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**Gender, Livelihoods and Conservation in Hluleka, Mpondoland c.1920 to
the present: Land, Forests and Marine Resources**

Leila Emdon

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Supervised by Professor Anne Kelk Mager

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

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

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the Ngqeleni district of Mpondoland and particularly on the communities living adjacent to the Hluleka Nature Reserve from c. 1920 to the present. It aims to discuss the history of conservation in the area and the relationship of the local community and its leaders to conservation authorities. It seeks to demonstrate that conservation, both terrestrial and marine is experienced in different ways by men and women who consequently respond to the authorities in different ways. More particularly, it suggests that conservation both past and present has tended to be top-down and has failed to anticipate the effect of state measures on local livelihood strategies.

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Introduction

This thesis focuses on a small group of villages situated around the Hluleka Nature Reserve on the coast of western Mpondoland's¹ Ngqeleni district in the Eastern Cape. Hluleka's story adds to the historical narrative of how rural communities have depended on natural resources as part of a multitude of livelihoods and how conservation has impacted this dependence. These communities have had a troubled and complex history in relation to state initiated conservation measures. The thesis examines this history from the 1920s. It discusses the different forms of conservation that have been implemented in Ngqeleni including livestock improvement schemes, agricultural education and restrictions on forest access in the 1920s and 1930s. It examines intensified forms of conservation in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s such as betterment and rehabilitation schemes and increasing forest restrictions. It discusses the establishment of the nature reserve in 1976 and later, post-apartheid marine conservation.

In its enquiry into the history of conservation in Ngqeleni, this thesis poses the following questions: how have communities perceived, experienced, negotiated, accepted or resisted various conservation measures throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries? And how have reactions to conservation been shaped by gender? The thesis rests on the understanding that in exploring changing gender relations and livelihoods a deeper understanding is gained into how conservation has affected the lives of men and women in the region.

The thesis both draws on and contributes to a growing literature on conservation history in South Africa.² Beyond the broader histories of the Transkei,³ there are several historical

¹ Note on language: throughout this thesis I have made use of the spelling Mpondoland rather than Pondoland following the post 1994 use of isiXhosa. However, where I have used direct quotes from authors or archival documents, the spelling "Pondoland" has remained.

² See examples in William Beinart, and JoAnn McGregor, *Social history & African environments* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 2003), W. Beinart, *The rise of conservation in South Africa : settlers, livestock, and the environment 1770-1950* (Oxford University Press, 2003), W. Beinart, *Environment and Empire*, (Oxford University Press, 2007), S. Dovers, R. Edgecombe and B. Guest, eds, *South Africa's Environmental History: Cases and Comparisons* (Ohio University Press: Series in Ecology and History and David Phillip Publishers, Cape Town, 2002) and J. A. Tropp, *Natures of Colonial Change: Environmental Relations in the Making of the Transkei* (Ohio University Press Athens 2006).

³ See examples such as C. Crais, *the Making of the Colonial Order: White Supremacy and Black Resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865*. (Witswaterstrand University Press South Africa, 1992), 2., W. Beinart and C. Bundy *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa: Politics and Popular Movements in the Transkei and Eastern Cape 1890-1930* (London: J. Currey Berkeley, South Africa, 1987), W.D. Hammond-Tooke, *Command or Consensus: The Development of the Transkeian Local Government*, (David Phillip, 1975), J. Peires, *The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing of 1856-7* (USA: Indiana University Press, 1989), and R. Southall, *South Africa's Transkei: the political economy of an 'Independent' Bantustan* (London: Heinemann, 1982).

studies of Mpondoland specifically. Of most significance for my research is William Beinart's *The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930*. Beinart gives a detailed history of Mpondoland in the early 20th century, focusing specifically on the political economy, and examines how Mpondoland became part of the capitalist economy. In particular, he examines the effects of the migrant labour system on the social structure of society and on rural subsistence.⁴ While Beinart offers insight into male livelihoods he says very little about the lives of women during that period. As his work focuses on migrant labour and cattle, women's work is almost entirely absent from his history, and women enter nominally as widows who were vulnerable to landlessness and lack of ownership over livestock.⁵ Elsewhere however, Beinart has written on the environmental origins of the Mpondoland revolt and discusses the history of forest conservation in the coastal forests of eastern Mpondoland.⁶ The close proximity of his study to the coastal forests in Hluleka allowed me to draw comparisons.

In order to understand women's livelihoods in Mpondoland in the early decades of the 20th century I have turned to Monica Wilson Hunter's anthropological research. Hunter's close and detailed ethnography illustrating men and women's work in Mpondoland in the 1930s enabled me to understand women's work in particular. While Hunter makes it explicit that her work is not confined to a study of women in particular, she explained that as a woman she had "greater opportunity of studying the life of women than the life of men, and women's concerns are more fully discussed than those of men."⁷

Several social historians have demonstrated how gender shapes power relations in Eastern Cape communities.⁸ They draw attention to the reading of sources so that the gender story that is often hidden from view comes to the surface. Redding argues that between 1878 and 1895 various colonial governments imposed hut taxes on the basis of a mid-19th century white notion of what the African family looked like and on how state officials thought it ought to look. This system made little provision for African women as adults, treating them instead as economically productive but completely subordinate within patriarchal families.

⁴ W. Beinart, *The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1982).

⁵ *Ibid.*, 149.

⁶ W. Beinart, 'Chapter Six: Environmental origins of the Pondoland revolt', in *South Africa's Environmental History: Cases and Comparisons*, eds. S. Dovers, R. Edgecombe and B. Guest.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 13-14.

⁸ A. K. Mager, *Gender and the Making of a South African Bantustan: A Social History of the Ciskei 1945-1959*, (David Phillip, 1999), 7, Mager discusses work from historians such as Belinda Bozzoli, Jeff Guy, Shula Marks, Isabel Hofmeyer among others.

“For their part, the officials who instituted hut tax believed they were trying to ameliorate women's condition within the family by discouraging polygyny and altering the sexual division of labour.”⁹ A century later, Leslie Banks argues that the rise of female headed households in rural Eastern Cape in the late 20th century caused women to re-negotiate their identities, empowering them and giving agency in their lives and communities.¹⁰

I understand gender as shaped by relationships in society and the “multiple meanings attributed to sexual difference.”¹¹ Differences between men and women are created in hierarchical and social structures and “asymmetrical power relations.”¹² These relations are “constructed both discursively, through ideology, and nondiscursively, through struggles over material resources in daily practice.”¹³ Thus gender is “relationally and socially constructed and constantly changing.”¹⁴ Interpreting relations as contextually and spatially specific allows one to trace how gender relations change over time depending on changing circumstances.

Tropp argues that while anthropologists and geographers have explored gender and environment, “surprisingly little historical analysis has been devoted to the question of gender and environmental rights.”¹⁵ And while some recent writing in South Africa’s growing environmental historiography begins to incorporate gender issues, “many historians are still shying away from seriously investigating issues of gender and resource access.”¹⁶

Of particular influence to my research are the ways in which Tropp uses theories on negotiation to explore how gendered actors interpreted, accommodated or resisted conservation.¹⁷ Tropp interprets “negotiation” in different ways, viz “the more classic sense of adversarial parties bargaining over contested ground, of mediation, arbitration, and sometimes even compromise,” and the more “processual, performative connotation for

⁹ Sean Redding, ‘Legal Minors and Social Children: Rural African Women and Taxation in the Transkei, South Africa’, *African Studies Review*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (Dec., 1993), 52.

¹⁰ Banks, Leslie, ‘Beyond Red and School: Gender, Tradition and Identity in the Rural Eastern Cape’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 28, 3, (2002): 637.

¹¹ Mager, ‘Introduction’, in *Gender and the Making of a South African Bantustan: A Social History of the Ciskei 1945-1959*, 9.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Tropp, ‘Introduction: Colonial and Environmental Histories, Past and Present.’ in *Natures of Colonial Change: Environmental Relations in the Making of the Transkei*, 11.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Tropp uses Nancy Rose Hunt's theories of negotiation in his work in ‘Introduction: Colonial and Environmental Histories, Past and Present.’ *Natures of Colonial Change: Environmental Relations in the Making of the Transkei*, 11.

negotiating – as in travelling, making a turn, veering – as is appropriate for rendering a situation of everyday ‘making do’.”¹⁸ In examining negotiation he argues that one can see not only “how shifting power dynamics structured and constrained the actions of differently positioned people in unequal ways, but also how individuals creatively responded to these conditions.”¹⁹ Tropp examined the everyday performative sense of negotiation and how “individuals contended with the diverse and complex dimensions of their daily lives and how they then brought such particular yet multiple interests and meanings to their responses to changes in resource access.”²⁰

An example of this can be seen in Tropp’s analysis of how women responded to the ways in which conservation authorities sought to cement the gender order by keeping women tied to subsistence and men dependent on migrant labour.²¹ New laws restructured men and women’s customary use of resources, as colonial authorities sought to transform the Transkei in gendered directions that suited the cape colony.²² Beginning in the 1880s and 1890s, officials tampered with institutions tied to gender, class, age, and marital status which structured men and women’s access and entitlements to crucial natural resources particularly wood.²³ For example, women were given rights to collect firewood. “Through selective representations of Africans ‘customary’ gender roles and ‘subsistence’ practices, officials attempted to legitimize their efforts to restrict and charge Africans for access to forest resources.”²⁴ But men and women had their own understandings of “customary” practices and “critically engaged with colonial restrictions.”²⁵ However, the gendered division of labour was never hard and fast but fuel wood laws rejected this.²⁶

In the 1930s forest access became more and more restricted and conservation discourse, which interpreted Africans relationship with natural resources as reckless, particularly

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Tropp, ‘Chapter Two: Environmental Entitlements in the New Colonial Order, 1888-c. 1905.’ in *Natures of Colonial Change: Environmental Relations in the Making of the Transkei*, 60.

²² Ibid., 80

²³ Tropp, ‘Introduction: Colonial and Environmental Histories, Past and Present’, in *Natures of Colonial Change: Environmental Relations in the Making of the Transkei*, 12.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Tropp, ‘Chapter Two: Environmental Entitlements in the New Colonial Order, 1888-c. 1905’, in *Natures of Colonial Change: Environmental Relations in the Making of the Transkei*, 80.

targeted women's forest use.²⁷ Tropp describes how women resisted and negotiated these restrictions:

“Even as Africans in the Transkei faced an increasingly authoritarian and bureaucratic state in the early twentieth century – with greater influence over local environments, and growing interest in reducing popular forest rights and intervening in women's environmental practices in particular – men and women in many locales continued to negotiate and reshape the meaning of entitlements in ways they could most effectively control, whether selectively harvesting particular tree types or reorganizing wood collection practices.”²⁸

Tropp's work focuses on a particular locale in the Tsolo district in the former Transkei, but his story is part of the Transkei's historical narrative. Broadly he claims that Mpondoland was the least affected by restricted forest access.²⁹ However, he acknowledges that the Mpondoland general council in 1916 was frustrated with conservation authorities: “Chief Mangala of Libode district complained that 'all the forests were taken away from the natives, not a stick was left.’”³⁰

The sociological and anthropological studies such as Palmer, Herman and Fay's work on the Dwesa-Cwebe Nature Reserve which is south of Hluleka, and Thembela Kepe's work on the Mkambathi Nature Reserve, situated to the north, also throws light on conservation in Mpondoland. While each Nature Reserve has its own unique history and relationship with the community that surrounds it, I was able to establish similarities between these areas. Dwesa-Cwebe, Hluleka and Mkambathi share a history of environmental management that began and quickly increased from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. All three nature reserves were established in the late 1970s resulting in exclusion from resources, and all three communities share a dependence on both marine and terrestrial natural resources. All three nature reserves have a history of resistance by local communities surrounding them, and they have marine protected areas restricting people's access to marine resources.

Derick Fay, Herman Timmermans & Robin Palmer's research examines the history of environmental management in Dwesa-Cwebe and traces the progression of state measures

²⁷ Tropp, “Chapter Three: Shifting Terrains of Wood Access in the Early 20th Century, 1903-1930s”, in *Natures of Colonial Change: Environmental Relations in the Making of the Transkei*, 85.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 89

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 97

³⁰ *Ibid.*

implemented to control the ways in which people used their natural resources from the late 19th century until the present. The authors explore how the relationship between the community and nature conservation officials has changed over time, describing it as “a relationship based on contestation which has changed to co-operation in recent years.”³¹ Of particular interest to me was their work on forests and the establishment of the nature reserve. Like Tropp and Beinart, Fay (et al), explores the “arrival of various groups of ‘outsiders’ in the late 19th century”³² such as the Forest Department (FD) and the Native Affairs Department (NAD), but also includes early recreational visitors to the coast.³³ They also explore the beginnings of marine conservation in this region. Their book traces the intensification of environmental control and restrictions that came with the apartheid government in the late 1940s “culminating locally in protest action in 1994.”³⁴

Fay (et al’s) work in Dwesa-Cwebe covers all state measures of conservation such as forests, restrictions on game hunting, protection of the coastline and restrictions on agriculture and livestock.³⁵ The authors identify those who live near the nature reserve as “frontline communities” because of their complex relationship with conservation, and refer to all those who inhabit these ‘FC’s’ as residents.³⁶ This term grouped men and women into one category. Consequently the gendered differences in how people negotiated, or resisted conservation are not explored, and the gender relations within the community are not explicit. There are, however, chapters on livelihoods, which go into detail on men and women’s work such as firewood collection, agriculture, livestock keeping, marine resource collecting, hunting etc. which allows one to see how conservation has affected gendered livelihood roles.

Due to its close geographic proximity to the Hluleka Nature Reserve, Thembele Kepe’s work on the Mkambathi Nature Reserve is particularly useful. Communities at both Mkambathi and Hluleka share a long and complex relationship with conservation, and Kepe explores this relationship in great detail.³⁷ The objective of his study was to explore the “interaction

³¹ R. Palmer, T. Herman and D. Fay, eds., 'Introduction', in *From Conflict to Negotiation: Nature-Based Development on the South African Wild Coast*, xxii

³² R. Palmer, T. Herman and D. Fay, eds., *From Conflict to Negotiation: Nature-Based Development on the South African Wild Coast* (Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria, 2001), 51.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ R. Palmer, T. Herman and D. Fay, eds., 'Introduction', in *From Conflict to Negotiation: Nature-Based Development on the South African Wild Coast*, xxii.

³⁵ Ibid., 72.

³⁶ Ibid., xviii

³⁷ See Kepe's work on the establishment of the Mkambathi Nature Reserve in the 1970s in T. Kepe, 'Chapter 2: History of rural production, land use and environmental change', in *Environmental entitlements in*

between livelihoods, social institutions and environmental change in areas along the Wild Coast.”³⁸ Kepe traces the history of land use and environmental change in the communal area as well as in the Nature Reserve, and examines how these have affected livelihoods of local residents.³⁹ He also analyses the “different institutions that mediate rural people’s use of their natural environment.”⁴⁰

Of central importance to my research is Kepe’s thorough and detailed exploration of men’s and women’s livelihoods at Mkambathi. Kepe examines women’s work such as fuel wood collection,⁴¹ beer brewing,⁴² thatch grass collection,⁴³ medicinal plant collection,⁴⁴ marine resource collection,⁴⁵ crop production,⁴⁶ wild edible leaves (imifino) collection⁴⁷ and women’s craftwork.⁴⁸ The rich data he was able to collect highlights the intricate details of women’s daily livelihoods and chores, the struggles and challenges they have faced as well as their resistance or adaption to conservation.

Several studies have emerged recently on small communities that have lost land and fishing rights to conservation and the states implementation of marine protected areas.⁴⁹ This work highlights the importance of indigenous knowledge in understanding local conservation practise’s, and evaluates the impact marine protected areas have on people’s lives.⁵⁰ Apart

Mkambati: livelihoods, social institutions and environmental change on the wild coast of the Eastern Cape, (Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies, School of Government, University of the Western Cape, 1997), 19.

³⁸ Kepe, 'Chapter 1: Introduction.', in *Environmental entitlements in Mkambati: livelihoods, social institutions and environmental change on the wild coast of the Eastern Cape*

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Kepe, 'Chapter 2: History of rural production, land use and environmental change', in *Environmental entitlements in Mkambati: livelihoods, social institutions and environmental change on the wild coast of the Eastern Cape*, 19.

⁴² Kepe, 'Chapter 3: Rural Livelihoods', in *Environmental entitlements in Mkambati: livelihoods, social institutions and environmental change on the wild coast of the Eastern Cape*, 34.

⁴³ Kepe, 'Chapter 4: Case Studies of environmental entitlements', in *Environmental entitlements in Mkambati: livelihoods, social institutions and environmental change on the wild coast of the Eastern Cape*, 43.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 45.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 51.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 62.

⁴⁷ Kepe, 'Grassland Vegetation and Rural Livelihoods: A Case Study of Resource Value and Social Dynamics on the Wild Coast, South Africa,' PhD thesis, (University of Western Cape, 2002), 103-125.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 197-209.

⁴⁹ M. Sowman, M. Hauck, L. van Sittert, J. Sunde, 'Marine Protected Area Management in South Africa: New Policies, Old Paradigms', *Environmental Management*, April 2011, Volume: 47, Issue: 4, 579.

⁵⁰ See J. Sunde, and M. Isaacs, 'Marine Conservation and Coastal Communities: Who Carries the Costs? A Study of Marine Protected Areas and Their Impact on Traditional Small-scale Fishing Communities in South Africa.' *International Collective in Support of Fishworkers*, (ICSF, Chennai, India, 2008)., S. Raemaekers, 'Rethinking South Africa’s Small-scale Fisheries Management Paradigm and Governance Approach: Evidence

from van Sittert's historical work on the west coast of South Africa,⁵¹ there is limited historical perspective in these studies.⁵² The aim of my research is to develop the trend of research into men and women's livelihoods and their relationship to conservation measures which have challenged livelihood practices over time.

A brief history of Mpondoland and the Ngqeleni District

In pre-colonial times the Mpondo Kingdom was one of the four kingdoms in Eastern Cape.⁵³ It was strengthened by their greatest king Faku, who ruled for fifty years before 1820 until his death in 1867. Faku accommodated and absorbed smaller chiefdoms who were exiled from Shaka Zulus Mfecane.⁵⁴ Faku was astute in his dealings with colonial agents and managed to appease colonial officials, while at the same time maintain Mpondo independence.⁵⁵ At the height of his reign his kingdom became "fractured along the line of the Mzimvubu River."⁵⁶ The two polities of Western and Eastern Mpondoland were "related by culture and history but remained politically distinct."⁵⁷ The division came when Faku's son Ndamase, clashed with his Great son Mqikela. Ndamase was twenty years older and had gained a good reputation from fighting in Faku's wars, but Mqikela was the successor to Faku's throne. The friction was so bad that Ndamase left home and crossed the Mzimvubu River to set up a new chieftaincy.⁵⁸ He was already familiar with the two important branches of the royal family, the amaTshomane and the amaKhonjwayo who were established there.⁵⁹ Ndamase expanded

from the Eastern Cape', PhD thesis, Department of Ichthyology and Fisheries Science, Rhodes University, Grahamstown South Africa, 2009, and M. Hauck, 'Rethinking small-scale fisheries compliance: from criminal justice to social justice.', PhD thesis, University of Cape Town, South Africa, 2009.

⁵¹ See L. van Sittert, 'The tyranny of the past: why local histories matter in the South African fisheries.' *Ocean and Coastal Management* 46, 2003: 199–219.

⁵² See as an example Frank Matose, 'Knowledge, power, livelihoods and commons practices in Dwesa-Cwebe, South Africa', *Development Southern Africa*, 26:4, (2009), 627 — 637, and S. Kobokana, 'Reconciling Poverty Reduction and Biodiversity Conservation: The Case of Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) In Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves, South Africa', MA thesis in Land and Agrarian Studies, (2007).

⁵³ T. J. Stapleton, *Faku: Rulership and Colonialism in the Mpondo Kingdom (c.1780-1867)*, (Wilfred Laurier University Press, Waterloo, Ontario Canada, 2001).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Stapleton, *Faku: Rulership and Colonialism in the Mpondo Kingdom (c.1780-1867)* and F. Hendricks and J. Peires, 'All Quiet on the Western Front: Nyandeni Acquiescence in the Mpondoland Revolt', in T. Kepe and L. Ntsebeza, eds., *Rural Resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo Revolts after Fifty Years* (UCT Press, 2012), 117.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

the Mpondo territory at the expense of small independent chiefdoms and fought against the resistant amaKhonjwayo.⁶⁰ While east and west remained separate politically, when it came to matters affecting Mpondoland as a whole, “such as white encroachment the two houses worked together.”⁶¹

In the 1870s all African groups in the Transkei, except the Mpondo, signed treaties with the Cape and accepted white magistrates.⁶² But the British wanted control of all the ports along the African coast, including the Mzimvubu mouth.⁶³ Hammond-Tooke describes how “this was probably inevitable as it was now the only independent territory between the Cape and Natal and the anomaly offended the sense of political tidiness of Cecil John Rhodes, who was prime minister of the Cape at the time.”⁶⁴ Officials offered Ndamase a large sum of money twice for colonial control over Western Mpondoland which he refused. After his death, they found Nqwiliso much easier to convince.⁶⁵ “The two white officials who implemented the annexation on behalf of the Cape Prime minister Cecil Rhodes did not even attempt to justify their action but simply informed Sigcawu (Mqikela’s successor) that a decision had definitely been taken by the government. Sigcawu was left with no option but to submit.”⁶⁶ Sigcawu (East) and Nqwiliso (West) signed at different times and were placed under the control of different Magistrates. East Mpondoland under the Chief Magistrate of Griqualand in Kokstad, while Western Mpondoland was placed under the Chief Magistrate of Transkei in Mthatha.

