals. Instead, they were training individuals whose household membership was transient and dependent on their economic contributions to it. As such, women did not merely compete with one another, but also with other households. This became abundantly clear when the LSDI trainees refused to train others and kept the information secret. The LSDI's hope that their future workshops would just be able to "build on" the previous ones was also naïve in the context of the great mobility of most women. In order to "develop" all women at the craft market through their workshops, the LSDI would thus have to have constant, parallel workshops.

## **Conclusion**

Even though men and women in Maputaland occupied separate domains of action that roughly overlapped with the public/ domestic dichotomy, women were not disempowered or devalued by virtue of their association with the domestic sphere. Within the domestic

---

<sup>13</sup> Since men often fall ill and die first, women and children usually have to cope with the increased burden of caring for the sick, and take on greater responsibility for earning money and providing food

sphere women were autonomous and did not allow men to make decisions for them.

Women took pride in the notion that they were “doers” whilst men were “talkers”.

Women enforced the boundaries of the domestic sphere by ridiculing and violently attacking men who tried to interfere with their affairs.

In this society, the link between women and agriculture (food) had been in existence for a long time. As such, women were responsible for the reproduction of the household and also of the society at large. Since the area was well known for its poor soils, its unpredictable rainfall and diseases and pests, women could generally not rely on agriculture alone to provide in their households' subsistence needs. During apartheid, subsistence in this area became even more precarious as the available land for agriculture shrank due to population relocations. In this context, women diversified their economic activities to spread their risks. Women's networks of reciprocal help played a fundamental role in this diversification process and provided a source of security for many women. Central to the success of women's networks was that they were "informal", dispersed and allowed "savings". The enormous economic importance of these networks made women more reliant on other women than on men. For this reason, there was not a large discrepancy between the incomes of female-headed and male-headed households at the Ubumbano craft market.

Development projects inappropriately projected ideas about Western middle-class women onto the local setting. The developers assumed that the male representatives of women's groups actually represented and controlled these women's activities. The LSDI and KZN Wildlife thus believed that John Mlambo knew what was going on at the Ubumbano craft market, and that he could exercise authority over the women who

---

(Cassam 1991:113-116; Mullins 2000:5; Obbo 1995: 167-168, 177).

worked there. The decisions that John took on behalf of the women showed just how little he knew about the market. Furthermore, developers hoped that women would "settle down" to a single economic activity such as craft production under the auspices of their patronage. Development projects thus partitioned the women's domain into separate "activities". Craft work, subsistence agriculture and care work became "professions" and the women participating in these projects were discouraged from doing anything else. These initiatives halted the flow of women's activities across dispersed networks, and undermined their economic security. Most of these projects did not deliver anything more than a subsistence income (or less). Since most development projects had a fixed number of participants, women could not give others access to these projects. This made the participants in development projects of little use to the networks.

## Chapter 6

### Local Resistance

*"[P]olitical action refers to the totality of cultural representations (deeds, symbols, aesthetic forms, religious or cosmological values, and so forth) and of the historical traces that provide them with significance and consistency. All these elements taken together form the dramatic texture of history, although power and forms of resistance to its exercise are not always located exactly where the observer seeks them"*

- Bayart 1986b: 267.

*"If I don't take it, someone else will"*

- A harvester at Lake Sibaya on why she harvests immature reeds.

*"Look at her, she thinks she is Mrs. Mandela"*

- A remark at the Ubumbano craft market about a politically ambitious woman.

When I was doing my research, the number of politically and economically marginalised people in Maputaland expanded rapidly. Paradoxically, this came about as more actors entered the region to help in the socio-economic development of its people. These developers introduced gender- 'sensitive' development projects that reinforced separate domains for different sectors of this society. Developers clearly treated the women's spheres as less important than those of men, and Tribal Authorities had more direct access to political decision making and money than groups of women crafters managed by men. Women's voices remained largely muted in the development projects that targeted them.

On a larger scale, the LSDI's emphasis on the development of an eco-tourism industry and the declaration of a World Heritage Site in the region meant that successful land claimants could not move back onto their land. It also meant that land trusts, often just another name for Tribal Authorities, legally managed communal property and

development incomes. This tied regular people to the trusts (hoping that they would get their promised share of the development income) and ultimately to the developers' plans.

Most human relationships are based on non-verbal arrangements of power, rights and permitted actions. De Boeck (1996: 91-99) used the concept "*l'arrangement*" to refer to a specific mode of negotiation and compromise between the Zambian state and the traditional authorities it aimed to encapsulate. In this arrangement, the Zambian state sought to counteract its decay by incorporating ancient, traditional symbolism and local power structures on terms that legitimated its own domination. On the other hand, traditional authorities utilised their "currency" to aim beyond local encapsulation to regional and national integration. This situation was highly flexible and individualistic and no explicit rules of conduct were laid down. Both parties benefited from the anonymous informal negotiations and temporary agreements. In Maputaland, land use strategies and neo-liberal development plans muted dissent and enforced a specific arrangement upon developers, tourists, Tribal Authorities and other local people.

For instance, the Tribal Authorities who sat on the LSDI and other developers' committees knew that their presence at development planning sessions was often just window-dressing. Although they privately complained about their inability to influence development plans, they subscribed to the arrangement in which they showed up for meetings, had their pictures taken with the developers, and appeared at public ceremonies.

Likewise, women at the Ubumbano market subscribed to the patronising management of their domain, to the demands of developers who wanted them to produce more Zulu-looking crafts, and to the tourists' condescension. Within the Sodwana Bay



National Park, these women even kept to an arrangement whereby tourists were separated from locals. On the beachfront, tourists occupied the main beach while the locals took up a piece of beach on the other side of the lagoon. Local children and young women selling crafts were "allowed" onto the main beach as long as they did not use the space for leisurely pursuits. I once witnessed how a conservation official asked a group of young women swimming in their (conservative) underwear to clear off the main beach because their apparel shocked the tourists. On a beach where some white female tourists tanned topless, the double standard was obvious.

Similar arrangements existed between commoners and the Tribal Authorities that "represented" them, between crafters and nature conservation officials and between women and businesses in the service industry that employed them. In no instance of an arrangement were there any explicit rules as to conduct. For instance, no explicit rules prohibited women at Sodwana Bay from going onto the main beach to relax. Nor were commoners compelled to subscribe to the decisions of Tribal Authorities. Most of the time, these arrangements just represented the way of least conflict. They "worked" insofar as they allowed people to get on with their daily lives without having to negotiate procedures of power, authority and rights afresh each time they encountered a new person.

In this chapter, I will show how these arrangements sometimes slipped into hidden resistance, or where the arrangement totally broke down, into overt resistance. Men in Tribal Authority positions would often opt to openly resist those that threatened their positions of power and autonomy. Since these men 'owned' the land on which the conservation projects were centred, a total breakdown in arrangements left them with a

powerful negotiation card. Their strategic importance to development plans enabled Tribal Authorities to negotiate new arrangements. The breakdown of an arrangement allowed Tribal Authorities to build up political capital and to remind the developers of their importance as 'community' liaisons. However, the Tribal Authorities could only risk engaging in open resistance once they were sure that "the community" would support them. Otherwise a breakdown in the arrangement would expose the Tribal Authorities as illegitimate. They would thus leave the door open for those men who "worked politics" on the margins of the Tribal Authorities' sphere to take their places. Breaking an arrangement to build political capital was thus a strategy wrought with danger. For this reason, open resistance in the Maputaland region to development projects or any other intrusions on local people's autonomy was rare.

A more common strategy was for people to slip from the complicity of an arrangement to non-confrontational forms of everyday resistance. These everyday forms of resistance did not break the arrangement but subtly informed the other party that something was amiss. This created an anonymous space in which the arrangement could be altered without explicit negotiations between the parties concerned. In this situation, both parties were also spared "losing face", making the continued flow of daily interactions possible. I will argue that local people who were politically and economically marginalised by the development process were more likely to turn to hidden forms of resistance. Women, men outside of the Tribal Authority structures and youth resisted intrusions on their autonomy by turning to what Scott (1990) called the "weapons of the weak".

This chapter will be organised as follows. First, I will devote a section to the theoretical background of my investigation and examine resistance as an analytical construct. Hereafter, I will briefly describe a few instances of open resistance in Maputaland, the situations that prompted these, and the consequences of this form of action. This will be followed by a discussion of different forms of covert resistance, including over-harvesting, poaching, feigned ignorance and theft. Each of these forms of resistance will be examined and analysed separately. This does not mean to imply that they are unconnected or isolated.

### **Resistance as theoretical construct**

The anthropological concept of resistance emerged largely from research in societies subjected to colonial rule or other forms of domination. In most part, these ethnographies concentrated on how dominated people used cultural resources such as "tradition", "religion", "kinship" or ethnicity" to resist their oppressors (Mayer 1980; Cohen 1981; Comaroff 1985; Lan 1985; MacGaffey 1994).

One of the most influential ideas to emerge from this discussion is Scott's (1985, 1990) concept of "hidden" or "everyday" resistance. Scott (1990) asserts that peasants often deny or mitigate the ruling classes' claims on them by turning to underhand activities such as false-compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson and sabotage. These forms of resistance require little or no co-ordination and planning; often present a form of anonymous individual self-help; use implicit understandings and informal networks; and avoid openly confronting authorities. Such techniques are well

suited to the characteristics of the peasantry: a diverse social class often lacking the discipline and leadership required by resistance of a more organised sort. According to Scott (1990), these individual acts of resistance, often reinforced by a venerable popular culture of resistance, can have a considerable collective impact.

Isaacman (1990: 3, 31-33) criticised Scott for the imprecise nature of the concept "everyday forms of resistance". He pointed out that activities such as sabotage were not everyday occurrences and that the intent of many of these activities was difficult to determine. Another critique on Scott is that he did not investigate the limits to everyday forms of resistance, failing to show the contexts in which weapons of the weak are weak weapons. Nevertheless, Scott's concept has been found to be indispensable to a broader understanding of domination, subordination and conflict, also among social classes other than the peasantry (Sluka 1995: 82-83).

During the 1980s and early 1990s, Africanist scholars such as Bayart (1986a and b) and Chabal (1992) drew attention to the corrupt nature of postcolonial states in Africa and to the civil societies that opposed them. They looked at "politics from below", in an attempt to correct the interpretative simplifications of development and dependency theories, with their excessive institutional focus. "Politics from below" brought a welcome shift of analysis to the hitherto neglected political processes within society at large.

However, this literature often posits a rather simplistic dichotomy between "civil society" and "the state". For example, Bayart (1986a: 111) defines civil society "...in so far as it is in confrontation with the state". Likewise, Chabal (1992:83, 85) defined civil society as a vast ensemble of constantly changing groups and individuals whose only

common ground is their exclusion from the state, their consciousness of this exclusion, and their potential opposition to the state. These scholars emphasised that even though civil society's resistance to the state is not necessarily violent, it does take place on a large scale. They noted that civil society takes its revenge on the state through innumerable flexible and variable tactics including informal economic activities that contribute to the state's decline (Bayart 1986 and MacGaffey 1994: 173-175). As Bayart (1986b: 265-266) argues:

Revolts, the refusal of some kinds of work, slowdowns, strikes, electoral abstentions, migrations, ... reference to transcendent religious alliances... smuggling, the burgeoning informal economic sector, the intensive circulation of information not controlled by the media, undermining authority by ironic humor, conflictual participation in the structures of political control: There is a long list of people's actions which limit and reduce the field of state action, and which thus assure a sort of revenge of civil society on state institutions.

By the 1990s, Africanist scholars such as Mbembe (1992), Werbner (1996) and De Boeck (1996) questioned this dichotomy and point to the interpenetration and mutual reinforcement of state and civil society. These authors asserted that the standard binary categories such as domination and resistance, hegemony and counter-hegemony, were inadequate to explain postcolonial relations of power. For Mbembe (1992), the emphasis changed from resistance to connivance. According to him, there is an almost domestic familiarity in the relationship between the state and civil society, which effectively disarms both. This familiarity links the ruler with the ruled to such an extent that subjects internalise the authoritarian epistemology to a point where they reproduce it themselves. In this context, ordinary people cannot be in "opposition to the state", or "deconstruct power" or "disengage" (p 25). Mbembe claims that domination and subjection is turned into a "magical song" at that point where the original arbitrariness produces terror,

banality and hilarity (cited in Hoeller 2002: 6). Chabal and Daloz (1999) have commented that all political actors seek to exploit the current disorder of the postcolonial state for their own profit.

Contrary to Mbembe's claim that everyone in the postcolonial state is complicit to an empty show of power, I assert that people "on the ground" are fundamentally excluded from the state. In my research area, only certain men had access to the privileged domain of negotiation with the state by virtue of their claim to be traditionally sanctioned mouthpieces of the local people. To a large measure, they used these negotiations to further their own private political and economic interests. They were not just puppets of the state. The large majority of regular people were excluded from these negotiations with Tribal Authorities, developers or the state. The fact that they frequently resisted the Tribal Authorities questions the supposed "domesticity" in the relationship between people and the state or its accomplices. It is exactly because local people did not have access to the negotiation tables of "their" leaders that they turned to everyday forms of resistance. In Maputaland, many men "worked politics" even though they were not part of the state or of the Tribal Authority Structures. The confusion about who exactly represented the state made it possible for con men to promise local people municipal services such as the provision of water for a small fee.

A point of critique to many of these scholarly writings on resistance is that they completely ignore gender and treat "civil society" as an undifferentiated mass. An exception to this rule was Webster's (1991) study of a society in Northern KwaZulu-Natal. Webster draws attention to the ways in which women at KwaDapha invoked a traditional Thonga identity to resist male domination within the context of apartheid.

Older women, in particular, called upon an imaginative reconstruction of Thonga kinship relations and language to assert their interests in the domestic sphere (p. 256-260). By contrast, men invoked a Zulu identity to accommodate themselves to the demands of migrant labour. This study is exemplary in drawing our attention to the differential interests of men and women in a single society, and to the strategies they used to protect such interests. It is in this context that I found Scott's concept of everyday forms of resistance useful in describing forms of protest and resistance that were embedded in gender relations as well as those which formed an integral part of class relations.

### **Capitalising on open resistance: Tribal Authorities in Maputaland**

Open resistance often disrupts the flow of daily life. In Maputaland, there were just a few instances in which local people openly resisted intrusions on their autonomy by developers, Tribal Authorities and nature conservationists. Where open resistance occurred, it was often preceded by a total breakdown in the arrangement between the parties concerned. It usually took weeks if not months of protracted and costly negotiations to restore calm.

In October 2001, the Mabaso Tribal Authority (in the corporate guise of Funjwa Holdings) established a nature conservation area on communal land. In newspaper reports, chief Nxumalo, claimed that he consulted widely with the local "community" and asked that families inside the reserve relocate, pledging financial help for those who could not afford to move (Ka'Nkosi 2001: 4). However, local residents such as Nonhlanhla Zwelithini said that no one received any money to relocate and that the chief

sent his men at night to intimidate the twelve households that still lived in the proposed area.

For a long time, Nonhlanhla and the other people living on the proposed nature conservation site subscribed to the legal fiction that chief Nxumalo represented them and was the legal trustee of their land. This arrangement did not greatly influence their autonomy and they were allowed to go about their business as they had always done. However, when chief Nxumalo announced the plans for a nature conservation area, their lives were fundamentally altered. About six hundred people moved to other areas, severing friendship ties and leaving their means of subsistence (agricultural plots) behind. Others, like Nonhlanhla, stayed behind to be constantly harassed and to have their freedom of movement restricted by the newly erected fences. The chief's men assaulted people and made fearsome noises outside their homes. Nonhlanhla feared for her life but did not want to move. "Everything is here! We are not living in apartheid anymore... We cannot be moved like cattle!" Nonhlanhla also complained about the fence that Funjwa Holdings erected around the proposed nature conservation area. The new fence inconvenienced Nonhlanhla by cutting her off from the path she used to go to the Ubumbano craft market and to her fields. She suddenly had to scale a three-metre high fence at least twice a day. The intrusion on their autonomy was a violent breach of their original arrangement with chief Nxumalo.