Mpondoland was unique in that unlike other Transkeian territories, which were part of the council system where magistrates ruled through appointed headmen without the help or hindrance of a paramount chief, in Mpondoland the paramount's “enjoyed direct access to the chief magistrate”.⁶⁷ Officials saw the value in a strong paramount in implementing colonial rule.⁶⁸ However, the price for this privilege was “ultimate obedience.”⁶⁹ In 1911 Western

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Stapleton, *Faku: Rulership and Colonialism in the Mpondo Kingdom (c.1780-1867)*, 131.

⁶³ Ibid., 132.

⁶⁴ Hammond-Tooke, *Command or Consensus: The Development of the Transkeian Local Government*, 23.

⁶⁵ Hendricks and Peires, ‘All Quiet on the Western Front: Nyandeni Acquiescence in the Mpondoland Revolt’, 119

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 120.

⁶⁸ Beinart, *The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930*, 111

⁶⁹ Hendricks and Peires, ‘All Quiet on the Western Front: Nyandeni Acquiescence in the Mpondoland Revolt’, 120

Mpondoland accepted the council system.⁷⁰ The Mpondoland council, from 1 July 1927 was extended to include Eastern Mpondoland. The Mpondoland General Council consisted of the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories as presiding officer, the magistrates of seven districts and twenty-three councillors including the two Paramount Chiefs of East and West Mpondoland. The annual meetings were held at Port St John's.⁷¹ In the rural locations headmen still retained some form of control and had duties and responsibilities,⁷² but could only make recommendations to the magistrate, who had final authority. However, in daily matters and those pertaining to land allocations, the magistrate rarely deviated from the headman's recommendations.⁷³

Ngqeleni formed part of the Western Mpondoland magisterial districts along with Libode and the very small Port St John's. During the 1920s its paramount was Chief Victor Poto Ndamase who ruled from 1918 until 1972. Compared to East Mpondoland⁷⁴ which experienced fierce resistance to colonial rule, Western Mpondoland had a history of collaboration with colonial authorities.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ The council system otherwise known as 'Bunga' was the United Transkeian Territories General Council. This was the system of administration in the Transkeian territories. Hammond-Tooke, W.D (1975), *Command or Consensus: The Development of the Transkeian Local Government*, 1.

⁷¹ Hammond-Tooke, *Command or Consensus The Development of the Transkeian Local Government*, 90.

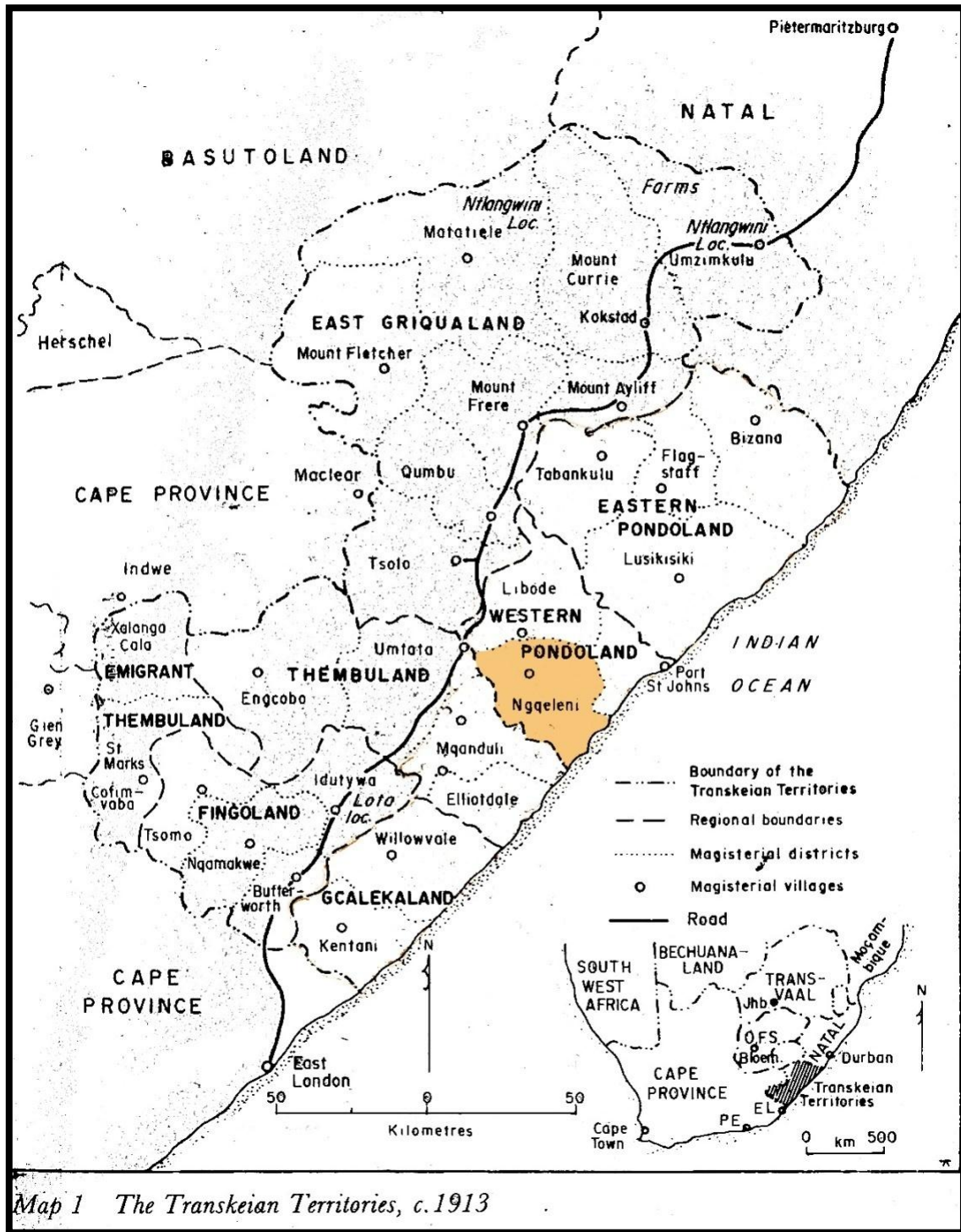
⁷² See Hammond-Tooke's description of headmen's roles and relationship with his people in *Command or Consensus The Development of the Transkeian Local Government*, 126-140.

⁷³ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*.

⁷⁴ East Pondoland is comprised of Mbizana, Ntabankhulu, Flagstaff and Lusikisiki and is much bigger than Western Pondoland

⁷⁵ Hendricks and Peires, 'All Quiet on the Western Front: Nyandeni Acquiescence in the Mpondoland Revolt', 120.

Map 1: Magisterial District of Ngqeleni in the Transkei, c.1913



Source: W. Beinart and C. Bundy, *C. Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa: Politics and Popular Movements in the Transkei and Eastern Cape 1890-1930*, xxvi.

The communities surrounding the Hluleka farm lived in small villages situated in the coastal area of the Ngqeleni magisterial district of Western Mpondoland. The villages formed part of the Konjwayo Tribal authority.⁷⁶ The terrain is hilly “rising from about 30 to 100 metres at the coast, to about 700 metres towards the interior, the coastal belt is a recently uplifted plateau deeply carved by rivers into great gorges opening to the sea.”⁷⁷ In the 1920s and 1930s, homesteads could be seen scattered along the hills as much anything from a mile to fifty miles apart.⁷⁸ Hunters’ bird’s eye view captures the scene: “a crowd of little hills tumble down to the sea, and grassy ridges, emerging like islands out of the sea mist which fills the valleys at dawn, are covered with round brown huts.”⁷⁹

In 1921 40306 African people lived in Ngqeleni, along with 225 Europeans and 315 Coloureds.⁸⁰ During the 1920s and 1930 Ngqeleni and other districts of Mpondoland was undergoing social and economic changes. Exploration of the Ngqeleni district and the community of Hluleka provide a window onto these changes. Central to the experiences in this area was a piece of land known as *Strachan’s Grant*. In 1860 William Strachan (known as Ubili) was granted land for his part in saving the Konjwayo clan from Mpondo attack. Strachan negotiated a truce between the amaKhonjwayo and the AmaMpondo. As a gift Chief Gwadiso of the Khonjwayo granted him the land now known as Hluleka. In total it was approximately 1040 hectares along the coast from the Umtakaty River in the south to the Umnenu River in the north and was known as *Strachan’s Grant*.⁸¹ When Mpondoland was annexed the government surveyed all holdings belonging to Europeans and reduced *Strachan’s Grant*,⁸² to approximately 253.27 morgen. The Department of Forests and the executors of the then late William Strachan struggled over the boundaries of the state forest.⁸³

⁷⁶ The Konjwayo Tribal authority still rules today over fifteen villages. However, according to archival records, from the 1920s the Konjwayo Tribal authority included locations namely Nkanunu, Lucingweni (closest to Hluleka), Noxava, Mpoza, Mgojweni, Hamsini, Mamolweni, Lower Ndundgunyeni, Ntsimbini, Gazini and Mankosi.

⁷⁷ Hammond-Tooke, *Command or Consensus: The Development of the Transkeian Local Government*, 10.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 16.

⁸⁰ Cape Town Archives Repository (KAB), Department of Native Affairs, District Administration: General Reports and Returns n.2/16/5, n. 1/15/6 report for 1939.

⁸¹ *Integrated Reserve Management Plan- Strategic Management Plan for the Hluleka Nature Reserve*, (Eastern Cape Parks Board, 2006), 1.

⁸² B. Holt, 'The Strachan's of Umtata' in *Where Rainbirds Call: A Record of the Transkei* (Howard Timmins Cape Town, 1972), 86.

⁸³ KAB, Department of Native Affairs: Lease and sale of crown land, (European land matters), correspondence relating to dispute of forest boundaries, History of Strachan's grant 29th October 1925 “Title: Strachan's grant Hluleka” and KAB, Department of Native Affairs: Forests and Plantations n10/1/2, “Farms”.

Ubili was also renowned for his opposition to witchcraft. After a series of torturous killings of those accused of witch craft, he appealed to Nqwiliso to allow exiled witches to take refuge on his farm. Nqwiliso agreed and Ubili became “the father of hundreds of hapless people who fled to him for refuge.”⁸⁴ In June 2011 I met old men and women who remembered Ubili. Fanelekile Nkosine remembers him as a child with good memories. For example, he explained that when Ubili caught children stealing fruit from his trees he would speak to the parents but urged them not to beat their child.⁸⁵ After Strachan’s death, the land was sold to a Johannesburg stock broker named Leonard Heard and his wife Mona in 1927. The Heard’s renamed *Strachan’s Grant* to the *Hluleka Farm*.⁸⁶

Over the next few years Mr L.G. Heard negotiated with the government to have the boundaries extended to the size of the present-day nature reserve. He began breeding Afrikaner cattle and later introduced a Hereford strain. Farming was a hobby rather than a business, and he maintained that people living near his farm stood to gain as he would sell the livestock to them at very reasonable prices. This improved the stock of the surrounding cattle owners.⁸⁷ The older people at Hluleka remember the Heard’s fondly and had a good relationship with the family. Men and women had free access to pass through the farm to gain access to the coast and natural resources. Older fishermen remember being able to camp at Hluleka to go fishing. Mrs Heard would even bring them food.⁸⁸

“We had free access to the land in the Reserve then and the Heard’s employed people from the community on their farm, the people working for Mr Heard did not have to go to the mines because they were happy with their jobs. Some of the young men were employed in his cottages and he gave out milk for free to the community from the

⁸⁴ Holt, ‘The Strachan’s of Umtata’ in *Where Rainbirds Call: A Record of the Transkei*, 87.

⁸⁵ Oral history interview with Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁸⁶ C. Dennison, ‘Billy Strachan ‘The Peacemaker’’ in *A Brief History of the Wild Coast*, (Brevitas publishers, 2008), 69.

⁸⁷ Kobokana, ‘Reconciling Poverty Reduction and Biodiversity Conservation: The Case of Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) In Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves, South Africa’, 46.

⁸⁸ Oral history interviews with Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011 and an oral history interview with Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

farms and sold some of his cattle to local people. This period was good because we could benefit from the resources along the entire coast.”⁸⁹

The Native Land Act of 1913 declared certain areas to be reserved for Africans only, and white people who had farms in “Native Areas” had to move. In 1935 the Heard's faced this possibility. Mr Heard pleaded with the magistrate to let him keep his farm on the grounds that the farm had been given as a gift.

“This property was a gift to my predecessor, Strachan, by the Natives themselves, in reward for great services rendered. Strachan was practically the tribe’s advisor in chief for years before the British annexation, and was given this ground before Annexation. What similar cases exist in the Transkei?”⁹⁰

Heard pleaded for the right to keep his land based on the symbiotic relationships he had with the surrounding community and compared his relationship with that of the nearby trader to make his case.

“I am of more use to the Natives than any trader. I use purebred bulls and the Natives clamour for the progeny. I have for instance only two of last year’s crops left! I give steady employment to the surrounding Natives and never have less than ten boys on the farm. The place is most popular with them and I am always inundated with applications for work. What trader can give these benefits to the Natives? He employs possibly two boys and for the rest takes the Natives money. When they are in financial difficulties the Natives don’t go to the trader who bleeds them but comes to me.”⁹¹

After Mr Heard died, people remember a continued relationship with Mrs Heard, one older woman at Hluleka remembers how as children they would sing and dance for her at Christmas and she would give them gifts.⁹² The Hluleka Farm was finally sold to the Transkei government in 1971 when Mona Heard passed away.

⁸⁹ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁹⁰ KAB, Department of Native Affairs: Lease and Sale of Crown Land: European Farm Matters. Letter from Mr Heard to Mr Smit, 12.6.1935.

⁹¹ Ibid.

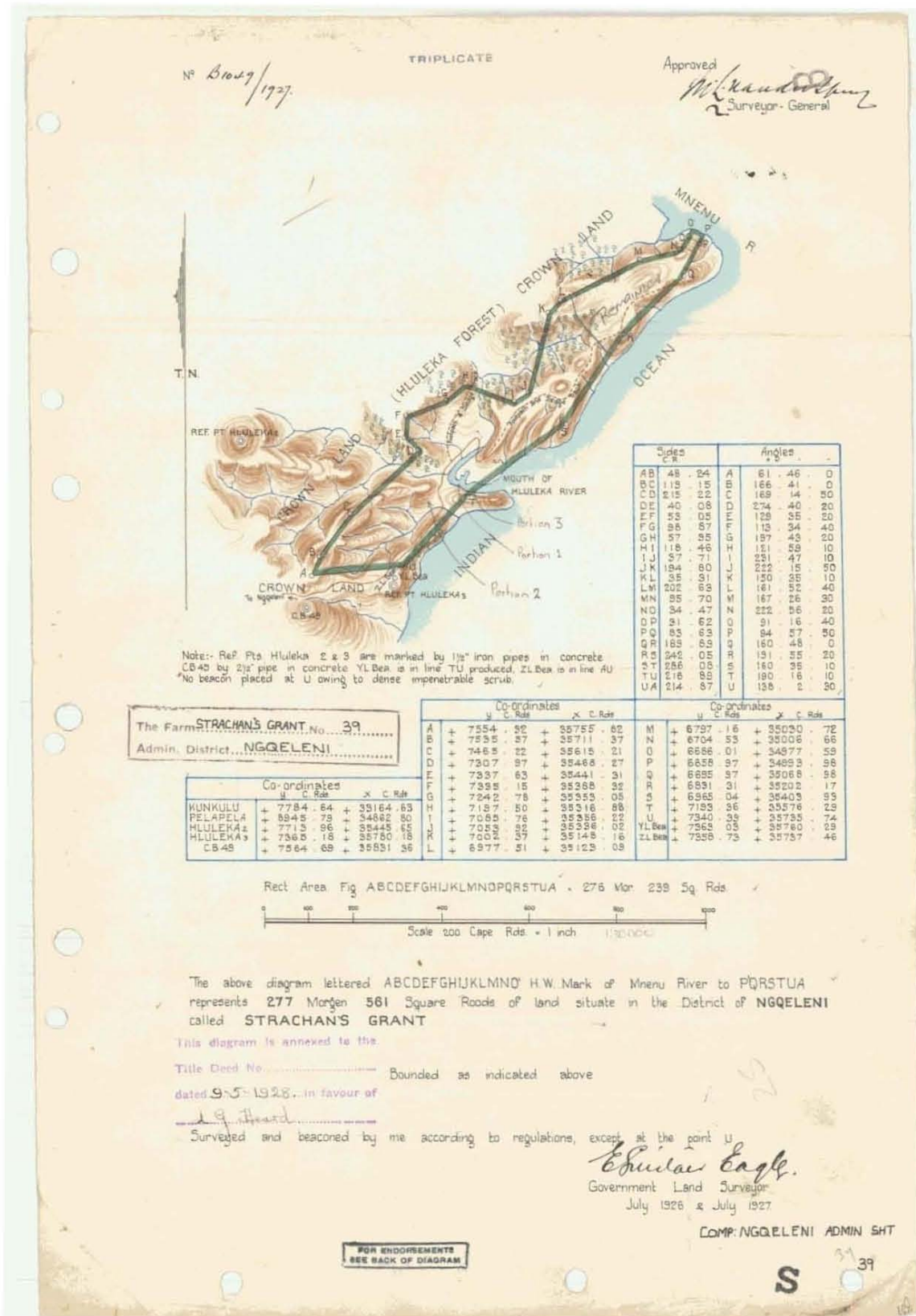
⁹² Oral history interview with Patience Songqaba and her mother Nosayze Songuwaba, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

In my attempt to piece together the history of Hluleka I was presented with the challenge of conflicting historical narratives on the Strachan's and the Heard's. Basil Holt, Clive Dennison and oral history interviews present brief histories of these families, and describe the interactions between the communities and the families as symbiotic. However, this is challenged by the historical narrative presented by the Department of Land Affairs Memorandum of the land claim that was settled in 2009. This document reveals a history in which the Heard family encroached on peoples land and inhibited the community's access to grazing areas.⁹³ This thesis utilises a combination of written sources, archival material and oral testimony to attempt to construct as accurate a story as possible. However, this narrative is but one of many in the history of Hluleka.

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⁹³ Department of Land Affairs: Memorandum submission in terms of section 42D Read with section 14 (3) of the restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994) ACT No. 22 of 1994 as amended for finalising the matter of the Hluleka Community concerning the land known as Hluleka.

Map 2: Boundaries of Strachan's Grant when it was sold to L.G Heard, c.1927



Source: Department of the Chief Surveyor Generals Office, Cape Town.

Sources and the challenge of gendered history

In seeking to understand conservation in Ngqeleni from the 1920s I drew on the Cape Town Archive Repository's Department of Native Affairs Files for Ngqeleni from the years 1920-1963, after which these records end. Here I read annual reports, agricultural reports, reports from the Native Commissioner, minutes of meetings with headmen and local residents from various locations, forest conservation schemes and any information that hinted to state control of land, livestock and natural resources. These records gave insight into the motivations and ideologies in official thought and action. However, as other historians of gender have experienced,⁹⁴ women are often invisible in archival records. All records are written by male government officials, and people are grouped into a single category devoid of gender. As all men and women were grouped together as "natives", one can see how state conservation initiatives were ignorant of men and women's differing livelihoods and dependence on natural resources. In an attempt to locate women's voices in archival records I was drawn to land dispute and land complaint files. Although these records were not always directly related to conservation, they offered the opportunity to read letters written, or statements given, by women. These records gave me some understanding of gender relations in Ngqeleni, and women's precarious relationship to land and resources.

My greatest challenge was accessing archival records after 1963. During the time of my research important records from the Mthatha archives were unavailable due to building renovations. The lack of availability of archival records during this research meant that the period from 1963 relies mainly on oral histories; however, this adds richness to the narrative that one cannot glean from official records. As the term itself implies, oral history is a specific form of discourse: history evokes a narrative of the past, and oral indicates a medium of expression.⁹⁵ Life stories are "reconstructions of a person's experiences, remembered and told at a particular point in their lives, to a particular researcher/audience and for a particular purpose: all of which will have a bearing on how the stories are told, which stories are told, and how they are presented or interpreted."⁹⁶ Portelli describes how "much more than written

⁹⁴ In her book *Gender and the Making of a South African Bantustan: A Social History of the Ciskei 1945-1959*, Mager recalls the "often frustrating and lonely experience" of searching for female voices in archival records, 10.

⁹⁵ A. Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia, Oral History and Art of Dialogue* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 3.

⁹⁶ D. M. Kakuru, and G. G. Paradza, (2007), quoting K. Etherington, in 'Reflections on the use of the life history method in researching rural African women: field experiences from Uganda and Zimbabwe', *Gender & Development* Vol. 15, No. 2, (2006), 288.

documents, which frequently carry the impersonal aura of the institutions by which they are issued, oral sources involve the entire account of their own subjectivity.”⁹⁷ Oral history is different from other forms of historical research because it “tells us less about events than about their meaning.”⁹⁸ Additionally, life stories help to put individuals’ experiences in the context of a wider web of meanings, thereby revealing the links between individual or group problems. During this research three field trips were undertaken to Hluleka. Sixteen oral history interviews were recorded with 21 men and women and four group interviews. Field work also involved group meetings, casual conversations and the observation of men and women as they collected marine resources and fished.

Conducting field work and oral histories with people who speak a language different to my own presented various challenges. All respondents spoke isiXhosa and all interviews had to be conducted with the help of a research assistant. This inhibited me from moving beyond a formal interview environment and into a more relaxed conversation, and limited my understanding and interpreting of subtleties and nuances. In order to conduct the best interview possible I had to learn to surrender to the agency and authority of the interpreter and ensure that they could lead the interview process. This allowed for a more relaxed environment. Besides translation, women in particular often felt insecure about the significance of their life stories. Many felt they had little to offer and recommended that I spoke to men. One woman said that she felt she did not have enough to contribute to the discussion because she had never been to school.

During my research I found group interviews to be the most rewarding and enriching. Given that the population of Hluleka is very small, most people shared open and obvious bonds with their neighbours. Group interviews allowed men and women to speak more freely, and argue over historical moments. In group interviews with women only, women were more confident to share personal experiences, especially since both researchers that assisted me were also female. The direct translation and transcription of oral histories and group interviews after my field work allowed me to hear, for the first time, people’s personal stories without the assistance of a translator.

Another challenge in using oral testimony is the precarious nature of oral memory. All memory, whether short or long term, is stored through a process of selection, and oral

⁹⁷ A. Portelli, ‘What makes oral history different’, in R. Perks and A. Thomson, eds., *The Oral History Reader*, (London and New York, Routledge, 1998), 72.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 67.

histories are often remembered and retold under the conditions of current contexts. In Hluleka, the current issue of environmental entitlements is high and this had a significant impact on how people constructed and remembered their experience of conservation. Challenges also arose in trying to pin point specific time frames and events. Portelli argues that these supposed challenges are actually opportunities and that “the organization of the narrative reveals a great deal of the speaker’s relationships to their history.”⁹⁹ He describes how “oral sources are credible but with a different credibility. The importance of oral testimony may not lie in its adherence to fact, but rather in its departure from it, as imagination, symbolism, and desire emerge. Therefore, there are no ‘false’ oral sources.”¹⁰⁰ Likewise, Thompson and Slim argue that:

“Memory, whatever one’s age, is thus a continuing process of editing and selection, often influenced by hindsight. These characteristics mean that we should never assume the information produced from memory to be unadulterated fact. Memory does contain facts, but as they are remembered – which may not be exactly as they happened. In this sense, memory is more a creative than a mechanical act.”¹⁰¹

Further, Samuel and Thompson argue that, “As soon as we recognize the value of the subjective in individual testimonies, we challenge the accepted categories of history. We reintroduce the emotionality, the fears and fantasies carried by the metaphors of memory.”¹⁰² Collective and individual memories of the creation of the Hluleka Nature Reserves illustrate how conservation was perceived and understood by this coastal community. Memories highlighted how present relationships with conservation are embedded in the community’s past experiences.

The ways in which people constructed their histories with conservation allowed me to understand how people perceived and experienced conservation and how this has changed over time. Differing memories of men and women illustrate the intricate, gendered structure of rural life, enabling this narrative to demonstrate how livelihoods have been impacted and shaped by conservation and how reactions to conservation were experienced and are now remembered in gendered ways.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 68

¹⁰¹ N. Slim and P. Thompson, ‘In their own words: The strengths and weaknesses of oral testimony’, in *Listening for change, Oral Testimony and Development*, (London: Panos Publication, 1993), 141.

¹⁰² R. Samuel and P. Thompson, eds., ‘Introduction’, in *the Myths We Live By*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), 2.

Structure of thesis

The organisation is both chronological and thematic. Chapter one begins in 1920s Mpondoland, in locations in the Ngqeleni district, and more specifically, the coastal villages surrounding Hluleka. It focuses on the daily lives of the men and women who lived in these locations. This chapter covers the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s and discusses how land shortages impacted men and women in Ngqeleni. It attempts to understand how gender relations shaped access to and control over land and resources. Land disputes and complaints in these decades reveal how different categories of men and women were more vulnerable to losing land than others. This chapter attempts to uncover how gendered access to land impacted people's dependence on resources. For example, while single women and widows were most vulnerable to losing land, women who were unable to plant crops were more reliant on marine and natural resources and more vulnerable to conservation measures.

Chapter two discusses conservation measures in the 1920s and 1930s, such as livestock improvement and monitoring, agricultural education and the reservation of forests. It draws attention to the nature of official thinking which perceived Africans' use of land and resources as reckless, and discusses how these ideas translated into policy and conservation measures. Attempts to teach people new farming methods did not account for the fact that most men were out of Ngqeleni working on the mines, leaving the heavy burden of subsistence agriculture on the shoulders of women. Despite the increase of conservation measures in the form of forest reserves and agricultural education, most women continued with their daily livelihood practices finding ways to negotiate around increasing forest restrictions.

During the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s fears regarding the degradation of soil materialised in the form of rehabilitation and betterment schemes. Chapter three discusses the intense increase in this form of conservation in Ngqeleni and examines how betterment was received, resisted or accepted in gendered ways. It argues that betterment greatly threatened men's livelihoods as livestock keeping habits were closely monitored and the reorganisation of locations resulted in men living far from their cattle. Betterment and rehabilitation in Ngqeleni impacted men's power position within the rural economy as power rested on the ability to accumulate livestock.

Chapter four discusses forest conservation in Ngqeleni from the 1940s to the 1970s. It examines official concerns over forest degradation and increasing restrictions on forest

access. It explores women's routine use of forest resources and examines how the state continued to control and restrict women's access to forests. It discusses how women resisted and negotiated forest conservation and argues that state conservation measures viewed women's forest usage as reckless. The chapter explores the creation of the Hluleka Nature Reserve and the beginnings of formal nature conservation. It shows that because the community had a symbiotic relationship with the previous owners of Hluleka and were able to exercise their rights over natural resources, they were unhappy when these rights were taken away.

Finally, chapter five discusses post-apartheid conservation by paying particular attention to the increase in marine conservation measures and fisheries management. It explores the state's conflicting aims of achieving conservation goals while at the same time readdressing the past injustices that conservation has caused. It discusses how, failure to recognize customary fishing and marine harvesting practices resembled past conservation initiatives and resulted in the further marginalisation of the community from the nature reserve. This chapter also discusses how the increase in marine conservation clashed with the increasing dependence communities had with marine resources.

In sum, this thesis seeks to illustrate how reactions to conservation have changed over time reflecting gender relations and the gendered division of labour. It aims *inter alia* to demonstrate how recent, top-down marine conservation is remarkably similar to earlier forms of conservation that were implemented in Ngqeleni.

Chapter One: Changing gender relations, land scarcity and livelihoods

By the 1920s, Ngqeleni faced increasing land shortages like other districts in Mpondoland and the rest of the Transkei. Land shortage Cousins argues was primarily due to an increase in the population and the state's curbs on urban migration.¹ Changing gender relations also affected who had access to land and resources. This chapter examines gendered livelihoods in Mpondoland and goes on to discuss land disputes involving widows, single women and women whose husbands as a window onto the pressures on land and land allocation. The chapter highlights how precarious women's livelihood strategies were becoming.

Livelihoods and the gendered division of labour in Ngqeleni

Gender relations in Mpondo society were shaped by polygamy. Each homestead or "*umzi*" was allotted to the senior male of the family. Here he lived with his wives, married sons and their wives and children. The huts were arranged in a specific order with a hut for the owner, a hut for his mother and separate huts for each of his wives and their children. Each woman in the *umzi* who had been married for more than a year or so had her own hut, and often also a store-hut. Marriage was polygamous and patrilocal; polygamy although widespread was not universal.²

By the early 1930s, homestead sizes became smaller, with an average *umzi* housing four to five adults and four children.³ Monica Hunter attributes this to the amaMpondo no longer needing the protection of larger homesteads,⁴ but Beinart claims that the change was due to an increase in migrant labour. Young men returning from the mines with money wanted to purchase cattle and form their own homesteads: "Homesteads which were traditionally under the thumb of the father were now under the thumb of the son."⁵

Inside each *umzi* were separate houses for each wife. Each house had its own property in cattle and the right to till certain fields. However, all members of the *umzi* worked together in

¹ Ben Cousins, 'Chapter Five: Characterising 'communal' tenure: nested systems and flexible boundaries', in Aninka Claasens and Ben Cousins, *Land Power and Custom: Controversies generation by South Africa's Communal Land Rights Act*, (UCT Press, 2008), 5.

² Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 16.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Beinart, *The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930*, 96.

gendered ways.⁶ At the end of every day men corralled livestock in a kraal in the middle of the *umzi*. Gardens and land for ploughing maize were some distance from the homestead in “valleys, on the banks of rivers and on the steep slopes of the valley walls.”⁷ The ridges and uplands were as far as possible kept for grazing.

The rules of access to arable land were changing. Hunter explains that “formerly a woman had the exclusive right to cultivate any area which she had once turned over, no matter how long it was kept lying fallow.”⁸ This right over certain land was inherited and the right only lapsed if all kin left the district.⁹ In the early decades of the 20th century there was no limit to the size and number of the fields a woman might cultivate, provided the land was available. When the head of the *umzi* wanted land they would ask the headman who would apply at the magistrate. The magistrate seldom deviated from the headman’s recommendation. Officially a man was entitled to one land (up to 8 acres) on payment of tax; for each of his wives he was allotted another land. The homestead head paid tax for his wives.¹⁰ Hut tax was meant to curb polygamy. Widows were allowed to cultivate the land they used while married but first claim was given to the son of the deceased.¹¹

Hut tax was intended to reinforce the gender order of amaMpondo society, at the same time as providing revenue for the state.¹² Only men were taxed for each hut they owned.¹³ While the government wanted to consolidate holdings, most people preferred to have two lands a distance apart so they could guarantee a better crop on at least one of their lands. Women had the permanent right to the crops produced on her field, but Hunter described how “after reaping, fields become part of the commonage, and everyone’s cattle are at liberty to feed on everyone else’s maize stalks.”¹⁴

In the coastal areas of Ngqeleni people grew maize, millet and sorghum as well as a variety of different kinds of pumpkins, calabashes and sweet potatoes. People also grew tobacco and hemp.¹⁵ Planting would begin in September on the coastal districts where rains came earlier

⁶ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 17.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 71

⁸ *Ibid.*, 113

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 113

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 113-114

¹² Redding, ‘Legal Minors and Social Children: Rural African Women and Taxation in the Transkei, South Africa’, 55.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁴ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 115

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 71

than in other parts of Mpondoland.¹⁶ Planting was always the work of women, but some men helped their wives where needed. Taboos on women working with cattle prevented women from planting when ploughs were introduced.¹⁷ Women were also responsible for weeding and harvesting. By Christmas, sorghum, pumpkin and green mealies from early patches were ready.¹⁸ Pumpkins were harvested daily by women, and for four months families would live on green food brought daily from the fields.¹⁹ Hunter described how:

“When I walked through the fields, there was, on the average one man to ten women at work. The women carry grain to the *umzi*, returning each evening after reaping with baskets full of cobs.”²⁰

Hunter observed that women took great pride in their fields,²¹ and during planting or growing seasons much of the conversation would be about their fields.²² Men discussed crops but it was not as important a subject as it was to women.²³ Women seldom worked alone, and the fields of an *umzi* were worked together “each being planted, weeded, and reaped in turn by all the women and men of the *umzi*.”²⁴ When a field needed to be harvested women would often put the word out to her neighbours that she needed to form an *amalima* (work party), here she would offer beer and meat and everyone would work together. A large part of a woman’s identity and attractiveness to men was how hard she could work to provide for her family, and Hunter explained that “to be lazy about field work is a disgrace to a woman.”²⁵

Social rules and customs divided labour tasks between men and women. Women were responsible for all the household chores as well as providing water, firewood and food for the family. Monica Hunter’s account of a day in the life of an average Mpondo wife in the early 1930s documents how women would get up early to fetch water from the nearest stream, and collect bundles of dry wood in the forests for the day. Women also collected grass to make thatch and to weave baskets.²⁶ “The drawing of water, collecting firewood, and cooking are

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 74

¹⁸ Ibid., 84

¹⁹ Ibid., 85

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 92.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 97.

always done by women, except at feasts, when men cook their own meat, and when men are away from women.²⁷

From the 1940s through to the 1970s women continued to rely on a multitude of strategies to support their families. All women grew vegetables such as mealies, sweet potato, beans, and cabbage.²⁸ Some women earned a little bit of money selling baskets and mats made of dried grass.²⁹ However, men's migrant wages and livestock were an important source of wealth and security for families. Custom dictated that men were responsible for cattle, sheep and goats while women looked after pigs and chickens.³⁰ This made women dependent on their husband's ability to secure livestock ownership. Many men and women described growing up in households that owned a lot of livestock in the 1920s, and some had livestock in their married lives later.³¹ Most people recall eating meat in their diets but only occasionally.³² Those with a lot of chickens would slaughter more regularly while others would also slaughter pigs.³³ Widows were vulnerable to losing livestock. For example Mangcitshane Silosini's father died when she was young so her family did not have livestock. Later when she married and had a family, they would milk the cows and give her children sour milk. When her husband passed away, his first wife (whom he had split from many years previously) came with police and took all the cows because she claimed her husband's first child was the rightful heir.³⁴

For generations men and women historically relied on shell fish collection and fishing, especially in lean times. Monica Hunter described how "coastal people are extremely fond of fish, some even preferring it to meat. Most people living inland will not touch it, even when it

²⁷ Ibid., 104

²⁸ Group interviews with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012., group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego, and an individual oral history interviews with women at Hluleka during May and June 2011, all conducted by Leila Emdon and translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Oral history interview with Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

³¹ Oral history interviews conducted with men and women at Hluleka, May-June 2011 by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

³² Ibid.

³³ Group interview with 8 young men and women (aged between 18 and 35 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

³⁴ Oral history interview with Mangcitshane Silosini, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

is offered to them.”³⁵ We see evidence of this in 1912 when Mpondoland experienced a crisis when East Coast fever killed most of their cows and severely hampered ploughing.³⁶ The state was reluctant to intervene in the famine crisis declaring that as far as possible African areas should be self-supporting.³⁷ By the mid-1920s Ngqeleni had recovered from hunger³⁸ but crops were still vulnerable to dry years and even locust infestations.³⁹ In the coastal areas of Western Mpondoland, men and more particularly women, relied on sea food for survival in these vulnerable periods. A letter from the magistrate of Ngqeleni in 1935 to the chief magistrate of Umtata, described how “the shellfish gathered on this coast greatly augment the natives food supplies in times of famine.”⁴⁰

“If there was poverty we would go to the sea and collect mussels and you would come back with mussels this big and we would just eat them then drink water and sleep even without maize”⁴¹

Women at Hluleka recall going with their mothers to collect mussels from a young age.⁴² Some said that girls would usually accompany their mothers from the age of about eight years.⁴³ Women would usually go in groups and it was a social and fun event.⁴⁴ They remember their mothers using the same tools that they use to get the mussels off the rocks;

³⁵ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 96.

³⁶ Beinart, ‘Chapter Three: Rural production and the South African state, 1911-1930’ in *The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930*, 71.

³⁷ Beinart, ‘Chapter Three: Rural production and the South African state, 1911-1930’ in *The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930*, 73.

³⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Minutes of proceedings: Libode general council n.29/13/6 Annual Reports for year 1926, Treasurers report: Report on demonstration work in Western Pondoland

³⁹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Crop Reports: 1929-1946, Ngqeleni 15th May 1935. Report describes how locust problem in coastal areas of Western Pondoland had been solved by late 1930s, however, the crisis affected crops from the mid-1930s.

⁴⁰ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Protection of Fauna and Flora n. 3/6/3, “Protection of Game and Fish”, Letter to the magistrate of Umtata from the magistrate of Ngqeleni titled “Protection of shell fish, cat fish and red bait”, 29th January 1935.

⁴¹ Oral history interview with Mercy Mtshazi, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁴² Group interviews with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012, and 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego, and oral history interviews conducted in May-June 2011 by Leila Emdon and Nosipho Kraai.

⁴³ Group interview with 8 young men and women (aged between 18 and 35 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁴⁴ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 96 and a group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

this was usually a crow bar or a spoon. Their mothers would show them what to do, what species to collect and how to leave the smaller ones behind to conserve them. Women would usually only take a limited amount from one rock and would not leave it bare.⁴⁵ They also collected octopus, oysters, red bait and peri-winkles, but mussels were the most popular.⁴⁶ Mussel collection took place when the tide was low. Women remembered their mothers going about twice a week, and would usually return with a big maize bag full of mussels.⁴⁷ Mussels were plentiful along the coast and there were no restrictions, women from Mdzwini would collect in a specific spot in the Hluleka farm.⁴⁸ When people were struggling they could rely on mussels as an important source of protein.⁴⁹ Women would boil the mussels and give them to their children to snack on or would serve boiled mussels with pap.⁵⁰ Everyone loved the taste of sea food and the fish which their fathers and brothers caught.⁵¹

Selling mussels to passing holiday makers was another way women could earn money: “My mother used to collect a lot of mussels and we would go and help her carry them back home and she would sell them and get money so that she could send us to school.”⁵² For some women, the small income they derived from selling shell fish was crucial in enabling their

⁴⁵ Oral history interview with Martha Mayethu and Doris, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego and Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁴⁶ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego and an oral history interviews conducted in Hluleka, May-June 2011 by Leila Emdon and Nosipho Kraai, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Oral history interviews with Mercy Mtshazi, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, and Ncedo Ntsasela, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego and group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁴⁹ Oral history interview with Mercy Mtshazi, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁵⁰ Oral history interview with Ncedo Ntsasela, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁵¹ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego and oral history interviews conducted in Hluleka, May-June 2011 by Leila Emdon and Nosipho Kraai, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁵² Oral history interview with Mercy Mtshazi, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

children to attend school and obtaining household necessities.⁵³ However, women remember there being bigger and many more mussels when they were young compared to today.⁵⁴

Older men recall how in the past, migrant labour was important but men only went to the mines for short periods of time.⁵⁵ By the 1920s and 1930s migrant labour was a common source of income for men in Mpondoland. In 1921, 19 000 men from Mpondoland were at labour centres and around 30, 000 by 1936. By 1921 13.5% of men were absent and by 1936 17%.⁵⁶ The agricultural burden was firmly upon the shoulders of women.⁵⁷ Usually men returned after a nine month contract and would spend the rest of the time ploughing and farming and would spend money earned on the mines buying cattle and livestock. Migrancy initiated change in the control of resources within families. Before migrancy cattle belonged to the homestead head, now there were tensions because young men could buy their own cattle to secure bride wealth and set up their own homestead. Men no longer needed to remain in large homesteads as access to wages enabled smaller homesteads to survive.⁵⁸ Tensions were high as homestead heads were responsible both for paying taxes and for all fines. Patriarchs needed access to their son's wages. But sons were not generally keen to hand over their wages. Migrant labour not only enabled men to acquire more stock but also changed the structure of homesteads and families. While young men had depended on their fathers and elders to secure bride wealth in the past, they could now buy their own cattle and set up their own homesteads.⁵⁹ For the first time "men had independent access to wives as opposed to fathers and elders".⁶⁰

⁵³ Oral history interview with Ncedo Ntsasela, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁵⁴ Oral history interviews with Mercy Mtshazi, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, Patience Songqaba and her mother Nosayze Songuwaba, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011, Martha Mayethu and Doris, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, and Mangcitshane Silosini, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego

⁵⁵ Oral history interviews with Nongondzo Gwadiso and Robin Gwadiso, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011, and Mpulolelo Siphango, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego

⁵⁶ Beinart, 'Chapter three: Rural production and the South African state, 1911-1930' in *The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930*, 95.

⁵⁷ G. Porter and K. Phillips-Howard, 'Agricultural Issues in the Former Homelands of South Africa: The Transkei', *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 24, No. 72, 1997, 186.