In November 2001, this group launched an action in the Constitutional Court to stop Funjwa Holdings from establishing a nature conservation area on their land<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> The newspapers reported widely on the establishment of and resistance to Funjwa Holdings' community nature conservation area (See Bishop 2001b: 3; Ka'Nkosi 2001: 4; and Moore 2002a: 9).



Amnesty International paid all their legal fees<sup>2</sup>. The applicants claimed that they were Zikhali, not Mabaso and that the land set aside for the nature conservation area encroached on their "tribal" land. In their court application, the group stated that they had launched this action to avoid a "bloodbath" in the renewed boundary conflicts between the Mabaso and Zikhali chieftaincies. The more "technical" side of the application dealt with the erection of the fence around the nature conservation area. The erection of this fence allegedly broke the lease agreement with the Ingonyama Trust in terms of which Funjwa Holdings could not "erect, repair, refurbish or construct any structure or improvements on the premises" (Ka'Nkosi 2001: 4). In response to this court action, chief Nxumalo pleaded his innocence. He claimed that he had followed all the correct procedures and that he had consulted widely with members of "his community" who were affected by the development. Chief Nxumalo described the tension as a conflict between a people who wanted to prosper and those who were jealous of their success (Ka' Nkosi 2001: 4). Some of his councillors blamed the trouble on the ANC, and said that the ANC wanted to stir up bad feelings so that they could replace the chief in negotiating between developers and the community.

This court case illustrates the extent to which the arrangement between chief Nxumalo and "his people" had broken down. The group of applicants did not ascribe to the fiction that he represented them anymore and pledged their allegiance to chief Zikhali. They emphasised this new allegiance by claiming that they had "always" been Zikhali. Chief Nxumalo was placed in a difficult position. When Funjwa Holdings applied for a lease on the land, they claimed that it was to establish a *community*

---

<sup>2</sup> Despite my repeated calls over seven months to Amnesty International, I could not get more information about their involvement.

conservation area. The donors were all too happy to throw money at the traditional leader of the "community" in question, believing that chief Nxumalo represented the interests of "his people". However, in the court case the "community" affected by the "development project" openly questioned chief Nxumalo as their legitimate traditional leader. This statement threatened the arrangement between Funjwa Holdings (of which chief Nxumalo was the director) and the donors. As such, this arrangement was premised on the legitimacy of chief Nxumalo *vis-à-vis* "the community". In order to save that arrangement, chief Nxumalo found it expedient to ascribe the "tension" to a rogue group within the "community". This explanation underscored his continued legitimacy and undermined the court applicants' claims by accusing them of the blackest of trespasses, jealousy. This accusation painted the applicants as an envious, grudging lot who wanted others to be just as deprived as they were by trying to stop "development".

In the chaos surrounding the breakdown in the arrangement between chief Nxumalo and "his people", chief Zikhali opportunistically entered the fray. He claimed to be the legitimate leader of portions of the irate "community". This was an overt demand to be included in the arrangement between chief Nxumalo and the donors. By claiming that two distinct "communities" were actually involved in the development project, and not just "Nxumalo's people", chief Zikhali had legitimate reason to want to be on (the) board. In this manner chief Zikhali augmented his political capital. In the court case, he pictured chief Nxumalo as a greedy chief who forcefully evicted large numbers of people from land that he and his councillors wanted to use for their own personal profit. Chief Zikhali was depicted as the champion of beleaguered and trampled people.

By January 2002, the court case against Funjwa Holdings (the Mabaso Tribal Authority) had still not been settled. As the intimidation and eviction of people continued unabated, people residing on the Mabaso Game Reserve became extremely impatient. At this point that the Mabaso Game Reserve fell victim to poaching and vandalism of its fence amounting to R200 000 in damages. In response, the Mabaso Tribal Authority appointed six game scouts, helped by bands of "volunteers", to patrol the area. Groups of workmen were also mobilised to salvage the posts and strands of wire. They patched up the fence until it could be properly replaced. Newspaper reports on the matter became increasingly unsympathetic to the plight of those staying on the reserve and empathised with chief Nxumalo's valiant efforts to save the project from vandals who wilfully destroyed development projects (Bishop 2002: 3; Liebenberg 2002: 6; Moore 2002a: 9; Moore 2002b: 5). The culprits were never named but there was general agreement that the people still living inside the Mabaso Game Reserve must have vandalised the fence. Although they remained "hidden" from the law, the cause of those living inside the reserve was severely undermined.

Since chief Nxumalo's claim to legitimacy was significantly strengthened by the negative publicity that the vandals received, chief Zikhali lost some political ground. His association with the earlier court case that attempted to halt the development project put him in the same camp as the vandals. In a last-ditched attempt to regain some of the lost political ground, chief Zikhali egged a group of his supporters ("the Zikhali community") to lodge an interdict to halt the construction of the Mabaso Game Reserve at the Pietermaritzburg High Court in March 2002. However, there was general agreement in

the area that this action was futile and that the Mabaso Game Reserve would be completed.

Another case of open resistance to a development project involved two rivals for the position of chief<sup>3</sup>. In the Kosi Bay area, a succession dispute raged for some years after the KwaDapha chief, Gilbert Ngubane ousted his brother, Amos Ngubane. Since his deposition, Amos had continuously contested the legitimacy of his brother. After all his efforts to rally supporters had failed, Amos was relegated to a marginal position on the Tribal Authority Council. However, with time people of Kosi Bay increasingly blamed chief Gilbert for the unemployment and for the lack of development in their area.

Then in 2000, Gilbert granted Attie van Tonder (an ex-policeman from Pongola) permission to erect a private residence and a tourist lodge on a piece of wilderness area. Attie promised that his lodge would create jobs for the people of KwaDapha and that he would enter into a profit-sharing agreement with "the community". If this project worked, Gilbert's position as chief would have been secured. Amos ran to the Ingonyama Trust and to KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, spilling the beans on Gilbert's plans. KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife wanted to put an immediate stop to the proposed project. They warned Attie in an official letter that his building plans were in contravention of the National Environmental Affairs Act. Attie had broken the law when he cleared bushes in a conservation area without having the necessary environmental impact assessments done. Despite the threatening tone of the letter, Attie continued with his plans. The Ingonyama Trust then claimed that Attie's development project was illegal because he did not get a PTO from the Trust. Since neither the Ingonyama Trust nor KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife

---

<sup>3</sup> Some of the "facts" of the case was confirmed by a well-researched newspaper article by Nicki Moore, "Trouble in Paradise", published in the *Natal Witness* on July 25, 2001, p. 9.

could put a stop to the project, they called on the Minister of Environmental affairs, Mr Vali Moosa, to put a moratorium on the developments on the site.

In this case, the arrangement between Gilbert and Amos faced total breakdown after Amos went to the Ingonyama Trust and KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife. Up to that point, the arrangement between the two brothers was that they could contest each other's legitimacy within the local sphere of politics. When Gilbert took over, he did not banish his brother from the area and tolerated his constant attacks. However, when Amos enlisted the help of the Ingonyama Trust and KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, Gilbert was livid. The attack was no longer personal. Gilbert blamed Amos for endangering a development project that could bring jobs to the people of KwaDapha. He also framed Amos as an enemy of the "community". I later heard that Amos was chased out of the Kosi Bay area.

One of my informants, Hlubi Nongoma, who was an insider to these disputes, laughed about Amos's failed attack and reflected on his possible reasons for going to the Ingonyama Trust and KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife. Hlubi speculated that Amos "maybe thought that some people would support him if the Lodge failed". However, in challenging his brother, Amos had ventured onto the dangerous terrain where his lack of political support was laid bare.

In Maputaland, most open resistance movements could be traced back to men with public political aspirations. For the men involved, resistance was an outward show of their political acumen and power. However, open resistance was an uncertain and potentially extremely dangerous political strategy. For public political figures its success depended upon the arrangement between them and the people whom they claimed to represent. This latter arrangement was often slippery and depended on a whole range of

other factors. It was exactly this imprecise nature of the arrangement between people and public political figures that made politicians apprehensive of open resistance.

### **Protecting the "domestic": Everyday forms of resistance in Maputaland**

Local people who did not have access to the public political sphere were more likely to turn to hidden forms of resistance in cases where their autonomy was threatened. Practically, open forms of resistance held little reward for women, men outside of the Tribal Authority structures and youngsters. Open resistance was time-consuming and required skilful co-ordination. Most women in the region had such busy work schedules that they could hardly afford taking time off without affecting the survival of their households. Furthermore, open resistance was no guarantee to success, and often had tragic consequences for its participants, such as imprisonment. Thus on a basic profit-loss scale, open resistance was not a viable option for most people in Maputaland.

Rather, most people would slip between complicity to an arranged (but unauthored) situation and non-confrontational forms of everyday resistance. These everyday forms of resistance caused subtle shifts in an arrangement without forcing the parties involved into a stand-off. As such, an arrangement did not necessarily imply equal power or "friendship" but allowed people to go about their daily tasks without open conflict. These observations underscore Scott's (1990) suggestion that by pragmatically adjusting to the exploitative circumstances that they were confronted with on a daily basis, the poor do not necessarily grant normative consent to these realities, nor rule out certain forms of resistance.

This strategy was amply illustrated by the actions of workers at the Sodwana Bay Lodge. The upmarket resort was well known in the region for its propensity to hire temporary staff at low wages rather than creating secure employment. As Thobile Zikhali exclaimed, “Everything is piece-jobs there. If you do not want the cents they pay, there are many others to take that job”. I met Thobile at Ubumbano craft market where she sold crafts for her aunt on weekends. During the week and over the summer vacation, Thobile tried to find work at tourist resorts or in the tourist camping sites at Sodwana Bay. In December 2000, Izaac Knowles at the Sodwana Bay Lodge hired Thobile and five other women to harvest grass and thatch a small canopy next to the pool. I was surprised to learn that they took two weeks to complete the job. From observations in my research area, I learnt that the harvesting of grass only took a day while the thatching can be done in another two days. Thobile laughed when I pointed this out to her. Her answer was that “when you work there you are on a go-slow. As long as the boss does not catch you sleeping, you will get paid. He cannot say anything because he does not know how to thatch”. There were limits to the “go-slow”. Thobile and her friends finished the job on the last day of the two weeks because Izaac had become suspicious. He came round to the site once too often and impatiently asked them to finish the job. Thobile said that they did not want to fight with Izaac and thus spoil their chances of future employment.

“Go-slows” at the Lodge was an effective way through which local workers could get their own back at the owner. They resented him for not employing people on a full-time basis and for paying starvation wages. Since Izaac paid a daily rate, the go-slows forced him to pay more and employ more workers for each job. Such go-slows were not organised by any particular person because the rate of labour turnover at the Lodge was

too high, prohibiting the establishment of any lasting organisation for resistance.

However, workers in the area somehow knew that “when you work there you are on a go-slow”. This form of resistance also avoided open confrontation.

I am not convinced that Isaac was totally duped by the women’s slow progress. Rather, he merely acted in a way that caused the least amount of conflict. Isaac needed the women’s labour and wished to avoid any open conflict over the ad hoc nature of his labour procurement practices and over his wage rates. Should this situation be scrutinised by for instance the Zikhali Tribal Authority, Isaac could be forced into paying his workers more, and could attract unwanted negative publicity for his establishment. In Isaac’s arrangement with his workers, there was an unwritten rule that he would not interfere with their work for as long as they did not demand higher wages. However, there were unwritten limits to the leniency of both parties. The workers accepted their end of the “bargain” for as long as they were employed for “reasonable” periods of time. In Thobile’s case, this was two weeks. Isaac left the workers alone for what he felt was a reasonable time. Since all these “rules” were unwritten and seldom verbalised, the workers looked for subtle changes in Isaac’s behaviour as signs that they had reached the limits of their comfortable arrangement. In this case, it was reached on the fourteenth day when Isaac showed up more than once to check up on them. The women then quickly finished the job, keeping the arrangement in place.

Unskilled women workers in Maputaland conformed to patterns of resistance widespread among the worker class in Southern Africa. As Van Onselen (1976: 244) writes:



The largely silent and unorganised responses of black workers offer eloquent testimony to the existence of a consciousness of who the exploiters were. Black workers did not require meetings, pickets, leaders and ideologies to make them understand who was oppressing them.

The fact that these workers were mainly women and were confined to the poorly remunerated service industry, was a consequence of eco-tourism in which political decisions were taken by men in the public sphere, and women's activities were confined to the domestic sphere.

More pertinent in this discussion will be a closer look at the instances where decisions by men of the Tribal Authorities threatened the control that commoners and women exercised over resources. Here tensions in the arrangement of boundaries between different spheres provoked considerable anonymous and everyday resistance. For the most part, resistance by marginalised men and women did not precipitate any major changes in the arrangements between conservationists, developers and Tribal Authorities. However, such resistance served as an escape valve for much resentment and discontent.

Widespread poaching by local men constituted a form of resistance to the intrusion that nature conservation areas made on their autonomy. During the colonial and apartheid eras poaching was the only weapon of local men against the strong-arm politics of nature conservation authorities. At Sodwana Bay for instance, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) used heavily armed military personnel to patrol the park. National laws empowered the conservation authorities to imprison those it caught trespassing on Sodwana Bay. In this context where overt resistance was extremely dangerous, local people embarked upon small-scale illegal harvesting and poaching.

Given the chance, most people I talked to had stories to tell about their near run-ins with conservation guards during the apartheid era. In these stories, the "hunts" were never co-ordinated, but were spur-of-the-moment affairs, involving the male occupants of a single household or two neighbours. On hunting trips, men and young boys generally just set and checked handmade traps for small antelope and rodents. They were not armed with guns. There was also the occasional tale of getting caught. However, individuals that were caught such as Kiphile Mlambo's father, were generally not regarded as morally reprehensible. In this regard, Turner (2001: 366) contends that the rural poor's experiences of apartheid and colonial rule meant that they redefined legitimacy and legality. This made it possible for one to have a criminal record without being morally at fault<sup>4</sup>.

However the cumulative impact of poaching and illegal harvesting activities was so intense that KZN Wildlife had to adopt a "conservation-based community development" approach at the end of the apartheid era<sup>5</sup>. They hereby acknowledged that their strong-arm policies would not be able to keep people out of parks. The conservation authorities now sought to limit poaching by promising local people a share in decision making and in profit sharing.

By and large, these measures reaped little reward. I frequently drove past roadside butcheries where men living next to the parks sold game carcasses and small rodents. Although the hunting stories were now more cautious, they still abounded in my talks with people in the area.

---

<sup>4</sup> Contrasting with this view, Chabal and Daloz (1999: 78-79) believe that Africans conceive of legality and legitimacy differently than Westerners. They declare that patron-client relationships are so widespread in Africa that clients determine the legality of their patron's actions on how they distribute their gains rather

In terms of the rhetoric of KZN Wildlife and of developers, such behaviour was anomalous. These authorities attributed resistance to nature conservation during the apartheid era to the resentment that accompanied forced removals and the loss of natural resources. But now that the "community" owned the land and stood to gain financially from its effective management, it seemed that the poachers were eroding the source of their future income.