⁵⁸ Beinart, 'Chapter three: Rural production and the South African state, 1911-1930' in *The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930*, 96

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

Men at Hluleka regarded fishing as an important livelihood strategy dating back many generations. The oldest man I interviewed (101 years old) remembered his father fishing when he was young.⁶¹ Hunter observed how men would stand on the rocks with “line made of a bark (uluzhi) and trade hooks, but is said by the older men to be a technique learnt from Europeans, but spearing is properly the work of men.”⁶² Pronged spears were used for fishing, and men went in parties at night with torches made of sneeze wood.⁶³ Fishing was always an important livelihood for men at Hluleka and more was eaten during times of food shortages.⁶⁴

“We would all go together with the father carrying his fishing rod, my mother with her crowbar to go and collect mussels We would eat mussels to the point that we wouldn’t even cook anything else and sleep on them and leave them to eat the following day, as well as limpets, red bait, fish and crayfish. We were dependent on the sea, all of us and we were eating from it and we were getting full from it.”⁶⁵

In the past men would learn to fish when they were teenagers and would usually follow the lead of older men in the community.⁶⁶ They would learn in rivers before trying it in the sea.⁶⁷ They did not use traditional fishing rods but rather used a special type of branch with a sharpened piece of wire attached which was known as an umchekulo.⁶⁸ The rod was short so the men would have to wade into the shallows to throw their line. Compared to the present day men remember fish being more plentiful and also bigger in size.⁶⁹ Typical species caught

⁶¹ Oral history interview with Anonymous (101 year old man), Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁶² Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 96.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Oral history interview with Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁶⁶ Oral history interviews with Zolile Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.201, Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, and Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Oral history interview with Zolile Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.201, conducted by Leila Emdon and translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁶⁹ Oral history interview with Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego, and a group interviews with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012 and 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

were shad, cob, Steen bras and rock cod.⁷⁰ When their fathers came back from the mines they would fish.⁷¹

People's favourite fishing spot was a place which is inside the nature reserve today known as Nobhola.⁷² In the 1960s, white holiday makers who came to the coast introduced men to modern fishing rods. This changed fishing habits, as men could stand on the rocks and reach further into the sea.⁷³ While their fathers caught fish to feed their families, these men caught fish to eat as well as to sell to tourists. Besides being an important food source for their families, men saw fishing as a leisure activity they would do with their friends and family.⁷⁴ They remember missing the sea while working on the mines and would fish as much as they could when on their leave.⁷⁵ " ... because I am a person who is used to going to the sea, if my leave ends and I go (to the mines) without going to the sea I won't feel good."⁷⁶ This account of fishing is contradicted by the Chief who recollects that in the past men did not value fishing as they now claim.⁷⁷

⁷⁰ Oral history interview with Mpulolelo Siphango, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁷¹ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁷² Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁷³ Oral history interview with Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁷⁴ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁷⁵ Oral history interviews with men from Hluleka May-June 2011 conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego, and group interviews with men and women at Hluleka in May 2012, conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁷⁶ Oral history interview with Zolile Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon and translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁷⁷ Oral history interview with Nongondzo Gwadiso and Robin Gwadiso, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

Gender and disputes over land in the mid-20th century

In seeking to understand changing gendered livelihoods and access to resources in the 1940s and 1950s this section examines archival records of land disputes in the magisterial district files of the Ngqeleni district. It focuses on the complaints brought to the magistrate of Ngqeleni, disputes heard by the magistrate or, in some cases, the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian territories. These disputes draw attention to the reality that in a land crisis, it was often widowed or unmarried women who were rendered landless and who became more dependent on marine resources. These land disputes allow one to gain insight into changing gender relations, women's and men's changing relationships to land and resources and help us to understand how conservation was perceived in gendered ways.

Gender relations as imposed by the state derived from a codified interpretation of customary law,⁷⁸ the Native Administration Act 38 of 1927,⁷⁹ and the 1936 Land Act. Under the Native Administration Act, Africans were to be governed in a distinct domain legitimized by "custom" and chiefly rule, but under strict control from above.⁸⁰ The state's interpretation of "customary law" was not in line with pre-colonial and "living" customary law, but was a rigid interpretation of indigenous custom.⁸¹ This interpretation sought to firmly establish the already existing patriarchal dominance, Walker argues that:

"The interpretation of 'customary' law by colonial administrators and magistrates served to strengthen, not weaken, patriarchal controls over women and to freeze a level of subordination to male kin (father, husband, brother-in-law, son) that was unknown in pre-colonial societies ... this project involved not simply the imposition of Eurocentric views and prejudices on the part of colonisers, but also the collusion of male patriarchy within African society, who were anxious to shore up their diminishing control over female reproductive and productive power."⁸²

⁷⁸ Peter Delius, 'Chapter 9: Contested terrain: land rights and chiefly power in historical perspective', in Aninka Claasens and Ben Cousins, *Land Power and Custom: Controversies generation by South Africa's Communal Land Rights Act*, 223.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Cousins, 'Chapter Five: Characterising 'communal' tenure: nested systems and flexible boundaries', 124

⁸¹ Martin Chanock, *Law Custom and Social Order: The Colonial Experience in Malawi and Zambia*, (Cambridge University Press, 1985), and Tom Bennet, 'Chapter 6: 'Official' vs. 'living customary law: dilemmas of description and recognition', in Aninka Claasens and Ben Cousins, *Land Power and Custom: Controversies generation by South Africa's Communal Land Rights Act*.

⁸² Cousins, 'Chapter Five: Characterising 'communal' tenure: nested systems and flexible boundaries' quoting Cheryl Walker, 120.

This “Native Law” and “Custom” was recognized as the legal avenue for settling disputes. The Act also “instituted a segregated system of native commissioners’ courts, provided for the chiefs not to be authorised to hear civil cases and established an appeals procedure with the Magistrate.”⁸³

Following the Native Administration Act was the Native Land Act of 1936 which established the South African Native Trust – Crown land set aside for “native occupation.” This added “another 6 per cent to the 7 per cent of land area of South Africa which had been set aside for Africans.”⁸⁴ The Act limited the size of people’s allotments as well as women’s lands rights.⁸⁵ Chiefs and headmen were to undertake the task of allocation, agricultural officers to survey the boundaries of sites and fields, and magistrates to issue certificates of permission to occupy.⁸⁶

African reserves were becoming increasingly over populated. While some women lived independently others became more marginalised as land became scarcer.⁸⁷ For example, Single women, unless they could demonstrate “justifiable family obligations,” were ineligible to apply for land so they were often most vulnerable to losing land rights. Married men always received preferential access to land.⁸⁸ Unlike men, women could not easily escape to towns or turn to migrant labour as there was tight influx control and a shortage of jobs.⁸⁹ In order for a woman to secure access to land she needed to be under the guardianship of a man. This meant that some women put up with abusive relationships in order to secure access to important resources.⁹⁰

With the increase in migrant labour many husbands were deserting their wives, leaving women as the heads of households despite still being regarded as legal minors. Single men were allowed to be registered for tax, and therefore granted land, making marriage less urgent. “The state effectively taxed women without according them the status of taxpayers or

⁸³ Delius, ‘Chapter 9: Contested terrain: land rights and chiefly power in historical perspective’, 223-224.

⁸⁴ Cousins, ‘Chapter Five: Characterising ‘communal’ tenure: nested systems and flexible boundaries’, 112

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa* and Mager, ‘Chapter Three: The People Get Fenced’, in *Gender and the Making of a South African Bantustan: A Social History of the Ciskei 1945-1959*, 87.

⁸⁸ Delius, ‘Chapter 9: Contested terrain: land rights and chiefly power in historical perspective’, 226.

⁸⁹ Mager, ‘Chapter Three: The People Get Fenced’, in *Gender and the Making of a South African Bantustan: A Social History of the Ciskei 1945-1959*, 87.

⁹⁰ Shamin Meer, ed., *Women, Land and Authority: Perspectives from South Africa*, (David Phillip, 1997), 3.

adults. Women were still economically productive, but the tax regulations (as well as other laws) treated them as legal minors without defensible property rights.”⁹¹ Drought put more pressure on the land and on women. With increasing competition for arable land, state officials were looking for ways to disqualify claimants; women were increasingly denied access to land and became even more dependent on their male relatives for resources.⁹²

Many women were at the mercy of headmen and chiefs, and the colonial administration of communal tenure allowed considerable scope for corruption.⁹³ By the 1920s headmen demanded and received a fee for each piece of land they allotted and by the 1940s this practice had become widespread.⁹⁴ In Ngqeleni, some headmen’s corruption was brought before the magistrate. Residents from locations such as Mpoza and Lucingweni (at Hluleka) complained when their headmen demanded money or livestock for land, and some complained that their headman was taking away their gardens.⁹⁵

As demand for land increased in the locations of Ngqeleni, widows were frequently vulnerable to having their lands re-allotted.⁹⁶ Some widows would spend time at their families’ homes in different locations, only to come home to find the headman had re-allotted their sites to someone else.⁹⁷ However, the appeal system which granted widows land rights also gave them an opportunity to turn to the magistrate for help. Some widows wrote to the magistrate telling of their plight. One such example is from Maradebe Blesi, a widow from Godini location in Ngqeleni:

⁹² Ibid., 62.

⁹³ Ibid., 60

⁹³ Delius, ‘Chapter 9: Contested terrain: land rights and chiefly power in historical perspective’, 227.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n 2/21/2, Land complaints from Mpoza Location Ngqeleni, 1940, from Mr Msingali Mqolo, Lucingweni Location Ngqeleni, 1946 against Payiyi Gwadiso for taking money, peoples gardens and tobacco plantations from residents, Mtingji Ndolowa Lucingweni Location Ngqeleni, (undated), Rural Locations, n 2/21/2, (43), Land complaint from Makolatsha Mzilwa from Lucingweni Location Ngqeleni, (undated), Zibitsi Mcola from Mampondomiseni Location Ngqeleni, 7th April 1942, Idlwana Bila from Mampondomiseni Dyanvani Nonlebeba from Mazizini Location Ngqeleni, 4th March 1944, Mamegebe Zaku from Lucingweni Location Ngqeleni, 1955, and Ngangabo Mbube (and others) against Headman Payiya Gwadiso from Lucingweni Location Ngqeleni, 1st April 1958.

⁹⁶ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations files: n 2/9/3, n.2/8/3 (50), 2/8 /3 /8 , n 2/21/2 (41), n. 2/8/3 (38) and n. 2/8/3 (38).

⁹⁷ For example: KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: n. 2/9/3 (50) Land complaint: Nodamanetiwywo Sithshwampa vs Mayilana Ntshadayi Mankosi location 1955, Rural Locations, n 2/8/3 (31) Land complaints, 1938-1952. Complaint from Mabavuma Marau of Nkumandeni Location, 25th November 1941. This woman went to hospital for treatment only to return and her land was given to someone else and Rural Locations, n 2/8/3 (31) Land complaints, 1938-1952 Mpoza location Ngqeleni 1943.

“I am a widow residing at Godini. My husband Notshowu Nyangiwe died long ago. I was his right hand wife. I have no land. I have no homestead site. I have no son.”⁹⁸

Sometimes the magistrate would consult the headman and the matter would be settled, or an investigation would take place where the Native Constable took statements from all parties involved. After hearing all sides of the story the magistrate made his ruling. If he was unable to make an adequate ruling, or a woman wanted to appeal his decision, the case would be taken the chief Magistrate of Transkeian Territories in Mthatha, but this was rare. For widows who had no male heir the ruling was crucial in securing access to land and their ability to produce food. Life was not necessarily easier for widows who had male heirs. For some widows, this appeal process was a means to seek refuge and protection from abusive men (such as their sons or brothers) who were their guardians.⁹⁹ Mayalo Sigcau of the Nkumandeni location complained that her son took all her money and that the headman wanted the land registered in her name rather than her sons but “he refused saying that his father’s land cannot be allotted to anyone else. “He is refusing to open a pit¹⁰⁰ for me and uses those mealies for his own consumption.”¹⁰¹ Another woman complained that her brother wanted her as his “subordinate”, and that he “only wants to make me his slave.”¹⁰² In this case the headman sided with her brother, which is why she appealed to the magistrate. In most cases, the headman would side with male guardians over women.¹⁰³ Land disputes reveal that the magistrate often ruled in favour of the widow, although turning against your headman had its consequences. One man, who defended a widow, went back to the magistrate expressing fear that his life had been

⁹⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (31), Land complaints: 1938-1952. Complaint from Maradebe Blesi from Godini location Ngqeleni 1st May 1945, and reply from the acting headman of that location.

⁹⁹ For example: KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (31) Land complaints, 1938-1952 Katini location Ngqeleni 15th May 1945, Mazizi Simanga, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (31) Land complaints, 1938-1952. Complaint from Sarah Jane Manitshana from Mampondomiseni location Ngqeleni 3rd February 1942 and Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (31) Land complaints, 1938-1952. Complaint from Mayalo Sigcau of Nkumandeni location 2nd December 1941.

¹⁰⁰ In Mpondo society most homesteads had a grain storage pit in which grain was kept after the harvest.

¹⁰¹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (31) Land complaints: 1938-1952. Complaint from Mayalo Sigcau of Nkumandeni location 2nd December 1941.

¹⁰² KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (31) Land complaints: 1938-1952. Complaint from Mamcapati Sikwebu from Godini location Ngqeleni 17th September 1946, “Complaint by Mamcapati Sikwebu: Refusal by Headman to Register for payment of Local Tax etc.”

¹⁰³ For example, KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (41A), 1952-1959, Land complaint from Maseyile Ngaka from Lucingweni location 3rd December 1957, Headman of the location, Gwadiso, sides with a foreman that was chasing her off her land.

threatened for defying the headman.¹⁰⁴ Land disputes involving widows highlight their vulnerability to land dispossession and the ambiguous role that the state played in their quest for protection. While some women had access to land via a guardian, land complaints reveal that abusive men would withhold mealies or deny women the ability to plough rendering them unable to have control over these resources.¹⁰⁵

A further category of women who could appeal to the magistrate for the return of re-allotted land were women whose husbands were away at the mines.¹⁰⁶ In these cases their husbands appealed on the women's behalf to have land given back for their wives to plough in their absence. These men wrote letters from the mines or appeared at the magistrate's office to make a statement on his family's behalf. Land complaints and disputes of this nature reveal that some men would be in arrears with their taxes and their wives would lose land. These complaints reveal the dependence of women on male guardians and husbands to secure access to land and resources. Women whose husbands were away for long periods of time rendered them more vulnerable to corrupt headmen who took advantage of their lack of decision making power. Without a tax paying husband present women would risk losing their fields. Being married was better than being single as it enabled women to appeal to the magistrate to get back their fields through their husband's land holding and taxpaying power. For example, one man from the Mamolweni location, a coastal village in Ngqeleni, wrote to the magistrate describing his wife's desperate situation. She had no land to plant her mealies for their children:

“If you are willing to perform my request you will give my wife a residence permission and permission of land as she has no land for planting mealies.

¹⁰⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (38) Land complaint from Ngangabo Mbube (and others) against Headman Payiya Gwadiso from Lucingweni Location Ngqeleni, 1st April 1958.

¹⁰⁵ For example, twenty land complaints from the KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations files: n. 2/9/3, n.2/8/3 (50), n. 2/8 /3 /8 , n. 2/21/2 (41), n. 2/8/3 (38) and n. 2/8/3 (38).

¹⁰⁶ For example KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Location , Land disputes: Complaint made by Dywili Mbube of Mpoza Location to the Magistrate of Ngqeleni, 30th August 1938, Rural Locations, n. 2/21/2, Land complaints Mpoza Location Ngqeleni, 1940, letter to the Magistrate from Nontana Ntlanganiso complaining about headman Dywili taking away his land, Rural Locations, n. 2/21/2, Land complaints: Case 10/4/45: Tsonyeni, statements from Gongqendlini Fombeka and Headman Mambunga, Rural Locations, n. 2/21/2, Land Dispute: Bomvana location, case number 6/11/45. Statements made from Mtsheulana Landani and Headman Valipatwa and Rural Locations, Mamolweni Location, n. 2/8/3 (46) 1952-1955, Land complaint from Jim Mpohelekana 29th august 1955.

Her name is Ida or Madosini, this above mentioned woman is crying very bitterly because she has a large family and many children, those four children are also crying to her for food although she has no land for her children.”¹⁰⁷

These complaints reveal changes in rural families in Ngqeleni. With men away at the mines for long periods of time families were split apart. Land complaints reveal that a woman’s access to land through her husband’s land rights made her access to resources and food security vulnerable. If a woman lost land she would be forced to move elsewhere to secure food for her children. For men the consequences were that they could lose their families back home while on the mines. For example one man wrote from the mines stating:

“Sir, last year in 1940 I did not plough my land; because Luwili, who is the headman of the location re-allotted it to Velemeni, accordingly: I wish to know from you, sir, the reason why this has been the case. My family has now left my kraal, being driven away by famine; in spite of the fact that I never had arrears in my taxes. Today I am working here on the mines being burdened with the task of providing for both my family and the government.”¹⁰⁸

It is evident that the most vulnerable group of women in Mpondoland were single mothers. Unlike widows, and women who had husbands to plead on their behalf, these women were seen as “loose”. Magistrates were not usually happy about granting land to these so called “dikazi”- a derogatory word for single women. Single women posed a threat to the idea of family unity, and the gender order that the colonial state were trying to encourage. For both Africans and white officials women were regarded as childlike and unable to look after themselves. Redding describes how “discussions of African family life in the 1930s and 1940s frequently depicted women as childlike in both good and bad ways. For example, many Africans (and whites) feared that the migrant-labour system fostered a loss of control and discipline among African women that was leading to the breakdown of the African family.”¹⁰⁹ Redding cites an African writer from the 1930s who described women as lacking

¹⁰⁷ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, Mamolweni Location, n. 2/8/3 (46) 1952-1955, Land complaint from Jim Mpohekana 29th august 1955.

¹⁰⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n 2/21/2, Land complaints Mpoza Location Ngqeleni, 1940, letter to the Magistrate from Nontana Ntlanganiso complaining about headman Dywili taking away his land.

¹⁰⁹ Redding, ‘Legal Minors and Social Children: Rural African Women and Taxation in the Transkei, South Africa’, 66.

discipline and respect and believed that “women needed men to control them and anything that forced men to leave women on their own for extended periods of time was bound to have un-fortunate consequences.”¹¹⁰ Women who had children out of wedlock were therefore the most dangerous to the gender order as they reflected the dissolution of traditional family structures. However, some single women in Ngqeleni appealed to the magistrate for assistance in circumstances that they felt were unjust such as being forced off their land by a male relative who arrived from another location.¹¹¹

Some magistrates and headmen allocated land to minor sons of single women but others preferred to allot land to women directly. In one case a group of independent women appealed to the magistrate to have the land they were living on allotted to their male children but the magistrate of Ngqeleni during this time was not happy about the idea: “I cannot see that we can allot lands to children because then it will become a practice that all lands of deceased people will pass to minors and we will not have vacant lands for adults who are married or landless.”¹¹² In this dispute, the idea of allotting the land to the single women was not even entertained.

Some women were abandoned by their husbands and were regarded as “dikazi” because the marriage had not been formally dissolved.¹¹³ Other single women were vulnerable to relatives coming from nowhere and laying claim to their land and belongings.¹¹⁴ While “dikazi” who were forced to leave their homes were usually allotted land under a guardian. However, the stigma of being an unmarried woman with children often meant that they were vulnerable to abusive male relatives, and many felt safer living on their own.¹¹⁵ The biggest threat to single women was losing their ability to plough land and grow vegetables. Most single women were completely dependent on subsistence, as without the financial support of a husband’s wages, they were completely dependent on the land to survive. In one case, it is reported that Mrs

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ For example, 12 land complaints and dispute from single women in KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations files: n 2/9/3, n.2/8/3 (50), 2/8 /3 /8 , n 2/21/2 (41), n. 2/8/3 (38) and n. 2/8/3 (38).

¹¹² KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8 /3 /8 Land complaints, Ezixolosini location 1938 -1952, complaint from Josepline Nato 4th February 1948.

¹¹³ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n 2/21/2, Land complaints: n 2/8/3 (31), complaint from Lanie Jame of Godini location and ruling by Magistrate October 1950 and Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (38), land complaint from Mangcingane Ndzabela of Cwele Location Ngqeleni 23rd November 1954.

¹¹⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (17), land complaint from Mabel Nkondlwane and Ntombinde Nkondlwane of Matanzima location to Chief Magistrate of Umtata 1st July 1952.

¹¹⁵ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (38/3), complaint from Maqabatule Ndamase of Cwele Location Ngqeleni 1953.

Heard from Hluleka phoned the magistrate herself when one of her female employees found someone else ploughing her land.¹¹⁶

The inability of the law to reflect changes on the ground is demonstrated in a case brought before the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian territories by Innah Cikolo of Katini Location in 1943. Innah's father died when she was young and she lived at her homestead with her mother, sickly brother and children. For years she looked after her family until her mother and brother eventually passed away. She was granted permission to occupy her homestead until unexpectedly, she was told by the acting headman to vacate her kraal immediately. Ms Cikolo appealed to the magistrate to allow her son to be registered as he was seventeen years old, but this was refused. She was told to leave her home within three months despite the local constable stating that her huts were "in good repairs".¹¹⁷ Her new guardian was meant to be John Sibomvana, a distant relative in another location. In desperation to keep her land, Innah appealed to the Chief Magistrate of Umtata. Here, the magistrate of Ngqeleni defended his ruling by stating that she had no legal standing to establish her own kraal and he was merely adhering to native law. He further defended his ruling by stating:

"I have consequently strongly resisted a tendency on the part of some unmarried woman to set up their own establishments. Native sentiment and departmental policy are both strongly opposed to the breaking down of native family unity, under native law a native woman must be found in one of two places, either at her husbands or at her father's kraal. There is no third domicile. The hardships foreshadowed in this particular case in question is nothing compared with the evils attendance on the breakdown of parental control."¹¹⁸

The Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian territories appeared to have sympathised with Ms Cikolo's case and granted permission for her to stay at her homestead if her guardian allowed it. Despite this being against custom and law he seemed to see no logic in making a family move from a place they had lived their whole lives. He stated that "the woman has raised a

¹¹⁶ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (46), Native Affairs, complaint from Mrs Heard of Hluleka Ngqeleni to Magistrate regarding land taken from one of her employees, 1955.

¹¹⁷ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/21/2, Land complaints n 2/8/3 (31), complaint from Innah Cikolo of Katini Location, n. 2/21/2 (25).