However, if one looked at the spheres of interaction that I identified, the poachers' behaviour was perfectly reasonable. These men (and boys) did not have access to the public political sphere in which decisions about nature conservation practices were made. Neither were they likely to gain financially from the profits of eco-tourism that were channelled into their "community" trusts. These men had hoped that the land claims process would give them access to the land and resources they had lost. Instead, the land remained protected and became the spill around which an industry "for women" was created. Many of these men had lost their jobs on the mines and were likely to remain unemployed. Bukhala Nhlozi said, "at least during apartheid we could go work in eGoli [Johannesburg]. Now we sit at home". Men who engaged in poaching were often nostalgic about the days of apartheid and full employment. This nostalgia was a form of resistance to the current situation; they were saying that the brutality of apartheid was preferable to what they were experiencing in the present.

It was a sentiment that many women in the region shared. At the Ubumbano craft market, older women complained that they were economically in the same position that they had been in thirty years ago, if not worse off. Their experience of the craft industry

---

than on how they obtain their resources. It is when patrons fail to distribute their legal or ill-gotten gains to their clients that their activities become criminal (Chabal & Daloz 1999: 79-80).

informed their disillusionment with the promises that developers made about the profitability of the tourist industry. Despite the women's objections to the promises of eco-tourism, male politicians pressed ahead and accepted the partnership-in-conservation deal. Publicly, the women accepted the deal and even went to the ceremony at Mbaswana in large numbers. In private, the women at Ubumbano expressed their unhappiness with this decision and remained cynical about the men's promises that they would be included in a profit-sharing agreement.

It was on the edges where men's public political interests (nature conservation) and women's interests (the crafts market) intersected that the women resisted the interpenetration of the two domains. As part of the agreement between KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife and the "communities" living next to conservation areas, women (with permits) were legally allowed to harvest plants in the parks. In the sphere of legal harvesting, where the interests of nature conservation and women intersected, women fiercely defended their access to resources.

On several harvesting trips to Lake Sibaya, Dudu and I noticed large bundles of reeds and sedges left to rot at the park entrance. There was nothing wrong with these harvested bundles and someone could easily have used them in the production of sleeping mats. We found the bundles in the rainy season when Lake Sibaya was very full. The high water level forced harvesters to wade into the lake up to their waists in order to reach the reeds. In this position, they were particularly vulnerable to the dangerous hippopotami that lived in the lake. Reeds and sedges were thus hard to come by, and would not have been carelessly forgotten at the gates. Furthermore, harvesters knew exactly how many reeds or sedges they could utilise at any particular time and did not

---

<sup>5</sup> For writing on these policies, see Douglas (1998: 21); Harvey (1999: 37-39); Turner (2001:370).

make "mistakes" when harvesting. In this context, the large-scale over-harvesting<sup>6</sup> we witnessed at the entrances to the reserve could not have been due to miscalculation on the harvesters' part. Moreover, it seemed odd that the harvesters would only realise their mistake when they were about to leave the park. The entrance gate was about two kilometres' walk from the harvesting spot. It seems very likely that the harvesters had purposefully chosen to dump reeds and sedges at the gate, because this was the spot where most traffic, and especially conservation traffic, passed. The visible destruction of resources that the nature conservationists were protecting can only be seen as an act of resistance.

Again, I found no proof that this resistance was organised. At the Tembe Elephant Park, legal harvesters also left bundles of reeds to rot at the entrance. The perpetrators remained anonymous and none of the harvesters I interviewed knew who had left the bundles of reeds at the entrance and no one assumed responsibility for it. John White, a conservationist at the Tembe Elephant Park, deplored the wanton destruction of a resource that KZN Wildlife had kindly allowed the local "communities" to use. Since the harvesters were too diaphanous a group, the conservationists could only lodge complaints to the Tribal Authorities or to other community representatives on the conservation boards.

In these meetings, local men promised to find the perpetrators or to do something about the problem. Due to the public conception that real men did not interfere with women's work, these men had no authority to stop the over-harvesting. In front of the conservationists and developers, the men could not admit their political impotence in the

---

<sup>6</sup> This should not be taken to infer anything about sustainable utilisation of plant materials, as I am not equipped to make such judgements. My reference to over-harvesting just refers to people who harvest more

women's domain, as this would undermine their legitimacy as representatives of the whole "community". However, the mere fact that the conservationists knew about instances where local men could not control women, eroded some of the men's political capital.

Another area where the interests of powerful local men and those of women intersected was in the sphere where women interacted with the tourists. Men promoted and encouraged tourism as the activity with the highest potential to deliver economic salvation to local people. However, it was women who dealt directly with the tourists at the craft markets and in the lodges where the tourists stayed.

The majority of tourists arrived at Sodwana Bay with new four-wheel drive *Pajero*'s, *LandRovers*, *BMW*s, *Mercedes*, and *Landcruisers*. Regular sedans often stood out like sore thumbs in the parking lot close to the beach. In December when the humidity was almost at 100% and the daily temperatures soared to 40°C+, tourists descended from their air-conditioned cars barely creased. They wore *Nike*, *Billabong*, *Reebok* and other branded clothing and did not want the locals to copy these brands. Until recent legislation was passed, tourists with four-wheel drive vehicles were allowed to park their cars on demarcated beaches. These beaches became catwalks of wealth. In front of each expensive vehicle the owners camped out on beach chairs under umbrellas with cooler boxes full of chilled drinks. Some tourists used their four-wheel drive vehicles to tow their private boats to the water. The contrast between these tourists and the locals was striking and immediate.

At the craft market it annoyed the women that the rich tourists forever tried to bargain with them. They did not only accuse the tourists of being miserly but also

---

than they can use or carry at any one time

suspected that the tourists were cheating them. On a hot December day at the market, Dudu drew my attention to the transaction between a crafter and a tourist. The tourist was haggling over the price of a Zulu beer basket that had taken three weeks to complete. In her hands, the tourist had a *Magnum* ice cream (R8) and a bottle of *Savannah* cider (R12). Though the crafter wanted only R15 for the basket, she complained that it was "too expensive" and said that she did not have enough money on her. I do not think that it occurred to the tourist that most women at the market knew exactly how much money she had just spent on an ice cream and a cider. Although the women did not react to this particular tourist at that particular time, there was growing resentment about tourists in general. As Dudu remarked, "They come here and cry about this beautiful place and then give us R5. What will we do with this money? It is not even enough for a *Coke* at Elsie's shop!"

Given sentiments such as these, I expected that the women would show some kind of resistance to the development projects that taught them to make better crafts for the tourists. I was disappointed to find little more than jokes about the tourists or the developers. For the most part, it seemed as if the crafters were completely complicit in the processes through which they were marginalised. Then, completely unexpected, my informal interviews with South African tourists about crime in Sodwana Bay led me to the discovery of a women's hidden resistance "movement".

Many South African tourists pointed out that in recent years the crime rate had escalated dramatically in Sodwana Bay. Newspapers had reported on the sudden spate of thefts since 1997. From 1999, tourists reported an even bigger upsurge in the number of thefts from vehicles they parked on the beach, and in snatchings from them whilst they

were tanning (Moore and Masinga 1999: 12). In the newspapers, the head of KZN Wildlife at Sodwana Bay repeatedly traced the origin of the problem back to the fact that 95% of the people living in the area were unemployed and turned to crime to make a living (De Lange 1997: 9). What he did not say was that most of the crimes were committed by the young boys who sold monkey oranges on the beach. Many of these boys ran away from very poor households to live in gangs at Sodwana Bay. The wealthy tourists that swarmed into the area were an easy target since they often left their cars open or their possessions unguarded. The criminals knew that these tourists would almost invariably have some valuables on their person or in their cars.

When I talked to the women at Ubumbano about these boys, I was surprised that they did not condemn their actions. In any other context, theft was viewed as utterly reprehensible and met with severe punishment. Yet few women at the craft market had any sympathy for any of the tourists who were robbed. They were more concerned about the safety of the young culprits. The general feeling was that the tourists had money to spare and that they "had it coming". The women often knew who stole what from the tourists, but never reprimanded the perpetrators. These women were not encouraging theft from tourists, but then they were not discouraging it either. I contend that this moral ambiguity was a recent phenomenon, fed by the women's disillusionment with eco-tourism-led development and their resentment toward rich tourists.

These women's complicity to the arrangement with powerful men (that they would treat the tourists with hospitality) and the tourists (that they would sell cheap crafts to them with a smile) slipped into resistance in those instances where women stood sympathetic to the thieves that stole from the tourists.



Women at Ubumbano craft market also resisted the intrusions that KZN Wildlife officers made on their autonomy at the market. These intrusions were more tangible and direct than the intrusions that the tourists made on the crafters' lives. During the December holidays, a KZN Wildlife official ordered the Ubumbano craft market committee to tell its members that they could not sell slingshots at the market. The tourists were using the slingshots to shoot at monkeys and to break windows. The slingshots were a very popular item with the tourists and many crafters sold them. A week after he issued this directive, the official inspected the stalls at the market. Vimbela Zikhali still sold the illegal item. Vimbela lied to the official, saying that she did not come to the market often and that this was the first time that she heard about the new rule. She actually came to the market almost daily and was present at the meeting where the slingshot directive was issued. Vimbela promised to take the slingshots home and not to sell any that day. The next day, she displayed the slingshots prominently at her stall. Like many of the other crafters, Vimbela publicly feigned compliance to the nature conservation officials' orders. However, as soon as the official turned his back, this compliance slipped into resistance.

## **Conclusion**

On face value, people in Maputaland welcomed eco-tourism as a potential industry that would deliver economic development to those living near nature conservation areas. Many "communities" opted for partnership-in-conservation deals rather than once-off payments for land that they successfully claimed in the land claims process. Outwardly,

this showed confidence in the promises of eco-tourism advocates. However, on the level where local people encountered nature conservation areas and its officials, resistance and erosion seemed to be the prime modalities. Here, local women sometimes willfully over-harvested reeds and sedges and left the surplus to rot where nature conservation officials could see it. Some local men also engaged in poaching activities from the reserves. Outside the nature conservation areas, local people supported poaching by buying "bush meat" and feigning ignorance of poaching activities and poachers.

On the surface, it also seemed that most people in Maputaland subscribed to the influence of Tribal Authorities. Despite the outward appearances of complicity to these actors' projects and plans, these arrangements constantly slipped into resistance. It was especially in the cases where men's political ambitions threatened women's control over resources in their "domain", that this slippage occurred. Women tended to resort to individual acts of resistance that required little or no co-ordination and which often resembled forms of self-help. These everyday forms of resistance were not, of course peculiar to women; they were also a feature of the political activity of the young men and those that "worked politics" on the margins of the public political domain.

For their part, Tribal Authorities were more likely to resort to open forms of resistance to either development or to the political authority of other men. Such open resistance was usually precipitated by a total breakdown in the arrangement between the Tribal Authority, developers, and the community. Open resistance was often an outward show of the political importance. But often resistance was an extremely dangerous tactic, given the imprecise and volatile arrangement between chiefs and commoners.

The difference between patterns of resistance embarked upon by men and women is indicative of a society stratified by gender, in which only men participated in public politics. Women- whose activities were confined to the domains of agriculture, trade and domestic duties- had very little to gain from open forms of resistance. Unlike men, success in resistance did not lend women political capital that they could later use to secure better positions in society. Furthermore, women were constrained by their material dependence upon the very organisations that they resisted. For instance, the harvesters at Sibaya Lake harvesters could not afford to be banned from the Park, as many of them relied on the sale of reeds and sedges contained in it for their families' survival. For the same reason, traders at the Ubumbano craft market could not afford to be barred from selling there. Furthermore, "women's work" was labour intensive and required sustained activity to meet the family's subsistence requirements. As such, everyday forms of resistance were particularly suited to the work schedule of women as they were not time-consuming, required little co-ordination, and could be sustained on an individual basis.

What was interesting was that large numbers of men were also becoming involved with such strategies of resistance and withdrawal. As I have indicated, not all men were involved in "high" politics and many of them were marginalised within the socio-political and economic spheres. Their living conditions were such that they could not bargain on the political capital that open resistance might bestow on them.

## Chapter 7

### Concluding remarks:

#### The violent nature of development

*"When you come back, will you bring development?"*

-A question addressed to me at my last visit to the field

The South African government launched the LSDI in Maputaland to force the region out of its supposed economic and political isolation. The LSDI declared that their network of roads would 'open' the region up to the world and that the region's inclusion into the globalised market-driven economy would benefit everyone living in Maputaland (Jourdan 1998:718). However, I showed that Maputaland had been included in the globalised market-driven economy since before the colonial period. It was exactly this inclusion that led to the region's impoverishment and to the exploitation of its people. The core-periphery model proved very useful in describing the process through which the region became impoverished. I showed how the establishment of nature conservation areas, the KwaZulu homeland and forestry projects led to overcrowded conditions in Maputaland and forced many men to become migrant labourers to Gauteng. Here they supplied cheap labour to white-owned industries while the KwaZulu homeland remained devoid of any big industries.

With the de-industrialisation of the South African economy, the usefulness of the core-periphery model to explain poverty is starting to expire. The ties between people in Maputaland and the 'core' of the South African economy became tenuous as many thousands of migrant men lost their jobs in Gauteng in the late 1990s. Unemployed men

in the area did not serve as a reserve army for the heavily industrialised South African economy any more. Maputaland was in danger of being 'delinked' from the South African economy.

As large numbers of jobless men returned to the region, the LSDI promised to bring economic development and employment. The 'fit' however between the industry-driven economy that the migrant labourers had been part of and the service-driven economy that the LSDI was promoting in Maputaland, was not seamless. The eco-tourism business was not labour-intensive, mainly employed women and generally offered seasonal and temporary jobs. Klein (2000: 231-257) claims that these features characterise a global economy in which, "[e]very corporation wants a fluid reserve of part-timers, temps and freelancers to help it keep overheads down and ride the twists and turns in the market". The upshot of the LSDI's emphasis on the development of an eco-tourism industry in the region was that many people and especially men remained unemployed.

Eco-tourism is the ultimate post-industrial enterprise<sup>1</sup> and fitted neatly into the government's neo-liberal macro-economic policy. As such, the emphasis on the development of the eco-tourism industry made the market rather than the state or developers responsible for the delivery of economic and political justice to impoverished rural people (Turner 2001: 372). People in Maputaland laid claims to the nature conservation areas from which they were forcefully evicted since 1913 in the hope that political justice would be served through the land claims process. The land claims process was central to the definition of the rights that had formerly been denied to black people

---

<sup>1</sup> An environmentally friendly service industry with no tangible 'products' (Anon 2001: 13-15).

under apartheid. The restoration of land was seen as a means of restoring rights of sovereignty and full citizenship to the African population (James 2002:3).

The emphasis on eco-tourism as economic salvation for people in the region however meant that contested nature conservation areas had to remain in their pristine state. Successful land claimants could thus not move back onto their land. Enshrined at the heart of these debates about political reform was a language of rights rather than property or ownership. In the subsequent negotiations with land claimants, the boundaries of land ownership became blurred. Although successful land claimants such as the eMandleni Trust owned the legal titles to the land, ownership as they understood it was effectively 'deferred'. They could not occupy the land, sell it or make improvements in terms of infrastructure on it. Furthermore, while KZN Wildlife made day-to-day decisions about the land, the Zikhali community was only marginally involved in the management of their property through participation in the eMandleni Trust. Property ownership made little if any impact on local people's lives. It was thus only in a very remote sense that these land claimants owned the land.

Local people were not given much choice in reaching this 'agreement' since the land that they claimed had already been incorporated into the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park World Heritage Site. Only lip service was paid to community consent and to democratic decision making. By treating local people as communities rather than individuals, the land claims commission and the LSDI paved the way for all kinds of violence directed at those who did not agree with the deal. People on the Mabaso Game Reserve were subjected to actual threats and physical violence, and old women were literally 'workshopped' into submission.

The “violent nature of development” (Sachs 1992: 5) in this region extended to the individual’s relationship with the state. In the development process, land claimants were not viewed as individuals but as part of ethnic groups, annihilating the individual in favour of the group that they supposedly belonged to. Tribal Authorities consistently mediated between local residents, the state and developers. James (2002:3) asserts that undoing the wrongs of apartheid and restoring the citizenship rights to black people required uncoupling the relationship between chiefs and communally held property. This was not effected in Maputaland. Local people became ethnic shareholders in an industry managed by nature conservation authorities and tourist advertisers.

### **Consumption as Salvation**

As shareholders, local people were intimately tied to the demands of the tourist market. They were told that their participation in the development projects would improve tourism and ultimately increase the earnings from their land. This forced co-option muted open dissent to development plans and land use strategies.

In making the market responsible for the delivery of ‘development’, the LSDI fundamentally reconstituted the relationship between “hosts” and “guests”. Suddenly the tourist was no longer just a guest to the region, but a possible harbinger of economic salvation. As such, meeting the tourists’ expectations about the area, its people and products, became an important economic goal. In the LSDI’s rush to cater to the needs of tourists as consumers, local people’s public identities were reconstituted and their production processes altered. In their encounters with tourists, local people did not only

sell their products but also images of themselves. I showed how tourists' expectations about the ethnic identity of their hosts influenced their buying behaviour. Tourists bought crafts that they thought were truly indigenous to the area and that conformed to their expectations of the Zulu. Developers packaged and branded people in Maputaland as authentic (nineteenth century) Zulu. Local people were taught how to make 'real' Zulu crafts and to perform 'real' Zulu rituals and dances. In their search for authentic art and crafts, the tourists' attention was drawn to the surfaces of people and things, framed primarily as objects of visual interest (Alpers 1991: 25-32). In the context of the global market in consumer goods, surfaces are often demarcated, delimited and authenticated by brands. Objects, personalities, inventions and ethnic identities are all 'brandable' consumables.

Ironically, the consumers' emphasis on the shiny surfaces of things made it possible to gloss over truly authentic local products. It also undermined real cultural differences. The consumer obsessively tried to verify that which he/ she bought with the brand they were presented with. Crafts that betrayed anything of the world to which the tourists belonged were immediately discarded as 'fake' while those that conformed to ethnic stereotypes were eagerly bought as the 'real thing'. Things are dumb. Once removed from the continuity of everyday uses and offered for sale, the meanings of objects were transformed (Crew & Sims 1991: 159). As far as crafts in Maputaland were concerned, advertising agencies and tourist marketers mediated between craft producers (local people) and consumers and were the most powerful agents in the ascription of meaning. They imbibed their representation of local people with the authority of the media and forced local people to consume such identities. Authenticity as the tourists



understood it was thus not about factuality or reality but about authority. Local people's means of self-representation were thus muted in favour of the demands of the consumer market. In the development process, local people in their contact with tourists were emptied of their substance to become branded surfaces. It was a form of violence that attacked the full humanity of the locals.

In this context, consumerism was praised as the highest good and production was kept to the background (cf. J. & J. L. Comaroff 2000). This emphasis on consumption rather than production made it possible to ignore the backbreaking hours that crafters spent in producing crafts. Tourists did not pay the crafter for their labour but paid for the degree to which an object convinced him/ her of its authenticity. They paid only for what was immediately visible, the surface.

These observations seem to vindicate criticisms that portray development as a tool for creating and maintaining unequal power relationships. Those with money (tourists) were placed in a unique position of power vis-à-vis those without money (local people). Furthermore, the demand for cheap crafts created new inequalities within the 'target community'. Craft production was outsourced to the poorest sections of society. The labour-intensive and poorly paid nature of the production process did not allow these crafters to escape their position of dependence.

What these theorists failed to notice in their emphasis on economic dependence is that this brand-driven economy depersonalises both consumers and producers. As I have shown, the tourists' search for authentic objects was driven by feelings of alienation they experienced 'at home'. Tourists searched for existential authenticity among the many surfaces they were presented with. However, the primacy of the visual emptied the

possibility of real human contact. Local people on the other hand were depersonalised when they chose to consume the ethnic identities held up for them to copy. They lost their means of self-representation and were merely tasked with holding a mirror up to the tourists' expectations. In this role, the crafters were bounded by the limits set by the brand. They too were prevented from having full human interaction whenever they encountered tourists. For instance, at the Ubumbano craft market, crafters could not argue with the tourists that tried to bargain with them for fear that the tourists would complain to KZN Wildlife.

The LSDI and other developers attempted to facilitate trickle-down effects in the market by 'formalising' the craft industry. They built various craft markets in the region, hoping that this would offer the tourist a predictable, calculable, efficient and controllable shopping experience. In effect, they bureaucratised large parts of the industry. Robertson (1984)'s argument that development agencies are premised on the need to turn an unreliable citizenry into a structured public and that development interventions are thus the site of contest between people and bureaucracy have some relevance here. Through the development process, the vague 'local community' was defined and its boundaries delimited. The dispersed networks of the informal economy were broken up and were given 'permanence' at the built craft markets. At such markets, strict hierarchies were set in place while the occupants of stalls had to adhere to formal rules and regulations. Within these markets, a division of labour was imposed between traders, crafters and management. Men, who did not sell crafts, occupied positions on the Ubumbano craft market committee. Despite the negative unanticipated consequences of this bureaucratisation process, people did not resist bureaucracy itself. People enthusiastically

participated in meetings, imitated bureaucratic procedures with gusto, and used the structure to their own benefit. For example, the Mabaso Tribal Authority used the bureaucratic rules of the Ingonyama Trust against the Trust itself. By following the rules to the letter, the Mabaso Tribal Authority was able to regain control over land vested in the Trust.

Robertson's (1984) claim that development projects aim to create a more structured public and that people would resist this transformation, is thus perhaps too broad a statement. It would be more accurate to say that development projects often lead to increased bureaucratisation. Ritzer's (1996) theory of McDonaldisation offers a broad framework for the changes wrought by development projects premised upon the neo-liberal principles of economic.

### **Gendered spaces, violent clashes**

In the implementation of 'development' in Maputaland, gender-specific spaces were created and maintained for local men and women. Local women were targeted as ideal recipients of development projects that aimed to improve the crafts trade, subsistence agriculture, nursing and all things 'domestic' while nature conservation and politics (the two were closely intertwined) became exclusive male spheres. I showed that the supposedly gender-sensitive development projects were largely informed by gender stereotypes of women as dependent housewives and men as providers. Women's projects centred on activities that women could do from home, using local skills. The developers paid very little attention to the money-earning potential of many of these projects. On the other hand, men's projects groomed participants for the labour market, for public political positions and

paid attention to the money-earning potential of the project. Developers thus reinforced the stereotypical dichotomy of public (men) / domestic (women). This dichotomy rested on the devaluation of the women's sphere and a disempowerment of the women in it.

Men were indeed tasked with public politics while women looked after the subsistence needs of their households. Unlike the stereotypical depiction of men as the dominators of women, local men did not have any say in the manner in which women organised their affairs or went about their daily tasks. Women had complete autonomy in their sphere and depended upon other women rather than men. In their role as providers of subsistence needs, women were linked to farming and food processing and were responsible for the reproduction of everyday life. Men were depicted as the "talkers" while women were acknowledged as the "doers". As such, the spheres were co-existent on each other and existed in parallel. This was still the case for many households in my research area.

With gender-sensitive development, the women's sphere became more permeable. Developers did not simply want men to represent women's groups, but also to act as managers who did low-level quality controls and mediated between the developers and women. John Mdluli's managerial role at the Ubumbano craft market had some disastrous consequences for the women whom he represented. Women's projects seldom provided a subsistence income for their participants and in their efforts to confine women to a single economic activity, developers broke down women's networks that used to provide economic safety. On the other hand, the men's political sphere remained closed to most women. Where women were allowed, it was to fill front positions. Such women seldom had any say in the decision-making process of the Municipal Council or Tribal

Authority. Powerful men often received generous remuneration for their services as community representatives. Overall, development projects opened the way for men to control women's labour and capital. This disempowered women within their own projects (spheres) and devalued women's work.

This outcome was not what the developers had envisioned. They had taken women's confinement to the domestic sphere as a sign of women's subordination. The developers were however insensitive to gender parallelism and to women's autonomy as producers. In their attempt to 'empower' women, developers focused exclusively on women and sought to allow women greater control over their own labour and resources. Yet ironically in Maputaland these attempts often led to a loss of women's autonomy. Goheen (1996)'s ethnography of the Nso proved invaluable in the conception of a society cleaved along the lines male (public) / female (domestic) that did not automatically devalue and disempower women.

Development projects and the land claims process created a space in which local chiefs and Tribal Authorities could stand as a link between local people and the developers. To legitimise their position as 'owners' of the land and representatives of local people, Tribal Authorities utilised discourses in which ethnicity and patriarchy featured as natural elements of the social landscape. Developers interacted with and supported these discourses since the reality it conjured (that a single chief was the mouthpiece of thousands of people) made it easier and cheaper to deliver 'development'. Thus a small group of local men constructed ethnic identities for and about the people in Maputaland. To a large extent, such constructions flowed from the agency of chiefs in the political sphere, not from a calculated move to 're-traditionalise' people.

These claims to traditional legitimacy excluded regular men from the lucrative development industry. Since the LSDI's focus was on the development of a service-orientated eco-tourist enterprise, few regular men entertained the hope that they would find employment in the new tourist resorts. Local resorts were well known for their tendency to employ women. In this context, elderly local men who were popular started to represent micro-level interest groups with the hope that they might snare a developer to fund a project with them at the helm. While canvassing for projects and help, these men were not paid. Young men were largely excluded from development projects and management positions while their female age mates were in high demand at tourist resorts as domestic workers. Thus, in negotiating exclusive access for themselves to the developers, the Tribal Authorities excluded and marginalised other men. In the process, women were forced to consume and reproduce these ethnic identities in their contact with the tourists that visited Sodwana Bay and environs. Women, by virtue of their employment in the service industry and their confinement to craft production, thus became the 'main vehicles' for the representation of difference and otherness to tourists. In Maputaland this role had dire financial and social consequences for women who became 'fetishized' by the market.

The clash of interest between and among men and women manifested in the home where violence became almost endemic to male-female relationships. At home women projected the resentment they felt towards development projects and men that kept them stuck in low-income generating activities. At home men also tried to reclaim the power that the developers effectively stripped away from them. The Tribal Authorities knew that they were basically dumb tokens to the developers' notions of democracy and 'local empowerment'. Although they were adequately remunerated for their services, Tribal Authorities acknowledged that their views and input would not change multi-billion-Rand infrastructure and nature conservation projects. Their enthusiastic echoing of developers' plans was to a large extent a face-saving mechanism.

Men who did not get into the Tribal Authority pound seats felt resentful towards local women employed in the tourist service sector. As their economic potential to earn wages

decreased, local men were also becoming less and less desirable as long-term sexual partners or husbands. In this context, husband-wife relationships were characterised by hostility, suspicion and mutual antagonism. These frustrations and tensions often built up to violent domestic fights. My female respondents at the Ubumbano craft market did not see themselves as 'victims' of domestic violence and often gave as good as they got. Kitchen utensils, brooms and sticks were seen as legitimate weapons in a domestic squabble. Many women also proudly recounted the harm they inflicted.

Perhaps the most violent reaction to the gendered nature of development projects was evident in the actions of gangs of unemployed young men. These gangs were widely regarded with fear as they mugged, raped and assaulted anyone with money. The Tribal Authorities could not 'control' them while few locals dared to give them up to the police in fear of retaliation. These gangs frequently mugged pensioners collecting their state pensions. Crafters were especially afraid of these gangs as they often raped women at the sites where they harvested. This was not just the delinquent behaviour of a group of bored men. Rather, it presented a violent attack on the reproductive capabilities of women in an environment where their own ability to be productive members of society was severely hampered by a lack of employment opportunities and strict gender role prescriptions.

### **Slipping or breaking into resistance**

When describing resistance, I pointed to the differential strategies that regular men, Tribal Authorities and women utilised to oppose plans that threatened their autonomy. Although I relied heavily on Scott (1985)'s concept of everyday forms of resistance, I found his treatment of motive and class highly problematic. People in my research area did not share some diffused sense of class-consciousness that manifested in their dogged

everyday resistance to their would-be superiors. Instead, men and women had very different reasons to resist nature conservation authorities, developers and the Tribal Authorities.

I worked from the premise that most human relationships were based on loose arrangements of power, rights and permitted actions. De Boeck (1996: 91-99) used the concept "*l'arrangement*" to refer to a specific mode of negotiation and compromise between the Zambian state and the traditional authorities it aimed to encapsulate. I found that this concept could easily be applied to other social relationships. The use of this term allowed me to treat resistance as concentrated opposition to specific modes of intrusion.

For instance, powerful men sometimes deliberately broke an arrangement between themselves and the developers to create the necessary space for negotiating a new arrangement. This strategy was, however, fraught with danger as it opened the way for other local men to muscle their way into the arrangement. Furthermore, powerful men risked losing political capital in instances where they openly broke an arrangement and were not visibly supported by those whom they claimed to represent.

The relationships between developers and local people, Tribal Authorities and the people whom they represented, and between men and women, were not simply characterised by domination, subordination or by complicity. Even in the context of the large-scale LSDI development project, people found numerous ways to create and defend autonomous spaces.



# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Survey of the Ubumbano craft market



		<b>17. Who also help out here?</b> Daughter Sister Mother Cousin
18.	<b>How many days do you come here per week?</b>	<b>19. On weekends do you:</b>  Sell for yourself Sell for someone else Stay home
20	<b>How do you get here and how much does it cost daily?</b>	

Where do you live?.....

Did you go to school?.....