¹¹⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/21/2, Land complaints n 2/8/3 (31), complaint from Innah Cikolo of Katini Location, n. 2/21/2 (25) and correspondence from Magistrate at Ngqeleni and Chief magistrate of the Transkeian territories, 16th of April 1943.

family of three, though out of wedlock, and has looked after this manage during the lifetime of her old mother and sickly brother both of whom are now dead.”¹¹⁹

It is arguable that tribal authorities’ patriarchal control over women’s access to land and resources, as well as the colonial state’s attempts at fixing gendered ideas of family and control did not reflect the changing gender relations in rural Ngqeleni and the Transkei at large. The dominant rule of the magistrate allowed widows and single mothers to challenge “native custom” which denied them control over land to which they felt they had rights. However, it is evident that the magistrate did not want to challenge “native custom”. Such custom was a key element in the states ideology: ideal African families comprised of women engaged in subsistence agriculture with husbands in migrant labour. In reality increasing poverty and the absence of men meant that more and more women were becoming household heads, and that the struggle for resources was becoming harder.

Women were not the only ones who were vulnerable to losing land. Some men were also vulnerable, especially those who were away at the mines for long periods of time or those who could not keep up with their tax payments.¹²⁰ Some land complaints and disputes from men working on the mines indicate the possibility of changing gender relations. The typical division of labour, as discussed earlier, assumed that men were tied to migrant labour while members of their household, mainly women ploughed their land and supported their families. Some cases show that for men who didn’t have women at home to plough ran the risk of losing land that had not been ploughed in some time.¹²¹ With a decrease in the availability of land, headmen chose to re-allot land that was not in use. Land cases indicate that some men relied on cousins and relatives (often male) to look after their land. Sometimes relatives did not keep up the responsibility of looking after their land.

Some men who lost their land tried to manipulate the system of appeal to their advantage, often in deceitful ways. Evidence demonstrates how some men tried to use their mother’s widow rights to gain access to land on their behalf. Upon investigation it was often discovered that these “widows” had in fact left the location many years ago, or had left their

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n 2/21/2, Land complaints. Mpoza Location, Ngqeleni, Case number: 7/44. Statements made to the Magistrate on the 29th Feb 1944 by Nontana Ntlanganiso and Velemi Nokepeyi.

¹²¹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n 2/21/2, Land complaints: Mpoza Location, Ngqeleni, Case number: 7/44. Statements made to the Magistrate on the 29th Feb 1944 by Nontana Ntlanganiso and Velemi Nokepeyi, and Rural Locations, n 2/9/3 (50), Land complaints from Mankosi location. “Mankosi Location Patrol Report” from the Native Constable, n. 2/8/3 (50) (4) 1955.

deceased husbands years ago.¹²² One man tried to obtain land for his wife, after an investigation it was revealed that his wife had deserted him a long time ago, he had not paid taxes for his land, and it had been reverted to commonage before being re-allotted to someone else.¹²³ Another who had one wife pretended to have two wives to try and obtain two fields.¹²⁴

Conclusion

Land disputes and complaints offer a window into complex and changing gender relations in the Ngqeleni district during the first half of the twentieth century. Women were willing to turn against traditional authority and seek assistance from the government in order to secure access to land. Land disputes highlight the disjuncture between patriarchal customary rules stipulating who has rights to land and the state's idea of what an African family should look like on the one hand, and the reality of what women and men in rural Ngqeleni were experiencing, on the other. The next chapter will show how conservation regulations further complicated gendered livelihood strategies and unequal access to resources.

¹²² KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n 2/21/2, Land complaint n.15/112/16, from Franisi Velegantsi of Mnyaqelwa's location at the office of the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories 13th October 1939, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (38). Application for allotment of land in Cwele location from Mpendulana Tshuvi, 1952, and Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (38), Letter entitled: "Unlawful Occupation of land by Jama Meji of Nkanunu Location Ngqeleni April 1955.

¹²³ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/21/2, Land complaints Mpoza Location Ngqeleni, 1942.

¹²⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3/(16) Land complaints, Ndungunyeni Location, 1954, "Patrol Report" stating that Elliot Zantsi tried to legitimize a customary union between him and his second wife who is actually his cousin and married to someone else. He did so to obtain an extra land.

Chapter Two: Changing livelihoods and early conservation measures

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s locations in Ngqeleni experienced a gradual increase in state intervention in the management of livestock, agriculture and natural resources. Conservation was further spurred on by the denudation of the veld. Successful dipping operations and restrictions on the movement of cattle which curbed disease, as well as migrant labour which allowed more men to purchase cattle resulted in dramatic overstocking of livestock in Mpondoland. Officials also feared that traditional agricultural practices would erode the soil. To curb this, agricultural officers were placed in different locations to teach better farming methods. There were also growing fears that Africans were stripping the forests of timber.

This chapter examines how early forms of top-down, state intervention and conservation did not change people's livelihoods and access to resources dramatically, however as these restrictions increased, daily life slowly began to change. Furthermore these changes were experienced differently by men and women.

Conservation and state intervention: Livestock, agriculture and forests 1920-1940

District Council minutes for the 1920s detail government fears of over grazing and erosion caused by too many cattle. "There is at present 44, 000 head of cattle and there is no doubt that the country and more particularly the coastal belt is overstocked."¹ While dipping had the positive effects of eliminating the spread of cattle diseases, it often interfered in people's daily lives in a negative way. Hunter described how "compulsory dipping, and the accompanying tax and regulations regarding the movement are resented."²

Despite over grazing due to large cattle numbers, men were concerned more with quantity than quality with cattle.³ Some people complained that they had to travel long distances to reach the nearest cattle tanks.⁴ This may have been an extreme case but one field worker reported that he had seen some cattle die on the side of the road from exhaustion while

¹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Dipping Operations: 1924-1929, Office of the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories Umtata 29th July 1924.

² Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 67.

³ Noted by Hunter in *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa* and Beinart, *The Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930*

⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Dipping Operations 1924-1929: Letter from the 24th June 1927 explaining that people in one area need to travel six or seven miles over rough ground to get to the nearest dipping tank.

getting to a faraway tank.⁵ People applied to have the dipping intervals extended during ploughing season as it took too much time away from the fields.⁶ Others complained that it was difficult to carry around stock cards and called for them to be abolished.⁷

Measures were also put in place to try curb the rising issue of soil erosion in Mpondoland and investigations detailed the impact of improper farming methods. The drought investigation commission, which published its report in 1923, wanted to draw the public's attention:

“To the very serious consequences which may be expected to result from soil erosion if steps are not promptly taken to counteract this evil. These consequences are likely to be more serious in those parts of these Territories where cattle and sheep have been rapidly increasing in recent years. Overstocking inevitably leads to overgrazing, denudation of vegetation and resulting deterioration of veld, culminating in the formation of dongas, the disastrous effects of which it is unnecessary to emphasise.”⁸

In 1926 two hundred pounds was provided to Western Mpondoland for the prevention of soil erosion. Agricultural schools were established, and agricultural demonstrators were sent to teach people better methods of farming. Each demonstrator was allocated a district in which he worked a demonstration field.⁹ During this time more maize than ever before was being produced, however this led to less field rotation and a consequent increase in soil erosion.¹⁰ In some areas, people regarded agricultural demonstrators with suspicion as they did not trust the government.¹¹ However, in Western Mpondoland they were received relatively well. This can be attributed to the paramount chief Victor Poto Ndamase's keen interest in agriculture, and its improvement.¹² Agriculture was his favourite subject at school¹³ and his support for the

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Dipping operations 1924-1929: letter from the 23rd august 1926.

⁷ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Council n. 29.13/2 1926 and 1927 reports: people want stock cards abolished and response from 1927 “summary of replies made or action taken on recommendations of the Pondoland General council 1927 session.”

⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, General Council minutes: general council sessions n. 29/13/5 Report on demonstration work in Western Pondoland.

⁹ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 94.

¹⁰ Beinart, *the Political Economy of Pondoland, 1860-1930*, 85.

¹¹ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 94.

¹² Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 94, and Hendricks and Peires, 'All Quiet on the Western Front: Nyandeni Acquiescence in the Mpondoland Revolt', 123.

¹³ Ibid.

improvements had a great influence.¹⁴ In the 1929, at the General Council Session the director of agriculture J. W. D Hughes explained:

“I am pleased to be able to report that a decided advance has been made during the last year. Last season's mealie crop was a record one and the Natives of Pondoland were in such a position that they did not require to buy grain from outside, but instead, sold thousands of bags to those parts of the Territories and Ciskei where the grain crop had been a failure. The keen interest taken by the Paramount Chief Poto in all agricultural matters, and the fact that he has put his own hand to the plough, has been, and is doing a lot to influence his people in the right direction.”¹⁵

Agricultural demonstrators in Ngqeleni taught people how to use a plough and how to improve the quality of their stock. Hunter observed that “some have fenced fields and grow winter crops like wheat and oats and use manure.”¹⁶ Generally “school people” were more open to European agricultural practices.¹⁷

Mpondoland coastal forests were recognized as among the largest and densest in the Transkei.¹⁸ A branch of the forest department under a conservator of forests had been established in the Transkei in the 1880s and its work included the demarcation of forests. At the same time, regulations provided for further wooded areas to be proclaimed under control of headmen, who could allow some use but not clearing.¹⁹ Forest officials appealed to the magistrate to demarcate forests and prevent people from getting permits to collect firewood. One officer described his plans of having the Qokama forest in Ngqeleni demarcated as there was a “Great deal of damage done from people ‘dragging out’ firewood”²⁰ In the 1920s and 1930s access due newly demarcated forests in Ngqeleni was restricted.²¹

¹⁴ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 94 and Hendricks and Peires, 'All Quiet on the Western Front: Nyandeni Acquiescence in the Mpondoland Revolt', 123.

¹⁵ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, General Council Minutes: general council sessions n. 29/13/, Report on demonstration work in Western Pondoland.

¹⁶ Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*, 94.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Beinart, 'Chapter Six: Environmental Origins of the Pondoland revolt', in S. Dovers et al, *South Africa's Environmental History: Cases and Comparisons*, 84.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ KAB, Forests and Plantations: n.10/1/2, District Forest Officer: letter to the magistrate of Ngqeleni 18th march 1919. Letter describes how the department of forests does not like issuing permits to people who need to collect wood from forests.

²¹ Tropp, *Natures of Colonial Change: Environmental Relations in the Making of the Transkei*.

State control of forests “not only implied the removal of rights of access, but also supplanted the earlier regulation by chiefs. Similar disputes over who was to control the resources of Pondoland arose over small pockets of lands appropriated by the state and over game hunting. The blurring of boundaries was a significant political victory for the paramount chief and led to considerable confusion in enforcement after 1915.”²² Headmen in Ngqeleni were confused as to what was permitted. At the Pondoland General Council in 1924 the issue of the Tapping of Euphorbia Trees was explained to a headman who did not understand whether or not the use of certain species by his people was permitted by the department:

“The people are suspicious, they are afraid Government will take all from them and prevent stock grazing near them and prosecute us for damaging the trees or using them for our needs. In truth we did not object but did not thoroughly understand. If it is said our stock will not be interfered with and we can use the trees we now do not object. If it is merely desired to take 'milk' and the bushes and trees remain we have no objection to offer.”²³

The establishment of the Hluleka Forest Reserve

In the 1920s the Strachan's disputed the boundaries of the Hluleka forest and in 1929, the dispute was settled. The 807 morgan which once formed part of part of Strachan's Grant was declared government state forest.²⁴ Fears that local people were taking too much timber led the Forest Department to declare this forest as government property.²⁵ In a letter to the department of Forests regarding *Strachan's Grant* and the government forest behind it, a man warned a forest officer that “the small forest near Strachan's camp is partly inside and partly outside the farm or grant, and if the part that lies outside the farm is not demarcated it will eventually be cut out. An instruction from you to the headman will prevent it being cut out just at the present but sooner or later the natives will get busy at it.”²⁶ A legal battle ensued between the executors of Strachan's estate (his sons) and the Department of Forests regarding the boundary of the forest, which had overlapped into their grant. The resident magistrate of Ngqeleni at the time explained that:

²² Beinart, 'Chapter Six: Environmental Origins of the Pondoland revolt', 84.

²³ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Council Minutes 29.13/2 Pondoland general council session 1924.

²⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Trust Forests: Forests and Plantations, 1934-1950, N 8/17/2. Demarcation of sub reserve Hluleka.

²⁵ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Forests and Plantations n.10/1/2: Hluleka File, Letter: Forest Department Umtata 13. 3. 24

²⁶ Ibid.

“Mr Miller and I both thought that if the bush was left un-demarcated it would be under the control of the native headman who might allow it to be cut out and destroyed and further that the Strachan family might dispose of the farm to people who might not exercise the same care in preserving the scrub at this sea side resort.”²⁷

Upon discussing the matter he changed his mind and argued that:

“Natives in a well-wooded part of the district are not likely to proceed over a farm to remove a little scrub and a few trees when they have an abundant supply of forest produce close at hand to last them for generations. It is not likely that any magistrate would permit a headman to remove trees or scrub at a sea side resort ... In any event I am convinced that no headman or native would think of exercising rights over what they believe to be the Hluleka farm and which is really accessible to the owners of the farm and European visitors.”²⁸

The Strachan's were arguing that no one could reach the area in question besides the owners of the land, and that there were no trees of value to the forest department. They also feared that if the government were to take over the small portion of land, they would be liable to have their stock impounded or “would be liable for prosecution for removing a wattle or tree.”²⁹ The conservator of forests, Percy Doran, replied by accepting the Strachan's and the magistrate's recommendation of not demarcating that portion the forest but added that “I desire, however, to point out that the proposed demarcation was for the benefit of the lessee of the Hluleka camp as protection against cutting by natives.”³⁰

The legal battle continued for another few years, this time over another piece of land that the Strachan's felt the Department of Forestry were wrongfully claiming.³¹ Again the Department's claim to the land rested on fears of “native cultivation.” While the Strachan's, the magistrate and the demarcater had come to an agreement, the Chief Conservator of Forests was unhappy with the decision, and explained that: “The present difficulty caused by the trespass of natives into the Crown Forest and Strachan's Grant

²⁷ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Forests and Plantations n.10/1/2: Re Demarcation of 1 (a) Hluleka Forest Conservator of Forests Umtata, 27/3/24

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Forests and Plantations n.10/1/2: n. 27/3/24 Reply: “Re-demarcation of 1 (a) Hluleka Forest: Ngqeleni District” 2 May 1924.

³¹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Lease and sale of crown land n.12/13/3 (European land matters), letters of correspondence between the Strachan's lawyer, the department of Forests and the resident Magistrate of Ngqeleni 12th August 1924 Chief Conservator of Forests, Pretoria.

would be overcome by locating the original beacon of Strachan's Grant on the Hluleka Forest side.”³² A single boundary, he argued, would mean “The natives would have no excuse to trespassing either on Strachan's Grant or the forest.”³³ In another letter, the removal of this small area of cultivation between *Strachan's Grant* and the Crown Forest would mean “doing away with cultivation of small patches of ground by natives causing trouble to this department, the Native Affairs Department and the owners of the Grant.”³⁴

Derick Fay et al explore the role of the forest department in Dwesa-Cwebe and described how in the 1920s conservation was based on “racially categorized ideas about who should use the forests and how, not on the more contemporary vision of preserving the biological diverse forests as an obligation to the international community.”³⁵

By 1936 there were 44 demarcated forests in Ngqeleni.³⁶ The Forest Department decided that no kraals could be located closer than 200 yard from the forest edge and that kraals that had already been established would gradually be moved away by insisting that new huts be built, and that as old huts fell in, they not be rebuilt in the same site by at least 200 yards or more from the forest edge.³⁷ Apart from removals and strict control over access to resources and grazing within forests, the Forest Department also sought to take control of resources surrounding their forests, such as sand shingle and sea weed: “on account of the difficulty that would be experienced in exercising control over such areas, [the department] has authorized the Forest Department Tariff rates, for the removal of sand, stone, shingle etc., ‘from seashores adjoining Forest Reserves, or where the Forest Department is in a position to supervise and control the removal of the material.’”³⁸ It is clear that the restriction of access to forests enforced by the Forest Department, and patrolled by rangers, affected women’s ability to collect firewood, as it was their task to provide wood for the family.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Forests and Plantations n.10/1/2: n. 27/3/24 Reply: “re-demarcation of 1 (a) Hluleka Forest: Ngqeleni District”, 2nd May 1924.

³⁵ Derick Fay (et al), 'Chapter Four: Competing for the forests: Annexation, Demarcation and their consequences (c. 1878-1936)', in *From Conflict to Negotiation: Nature-Based Development on the South African Wild Coast*, Palmer, et al., 60.

³⁶ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration, minutes of meetings, n 2/2/2, Forest department to control removal of sand, stone and shingle of coasts that are within forests, District forest officer 1th June 1937.

³⁷ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration quarterly meetings 1936-1952, Forestry Act Regulations: District Forrest Officer Umtata, 18th November 1936.

³⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration quarterly meetings 1936-1952, Forest department to control removal of sand, stone and shingle of coasts that are within forests, 1937.

Marine Conservation

An emotive letter from a Magistrate in Komgha to Native Affairs in Pretoria urged magistrates further up the coast to take control over resources all along the coast before shellfish and other species became extinct.³⁹

“This aims at eliminating the danger of the depleting your coast of such shellfish by native invasions from adjoining native territories where shellfish have become almost extinct. I have received numerous complaints of natives’ crossing over to our coast and carrying away sacks of every edible matter they can find on the rocks and low tide. I have observed this disastrous consequence of the wholesale and promiscuous stripping of the rocks in native territories.”⁴⁰

Following this letter, the Magistrate of Ngqeleni was subsequently called to evaluate the coast in his district. The response from the magistrate was a recommendation that no restrictions should be placed on Africans access to marine resources.⁴¹ He argued that people had been gathering shellfish for generations,⁴² and that:

“From information gleaned from ordent fishermen and observers, the depredations of the natives is negligible compared to the quantities of shell fish etc., which are out of reach of the natives at lowest tides.”⁴³

He was also clear in stating the importance of marine resources in people’s diets: “the shellfish etc., gathered on this coast, greatly augment the natives’ food supplies in times of famine.”⁴⁴ Evidently, marine conservation did not affect the ways in which men and women used marine resources along the coast of Ngqeleni during the 1920s and 1930s. However, marine conservation legislature passed in the 1930s resulted in the forced removals of some families along the Hluleka coast. The Sea Shore Act No. 21 of 1935 was passed to forbid people from living near the high water mark of the coast and from using the sea resources and

³⁹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Local Village Management Board, n.3/6/3, Letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs Pretoria entitled “Komgha Division: Protection of Shellfish, Catfish and Redbait”, 13th December 1934.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Local Village Management Board, n.3/6/3, Letter to the Magistrate of Mthatha from the Magistrate of Ngqeleni entitled “Protection of shell fish, cat fish and red bait”, 29th January. 1935.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

fishing.⁴⁵ Under this legislation, people could be moved from their homes. However, oral histories give no indication that people were not allowed to fish from Hluleka.

Conclusion:

This chapter has demonstrated that during the 1920s and 1930s, Africans living along the Ngqeleni coast were experiencing the onset of state conservation in a variety of forms. Gradually the state was monitoring and reorganizing livestock keeping, agricultural methods and forest access. The colonial discourse of conservation was embedded in fears that Africans could not manage their own natural resources and fuelled further interventions.

The gradual increase of state interventions which sought to control and monitor men and women's livelihoods in the name of conservation failed to consider how these measures would influence gendered livelihoods. The state's strict regulation of men's ability to trade cattle freely between districts and maintain traditional stock keeping habits threatened their ability to maintain power and wealth. Agricultural educator's attempts at teaching people new farming methods did not factor in those women who were mostly without male labour and that the burden of rural subsistence was left on the shoulders of women. Forest conservation authorities regarded women's forest usage as careless and did not consider their dependence on forest resources. However, state measures to restrict forest access were met with resistance as women made plans to exercise their forest rights in which ever ways they could.

⁴⁵ Department of Land Affairs: Memorandum submission in terms of section 42D Read with section 14 (3) of the restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994) ACT No. 22 of 1994 as amended for finalising the matter of the Hluleka Community concerning the land known as Hluleka.

Chapter Three: Men, Cattle and Rehabilitation in Ngqeleni

This chapter examines the intensification of conservation initiatives during the 1940s, 1950s and early 1960s with a particular focus on the implementation of Betterment and Rehabilitation schemes in the Ngqeleni during the 1950s. Betterment refers to attempts implemented by the South African Union government in the 1930s, and later the nationalist apartheid government from the late 1940s to control patterns of settlement and land use in reserves with the purpose of conserving the land from soil erosion and over stocking.¹ Betterment has its origins in the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act which outlined a “betterment” scheme, which became compulsory on all land acquired by the Trust. Livestock Control and Improvement Proclamation (No. 31 of 1939) made provision for the creation of betterment areas and for the limitation and control of livestock in such areas. Later legislation introduced further measures.² Land in betterment areas was to be divided into arable, grazing and residential units; homesteads were to be grouped together in village-like settlements and grazing areas fenced off into camps. Various veld reclamation and soil conservation measures were introduced.³ The reorganisation of the rural life that Betterment and Rehabilitation necessitated resulted in “patterns of social interaction, rural power, and authority” being drastically disturbed.⁴

¹ P. A McAllister, ‘Resistance to ‘Betterment’ in the Transkei: A Case Study from Willowvale District’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2, Special Issue on The Politics of Conservation in Southern Africa (Jan., 1989), 347, Peter Delius and Stefan Schirmer, ‘Soil Conservation in a Racially Ordered Society: South Africa 1930-1970’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 4, Special Issue: African Environments: Past and Present (Dec., 2000), 720, and Chris De Wet, ‘Betterment Planning in a Rural Village in Keiskammahoek, Ciskei’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2, Special Issue on The Politics of Conservation in Southern Africa (Jan., 1989), 326.