Do you use:	Yes or No	Where do you get it?	How much R per month	How many times do you go to collect it per week?	How long does the trip take you?	What part of the plant do you use?
Ilala						
Ikwane						
Insikane						
Uzi						
Isizimane						
Isidokwe						
Iqumbe						
Inhlanhla						
Incema						
Idambayi						
Isundu						
Umhlala						
Isikhonkho						
Induli						
Halbom						
Ulozisi						
Dye						

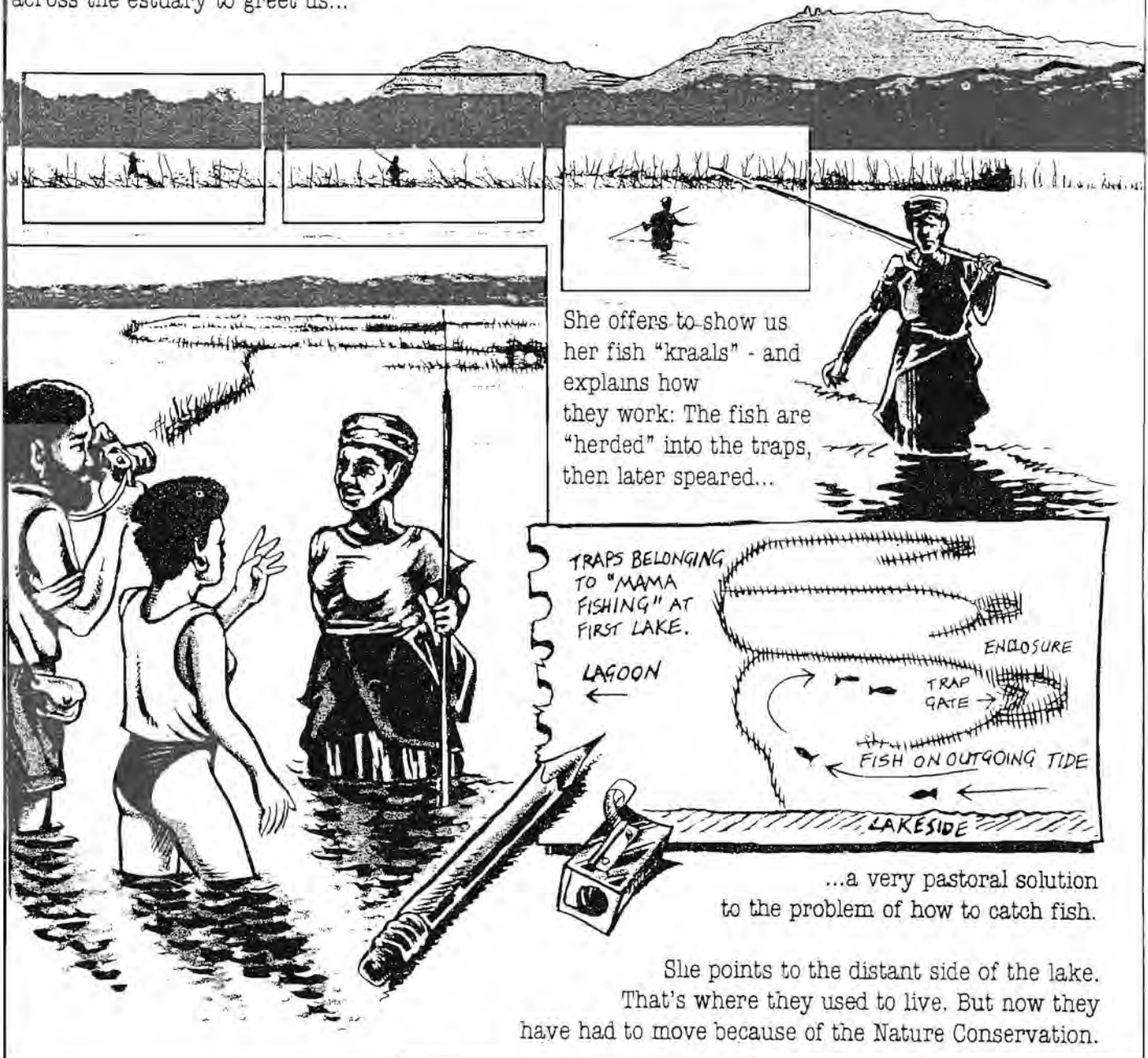
What do you sell?	For how much did you buy it?	Where did you buy it?	Did you make it?	How long does it take to make?
Doormats (ikwane)				
Ilala hats				
Ilala basket with lid				
Ilala waste basket				
iLala baskets open				
iLala potholders				
iLala laundry baskets				
iLala dishes				
iLala shopping bags				
iLala paper baskets				
iLala dog trays				
Swazi masks				
Swazi birds				
Swazi baskets				
Swazi doormats				
Swazi hats				
Swazi potholders				
Swazi stone carvings				
Wooden keyrings				
Wooden 4x4				
Wooden boats				
Wooden areoplanes				
Walking sticks				
iSundu brooms				
iLala brooms				
Inhlala				
Igula				
Sichumo				
Isundu shoulder bags				
Iqumbe sleeping mat				
Idambayi sleeping mat				
Inhlanhla sleeping mat				
Incema sleeping mat				
Induli sleeping mat				
Ilala/ isikhonkho bracelets				
Chobozi				
PB bracelets/ necklaces				
Material wraps				
Pineapples				
Bananas				
Granadillas				
Pawpaws				





Appendix 4: Pamphlets distributed by CORD (Kosi Bay)

Rhythm. The ancient peaceful rhythm of life at the lake has been disrupted for "Mama Fishing" (I never learned her name) and her people. Her voice, full of humour, echoes over the water as she wades across the estuary to greet us...



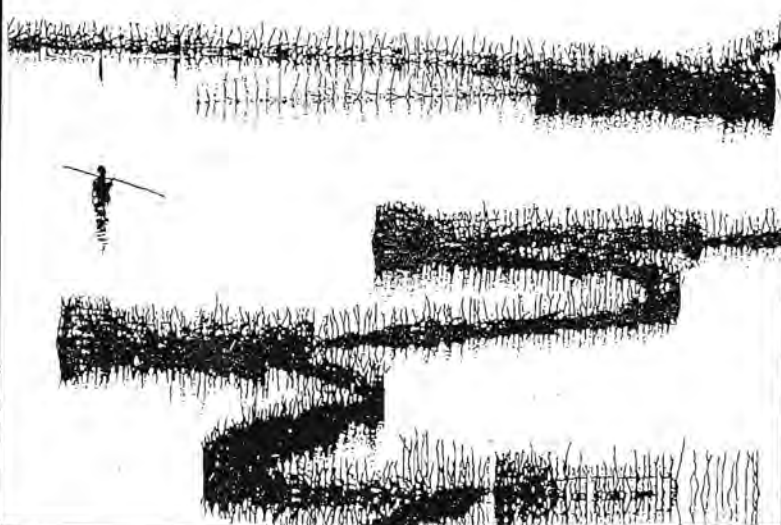




"Our people do not have tractors to plough the fields. For all our planting we use our hands."

"These fields near the sea, these we have always had. But now we are told we can't plant because the place is to be given to the hippopotami."


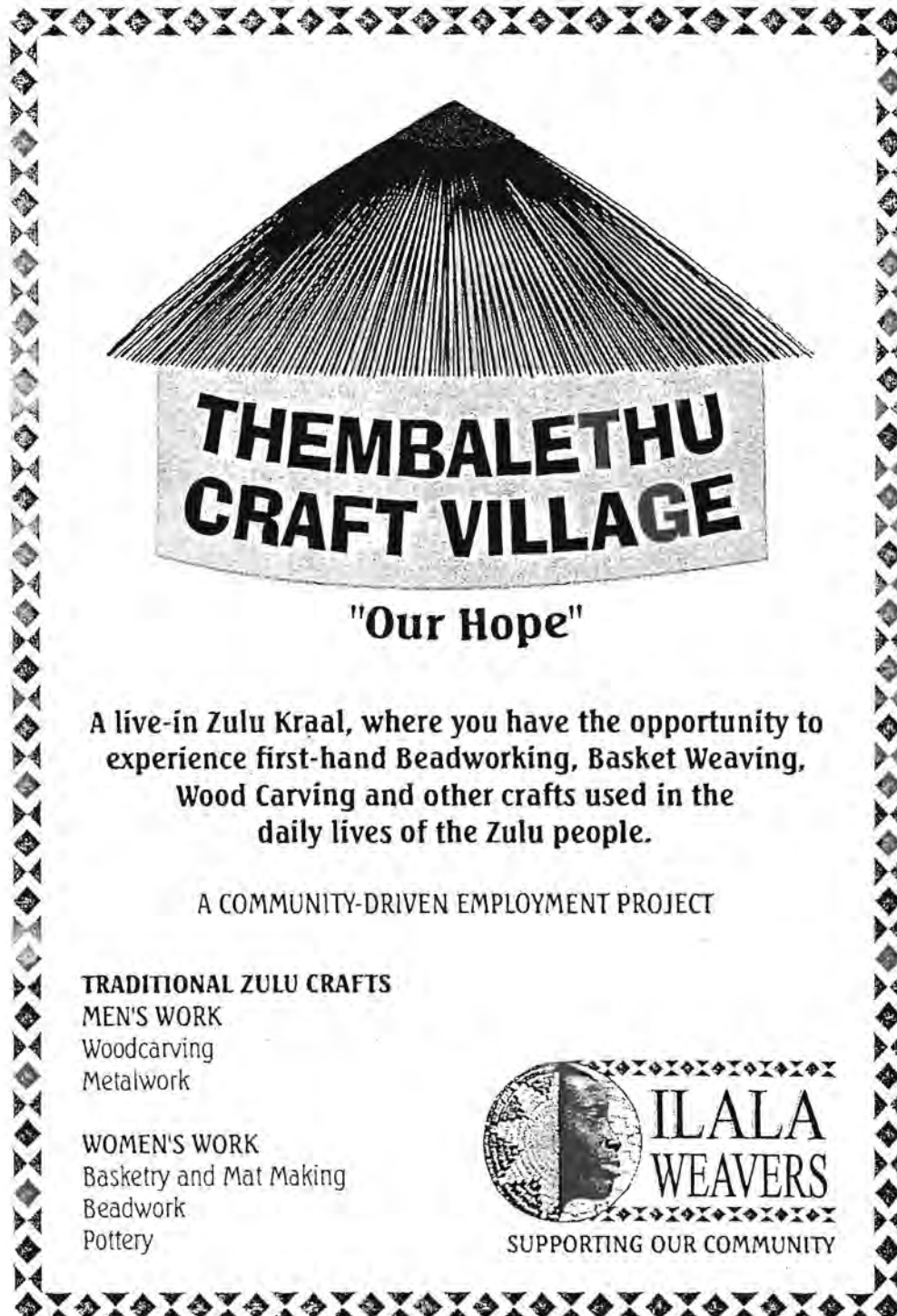
"They have told us to move. We must abandon our fields and our homes and leave behind the graves of our forefathers... They say they want to protect the place. From whom? We have been living here all the time."



"We are made to feel that we are nothing... that animals are better than us."



## Appendix 5: iLala Weavers Brochure- Themba lethu



**THEMBALETHU  
CRAFT VILLAGE**

**"Our Hope"**


A live-in Zulu Kraal, where you have the opportunity to experience first-hand Beadworking, Basket Weaving, Wood Carving and other crafts used in the daily lives of the Zulu people.

A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN EMPLOYMENT PROJECT

**TRADITIONAL ZULU CRAFTS**

**MEN'S WORK**  
Woodcarving  
Metalwork

**WOMEN'S WORK**  
Basketry and Mat Making  
Beadwork  
Pottery



**ILALA  
WEAVERS**

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

# TYPICAL LAYOUT OF A TRADITIONAL ZULU KRAAL



218  
KEY

1. Patriarch/Headman's hut (Ndlunkulu)
2. First wife's hut
3. Second wife's hut
4. Grain Storage Bin (inQolobane)
5. Cooking hut (ixHiba)
6. Unmarried boys' hut
7. Unmarried girls' hut
8. Cattle kraal (isiBaya)
9. Vegetable gardens/Mealie fields

It must be noted that THEMBALETHU is a contemporary version of the traditional Zulu kraal and is typical of the style of homestead found in these North-Eastern regions of Zululand. An interesting feature of the modern 'Cone-on-Cylinder' (rondavel) style of homestead, is the Headman's hut, which is built in the square shape, to differentiate his hut from the others.

Members of the local Zulu community were instrumental in the layout and construction of THEMBALETHU.

# ACCESSORIES OF THE ZULU KRAAL

## GRAIN STORAGE BIN (inQolobane)

A grass bin, elevated on stilts in order to keep termites and rodents clear of the maize cobs, which are stored, after harvesting, for use during the following year. The inQolobane can be likened to the Western Grain Silo.

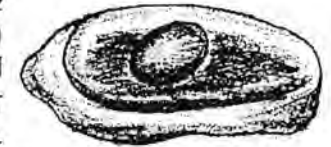


## GRAIN STAMPER (iGovu)

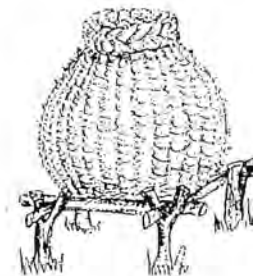
A tall, narrow tub for stamping and crushing maize. The "mortar" (iGavu) is hewn and hollowed from a large log of wood, while the "pestle" (isiGxusho) is a long pole. It is the women's job to stamp the grain.

## GRINDING STONE (iTshe Lokugaya)

A large, hollowed-out rock, used together with a large round river pebble.



The women kneel in front of the stone and ply the pebble back and forth until fine meal is produced. The meal is then swept with the hand onto a large isiThebe (Grinding mat).

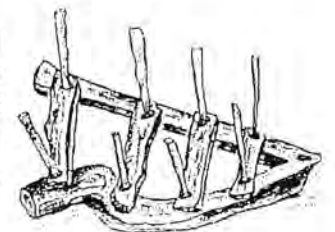


## GRAIN BASKET (isiLulu)

A large, soft, flexible, "hairy" basket, used to transport maize cobs or millet from the fields to the kraal - this is transported upon the ox-drawn sled. When used as a grain-storage container, the isiLulu is daubed with cow dung to seal it, then placed upon an elevated rack, or buried underground. A miniature version is used as a "chicken" basket.

## SLED (isiHlibhi)

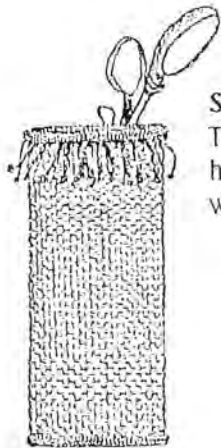
A large "Y-shaped" wooden structure, hewn from the forked section of a tree, kept in one piece. It is flattened on the base, in order to slide easily along the rough terrain, when drawn by a team of oxen.



## MILKING PAIL (iThunga)

A tall, elongated wooden vessel, with two lugs high on either side, for gripping with the knees whilst squatting to milk the cow. Although functional, everyday object, the iThunga takes on a sculptural form, with the shape and bass-relief motifs produced by the sculptor.

## ACCESSORIES OF THE ZULU HUT



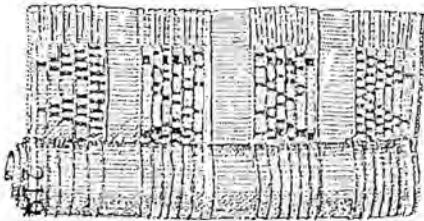
### SPOON BAG (iMpontshi)

This small, finely-woven grass bag is hung up in the hut to hold the wooden 'maas' spoons.



### GRASS BROOM (uMshanelo)

Made from a thick bunch of grass, tied together and woven at one end to form a handle. Used to sweep the floor of the hut.



### SITTING MAT (isiCephu)

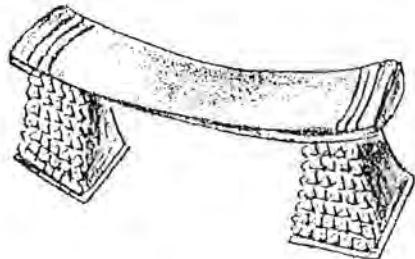
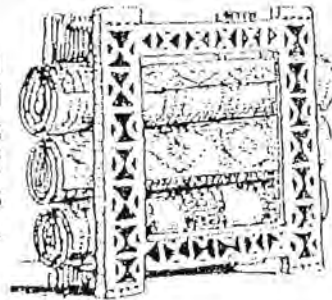
The sitting mat is smaller than the sleeping mat, and generally quite decorative.

### SLEEPING MAT (iCansi)

Each family member has his own sleeping mat, which is rolled up during the day and placed within the mat storage racks.

### MAT STORAGE FRAMES (amaBhaxa)

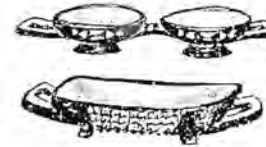
amaBhaxa are wooden frames, generally painted with bright, decorative 'beadwork' motifs. A pair is attached either to the wall or the roof of the hut, and within these are placed the rolled-up sleeping mats when not in use.



### ZULU HEAD REST (isiGqiki or isiCamelo)

This wooden 'pillow', used at night upon which to rest the head, or during the day as a seat, it is carved from a single block of wood and consists of a slightly concave, elongated wooden cross-piece, with a pair of pillars or 'legs' on either end.

## UTENSILS USED IN A ZULU KRAAL FOR EATING AND DRINKING

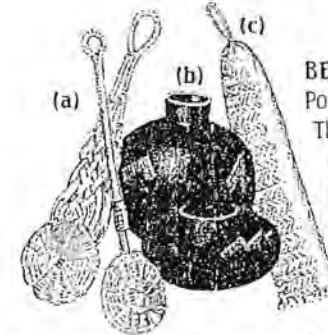
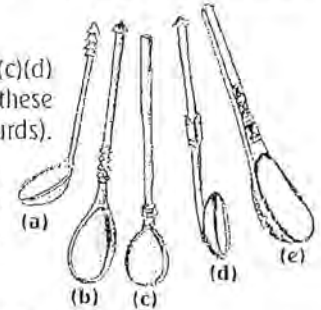


### MEAT PLATTERS (uGqoko)

Important items in daily use, they vary in size from saucer-shaped to large, double-handled trays with four stumpy legs. The underside is char-blackened and decorated.

**WOODEN SPOONS (uKhezo) (a)(c)(d)**  
Roughly 30cm long, with a carved pattern along the handle, these are used for eating soft foods, i.e. "maas" (soured milk curds).

**SERVING LADLES (isiXwembe) (b)(e)**  
These have a longer handle and bigger bowl than the iziNkhezo and are generally carved from a softer wood!



### BEER POTS (iziNkhamba) (Pottery) (b)

Pottery, in a simple form, has always been the work of Zulu women. The beautiful, symmetrical pots are made with the coiling method, then decorated with etched or raised geometric patterns. The finished pots are covered with wood and dry cowdung, then open-fired for 6-8 hours. When cooled, they are then covered with dry grass and re-fired to give the blackened finish. They are finally "polished" with a round pebble and fat.

### BEER STRAINER (iVovo or iHluzo) (c)

Woven from Ilala or Grass, it is long and narrow to fit into the mouth of the Beer pot. The home-brewed beer is then poured in and filtered through.

### BEER SKIMMER SPOONS (isiKheto) (a)

A woven spoon-like shape, this is used to skim the scum from the surface of home-brewed beer (utshwala).

### BEER-POT LID (Mbenge)

A small, saucer-shaped bowl, woven from grass and Ilala Palm, it is used to cover the mouth of the clay beer pot in order to keep the beer free of dust and flying insects. It is decorated on the convex side and when not in use is hung up in the hut.

### WOVEN BEER POT (Ukhamba)

A rigid, bulb-shaped basket tightly woven from the leaves of Ilala Palm and lightly decorated, especially those for ceremonial use.

### GRAIN BASKET (isiQuabetho)

A large basin-shaped basket used for gathering and carrying grain. These can be up to 80cm in diameter and have a slight concave depression in the centre to comfortably sit on the head.

### HERB BASKET (iQuthu)

The smallest of Zulu baskets, it is bottle-shaped and used for the storage of culinary and medicinal herbs.

## ZULU BASKET WEAVING

What was once a predominantly male chore, basket weaving has now been taken over by the women and girls.

The most common material used in basket weaving is the Ilala Palm, and all the colours are obtained from natural sources as roots, bark, berries, leaves, etc. Different shaped baskets are made for utilitarian purposes, to contain food and liquids and some that are still in everyday use are:

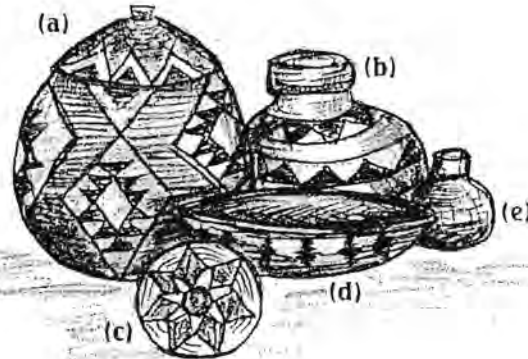
**Ukhamba (a)** - A bulb-shaped basket used to serve beer

**Isichumo (b)** - A bottle-shaped basket used to carry beer or water.

**Mbenge (c)** - A small, saucer-shaped bowl, used as a "lid" for the clay beer pot

**Isiqabetho (d)** - A large basin-shaped open bowl used to carry grain and foodstuff

**Iqutu (e)** - A tiny bottle-shaped basket used to hold herbs and medicines



220

## ZULU BEADWORK

Zulu beadwork is a vast and intricate subject, which cannot be covered in a few words. Mention of Zulu beadwork always conjures up visions of bright and colourful ornaments and items of apparel worn by the Zulu people on most festive occasions.

Having no writing with which to record messages, the Zulus developed a form of symbolism in their beadwork, with specific meanings attached to colours and motifs, particularly the well-known Zulu love-letter (messages in beads), so proudly made by young girls to present to their boyfriends. Combinations of triangles, diamonds, squares and zig-zags are the most common designs and colours can vary from area to area.



Other bead items often made and worn by the Zulus include:

**Waistbands (isiGege)** - worn by young girls

**Belts (isiBhamba)** - worn by married women

**Armbands and Anklebands (amaDavathi)** - worn by men and women

**Apron (ubheshwans)** - worn by boys and girls

**Headbands (ingusha)** - worn by married women around the head and hat.

**Neckpiece (umgexo)** - generic name for necklace

**Beaded gourds/dolls/sticks** - ornamental use



## ZULU WEAPONS AND MUSIC

### ZULU SHIELDS

There were several different varieties of shield, depending on their purpose:

War Shield - isiHlangu

Dress Shield - uMdlela

Dance Shield - iHawu

Hunting Shield - iHubelo

### SPEARS & ASSEGAI

There are many types, varying in the length of blade and shaft!

**ASSEGAI (umKhonto) (d)**

Carried together with the shield (iHawu) and knob-kerry (iWisa).

**THE "THROWING" SPEAR (isiJula) (b)**

This had a long shaft and big blade with a range of up to 25 metres - used in combat situation.

**THE "STABBING" SPEAR (iKlwa) (e)**

Originally introduced by Shaka, for use in close-up combat. It had a long, heavy blade and a short shaft.

**THE "HUNTING SPEAR" (iNgcula) (a)**

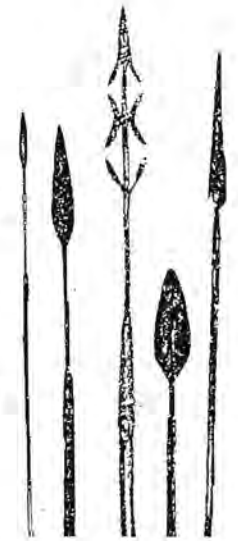
Used in hunting small game and wildfowl, it had a small blade and long shaft.

**THE "HUNTING SPEAR" (isiPapa)**

Used for the hunting of larger game, like antelope & buffalo.

**THE "STATUS" WEAPON (iNhlemla) (c)**

Usually carried only by royalty and men of rank, it had a long shaft with a short, barbed blade.



(a) (b) (c) (d) (e)

### STICKS

**KNOB-KERRY (iWisa)**

Carried with a shield and assegai, these are known as the "fighting" stick.

**WALKING STICKS (iziNduku)**

Commonly known as the "Defending" stick, was always carried by the Zulu man when out walking.

**STAVES (iziMboko)**

These were long elaborately-carved sticks, carried by the elderly men and women to give support.

**DECORATIVE STICKS (iNduku yokusina)**

These were short, decorative sticks, either beaded, painted or carved and carried as accessories to their traditional attire for festive occasions.

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

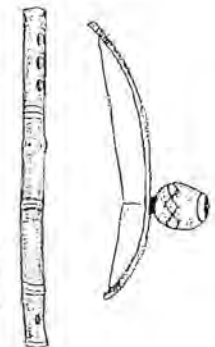
Dance and song marked every important function at the Zulu homestead and so were accompanied by basic instruments.

**THE FLUTE (iGemfe)**

Made of reeds of varied lengths to achieve a different pitch.

**THE CALABASH BOW (Makhweyane)**

A gourd attached to a hardwood bow with a single string of gut or wire, which is gently tapped with a thin stick, the open-ended gourd (resonator) being pressed against the bare chest. It gives off a very soft sound and is generally accompanied by the musician's singing.



P.O. Box 195  
Hluhluwe 3960  
KwaZulu Natal  
South Africa

Tel: (035) 562 0630/1  
Fax: (035) 562 0361

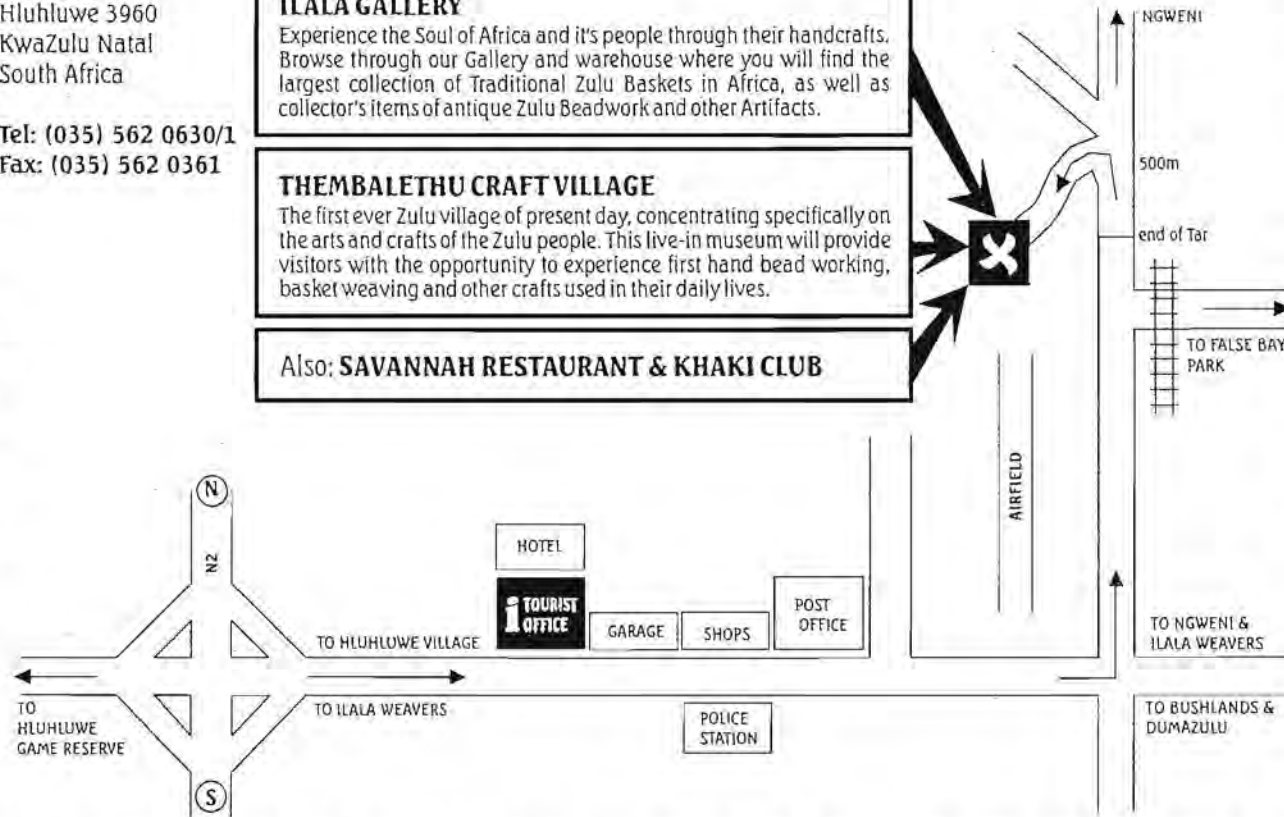
**ILALA GALLERY**

Experience the Soul of Africa and it's people through their handcrafts. Browse through our Gallery and warehouse where you will find the largest collection of Traditional Zulu Baskets in Africa, as well as collector's items of antique Zulu Beadwork and other Artifacts.

**THEMBALETHU CRAFT VILLAGE**

The first ever Zulu village of present day, concentrating specifically on the arts and crafts of the Zulu people. This live-in museum will provide visitors with the opportunity to experience first hand bead working, basket weaving and other crafts used in their daily lives.

Also: **SAVANNAH RESTAURANT & KHAKI CLUB**



## References

- Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA). 1990. *Maputaland: Conservation and Removals*. Special Report no 6. Pietermaritzburg: AFRA.
- Akong'a, J. 1988. "Drought and Famine Management in Kitui District, Kenya", in D. W. Brokensha and P. D. Little (eds.) *Anthropology of Development and Change in East Africa*. London: Westview Press.
- Albers, P. C. 1994. "Sioux Women in Transition: A study of their Changing Status in Domestic and Capitalist Sectors of Production", in P. Albers and B. Medicine (eds.) *The Hidden Half*. New York: University Press of America.
- Alpers, S. 1991. "The Museum as a Way of Seeing", in I. Karp and S. D. Lavine (eds.) *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Smithsonian Institution Press: Washington.
- Anon. 2001. "The Greater St Lucia Wetland Park: a symbol of a nation's dreams and challenges", *Wildside* 1(7), 13-20.
- Barnard, P. W. 1989. *Rural Community Development: An Operational Model*. D. Phil thesis. Department of Development Studies: University of Port Elizabeth.
- Barnett, T. 1977. *The Gezira Scheme: An Illusion of Development*. London: Frank Cass.
- Bayart, J-F. 1986a. "Civil Society in Africa", in P. Chabal (ed.) *Political Domination in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bayart, J-F. 1986b. "Populist Political Action: Historical understanding and Political Analysis in Africa", in *African Historiographies: What History for which Africa?* London: Sage Publications.



- Beckman, N. 1977. "Policy Analysis in Government: Alternatives to 'Muddling Through'", *Public Administration Review* 37, 222-227.
- Benedict, R. 1934. *Patterns of Culture*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Bernstein, H. 1979. "Concepts for the Analysis of Contemporary Peasantries", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 6, 4-10.
- Bernstein, T. P. 1977. *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages: The Transfer of Youth from Urban to Rural China*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Boonzaaier, E. and J. Sharp (eds.), 1988. *South African Keywords: The Uses and Abuses of Political Concepts*. Cape Town: David Phillip.
- Boserup, E. 1970. *Woman's Role in Economic Development*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- Brandon, K. and Wells, M. 1992. *People and Parks: Linking Protected Area Management with Local Communities*. Washington DC: World Bank.
- Brokensha, D. W., D. M. Warren and O. Werner (eds.). 1980. *Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Development*. Lanham: University Press America.
- Brokensha, D. W. and P. D. Little (eds.). 1988. *Anthropology of Development and Change in East Africa*. London: Westview Press.
- Brooks, S. 1999. "Green Gold or Green Deserts? Contestations between the Choice of Poverty or Commercial Tree Planting by Rural Communities in KwaZulu-Natal". Unpublished paper presented at the Department of History, University of Natal, Durban.

- Brooks, S. 2000. "The Museum and the Game Reserve: Dr Ernest Warren and Representations of Nature in Early Twentieth-century Natal". Paper presented to the School of Life and Environmental Sciences (Geography), University of Natal, Durban.
- Bruton, M. N. 1980. "Conservation and Development in Maputaland", in M. N. Bruton and K. H. Cooper (eds.) *Studies on the Ecology of Maputaland*. Grahamstown: Rhodes University Press.
- Bruton, M. N., M. Smith and R. H. Taylor 1980. "A Brief History of Human Involvement in Maputaland", in M. N. Bruton and K. H. Cooper (eds.) *Studies on the Ecology of Maputaland*. Grahamstown: Rhodes University Press.
- Budlender, D. 1998. "Race and gender in local government employment", *Development Southern Africa* 15(5), 679-687.
- Bundy, C. 1972. "The Emergence and Decline of a South African Peasantry", *African Affairs* 72(5), 368-388.
- Bunker, S. G. 1988. "Lineage, District, and Nation: Politics in Uganda's Bugisu Cooperative Union", in D. W. Brokensha and P. D. Little (eds.) *Anthropology of Development and Change in East Africa*. London: Westview Press.
- Bähre, E. 2002. "Money and Violence. Financial mutuals among the Xhosa in Cape Town, South Africa". PhD Thesis. School for Social Research. University of Amsterdam.
- Calvocoressi, P. 1985. *Independent Africa and the World*. New York: Longman Group Limited.
- Cameron, A. 1999. "Shamwari- Our Friend", *Earthyear* 20 (Dec 99/ June2000), 124-

127.