² McAllister, ‘Resistance to ‘Betterment’ in the Transkei: A Case Study from Willowvale District’, 347.

³ McAllister, ‘Resistance to ‘Betterment’ in the Transkei: A Case Study from Willowvale District’, Delius and Schirmer, ‘Soil Conservation in a Racially Ordered Society: South Africa 1930-1970’, and De Wet, ‘Betterment Planning in a Rural Village in Keiskammahoek, Ciskei.’

⁴ W. Beinart, ‘Chapter ten: Debating Conservation in African Areas of the Cape, 1920-1950’, in *The rise of conservation in South Africa: settlers, livestock, and the environment 1770-1950*, (Oxford University Press, 2003), 366.

Map 4: Ngqeleni District, c.1943



Source: Office of the Chief Directorate: National Geo-Spatial Information (copyright)

Betterment was as a result of a growing fear in the degradation of soil in the reserves as a result of over stocking and a perception that Africans were careless in the ways in which they handled natural resources.⁵ This was expressed in the Native Economic Commission of 1932 and later the Tomlinson Commission in 1955.⁶ Ideas about conservation came from “a burgeoning body of international scientific and popular literature, which highlighted the prevalence and perils of soil erosion.”⁷ This conservationist ideology was expressed in a number of alarming reports which blamed Africans for the deterioration of land and for ‘careless’ attitudes towards animal husbandry:

“Rural decay was invariably attributed to overstocking. Africans, so the argument went, had an irrational desire to accumulate large numbers of livestock indiscriminately. Their religious outlook towards stock-holding contradicted 'scientific' farming methods and was the root of the evil of overstocking. The proposed solution to these problems coincided neatly with their supposed causes. Africans were to be taught to abandon their uneconomic ideas, their stock was to be limited and anti-erosion measures instituted.”⁸

Beinart describes how officials had a preoccupation with soil erosion, the necessity of combating it, and the preservation of natural resources, forests and watercourses. “The welfare of the soil emerges as the cutting edge of justification for intervention in peasant agriculture. Conservationist ideas also deeply affected the way in which agricultural schemes were designed and implemented.”⁹

This chapter examines the schemes that were implemented in the Ngqeleni district, and how they were received by communities. Using archival records it explores how conservation ideology and plans to reorganise how people lived off their land translated into every day

⁵ McAllister, ‘Resistance to ‘Betterment’ in the Transkei: A Case Study from Willowvale District’, 348, Delius and Schirmer, ‘Soil Conservation in a Racially Ordered Society: South Africa 1930-1970’, 720.

⁶ McAllister, ‘Resistance to ‘Betterment’ in the Transkei: A Case Study from Willowvale District’, 349 and W. Beinart, ‘Soil erosion, conservationism and ideas about development: a Southern African exploration, 1900–1960’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol. 11, no. 1, (1984), 55.

⁷ Delius and Schirmer, ‘Soil Conservation in a Racially Ordered Society: South Africa 1930-1970’, 720.

⁸ T. F. Hendricks, ‘Loose Planning and Rapid Resettlement: The Politics of Conservation and Control in Transkei, South Africa, 1950-1970’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2, *Special Issue on the Politics of Conservation in Southern Africa* (Jan., 1989), 316.

⁹ Beinart, ‘Soil erosion, conservationism and ideas about development: a Southern African exploration, 1900–1960’, 53.

practice. It argues that betterment and rehabilitation shaped and challenged men's primary means of power and authority in rural society. While officials perceived communities in Ngqeleni as open and to Rehabilitation schemes, resistance and defiance came in more subtle forms as were available to men and women. While these schemes impacted men's power, women were more accepting of rehabilitation.

Several historians have examined the motivation for betterment schemes. Beinart dismisses earlier arguments that simplified the states initiatives and argues that concern over agricultural decay was not simply the result of a need to keep dependents of mine workers contributing to a proportion of subsistence in order to keep wages low, but that conservationism was "a deeply rooted element in South African official thinking about agrarian society in the first half of the twentieth century. The set of ideas and prescriptions associated with conservationism assumed the proportions of an official ideology."¹⁰ Delius (et al) argue that racial segregationist policy greatly influenced the government's implementation of conservation. They use case studies from the Transvaal to demonstrate this and argue that policy, "although derived from a common ideological source, was refracted into distinctive forms by the radicalised composition of state and society."¹¹ Many writers examine resistance to betterment; McAllister argues that resistance stemmed predominantly from so called "red" Xhosa or traditionalists who were at the forefront of resistance to betterment schemes.¹² Hendricks argues that problems and the subsequent resistance were caused by the implementation of Bantu Authorities in the 1950's which elevated the position of chiefs and headmen by granting them greater power over local affairs, at the expense of ideas of conservation. He points out that the lack of funds led to betterment plans not following what they originally set out to achieve. "Both the abandonment of stock-culling and the disbandment of the Transkei Planning Committee, set up in 1945, hint at how the conservation principles in the Betterment and Rehabilitation programmes were modified and eclipsed, even at the level of policy, by a much more coercive system of ad hoc planning, removal and control of the population and manipulation of the land."¹³ Pieres and Hendricks shed light on why resistance was relatively quiet in Western Mpondoland arguing that the

¹⁰ Beinart, 'Soil erosion, conservationism and ideas about development: a Southern African exploration, 1900–1960', 70.

¹¹ Delius and Schirmer, 'Soil Conservation in a Racially Ordered Society: South Africa 1930-1970', 719-742.

¹² McAllister, 'Resistance to 'Betterment' in the Transkei: A Case Study from Willowvale District.'

¹³ Hendricks, 'Loose Planning and Rapid Resettlement: The Politics of Conservation and Control in Transkei, South Africa, 1950-1970', 307.

differences between Eastern and Western Mpondoland “are real but not as clear cut as they might first appear.”¹⁴ They examine pockets of resistance in the West and discuss the role of the paramount chief, Victor Poto Ndamase in keeping things calm.¹⁵ Mager’s work on the Ciskei critiques historical work on betterment for having “a pre-occupation with male dominated opposition.”¹⁶ She argues that “differential impact on wives, independent women, young and old men has been neglected.”¹⁷ Central to her argument is the notion that:

“Gender - principally the power relations between women and men and between women and the state - is crucial for an understanding of responses to Rehabilitation in the Ciskei reserves. As an analytical concept, gender helps to capture diversity in responses to state strategy, throwing light on internal power relations and struggles over resources.”¹⁸

Mager’s analytical framework has informed my analysis of responses to betterment in Ngqeleni. Of particular interest for this chapter is how livestock restrictions threatened men’s patriarchal controls.

As discussed in chapter two, conservation measures were being implemented in Ngqeleni on a small scale in the 1920s and 1930s. Agricultural demonstrators were placed in different locations to teach local Africans “better” farming methods.¹⁹ Although it was more than a decade before betterment would be implemented in the region, Douglas Ndamase, headman of the Mampondomiseni Location wanted to move people into closer settlement. When people refused to move he castigated them, saying that when state officials implementing rehabilitation came to their location they would be moved then.²⁰

¹⁴ Hendricks and Peires, ‘Chapter Six: All quiet on the Western front: Nyandeni Acquiescence in the Mpondoland Revolt.’

¹⁵ To see the latest research in a selection of essays see T. Kepe and L. Ntsebeza, eds., *Rural Resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo Revolts after Fifty Years*.

¹⁶ Mager, Anne. ‘The People Get Fenced’: Gender, Rehabilitation and African Nationalism in the Ciskei and Border Region, 1945-1955’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Dec., 1992), 765.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration General Reports and Returns 2/16/5 n.1/15/6, 1937-1952.

²⁰ KAB, Department of Native Affairs: Rural Locations. Land Dispute, Mampondomiseni Location. Statement made by Headman of Mampondomiseni Location to the Magistrate of Ngqeleni 8th April 1941.

The main conservationist schemes in the 1930s were restrictions on stock keeping, which most headmen and residents resented.²¹ Officials warned these headmen that they would be prosecuted for not obeying the Livestock Improvement Scheme. They stressed that it was essential for rehabilitating overgrazed locations.²² Sometimes opposition was more severely dealt with.

At a quarterly meeting held in Ngqeleni with the headmen and Native Commissioner in 1948, headmen expressed concern about people who were arrested for not removing noxious weeds; he explained that people were waiting for the heavy rains to clear.²³ Annual reports submitted during the 1940s create the impression that success was achieved in their district. Officials working in Ngqeleni in the late 1940s described their work being met with “measure of success” although they added that there was “still much to be done.”²⁴ There was not outright hostility towards new methods of farming but rather people were said to be disinterested.²⁵ Progress was described as being evident in the more “advanced members of society”.²⁶ Apart from the lack of interest, evidence of resistance to conservation measures is clear when agricultural demonstrators complained that once they prepared contour strips in the lands, people disregarded them and ploughed them up and down again.²⁷ Despite these challenges, NAD’s agricultural officers pressed ahead with conservation measures in the form of livestock improvement projects, agricultural education and other betterment and rehabilitation schemes.²⁸

Officials working in Ngqeleni believed that the success of the district lay in “civilising” (i.e. making people adhere to colonial rules) the rural people, and that those who could not live off the land should be absorbed in an established urban environment. The Native Commissioner

²¹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration, minutes of meetings, n. 2/2/2. Quarterly meeting of headmen held at Ngqeleni, September, 1948.

²² KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration, minutes of meetings, n 2/2/2. Quarterly meeting of headmen held at Ngqeleni, 1947.

²³ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration, minutes of meetings, n 2/2/2. Quarterly meeting of headmen held at Ngqeleni, 30th March 1948.

²⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration: General Reports and Returns 2/16/5, n. 1/15/6, Annual Report on District administration: Ngqeleni 1949.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration General Reports and Returns 2/16/5 N 1/15, Minutes of quarterly meeting: 30th June 1949.

²⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration Conferences, n 1/15/5. Office of the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories Umtata 20th Jan 1955, Official conference of Native Commissioners 1955.

wanted to develop industry in Ngqeleni and hoped that something similar to King Williams Town's Zwelitsha could be created there.²⁹

One official remarked that the fencing of grazing areas meant that more boys could attend school.³⁰ In 1956 the Native Commissioner was happy to report that conservation was being taught in schools in the district.³¹ Work was being done to “inspire” Africans to accept and participate in conservation. As one report noted, “Much has been done in the way of propaganda and talks to natives to endeavour to encourage them to build dams and assist with anti-erosion works and in some locations some success has been attained.”³²

In the early 1950s concern was expressed that soil erosion was increasing. In 1954 and 1955, 19 locations had been proclaimed betterment areas, with six more being planned.³³ By 1956 five villages had betterment implemented; these were Lujecweni, Buntingville, Mandlovini, Malunga and Masemeni. People in planned locations were moved into new residential sites; there was also considerable amount of fencing undertaken and stock culling. By the end of 1956 29 out of the 44 locations in Ngqeleni were recorded as having requested rehabilitation.

Officials were pleased to report that the Ngqeleni District was eager to accept rehabilitation:

“I wish to stress the fact that this district is probably outstanding in its demands for stabilisation, and the department should give all its support to satisfy this demand. These locations have asked for stabilisation of their own free will and without any special propaganda being made. They are satisfied that what has been achieved by the reclaimed locations, is what they want. Most of the headmen of locations who have asked for stabilisation have enquired several times and their locations are to be planned.”³⁴

²⁹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Native Pension Grants and Social Services, N 1/15/4. Social and Economic Conditions of Natives: 1951.

³⁰ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District admin reports and returns, n 1/3/6, Annual Report on District Administration: 1954 report.

³¹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District admin reports and returns, n 1/3/6, Annual Report on District Administration: annual report for 1956.

³² KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District admin reports and returns, n 1/3/6, report for 1956, Native Commissioner for Ngqeleni.

³³ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Native agriculture, 8/21/4, 1955 report.

³⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Native agriculture: 8/21/4. Annual report 1955-56 agricultural branch, n 8/9/56.

Other reports described the district as being “outstanding in its demands for rehabilitation.”³⁵ Officials commented that women were especially receptive to learning new farming methods.³⁶ Perhaps being responsible for food security, women were keener to improve farming methods while men, being more cattle orientated were more threatened by the schemes. Nevertheless, officials reported that more work needed to be done to convince people of betterment and rehabilitation.

By 1957 it was clear that the district administration had taken on far more than they could handle.³⁷ Annual reports complain of a lack of staff and funds to ensure that plans were carried out properly and that people were not disobeying the rules. “Encroachments on commonage and ploughing of virgin soil sometimes in places not suited to cultivation therefore continue and it is very difficult to combat this with the limited field staff at our disposal.”³⁸ Officials stressed that the limits of rehabilitation in Ngqeleni was not resistance but rather a shortage of staff and funds. “The limiting factor which retards agricultural progress is not the attitude of the native but a combination of shortage of staff, of finance and of time. Many Natives in this district are clamouring for rehab of their locations.”³⁹

There were many reasons why the ambitious betterment schemes were generally unsuccessful in the Transkei. One of the central reasons is conflicting policy. Conservation measures were the casualty of apartheid policy.⁴⁰ The Tomlinson commission argued that half of the African population could subsist entirely on Native Trust Land and recommended that the remaining people be absorbed into industrial towns and form an urban class.⁴¹ However this

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District admin reports and returns, n 1/3/6, Annual Report on District Administration: 1954 report.

³⁷ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: n 2/8/3 (10), Ndanye Location 1952, n. 2/8/3/9: Meeting with people from Ndanye location requesting stabilisation, 11.09.1957.

³⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District administration, n. 1/15/6: Annual Report 31st March 1957 and KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District administration, n. 1/15/6: Annual report 31st march 1958: Comments from agricultural officer working in the district.

³⁹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District administration, n. 1/15/6: Annual report 31st march 1958.

⁴⁰ Hendricks, ‘Loose Planning and Rapid Resettlement: The Politics of Conservation and Control in Transkei, South Africa, 1950-1970’, 307.

⁴¹ De Wet, ‘Betterment Planning in a Rural Village in Keiskammahoe, Ciskei’, 326, and Hendricks, ‘Loose Planning and Rapid Resettlement: The Politics of Conservation and Control in Transkei, South Africa, 1950-1970’, 307.

contradicted apartheid policy that reserved industrial towns for whites. Thousands of urban Africans were forced to live on the reserves adding to the over populated conditions.⁴²

An important change in betterment policy was the linking of betterment with the new Bantu Authorities, created in terms of the 1953 Bantu Authorities Act.⁴³ Propping up “tribal unity” or “retribalisation” was given precedence above the notion of creating a full-time farming class.⁴⁴ The Transkei would continue to be a heavily controlled, underdeveloped labour reservoir it had been since annexation, but now direct rule was to be replaced by a form of indirect rule in accordance with early Nationalist policy of “separate development”.⁴⁵

In 1951 the Bantu Authorities Act became the “the cornerstone of the apartheid system.”⁴⁶ The Act sought to begin the process of incorporating Chiefs into the administrative system.⁴⁷ The Act granted Chiefs more power over their own people, so long as they served as puppets to the state. According to Mager “implicit in the apartheid government’s invention and hardening of ethnic controls was the expectation that African men’s power over women and young men would be reinforced. Patriarchal powers were forged anew in this context, through men’s ability to manipulate “custom”, dominate location politics, and embrace the states ethnic restructuring.”⁴⁸ In the Transkei the number of recognised chiefs, for example, doubled to sixty-four and headmen were made subordinate to chiefs.⁴⁹ In Mpondoland, Chief Botha Sigcau supported the introduction of Bantu authorities.⁵⁰ However, Bantu Authorities had negative implications for gender in Ngqeleni. The ability of widows and single mothers to turn to the magistrate for appeal when customary law was insufficient was fast declining.

⁴² Hendricks, ‘Loose Planning and Rapid Resettlement: The Politics of Conservation and Control in Transkei, South Africa, 1950-1970’, and De Wet, ‘Betterment Planning in a Rural Village in Keiskammahoe, Ciskei.’

⁴³ McAllister, ‘Resistance to ‘Betterment’ in the Transkei: A Case Study from Willowvale District’, 350, Hendricks, ‘Loose Planning and Rapid Resettlement: The Politics of Conservation and Control in Transkei, South Africa, 1950-1970’, 306.

⁴⁴ Hendricks, ‘Loose Planning and Rapid Resettlement: The Politics of Conservation and Control in Transkei, South Africa, 1950-1970’, 311.

⁴⁵ R. Palmer, T. Herman, D Fay, eds., ‘Closing the forests: Segregation, exclusion and their consequences from 1936-1994’ in *From Conflict to Negotiation: Nature-Based Development on the South African Wild Coast*, 80.

⁴⁶ Peter Delius, ‘Chapter 9: Contested terrain: land rights and chiefly power in historical perspective’, in Aninka Claasens and Ben Cousins, *Land Power and Custom: Controversies generation by South Africa’s Communal Land Rights Act*, 229.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Mager, ‘Chapter Three: The People Get Fenced’, in *Gender and the Making of a South African Bantustan: A Social History of the Ciskei 1945-1959*, 90.

⁴⁹ Delius, ‘Chapter 9: Contested terrain: land rights and chiefly power in historical perspective’, 229.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 232.

While the states interference into who had access to land and resources was curbed by the Bantu Authorities Act, the states control and management of resources and the ways in which men and women used their environment was increasing through the development of rehabilitation and betterment strategies.

From 1957 four Tribal Authorities were established in Ngqeleni. These were the Konjwayo Tribal Authority, Ngqubusini Tribal Authority, Mcwebeni Tribal authority and the Mtakatye Tribal Authority.⁵¹ By 1958 three out of four Authorities had declared their locations betterment areas.⁵² By 1958 38 locations had been proclaimed leaving only 11 locations which had not requested rehabilitation. Conservation measures were increased and resistance or non-compliance were not to be tolerated. Headmen were allowed to prosecute those who did not volunteer their labour in schemes.⁵³

The introduction of Tribal Authorities brought inefficiency to betterment schemes in Ngqeleni and residents complained about delays. People were also disgruntled complaining that the reality of betterment was different from what was told to them by the Paramount.⁵⁴

“Long ago we agreed to rehabilitation when Chief Poto spoke to us. The then Magistrate came and spoke to us – it was at the time that Masemani accepted rehabilitation. Magistrate said he would return and organise the matter – we waited. At that stage the government was supplying material and paying labour. Now we hear that we have to supply the labour.”⁵⁵

The Bantu Commissioner complained of staff shortages as well as the inefficiency of Tribal Authorities. By 1960, all four Tribal Authorities were not functioning properly and in many

⁵¹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Tribal Authorities: n. 11/1/2, 30th October 1962.

⁵² KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Native agriculture: 8/21/4. Report on agricultural matters 1958.

⁵³ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: n 2/8/3 (12), Mafini Location 1952-1963, Minutes to meeting with the Native Commissioner, Headman and others at the Mafini Location, 13.10.1958.

⁵⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District administration: n. 1/15/6: Annual Report, 31st December 1959.

⁵⁵ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: n. 2/8/3 (10), Ndanye Location 1952, n. 2/8/3/10, 3. 1958, “ Minutes of meeting especially called for the purpose of considering whether or not the people should apply for their application of their area of the proclamation no.116” 1949. 92 males and 17 females attended.

cases corruption was a huge problem.⁵⁶ Officials complained that tribal authorities showed a lack of interest in agricultural affairs:

“Through continued pressure, the Tribal Authorities were induced to hold shows and crop competitions during 1961. It became clear that the Tribal Authorities are not interested in these matters and they had to be forced to apply for their grants from the Territorial Authority. The Agricultural Officer had to organise and generally handle all the crop competitions merely presenting the prize lists to the Tribal Authorities for payment. The last minute attempts to hold location shows proved a failure. It has been pointed out each year that the organisation of shows and crop competitions should commence early in the season but in spite of the experiences last year and constant reminders no efforts have been made this year to organise anything. It is obvious that the Tribal Authorities will again have to be forced into taking action and it is doubtful whether any object is being achieved in continuing to press these services on unwilling heads.”⁵⁷

Another issue was the tension between the amaKhonjwayo Tribal Authority and the Paramount of Mpondoland. The amaKhonjwayo, under Chief Mapiki Gwadiso, lived in the coastal areas surrounding Hluleka. While the amaKhonjwayo were an Mpondo clan, they were independent and did not have to answer directly to the paramount but rather to their own Chief. Despite living in the West, they owed allegiance to the paramount chief of Eastern Mpondoland. However, under the Tribal Authorities, they were expected to be more accountable to the Paramount of Western Mpondoland, Chief Victor Poto. Conflict ensued. The Bantu Commissioner was of the opinion that the Konjwayo chiefs were eager for rehabilitation and supported conservation, but they described their followers as “backward” and stubborn.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District admin reports and returns: n. 1/3/6, Annual Report on District Administration: Ngqeleni 31st December 1959, and 31st December 1960.

⁵⁷ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District admin reports and returns, n. 1/3/6, Annual Report on District Administration: Ngqeleni 31st December 1961.

⁵⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District admin reports and returns, n. 1/3/6, Annual Report on District Administration: Ngqeleni 31st December 1962.

“The fact that the Konjwayo Tribal Authority is not functioning as well is not due to any short comings on the part of its head but is due to the very backwardness of the Konjwayo people as a whole. It will take time for the efforts of the head to bear fruit.”⁵⁹

The slow and inefficient administration of the Tribal Authorities halted attempts by conservation authorities to implement betterment strategies adequately in Ngqeleni.

Resistance to betterment was tied to resistance to Tribal Authorities. This was one of the major factors for the Mpondoland revolt. Outbreaks of violence occurred in Bizana, Lusikisiki, and Flagstaff as rural people protested against Chief Botha Sigcau’s efforts to push through apartheid policies in the reserves. Major clashes occurred in June 1960 at Ngquza Hill, between Lusikisiki and Bizana, when 11 people were killed by police. A state of emergency was declared throughout the Transkei, thousands were arrested and many sentenced to jail or to death.⁶⁰ Beinart describes how consultation, and involvement of peasants in the process of planning, was usually minimal. Local chiefs or wealthier and more educated members of the rural elite could be persuaded that the planners were well-meaning, and might lend support. But early meetings with the mass of rural people were usually characterised by silence. This, optimistic officials mistakenly took to mean that the general attitude appeared to be favourable.⁶¹

While there was fierce resistance to betterment in eastern Mpondoland, the west was considered relatively peaceful by comparison. The absence of revolt in Western Mpondoland was due to the Paramount Chiefs long collaboration with colonial authorities. Pieres and Hendricks argue that “his genius resided in his ability to straddle the worlds of indigeneity and of the colonist, giving the impression of loyalty to both.”⁶² Poto took an interest in agriculture and conservation and supported the ideology of betterment. He was therefore able to infuse “his chieftainship with an ethos of modernisation and development to such an extent

⁵⁹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Tribal authorities n 11/1/2, Letter from Mr Blakeway (Native Commissioner for Ngqeleni) to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories Umtata, 13th September 1962.

⁶⁰ E. Lahiff, ‘Land reform and sustainable livelihoods in South Africa’s Eastern Cape Province’. *Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa Research Paper 9*, (Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, 2003), 80.

⁶¹ Beinart, ‘Soil erosion, conservationism and ideas about development: a Southern African exploration, 1900–1960’, 2.

⁶² Hendricks and Peires, ‘Chapter Six: All quiet on the Western front: Nyandeni Acquiescence in the Mpondoland Revolt’, 126.

that, when rehabilitation schemes were first proposed some twenty years later, they appeared in Western Mpondoland not as an unprecedented alien intrusion but as a natural extension of policies long established in the paramountcy.”⁶³

Reports from Ngqeleni boasted about how resistance to rehabilitation schemes in the district were few and far between during the late 1950s. When describing the region in a report from 1960, the Bantu Commissioner described how:

“On the whole the people are law abiding and well disposed towards the administration. During the past year there were no signs of Tribal unrest. Indications were that the Pondo’s of this district did not sympathise with the residents of Eastern Pondoland and deplored the unrest there, which they feared might spread to this district.”⁶⁴

While chiefs and headmen in Western Mpondoland were welcoming of conservationist plans in their locations, evidence points to a different attitude from Ngqeleni residents and attitudes differed across the district and across groups. These measures were met by some with acceptance, perhaps from those who welcomed the fencing of cattle which allowed young boys to attend school.⁶⁵ Others displayed indifference and lack of interest. For example, agricultural officers complained that residents in Masemeni location and Mampondomiseni were very reluctant to supply labour to help with grass stripping. Yet others complained that in some locations, field workers had to do all the work themselves.⁶⁶ This lack of cooperation made it impossible for officers to complete all their tasks. Headmen in locations were warned that those who didn’t help would be prosecuted and indeed, 150 people were prosecuted for damaging contour strips.⁶⁷ Several refused to allow their lands to be measured⁶⁸ and some were prosecuted for ploughing virgin soil or establishing kraal sites on the commonage of

⁶³ Ibid., 121.

⁶⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District administration, n. 1/15/6: Annual report, 31st December 1960.

⁶⁵ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District admin reports and returns, n. 1/3/6, District admin reports and returns annual report 30th June 1953 n. 1/15/6.

⁶⁶ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Native agriculture, 8/21/4, 1955 report.

⁶⁷ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Native agriculture, 8/21/4, 1955 report and KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: n. 2/8/3 (12), Mafini Location 1952-1963. Letter from the Magistrate of Ngqeleni to the Headman of the location entitled “Contour ploughing and Grass Stripping of Arable Lands”, 15.06.1955

⁶⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: n 2/8/3 (16), Ndungunyeni Location, Patrol Report 7th May 1952.

their location.⁶⁹ Agricultural officers adopted a condescending attitude towards those who did not accept rehabilitation. They complained that those who lived near the sea were backward:

“The majority of the locations, towards the sea, are still inhabited by a very backward people, and these locations will never voluntarily accept stabilization, although they need it the most.”⁷⁰

Agricultural officers were concerned about the scattered nature of homesteads situated towards the coast. Here the landscape is characterised by high ridges and deep valleys with homesteads perched on top of the high ridges. Rehabilitation policy required that these scattered homesteads be clustered together on the most suitable ridges for compact residential areas to make space for grazing.⁷¹ In 1958 people were still illegally building homesteads on the commonage of their locations or in areas that were not designated residential areas.⁷² This is a clear indication of the increasing shortage of land in the district or some peoples disdain for the new conservation measures. Perhaps resistance was more of a make do than an outright act of defiance.

Resistance to betterment was not uniform across all locations. Stock inspectors observed that while the stock far from the coast was of fair to poor condition, along the coast stock was of far superior quality and was continuing to improve.⁷³ An agricultural officer working in Ngqeleni reported that, “the stock in general in the district is from poor to fair, in exception of a few locations on the coastal area namely Lucingweni and Moilo where the stock is exceptionally good.”⁷⁴ This may be due to the good grazing lands along the coast as well as the Heard family trading with locals in Afrikaaner and Hereford strains. Perhaps the condition of the cattle in these coastal areas is an explanation as to why these so called “backward” people were reluctant to have their livestock interfered with. The livestock improvement scheme ruled that people had to apply to the magistrate to bring in livestock from outside the district and while many men applied to bring in a horse or a donkey most

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Native Agriculture: 8/21/4, 1955 report.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration: n. 1/15/4 Quarterly meetings, 29th June 1958.

⁷³ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Bantu agriculture 8/5/2: Livestock improvement scheme district reports 26/11/1952.

⁷⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Bantu agriculture 8/5/2: Livestock improvement scheme district reports 26/11/1952.

applications were denied.⁷⁵ Men who worked as migrant labourers were accused of being greedy when their cattle numbers were restricted.⁷⁶ Officials wanted to send men to take cattle to be dipped instead of young herd boys; this was to enable young boys to attend school. Headmen and men resisted this as it went against the division of labour custom which meant that it was young boys' duty to look after cattle.⁷⁷

Agricultural officers wanted to reorganise the landscape and rural life in accordance with their conservationist ideas despite knowing that many betterment measures were not accepted. A key issue was that of stock being located far away from people's homesteads.

“The arable areas are situated further away on the steep valley sides and along the river banks. This is probably due to the Natives dislike for having his stock graze out of sight from his kraal site. Here it may be possible to excise all valley lands and lands along streams banks and to issue the lands on the level ridges, after the scattered kraal sites have been removed into compact residential areas”.⁷⁸

This measure particularly angered men who depended on their cattle for wealth. In one location men wrote to the magistrate listing the reasons why they opposed rehabilitation. Apart from the security risk of having their cattle far from where they lived, the proposed residential site did not serve the needs of the community. Their objections included:

“1. Grazing are to be behind our kraals, that there should be another residential area which will appear up to the end of the grazing area, so the people may see what is taking to their stock which now as it is will be open to the thieves at any time.

On those grazing areas there is a main road leading to the bus stop at Sebani road also open to a number of people by savages who will hide in the trees which grow along the road.

11. A residential area planned up to this portion will cause heavy task of removal.

⁷⁵ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Stock limitation: 8/5/4, 1954-1959, Applications to introduce livestock.

⁷⁶ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: n 2/8/3 (10), Ndanye Location 1952, file number n. 2/8/3/9: “ Minutes of meeting especially called for the purpose of considering whether or not the people should apply for their application of their area of the proclamation no. 116 1949.” 92 males and 17 females attended.

⁷⁷ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration Quarterly Meetings N. 1/15/4, 1936-1952. Minutes of Quarterly meeting of Chiefs and Headmen held at Ngqeleni, 28th March 1952.

⁷⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Native agriculture, 8/21/4, 1955 and 1956 reports.

- b. People of this portion have no lands excised so by their removal will be far away from their lands.
- c. Some of us are workers and that will mean furtherness from their jobs causing lateness in work resulting to dismissal.”⁷⁹

Legal disputes and land complaints from this period highlight how many people were unhappy about losing their homes to the reorganisation that separated arable land, grazing land and residential sites.⁸⁰ One family from Noxovo Location took their case to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian territories complaining that the headman took their land to keep for himself under the pretext that it was for another arable allotment. This case highlights the complication involved in moving families from their homes to new residential sites:

“We told the Magistrate that our kraals have been in this locality from time immemorial and as a result we have very valuable improvements such as orange trees and banana trees from which we derive monetary assistance to enable me to support and clothe the families of our late brothers.”⁸¹

Besides being far from their stock, people complained that agricultural officers assessed their land while they were away and without their consent. Their families were then forced to move to places that were unsuitable for living.⁸²

Conclusion

Betterment and Rehabilitation came to Ngqeleni in full force by the late 1950s, however, soil conservation and stock limitation was in full swing already by the 1940s and increased dramatically by the early 1950s. This chapter has demonstrated that acceptance of betterment

⁷⁹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: n 2/8/3 (16), Ndungunyeni Location, letter of complaint from men of the locations written on their behalf by E. Mbenge, 20th January 1957 as well as complaint from men of upper Ndungunyeni location and KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (10), Ndanye Location 1952-, n. 2/8/3/10, 1.4.1958, “Minutes of meeting held at Ndanye Location at the kraal of headman Bertie Dlaindyebo, 26 others present.

⁸⁰ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/8/3 (12), Mafini Location 1952-1963, meeting held at Mafini Location at the kraal of the headman, 8.01.1959.

⁸¹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/21/2. Court proceedings at the Chief Magistrate Umtata 28th August 1951, Case number: 2/28/2/42: Statements made from Gqabuka Bushula and Mbambani Bushula and a letter to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories from the Magistrate of Ngqeleni regarding a land complaint lodged by Gqabuka Bushula and Mbambani Bushula against their Headman.

⁸² KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: n. 2/8/3 (10), Ndanye Location 1952, n. 2/8/3/10, 1.4.1958, “Minutes of meeting held at Ndanye Location at the kraal of headman Bertie Dlaindyebo”, 26 others present.

was not uniform across all the locations in Ngqeleni. The Khonjwayo leadership were not opposed to betterment, but rather it was the inhabitants of their locations who were perceived as “backward” people opposed to progress. I argue that the health and abundance of coastal communities’ cattle, as well as better grazing lands resulted in men not desiring assistance in managing their land and resources.

It also suggests that one should be cautious to assume that just because there was no violent resistance in western Mpondoland, people were not unhappy with the outcome of betterment. Stock limitation was accepted and rejected by differently positioned members of the district according to class and gender. Betterment measures threatened men’s power positions within the rural economy as it was cattle that defined men’s wealth and ensured access to lobola. Stock limitation and culling affected young men returning from the mines who wanted to bring in livestock from other districts. Some men returned from the mines to find cattle they had collected for lobola had been culled. Closer settlement which clustered homesteads in neat residential sites away from grazing and arable land raised fears that cattle would be stolen. It is plausible that those who disregarded the rules, especially with regards to ploughing virgin soil or establishing kraal sites on commonage did so out of desperation as there was a serious shortage of land. In a district where the Paramount Chief and tribal authority had a strong hold over people, and where the Paramount was in favour of betterment and conservation, apathy and lack of interest was for some the only means of resistance.

Chapter Four: Gender, forests and the creation of the Hluleka Nature Reserve

The conservation of forests in Ngqeleni was prevalent by the 1920s, however by the 1960s; state fears of degradation and the careless use of forests had reached new heights. By the 1960s, communities in Ngqeleni were already accustomed to state intervention in their use of land and resources. Conservation was associated with forest rangers, agricultural and livestock officers, betterment schemes and conflicts over land allocation. However, in the 1970s, the coastal location of Lucingweni and the small villages surrounding the Hluleka farm and government state forest experienced the onset of nature conservation in a form they had not experienced before, when the Hluleka Nature Reserve was established in 1976.

This chapter discusses forest conservation in Ngqeleni from the 1940s until the 1970s, focussing particularly on the Lucingweni location adjacent to Hluleka, and how forest conservation was increasing in the years leading up to the creation of the reserve. It examines the Hluleka community's dependence on the Hluleka forest reserve and the Hluleka farm (formerly *Strachans Grant*). It also explores the relationship men and women had with the owner of the Hluleka farm, Mrs Heard, and discusses how memories of this relationship shaped how the community handled the creation of the nature reserve in 1976. The chapter moves on to examine the details the establishment of the Hluleka Nature Reserve, focussing on the consultation process and the initial stages of nature conservation. Following this, it outlines how conservation changed men and women's livelihood strategies. Lastly it discusses resistance to the nature reserve culminating in the protest in 1993.

Forest conservation under the South African Native Trust

During the course of the 20th century, the population in Ngqeleni increased and so forest use intensified. Ox drawn ploughs extended cultivation and as a result, forests came under pressure.¹ Despite existing forest reserves, Beinart noted that in eastern Mpondoland in districts such as Lusikisiki, throughout the interwar years, small encroachments took place onto reserved forest areas; "but magistrates, who worked closely with chiefs and headmen on such questions, tended not to take harsh action. By contrast, forestry officials found this

¹ William Beinart, 'Chapter Six: Environmental Origins of the Pondoland revolt', in Stephen Dovers, Ruth Edgecombe and Bill Guest, eds., *South Africa's Environmental History: Cases and Comparisons*, 83.

approach frustrating.”² From the late 1930s and the 1940s like the magistrate in Lusikisiki, the magistrate of Ngqeleni, as well as forest officials were concerned about the increasing degradation and destruction of forest reserves and especially Native Trust Forests (S.A.N.T) which were controlled by headmen.

In the Transkei, headmen were expected to manage smaller indigenous forests:

“Headmen had a duty to protect ‘timber trees’, which could only be cut with the permission of a magistrate. Headmen also had to ‘conserve for public benefit’ all vegetation but could give permission for the cutting of non-protected species. People could remove dry firewood, bark and twine without permission as long as it was for their own personal use and not for sale. Headmen were expressly forbidden to charge a fee.”³

As in other parts of Mpondoland, officials in Ngqeleni were increasingly concerned about the state of headmen's forests and recommended that control be taken out of their hands.⁴ By 1944; Headmen in Ngqeleni were no longer allowed to issue permits to cut forest produce.⁵

Increasing forest conservation measures were part of a new wave of conservation that was “set in the context of a more muscular approach to conservation of natural resources following the Second World War.”⁶ What followed was the passing of the Soil Conservation Act (1946), the proclamation of a New Era of Reclamation (1945) in the African reserves, and “the beginnings of systematic implementation of Betterment and rehabilitation.”⁷ By 1946 the director of forestry in Pretoria had approved that many demarcated forests in Ngqeleni be closed to the removal of all forest produce. Provision was also made for the closure of the entire coastal forest reserves and portions of other reserves abutting on the coast.⁸ Laws outlined how close people could live to trust forests. No arable land could be

² Ibid., 84.

³ Ibid., 85.

⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs: Trust Forests and Forests and Plantations, 1934-1950, n. 8/17/2. Letter to the Chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories, 1942: “Control of Headmen’s forests.”

⁵ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration Quarterly Meetings 1936-1952, n. 1/15/4: Minutes of meeting of headmen and people held at Ngqeleni Court house on 6th Jan 1944.

⁶ Beinart, 'Chapter Six: Environmental origins of the Pondoland Revolt', 85.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Forests and Trees, n. 10/1/2, Letter to the conservator of forests Umtata 23rd September 1946 to the chief magistrate of Umtata, “Closing of certain demarcated forests in the Transkeian territories against the removal of Forest Produce”, n. 24/4/2

allotted within 20 yards and no kraal sites were permitted within 200 yards.⁹ Families who lived close to the forest eventually needed to be moved to new kraal sites and their old huts were torn down.¹⁰ By the end of the 1940s forests in Ngqeleni were being described as “damaged and scarred by indiscriminate and wanton felling of trees.”¹¹ Forest rangers were placed in S.A.N.T (South African Native Trust) forests to override the authority of headmen.

The magistrate of Ngqeleni was particularly concerned about the state of forests along the Hluleka coast, and the Lucingweni and Lwandile locations adjacent to the Hluleka Forest. Commenting on the state of these forests the magistrate wrote in a letter to Pretoria:

“I am particularly anxious that the progressive destruction of the beautiful indigenous forests along the coastal belt should be stopped, as apart from their economic value they are an important part of the natural beauty of our country, which when lost will not be easily restored and we should not stand by and see this wanton destruction proceed without lifting a hand to stop it. I can therefore assure the department that I shall do everything in my power to expedite the reservation of the forests.”¹²

In the villages surrounding Hluleka in the Lucingweni location, homesteads too close to the forest boundary of the Mtakatye forest were noted by the native constable.¹³ The district officer was also concerned about the destruction of coastal forests in Preslie Bay and complained that white people staying in the cottages were buying this illegal firewood.¹⁴ Forest officials investigated the extent of the damage to the Hluleka forest, and their reports told of reckless degradation:

“I again proceeded to Umtata Mouth, and Hluleka, and made a thorough investigation. I can again say that though damage is done to certain of our forests, one cannot even

⁹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs: Trust Forests and Forests and Plantations, 1934-1950, n. 8/17/2 “Reservation and beaconing of Trust Forest”, 21st April 1948.

¹⁰ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration quarterly meetings 1936-1952: n 1/15/4, Conservator of forests Umtata 8th September 1936, “Reservation of Un-demarcated forests in the Transkeian Territories 7th July 1936.”

¹¹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs: District Admin Reports, District Administration General Reports and Returns: n. 2/16/5, n. 1/15/6, Annual Report on District administration: Ngqeleni 1949.

¹² KAB, Department of Native Affairs: Trust Forests and Forests and Plantations, 1934-1950, n. 8/17/2, Forests and Land 1948: letter regarding reserved trust forests and how there are over 500 encroachments to deal with and compensation (people moved for trust forests), 1st November 1948: Letter explaining process of reserving forest and conservation fears of the Magistrate.

¹³ KAB, Department of Native Affairs: Rural Locations: n. 2/21/2 (43), Patrol Report for Lucingweni Location Ngqeleni written by the native constable, 1948.

¹⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs: Forests and Trees: 10/1/2. Letter from district forest officer to magistrate of Ngqeleni 5th November 1952, “Destruction of Indigenous Forest: Preslie Bay area: Ngqeleni.”

compare this with the vast destruction, and encroachment done to Native Trust Forests. Lands are ploughed right over Native Trust boundaries, beacons are ploughed over, huge trees are felled and these areas converted into lands. All this is seen by the eyes of the Forest Department. The natives in this area appear to be ploughing wherever it suits them. There appears to be no boundaries to their lands, and nothing is done by the headman to bring this destruction to a stop. I feel it is time the Magistrate was approached, and that he be asked of this destruction. At Hluleka one native has broken up land right up to the dunes, and one might say he is almost on the beach. At Tshani Native Trust the coastal trees right up to Mdumbi, the Scrub is in a deplorable state.”¹⁵

There was considerable confusion as to where people were allowed and what they could take from the forests. Headmen who were accustomed to managing the forests, were confused about the ways in which these outsiders were managing their forests. At a meeting held with headmen and people, a headman complained of those who had been arrested for cutting trees as he had given them permission:

“People have permission to cut trees from the Headman Forests and they are charged and convicted for a contravention of the Forest Regulations. We therefore wish to have this made clear. Forest Guards prosecute people who cut poles in Headmen’s Forests. Has that Headman’s authority to grant permission to people to cut poles been withdrawn?”¹⁶

Headmen were concerned that the closure of these forests impacted people's need to collect firewood and poles for building. One headman complained: “I have been listening to the matters concerning these forests and I find people want dry firewood and poles for building these huts.”¹⁷ Meetings throughout the 1940s highlight the blurring of the boundaries between the role of headmen and the forest rangers. Restrictions on forest usage angered headmen, and their people.¹⁸

¹⁵ KAB, Department of Native Affairs: Forests and Trees: 10/1/2. Letter from the district forest officer Umtata the Magistrate of Ngqeleni: “forest offences Notinsila,” 15/12/52.

¹⁶ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration, minutes of meetings, n. 2/2/2 meeting with Chiefs, headmen and people of Ngqeleni District 30th June 1948.

¹⁷ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration, Quarterly Meetings 1936-1953, n. 1/15/4: Meeting 31st March 1949.

¹⁸ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration Quarterly Meetings: n. 1/15/4, 1936-1952, Meeting of Chiefs, Headmen and people, 30th June, 1952, District administration reports and returns, n. 1/n3/6, Annual Report on District Administration: Ngqeleni Year ended 30th June 1952 and District Administration .