- Carr, M. 1989. "Introduction", in M. Carr (ed.) *The Barefoot Book. Economically Appropriate Services for the Rural Poor*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.
- Cassam, A. 1991. "The Invisible Woman", in M. Suliman (ed.) *Alternative Development Strategies for Africa*. London: Institute for African Alternatives.
- Chabal, P. 1992. *Power in Africa: An Essay in Political Interpretation*. New York: St Martin's Press.
- Chabal, P. and J. Daloz. 1999. *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*. Oxford: The International African Institute in association with James Currey.
- Chaiken, M. S. 1988. "Anthropology, Nutrition, and the Design of a Health Intervention Program in Western Kenya", in D. W. Brokensha and P. D. Little (eds.) *Anthropology of Development and Change in East Africa*. London: Westview Press.
- Chambers, R. 1980. *Rural Poverty Unperceived: Problems and Remedies*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.
- Chambers, R. 1983. *Rural Development: Putting the Last First*. Harlow: Longman.
- Chen, M. A. 1996a. "Introduction", in M. A. Chen (ed.) *Beyond Credit: A Subsector Approach to Promoting Women's Enterprises*. Canada: Aga Khan Foundation.
- Conelly, W. T. 1988. "Insect and Weed Control in Subsistence Farming Systems: Western Kenya", in D. W. Brokensha and P. D. Little (eds.) *Anthropology of Development and Change in East Africa*. London: Westview Press.

- Centre for Community Organisation Research and Development (CORD). 1991. "Regaining control", in M. Ramphela (ed.) *Restoring the Land – Environment and Change in Post-apartheid South Africa*. London: Panos Publications Ltd.
- Cochrane, G. 1971. *Development Anthropology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cochrane, G. 1979. *The Cultural Appraisal of Development Projects*. New York: Praeger.
- Cock, J. 1991. "The Politics of Ecology", in M. Ramphela (ed.) *Restoring the Land – Environment and Change in Post-apartheid South Africa*. London: Panos Publications Ltd.
- Coertze, P. J. (ed.) 1960. *Inleiding tot die Algemene Volkekunde*. Johannesburg: Voortrekkerpers.
- Coertze, R. D. 1999. "Afrika-Renaissance: Uitdagings en realiteite", *South African Journal of Ethnology* 22(1), 8-19.
- Coetzee, J. K., J. Graaff, F. Hendricks and G. Wood (eds.) 2001. *Development: Theory, Policy, and Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, A. 1981. *The Politics of Elite Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Comaroff, J. 1985. *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance: The Culture and History of a South African people*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Comaroff, J. L. and J. Comaroff. 1997. *Of Revelation and Revolution: The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier*. Chicago: The University of Chicago

Press.

- Cope, N. L. G. 1985. "The Zulu Royal Family under the South African Government, 1910-1933: Solomon kaDinuzulu, Inkatha and Zulu Nationalism". PhD thesis. Department of History, University of Natal, Durban.
- Crew, S. R. and J. E. Sims. 1991. "Locating Authenticity: Fragments of a Dialogue", in I. Karp and S. D. Lavine (eds.). *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Smithsonian Institution Press: Washington.
- Cunningham, A. B. 1987. "Commercial Craftwork: Balancing out Human Needs and Resources", *South African Journal of Botany* 53 (4), 259-266.
- De Boeck, F. 1996. "Postcolonialism, Power and Identity: Local and Global Perspectives from Zaire", in R. Werbner and T. Ranger (eds.) *Postcolonial Identities in Africa*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- De Boeck, F. 1998. "Beyond the Grave: History, Memory and Death in Postcolonial Congo/ Zaire", in Werbner, R. (ed.) *Memory and the Postcolony: African Anthropology and the Critique of Power*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- De Bruin, J. P. 1987. "Die Onvoltooide sendingtaak in Maputaland (Makathini Vlakte)", in J. P. De Bruin and D. G. Conradie (eds.) *Die Onvoltooide Sendingtaak in die Ingwavuma-Ubombo-Hlabisa distrikte*. Pretoria: Instituut vir Sendingwetenskaplike Navorsing (ISWEN).
- De La Harpe, R. 1999. "A journey of discovery: Maputaland", *Discover Africa* (Jan/ March), 35-43.
- De Wet, C. 2001. "Rural resettlement", in J. Coetzee, J. Graaff, F. Hendricks and G. Wood (eds.) *Developmen.: Theory, Policy, and Practice*. Cape Town: Oxford

University Press.

- Department of Health. 2002. *National HIV and Syphilis Sero-Prevalence Survey of Women attending Public Antenatal Clinics in South Africa 2001*. Pretoria: The South African National Department of Health.
- Dold, D. 1999. "Tourist development inside protected areas", *African Wildlife* 54(5), 32.
- Douglas, R. 1998. "Over-studied and under-developed?" *Africa environment and Wildlife* 6(3), 19-21.
- Douthwaite, R. 1992. *The Growth Illusion. How Economic Growth has Enriched the Few, Impoverished the Many, and Endangered the Planet*. Devon: Green Books.
- Drummond, W. H. 1875. *The Large Game and Natural History of South and South-East Africa from the Journals of the Hon. W.H. Drummond*. Edinburgh : Edmonston and Douglas.
- Dube, L. T. N. 1995. "Wind energy potential in Maputaland", *Development Southern Africa* 12(5), 625-636.
- Duggan, B. J. 1997. "Tourism, Cultural Authenticity, and the Native Crafts Cooperative: The Eastern Cherokee Experience", in E. Chambers (ed.) *Tourism and Culture- An Applied Perspective*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Els, H. 1993. *Van Shaka tot die Inkatha Vryheidsparty: Hoofmomente uit die geskiedenis van die Zulu (1816-1991)*. Brooklyn: Els.
- Escobar, A. 1991. "Anthropology and the Development Encounter: The Making and Marketing of Development Anthropology", *American Ethnologist* 18 (4), 658-682.

- Escobar, A. 1995. *The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Evans, I. 1997. *Bureaucracy and Race: Native Administration in South Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Evans, P. 1979. *Dependent Development: The Alliance of Multinational, State, and Local Capital in Brazil*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1952. *Social Anthropology*. Glenco Illinois: The Free Press.
- Felgate, W. S. 1982. *The Tembe Thonga of Natal and Mozambique: an ecological approach*. Durban: African Studies Department.
- Ferguson, J. 1990. *The Anti-Politics Machine. "Development", Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Cape Town: David Phillip.
- Ferguson, J. 1999. *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Fischer, A. 1988. "Whose Development? The Politics of Development and the Development of Politics in South Africa", in E. Boonzaaier and J. Sharp (eds.) *South African Keywords: The Uses and Abuses of Political Concepts*. Cape Town: David Phillip.
- Fischer, A. 1998. *Nkomazi women and development*. Development Bank of Southern Africa. Discussion Paper no 6. Halfway House: Development Bank of Southern Africa.
- Fischer, A. 2000. *The institutional dynamics of rural local government in transition: A*

- case study from Nkomazi 1996 and 1997*. Development Bank of Southern Africa. Discussion Paper no 5. Halfway House. Development Bank of Southern Africa
- Fleuret, P. 1988. "Farmers, Cooperatives, and Development Assistance in Uganda: An Anthropological Perspective", in D. W. Brokensha and P. D. Little (eds.) *Anthropology of Development and Change in East Africa*. London: Westview Press
- Fokwang, J. T. D. 2003. "Chiefs and Democratic Transition in Africa: An Ethnographic Study in the Chiefdoms of Tshivase and Bali". MA dissertation. Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of Pretoria.
- Freund, B. 1994. *Insiders and Outsiders: the Indian Working Class of Durban 1910-1990*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Galli, R. E. 1981. *The Political Economy of Rural Development: Peasants, International Capital, and the State :Case Studies in Colombia, Mexico, Tanzania, and Bangladesh*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Gardner, K. and D. Lewis. 1996. *Anthropology, Development and the Post-modern Challenge*. London: Pluto Press.
- Gelb, S. and C. Manning. 1998. "Editorial. Spatial Development Initiatives: Unlocking Economic Potential", *Development Southern Africa* 15 (5), ii-x.
- Goheen, M. 1996. *Men Own the Fields, Women Own the Crops. Gender and Power in the Cameroon Grassfields*. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Gouldner, A. 1950. *Studies in Leadership*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Graburn, N. H. H. 1979. "Introduction: Arts of the Fourth World", in N. H. H. Graburn



- (ed.) *Ethnic and Tourist Arts: Cultural Expressions from the Fourth World*.  
California: University of California Press.
- Grossert, J. W. 1978. *Zulu Crafts*. Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter.
- Grundy, K. W. 1984. "Foreword", in B. LaVine (ed.) *Art and Craft of Southern Africa-  
Treasures in Transition*. Craighall: Delta Books.
- Guy, J. 1994. *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom: the Civil War in Zululand, 1879-  
1884*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.
- Hamilton, C. 1998. *Terrific Majesty: The Powers of Shaka Zulu and the Limits of  
Historical Invention*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hamilton, G. 1999. "Land Lore", *Leadership South Africa* 10 (4), 60-64.
- Harkin, M. 1995. "Modernist Anthropology and Tourism of the Authentic", *Annals of  
Tourism Research* 22(3), 650-670.
- Harrison, P. 1987. *The Greening of Africa: Breaking Through in the Battle for Land and  
Food*. London: Paladin Grafton Books.
- Harvey, K. 1999. "The road ahead", *Timbila* 1(1), 37-39.
- Haugurud, A. 1988. "Anthropology and Interdisciplinary Research in Rwanda", in  
D. W. Brokensha and P. D. Little (eds.) *Anthropology of Development and  
Change in East Africa*. London: Westview Press.
- Hedges, D. W. 1978. "Trade and Politics in Southern Mozambique and Zululand in the  
Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries". PhD thesis. Department of History  
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

- Heyer, J., P. Roberts and G. Williams. 1981. *Rural Development in Tropical Africa*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Hobart, M. (ed). 1993. *An Anthropological Critique of Development: The Growth of Ignorance*. London: Routledge.
- Hoben, A. 1980. "Agricultural decision making in foreign assistance: An anthropological analysis", in P. F. Bartlett (ed.) *Agricultural Decision Making: Anthropological Contributions to Rural Development*. New York: Academic.
- Hoben, A. 1982. "Anthropologists and Development", *Annual Review of Anthropology* 11, 349-375.
- Hogg, R. 1988. "Changing Perceptions of Pastoral Development: A Case Study from Turkana District, Kenya", in D. W. Brokensha and P. D. Little (eds.) *Anthropology of Development and Change in East Africa*. London: Westview Press.
- Isaacman, A. 1990. "Peasants and Social Protest in Africa", *African Studies Review* 33 (2), 3-33.
- James, D. A. 2002. "Property, community and citizenship in South Africa's land reform programme". Unpublished paper presented at the Department of Social Anthropology: London School of Economics.
- Jolles, F. 1993. "Zulu Trade Dolls from Natal: Towards an Aesthetic of Tourist Art", *Museum Anthropology* 17(1), 37-49.
- Jourdan, P. 1998. "Spatial Development Initiatives (SDIs)- The Official View", *Development Southern Africa* 15(5), 717-725.

Klein, N. 2000. *No Logo*. London: Flamingo.

Kloppers, R. J. 2002. "Border crossings: War, peace and the Transformation of the South Africa/ Mozambique borderland". Unpublished paper presented to the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology: University of Pretoria.

Koch, E., G. De Beer, S. Eliffe and Others. 1998b. "SDIs, tourism-led growth and the empowerment of local communities in South Africa", *Development Southern Africa* 15(5), 809-826.

Kotze, D. 2000. "Crafts from Wetland Plants: Making Business and Conservation Work". Paper presented at the Indigenous Plant Use Forum, Nelspruit.

Kotzé, H. and A. Greyling. 1991. *Political Organisations in South Africa*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.

Kriel, L. 2002. "n Vergelyking tussen Colin Rae en Christoph Sonntag se weergawes van die Boer-Hananwa-Oorlog van 1894". PhD thesis. Department of History: University of Pretoria.

Krige, E. J. 1950. *The Social System of the Zulus*. Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter Pty Ltd.

Lan, D. 1985. *Guns And Rain: Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe*. London: Currey.

Lawes, M. J. and Eeeley, A. C. 2000. "Where have all the Forests Gone? A Brief History of Forest Use in KwaZulu-Natal", *African Wildlife* 54(1), 16-19.

Leacock, E. 1978. "Women's Status in Egalitarian Society: Implications for Social Evolution", *Current Anthropology* 19 (2), 247-275.

- Leslie, D. 1875. *Among the Zulus and Amatongas: With Sketches of the Natives, their Language and Customs, and the Country, Products, Climate, Wild Animals, etc., being Principally Contributions to Magazines and Newspapers*; edited by W.H. Drummond. Edinburgh : Edmonston and Douglas.
- Liebenberg, B. J. and S. B. Spies. 1993. *South Africa in the Twentieth Century*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Littrell, M. A., L. F. Anderson and P. J. Brown. 1993. "What makes a Craft Souvenir Authentic?", *Annals of Tourism Research* 20, 197-215.
- Lubell, H. 1991. *The Informal Sector in the 1980 's and 1990 's*. Paris: OECD Publications.
- Lukhele, A. K., 1990. *Stokvels in South Africa. Informal Savings Schemes by Blacks for the Black Community*. Johannesburg: Amagi Books.
- MacGaffey, J. 1994. "Civil Society in Zaire: Hidden Resistance and the Use of Personal Ties in Class Struggle", in J. W. Harbeson, D. Rothchild and N. Chazan (eds.) *Civil Society and the State in Africa*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Mackenzie, J. M. 1991. "The Natural World and the Popular Consciousness in Southern Africa: The European Appropriation of Nature", in P. Kaarsholm (ed.) *Cultural Struggle and Development in Southern Africa*. Harare: Baobab Books.
- Mackinnon, A. S. 2001. "Chiefly Authority, Leapfrogging Headmen and the Political Economy of Zululand, South Africa, ca. 1930-1950", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27(3), 567-590.
- Mair, L. 1984. *Anthropology and Development*. London: Macmillan.

- Makanjee, V. 1989. "Maputaland the Neglected Territory", *Indicator South Africa* 6(1/2), 70-72.
- Mamdani, M. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Marais, J. S. 1962. "The Nature of European Control", in I. Schapera (ed.) *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa: An Ethnographical Survey*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.
- Marks, S. 1978. "Natal, the Zulu Royal Family and the Ideology of Segregation", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 4(2), 172-194.
- Mayer, P. 1980. "Origins and decline of two rural resistance ideologies", in P. Mayer (ed.) *Black Villagers in an Industrial Society*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Mayer, P. and I. Mayer. 1961. *Townsmen or Tribesmen: Conservatism and the Process of Urbanization in a South African City*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Mbembe, A. 1992. "Provisional Notes on the Postcolony", *Africa* 62 (1), 3-36.
- McIntosh, A. 1991a. "Making the Informal Sector Pay: Rural Entrepreneurs in KwaZulu", in E. Preston-Whyte and C. Rogerson (eds.) *South Africa's Informal Economy*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- McIntosh, A. J. and R. C. Prentice. 1999. "Affirming Authenticity- Consuming Cultural Heritage", *Annals of Tourism Research* 26(3), 589-612.
- Mead, M. 1928. *Coming of Age in Samoa*. New York: American Museum of Natural

## History

- Mellinger, W. M. 1994. "Toward a Critical Analysis of Tourism Representations", *Annals of Tourism Research* 21(4), 756-779.
- Merton, R. K. 1968. *Social Theory and Social Structure*. New York: Free Press
- Mngadi, E. 1981. *The Removal of Roosboom*. Special Report no 2. Pietermaritzburg: AFRA.
- Mohanty, C. T. 1991. "Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism", in C. T. Mohanty, A. Russo and L. Torres. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Mokaba, P. 1998. "Message from Peter Mokaba the South African Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism", *Africa Indigo* 1(1), p. 7.
- Moore, H. L. 1988. *Feminism and Anthropology*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Mountain, A. 1990. *Paradise under Pressure- St Lucia, Kosi Bay, Sodwana, Lake Sibaya, Maputaland*. Johannesburg: Southern Book Publishers.
- Moyle, D. 1999. "Launch of the Tourism Action Plan", *Earthyear* 20(Dec/ June), p. 140.
- Mthethwa, D. 2002. "The Mobilization of History and the Tembe Chieftaincy in Maputaland: 1896-1997". MA dissertation. Department of History: University of Natal, Durban.
- Mueller, A. 1986. "The Bureaucratization of Feminist Knowledge: The Case of Women in Development", *Resources for Feminist Research* 15(1), 36-38.

- Mueller, A. 1987. "Peasants and Professionals: The Social Organization of Women in Development Knowledge". PhD thesis. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education: University of Ontario.
- Mueller, A. 1991. "In and Against Development: Feminists Confront Development on Its Own Ground". Unpublished paper.
- Mullins, D. 2000. "So exactly what is a 'household'?", *Links* (July), 5.
- Munnik, V. and Mhlope, G. 2000. "Uneasy Paradise: A Journey Through Maputaland", in P. Weinberg (ed.) *Once We were Hunters: A Journey with Africa's Indigenous People*. Amsterdam: Mets and Schilt.
- Murphy, P.E. 1985. *Tourism- A Community Approach*. New York: Routledge.
- Murray, C. 1980. "The Contemporary Economic Predicament", in N. Lye and C. Murray (eds.) *Transformations on the Highveld: The Tswana and Southern Sotho*. Cape Town and London: David Philip.
- Murray, C. 1981. *Families Divided: The impact of Migrant Labour in Lesotho*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Møller, V. 1996. *Perceptions of Development in KwaZulu-Natal. A Subjective Indicator Study*. Durban: Indicator Press.
- Nas, P. J. M. 2002. "Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Culture", *Current Anthropology* 43(1), 139-148.
- Niehaus, I. A. 2001. "From Separate Development to Development? Selling Anthropology by the Rand in Post-apartheid South Africa". Public lecture. Department of Anthropology: Catholic University of Leuven.

- Nindi, B. C. 1988. "Issues in Agricultural Change: Case Study from Ismani, Iringa Region, Tanzania", in D. W. Brokensha and P. D. Little (eds.) *Anthropology of Development and Change in East Africa*. London: Westview Press.
- Ntsebeza, L. 2001. "Traditional Authorities and Rural Development", in J. Coetzee, J. Graaff, F. Hendricks and G. Wood (eds.) *Development: Theory, Policy, and Practice*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Nustad, K. 1996. "The Politics of 'Development': Power and Changing Discourses in South Africa", *Cambridge Anthropology* 19(1), 57-72.
- Obbo, C. 1995. "What Women Can Do: AIDS Crises Management in Uganda", in D. F. Bryceson (ed.) *Women Wielding the Hoe. Lessons from Rural Africa for Feminist Theory and Development Practice*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). 1995. *Niche Markets as a Rural Development Strategy*. Paris: OECD.
- Oomen, B. 2000. "'We must now Go Back to Our History': Retraditionalisation in a Northern Province Chieftaincy", *African Studies* 59 (1), 71-95.
- Ortner, S. 1974. "Is female to male as nature is to culture?", in M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (eds.) *Woman, culture and society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Pauw, B. 1963. *The Second Generation: A Study of the Family among Urbanized Bantu in East London*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Pelser, J. J. 1968. "Kultuurbeïnvloeding van die Bantoe op Politieke Terrein", in G. Cronje (ed.) *Kultuurbeïnvloeding tussen Blank en Bantoe in Suid-Afrika*. Pretoria.



Van Schaik.

- Peters, P. E. 1995. "Uses and Abuses of the Concept of 'Female-headed Households' in Research on Agrarian Transformation and Policy", in D. F. Bryceson (ed.) *Women Wielding the Hoe. Lessons from Rural Africa for Feminist Theory and Development Practice*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.
- Preston-Whyte, E. 1991. "Petty Trading at Umgababa: Mere Survival or the Road to Accumulation?" in E. Preston-Whyte and C. Rogerson (eds.) *South Africa's Informal Economy*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Reader, D. H. 1961. *The Black Man's Portion: History, Demography and Living Conditions in the Native Locations of East London, Cape Province*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Richards, P. 1993. "Cultivation: Knowledge or performance?" in M. Hobart (ed.) *An Anthropological Critique of Development: The Growth of Ignorance*. London: Routledge.
- Ritzer, G. 1996. *The McDonaldization of Society: An Investigation into the Changing Character of Contemporary Social Life*. California: Pine Forge Press.
- Robertson, A. F. 1984. *People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rogers, B. 1980. *The Domestication of Women: Discrimination in Developing Societies*. London: Routledge.
- Rosaldo, M. Z. 1974. "Women, culture and society: a theoretical overview", in M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (eds.) *Woman, Culture and Society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

- Sachs, W. (ed). 1992. *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*. London: Zed.
- Sacks, K. 1975. "Engels Revisited: Women, the Organization of Production, and Private Property", in R. R. Reiter (ed) *Toward an Anthropology of Women*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Said, E. 1978. *Orientalism*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Schama, S. 1995. *Landscape and memory*. New York : A. A. Knopf.
- Scott, J. C. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Scott, J. C. 1990. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Serote, P., A. Mager and D. Budlender. 2001. "Gender and development", in J. Coetzee, J. Graaff, F. Hendricks and G. Wood (eds.) *Development. Theory, Policy, and Practice*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Simmel, G. 1950. *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*. Edited and translated by Wolff, K. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.
- Skalnik, P. 1988. "Tribe as colonial category", in E. Boonzaaier and J. Sharp (eds.) *South African Keywords: The Uses and Abuses of Political Concepts*. Cape Town: David Phillip.
- Sluka, J. A. 1995. "Domination, Resistance and Political Culture in Northern Ireland's Catholic-Nationalist Ghettos", *Critique of Anthropology* 15 (1), 71-102.

- Smith, A. 1969. "The trade of Delagoa Bay as a factor in Nguni politics 1750-1835", in L. Thompson (ed). *African Societies in Southern Africa*. London: Heinemann.
- Spiegel, A., V. Watson and P. Wilkinson. 1996. "Domestic Diversity and Fluidity among some African Households in Greater Cape Town", *Social Dynamics* 22 (1), 7-30.
- Spring, A. 1988. "Putting Women in the Development Agenda: Agricultural Development in Malawi", in D. W. Brokensha and P. D. Little (eds.) *Anthropology of Development and Change in East Africa*. London: Westview Press.
- Suliman, M. 1991. "Introduction", in M. Suliman (ed.) *Alternative Development Strategies for Africa*. London: Institute for African Alternatives.
- Sumner Curry, M. C. 2001. "Integrated conservation: a geographical analysis of policy and practice in Northern Maputaland". MA dissertation. Department of Geography: University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
- Taylor, D. 1988. "Agricultural practices in Eastern Maputaland", *Development Southern Africa* 5(4), 465-481.
- Taylor, D. R. F. and Mackenzie, F. 1992. "Preface", in D. R. F. Taylor and F. Mackenzie (eds.) *Development from within- Survival in rural Africa*. New York: Routledge.
- Thomton, R. 2000. "The 'Landscape', Land and Landscapes in Contemporary South Africa". Paper presented to the Department of Social Anthropology: University of the Witwatersrand.

- Tripp, A. M. 1994. "Rethinking Civil Society: Gender Implications in Contemporary Tanzania", in J. W. Harbeson, D. Rothchild and N. Chazan (eds.) *Civil Society and the State in Africa*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Turner, S. 2001. "Tourism, the Environment, and Rural Development", in J. Coetzee, J. Graaff, F. Hendricks and G. Wood (eds.) *Development. Theory, Policy, and Practice*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Turner, V. 1967 *The Forest of Symbols*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Udy, S. H., Jr. 1959. "Bureaucracy and Rationality in Weber's Organizational Theory- An Empirical Study", *American Sociological Review* 24 (December), 791-795.
- Unterhalter, E. 1987. *Forced Removal- The Division, Segregation and Control of the People of South Africa*. London: IDAF Publications Ltd.
- Van den Breemer, H. P. M, and L. B. Venema. 1995. "Local Resource Management in African National Contexts", in J. P. M. Van den Breemer, C. A. Drijver and L. B. Venema (eds.) *Local Resource Management in Africa*. West Sussex: John Wiley and Sons Ltd.
- Van der Merwe, C. 2000. "Adding Value through World Heritage", *Companion* 2, 38-44.
- Van der Waal, K. and J. Sharp. 1988. "The Informal Sector: A New Resource", in E. Boonzaaier and J. Sharp (eds.) *South African Keywords: The Uses and Abuses of Political Concepts*. Cape Town: David Phillip.
- Van Gennep, A. 1960. *The Rites of Passage*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

- Van Kessel, I. 2000. *Beyond our Wildest Dreams: The United Democratic Front and the Transformation of South Africa*. London: University Press of Virginia.
- Van Onselen, C. 1976. *Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia 1900-1933*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Vorster, L. P. 2001. "South African customary law and ethnicity: Challenges for South Africa", *South African Journal of Ethnology* 24 (4), 119-124.
- Walker, C. 1981. *Mass Removals in Natal: Consolidation and Farm Evictions. Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA)*. Special Report no 1. Pietermaritzburg: AFRA.
- Walker, C. 1982. *A Process of Dispossession: An Overview of Relocation in Natal. Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA)*. Special Report no 3. Pietermaritzburg: AFRA.
- Waller, J. and S. E. G. Lea. 1999. "Seeking the Real Spain? Authenticity in Motivation", *Annals of Tourism Research* 26(1), 110-129.
- Wallman, S. 1969. *Take Out Hunger: Two Case Studies of Rural Development in Basutoland*. London: Athlone Press.
- Wang, N. 1999. "Rethinking authenticity in Tourism experience", *Annals of Tourism Research* 26(2), 349-370.
- Warren, K. B. and S. C. Bourque. 1991. "Women, Technology, and International Development Ideologies: Analyzing Feminist Voices", in M. Di Leonardo (ed.) *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge- Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Weber, M. 1947 (1922). *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. Translated by A. Henderson and T. Parsons. New York: Free Press.
- Webster, D. 1991. "Abafazi baThonga bafihlakala: Ethnicity and gender in a KwaZulu Border Community", in P. McAllister and A. Spiegel (eds.) *Tradition and Transition in Southern Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Werbner, R. 1996. "Multiple Identities, Plural Arenas", in R. Werbner and T. Ranger (eds.) *Postcolonial Identities in Africa*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Williams, G. 1976. "Taking the Part of Peasants: Rural Development in Nigeria and Tanzania", in P. Gutkind and I. Wallerstein (eds.) *The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa*. Beverley Hills: Sage.
- Williams, G. 1981. *Rural development in tropical Africa*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Williams, G. 1985. *The Contradictions of the World Bank and the Crisis of the State in Africa*. New York: Mimeo.
- Williams, G. 1986. "Rural development: Partners and Adversaries", *Rural Africana* 25 (6), 11-23.
- Williams, J. M. 1999. "Understanding the Dynamics of Social Control in Rural South Africa: Traditional Leaders and the Allocation of Development Resources in KwaZulu-Natal". Unpublished paper presented at the Department of History: University of Natal, Durban.
- Wilson, M. and A. Mafeje. 1963. *Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Wolf, M. 1974. "Chinese Women: Old Skills in a New Context", in M. Rosaldo and

L. Lamphere (eds.) *Women, Culture and Society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Yeld, J. 1997. *Caring for the earth: South Africa: a guide to sustainable living*. Stellenbosch: World Wildlife Fund (WWF) South Africa.

### **Newspaper Articles**

Anon. 1997. Land trust to come under scrutiny. *The Natal Witness*. 2 February.

Anon. 1998. Blind to a win-win solution for Ndumo. *The Natal Witness*. 27 November.

Anon. 2001. Africa's elusive dawn. *The Economist*. 24 February.

Anon. 2002. Government's mid-term report to the nation. *Sunday Times*. 17 February.

Bishop, C. 2001a. Dept of Manpower thwarts Coelacanth search. *Natal Witness*. 7 May.

Bishop, C. 2001b. Community reserve launched. *Natal Witness*. 15 October.

Bishop, C. 2002. Community cut off by reserve. *Natal Witness*. 11 February 11.

De Lange, L. 1997. Diewe slaan kwaai in Sodwana toe op vakansiegangers. *Beeld*. 5 November.

Grimond, J. 2001. South Africa- Africa's great black hope. *The Economist*. 24 February.

Hlongwa, C. 1999. More pay for Amakhosi. *City Press*. 28 March.

- Ka'Nkosi, S. 2001. 'Bloodbath' warning in land claim. *Sunday Times*. 25 November.
- Khumalo, S. 1999. Communities celebrate land accord. *The Daily News*. 24 September.
- Khumalo, S. 2001. Joy as various development projects are launched. *Daily News*. 23 July.
- Larsen, D. 1999a. Visions for Maputaland. *Mail and Guardian*. 22 December 22.
- Larsen, D. 1999b. A paradise at the centre of controversy. *Natal Witness*. 29 November
- Liebenberg, D. 2002. Wildheining in KZN dalk weens stamtwis afgebreek. *Beeld*. 16 January 16.
- Moore, N. 1999a. Maputaland enmeshed in red tape. *Mail and Guardian*. 1 July.
- Moore, N. 1999b. 'No golden eggs on our empty plates'. *Sunday World*. 4 July.
- Moore, N. 2001. Trouble in Paradise. *Natal Witness*. 25 July.
- Moore, N. 2002a. Concern over community reserve. *Sunday Tribune*. 13 January.
- Moore, N. 2002b. Mabaso community vows reserve will be patched up after vandals destroy fence. *Natal Witness*. 18 January.
- Moore, N. and Masinga, S. 1999. Sodwana Bay thefts hit tourist industry. *Sunday Tribune*. 22 August.
- Payne, H. 1998. All the king's men. *Financial Mail*. 14 August.



Phahlane, C. 1998. KZN land redistribution held up. *The Daily News*. 27 April.

Sapa. 2001. Land Affairs reports progress on claims. *The Star*. 6 December

Thulo, T. 2001. Greater Sodwana Bay land big business. *Daily News*. 5 September.

### **Web Sites**

Anon. 2002. <http://www.rhino.org.za>. Access September 20, 2002.

Hoeller, C. 2002. Interview with Achille Mbembe. *Springerlin Magazine*, p1-10,  
<http://www.springerlin.at>. Access October 10, 2002.

Ross, R. 2001. Africa Burning. <http://africaburning.tripod.com>. Access July 10, 2001.