It is evident that the increase in forest regulations impacted communities in gendered ways. Women who had arable land near forests were forbidden to plough, while others who had planted were unable to harvest.¹⁹ Women in Hluleka recall being allowed to collect wood from the Hluleka Forest despite it being a reserve. Women had to pay a small fee and write in a log book what they collected. Once inside the forest, women admit to have stolen more than they were allowed, as collecting poles for building huts and fences was an essential part of running their homes.²⁰ Not only did forest conservation affect women's ability to collect firewood and poles for building, but forest boundaries led to increased scarcity of arable and residential land. Patrol reports and meetings regarding locations in Ngqeleni indicate that there was widespread unlawful occupation of buffer zones, and in 1948 there were 500 encroachments on demarcated forests in Ngqeleni.²¹ Many were forced to move by the new demarcation of forest boundaries.²² Many others were rendered landless due to revised forest boundaries.²³ People resisted the increasing closure of forests by removing or damaging forest beacons.²⁴ Others disobeyed forest rules and even burnt forests to make way for new lands.²⁵ Despite the increase in forest rangers, there is evidence that people were still encroaching on forest land in the 1960s.²⁶

The granting of partial self-government to the Transkei in 1963 saw the control and administration of the forests in Transkei transferred to the Transkeian Department of

n.1/15/4. Quarterly Meetings, Minutes of meetings of Chiefs, Headmen and people held at the Court house, Ngqeleni On 30th June 1954.

¹⁹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations, n. 2/21/2 (41) Letter to the District Forest Officer, Umtata from the Magistrate of Ngqeleni 3rd December 1941 entitled: "Land complaints by: Cwanyiswa Sigwempu and Jamzimba Mqakam: Nkanunu Location." and Rural Locations, n. 2/21/2 (41). Letter to the District Forest Officer, Umtata from the Magistrate of Ngqeleni 3rd December 1941 entitled: "Land complaints by: Cwanyiswa Sigwempu and Jamzimba Mqakam: Nkanunu Location" with attached statement from Cwanyiswayo Sigwempu 2nd December 1941.

²⁰ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

²¹ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Trust Forests: Forests and Plantations, 1934-1950: n. 8/17/2. Letter from the Magistrate regarding forest matters in Ngqeleni and, 1/NQL, Department of Native Affairs meetings district administration, n. 1/15/4, meeting held on the 31st March 1950.

²² KAB, Department of Native Affairs: Forests and Trees: 10/1/2, letter from Constable informing someone to relocate their homestead to another area as it is too close to the forest beacons, 5th December 1957.

²³ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: Land Matters n. 2/8/3/48 (6), Ntsimbini location Ngqeleni, "Ntsimbini Location Land Matter Nonkwenkwe Mlityalwa vs Mgxekwa Maritshini.", 1957.

²⁴ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, District Administration: n. 1/15/4, meeting held on 29/9/1950

²⁵ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: n.2/8/3/(48), Ntsimbini Location, Patrol Report by Native Constable H.M Yakobi, 1957 file no. 2/8/3 (33). Report made for the Native Commissioner by the Native Constable on forest offences in the Mandileni Location 1958.

²⁶ KAB, Department of Native Affairs, Rural Locations: n. 2/8/3/(48), Ntsimbini Location, Patrol Report by Native Constable H.M Yakobi, 1961.

Agriculture and Forestry. “New regulations appearing in 1965, in the wake of ‘self-rule’ for Transkei, made it clear that the authorities sought to control harvesting actively now that the territory was on the way to ‘independence’.”²⁷ The granting of ‘independence’ to the Transkei in 1976 allowed for an opportunity for conservationists to finally gain their objective of having reserve’s resources closed to surrounding communities.²⁸

It is evident that the former Transkei’s independence in 1976 saw the continuation of South African conservation policies along the Eastern Cape Coast. Embedded in the policies that were being developed was the idea that the ways in which rural people made their living was destructive and that their farming practices needed to be improved. As a result, new nature reserves and agricultural schemes that never became sustainable and had little support from villages were established.²⁹

From the 1960s forest regulations became tighter as more rules restricting the right of access were implemented. Following the establishment of “self-government” in the Transkei, a Department of Agriculture and Forestry was established, which transformed the former demarcated forests into “forest reserves”. “Overnight, people were barred from access to the reserves and they were forbidden to own tools for cutting and harvesting wood.”³⁰ Palmer (et al) argue that these stricter regulations should be viewed in light of the fact that “self-rule” was limited in its scope and representivity.³¹ “The officials in charge of agriculture and forestry were still primarily white bureaucrats accountable to their counterparts in Pretoria”.³²

²⁷ Palmer, Herman and Fay, eds., *From Conflict to Negotiation: Nature-Based Development on the South African Wild Coast*, 90.

²⁸ Frank Matose, 'Knowledge, power, livelihoods and commons practices in Dwesa-Cwebe, South Africa', *Development Southern Africa*, 26:4, (2009), 627 — 637.

²⁹ Kepe, 'Chapter Two: History of rural production, land use and environmental change' in *Environmental entitlements in Mkambati: livelihoods, social institutions and environmental change on the wild coast of the Eastern Cape*, 19.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Palmer, Herman and Fay, eds., *From Conflict to Negotiation: Nature-Based Development on the South African Wild Coast*, 90.

³² Ibid.

The Establishment of the Hluleka Nature Reserve under the Department of Agriculture and Forestry

Under the Transkei Constitution Act, which ushered in self-government, the responsibility for the preservation of game and fish in Transkei was allocated to the Transkei government.³³ Following the Nature Conservation Act of 1971, the Dwesa-Cwebe Nature Reserve was established in 1975. The reserve was fenced and stocked with a variety of wildlife (including alien species such as buffalo, hartebeest, wildebeest, rhinoceros and crocodile), which led to the total cessation of access rights to forests, grasslands and the seashore for the surrounding communities.³⁴

Further along the coast of Eastern Mpondoland, a similar event occurred. The seven-thousand-hectare Mkambati Nature Reserve was established in north-eastern Mpondoland between two rivers, Mtentu and Msikaba, on the Wild Coast, Eastern Cape Province.³⁵ The land was formerly a leprosy institution which was closed and handed over to the Department of Agriculture and forestry. The nature reserve was established in 1977.³⁶

³³ Ibid.

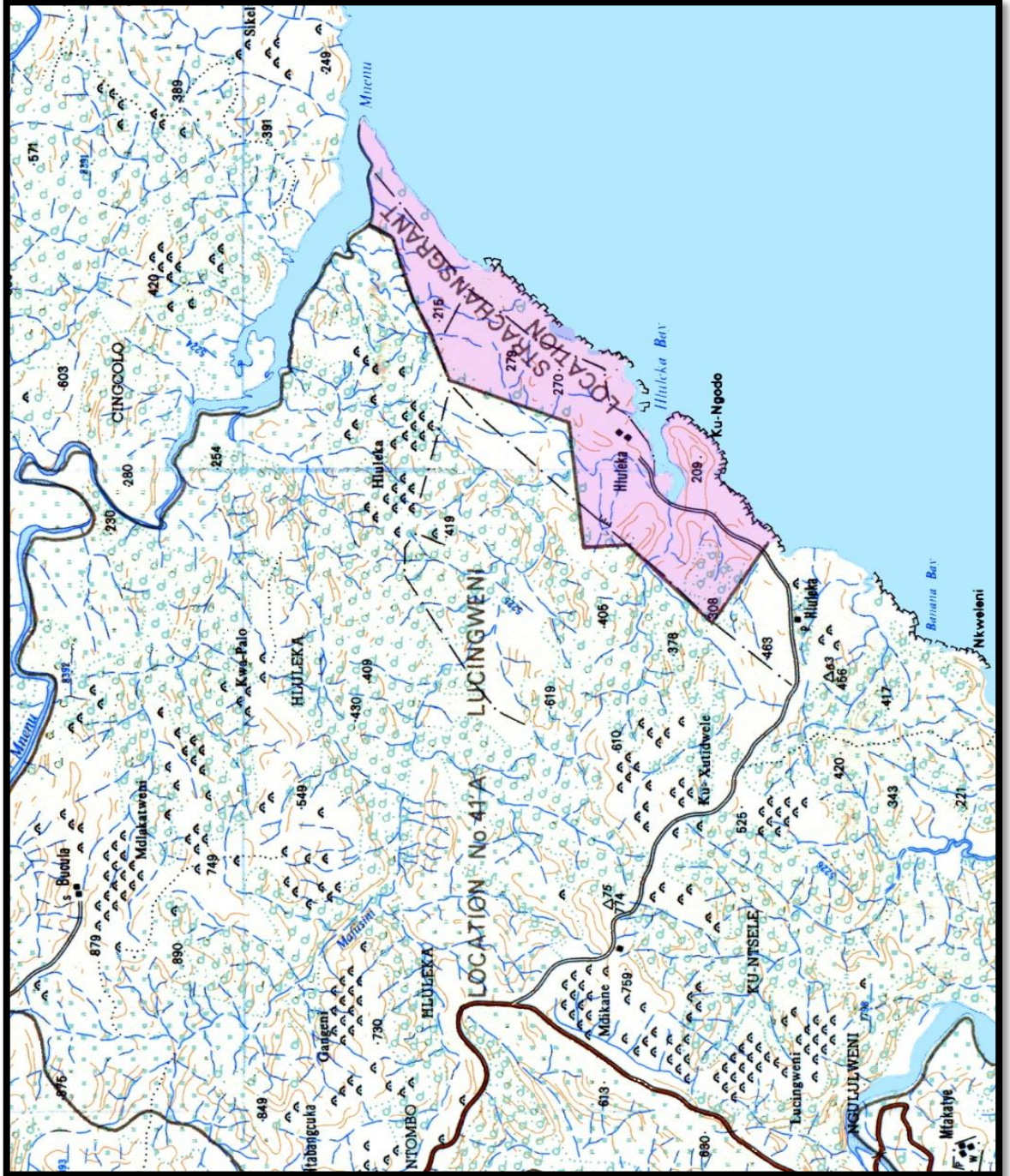
³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ T. Kepe, 'Land Restitution and Biodiversity Conservation in South Africa: The Case of Mkambati, Eastern Cape Province', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (2004), 695.

³⁶ Ibid.

Map 5: Lucिंगweni Location prior to the establishment of the Hluleka Nature Reserve c. 1968

Source: Office of the Chief Directorate: National Geo-Spatial Information (copyright)



In the early 1970s Mrs Heard, the owner of the Hluleka farm was persuaded to negotiate a sale of her property to the Transkei Government to whom one had to sell at that time. However, she insisted that their creation should become a wildlife sanctuary.³⁷ In 1971, Dr. Woodridge made representations to the Director of Nature Conservation in Cape Town for the preservation of the property in its present state as a nature reserve. In 1975, the farm was eventually made available to the Transkei Government to establish a nature reserve and, together with the adjoining Hluleka-Congwane-Mtombo Forest Reserve, was proclaimed as the Hluleka Nature Reserve by the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry in March 1976.³⁸

Ngqeleni residents remember that the headman of Lucingweni, Masinda Gwadiso, disagreed to the proposal of a nature reserve and that a man came from Ntabankulu to meet with the headman, and the men in the village. Women were not allowed to attend.³⁹ In these meetings men were convinced to allow the nature reserve to be established in their locations.⁴⁰ They were told that the reserve would bring employment to the men at Hluleka and they would no longer have to go to the mines for work.⁴¹ Men were also promised that their children would receive training in forest management and that bungalows would be built in the reserve to attract tourists.⁴² The community was promised ten per cent of the profits earned. People were told that the reserve was terrestrial only and would not affect fishing or marine collection.⁴³ One migrant worker explained: “I came back from Gauteng and I found “Nature” fencing ... I heard that “Nature” was saying at the end of the month there was a certain amount that they were going to give us. They didn’t come to destroy things but they

³⁷ Integrated Reserve Management Plan- Strategic Management Plan for the Hluleka Nature Reserve, (2006) Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Oral history interview with Patience Songqaba and her mother Nosayze Songuwaba, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁴⁰ Oral history interviews with Patience Songqaba and her mother Nosayze Songuwaba, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011, and Martha Mayethu and Doris, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁴¹ Oral history interview with Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁴² Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁴³ Oral history interview with Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

were coming to put in animals so that hikers could see here.”⁴⁴ Like most of the others, he accepted the nature reserve.

What followed was not anticipated.⁴⁵ Since there is no written record of these meetings, oral memory is the only source available for the account that follows. The community believes that promises were not kept and expectations regarding the positive impact conservation would have on the community were not met.⁴⁶ It is clear from oral memory that what people imagined nature conservation to be and what materialised were miles apart.⁴⁷ When people agreed to the nature reserve they did not anticipate being locked out and arrested if caught inside. Hluleka was always somewhere where people grazed cattle, took their cattle to drink in the river, collected medicinal plants and wood for poles, fished, collected mussels, and used the road running through the farm to get to the village north of Hluleka, known as Mdzwini village.⁴⁸ The reserve rules dictated that upon entering the reserve on the Lucingweni side, people had to sign a book and take a receipt. Once they reached the end of the road at the Mdzwini side, north of Hluleka, they had to present their receipt.⁴⁹ After 6pm the gate was closed and people in Mdzwini were cut off – apart from an alternate road which was three hours by foot.⁵⁰ If men wanted to fish they had to pay for a day pass which cost R5, this fee went up as the years went by.⁵¹ Those caught illegally inside Hluleka were arrested or even beaten. Some remember rangers forcing them to drink sea water if caught stealing

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Oral history interviews with Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, and Mpulolelo Siphango, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁴⁶ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego and oral history interviews, May-June 2011, conducted by Leila Emdon and translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁴⁷ Oral history interview with Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁴⁸ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego and oral history interviews, May-June 2011, conducted by Leila Emdon and translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

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⁵⁰ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego and oral history interview with Mpulolelo Siphango, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego

⁵¹ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

firewood or medicinal plants.⁵² Jobs that were promised were short lived. A few men were employed in the fencing of the reserve, but soon retrenched. “We only heard they are bringing “nature”, a place that will help us not to go Gauteng as it will have work but they were lying, they actually meant that those people from above [people from other areas] were the ones that would work here.”⁵³ Residents also never saw the profits they were promised.⁵⁴

Moreover, the extended boundaries cut through people’s arable lands and homesteads.⁵⁵ Many families were forced to move and were not compensated.⁵⁶ They saw the establishment of the Nature Reserve as an excuse to move people into closer settlements under betterment and rehabilitation schemes. People said that reasons given for their removals were always vague they were told only that residents from Mdzwini had to move to Xhuthudwele village to make space for grazing lands. People were moved “into other people’s yards”⁵⁷ and their homes were destroyed.⁵⁸

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁵⁵ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

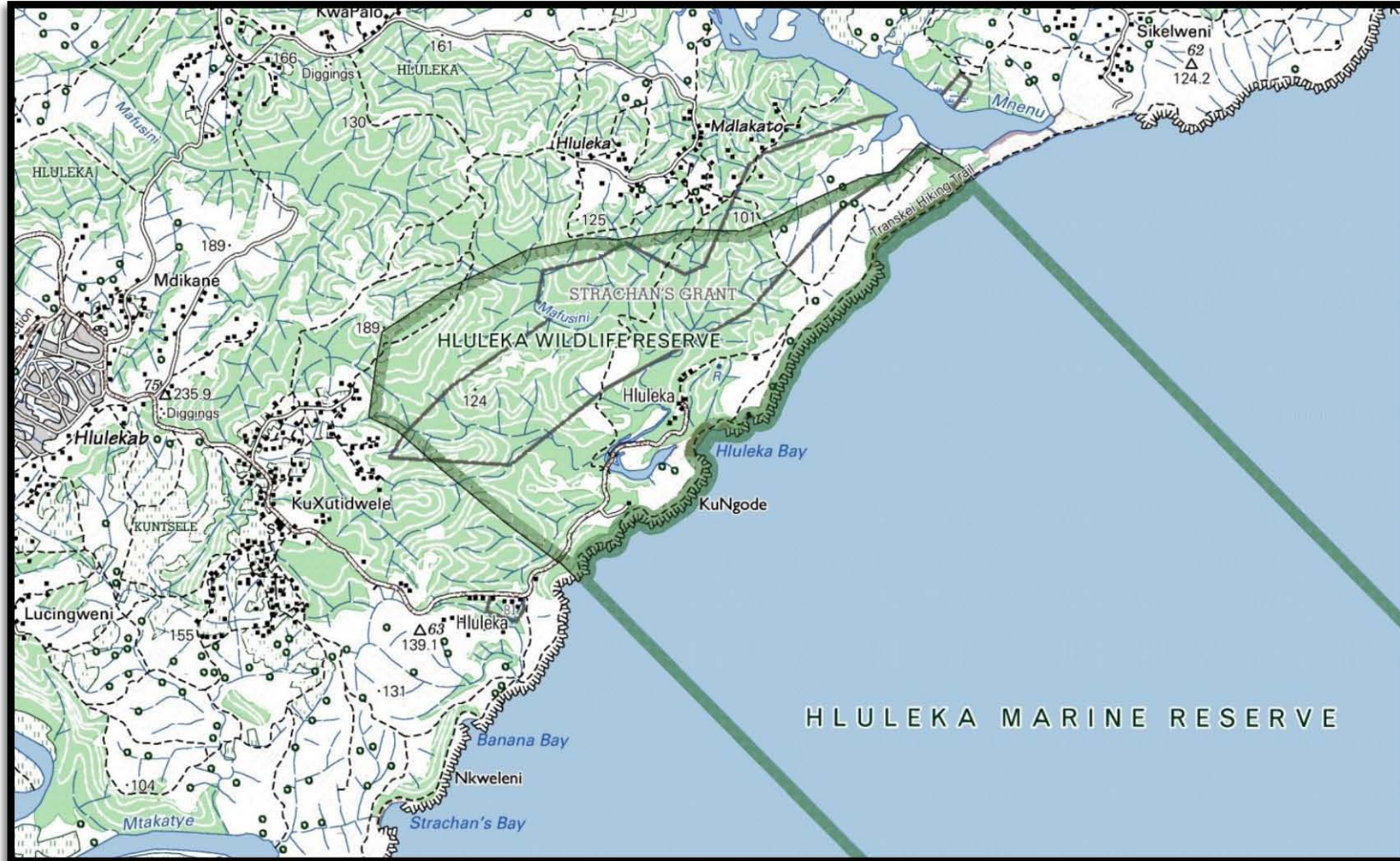
⁵⁶ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁵⁷ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁵⁸ Department of Land Affairs: Memorandum submission in terms of section 42D Read with section 14 (3) of the restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994) ACT No. 22 of 1994 as amended for finalising the matter of the Hluleka Community concerning the land known as Hluleka.

Map 6: Lucingweni Location after the establishment of the Hluleka Nature Reserve and Marine Reserve, c. 2004

Source: Office of the Chief Directorate: National Geo-Spatial Information (copyright)



The establishment of the Hluleka Nature Reserve affected the community in such a way that it significantly altered livelihoods, patriarchal power and social and economic life at Hluleka. Residents explain:

“Inside there (nature reserve), there is a very good grazing land. Many very big and beautiful cows were eating there because there the grass is moist because of dew that the grass gets so our cows would grow very big.”⁵⁹

After the establishment of the Nature Reserve herders had to travel with their cattle to the Mtakatye River which is down a steep and tall hill and further from the Lucingweni Location. They complained that the water there was salty and often muddy.⁶⁰ Cows were important because if people were unemployed they could sell their cows to support their children and for lobola.⁶¹

Women complained that the lack of grazing land meant that cattle walked and grazed on their maize. As cattle numbers decreased due to a shortage of grazing land, they had no oxen to plough the fields. Without the ability to plough people eventually gave up planting.⁶²

“Those [land inside the nature reserve] are our grazing lands that is where we used to herd our livestock ... as you can see. We would go to the fields which were on this side but they closed and now our cows starve and what has caused us not to grow is because the [cows] eat our maize.”⁶³

Although this is one of many reasons why people at Hluleka drastically stopped producing maize, people associate the creation of the nature reserve with the collapse of animal husbandry and agriculture.⁶⁴

The creation of the reserve and subsequent forced removals impacted women significantly. “We had homes just by the sea and we were told to move, people were not given a choice

⁵⁹ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁶² Oral history interview with Patience Songqaba and her mother Nosayze Songuwaba, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

they were just told to move.”⁶⁵ Women who had arable lands had to abandon fields that were fertile. Makhiwa Peter remembers the trauma of dislocation: “We experienced difficulty because we were forced to move from arable land that we were ploughing. There also used to be a soccer ground just adjacent to the banks of the sea. We left everything...”⁶⁶ Women had to rebuild huts or stay with relatives while their husbands were away.⁶⁷ She also lost her husband during the time that people were forcibly removed. With nowhere to go, she was forced to stay with relatives further away.

“This affected us because when we would collect (imizi) from there and there was no problem, we would also gather firewood from inside there. For us without men what were we going to do? It was difficult because even for this thing we would get it from the forest and it was hard ... that’s how my life goes.”⁶⁸

Women from villages on either side of the nature reserve were told that the forest was completely closed. “We were told that not even your dog, if you are walking by the reserve should go inside ... not your cows or any other animal from the community and everything else. The forest was totally closed that you could not get anything.”⁶⁹

People at Hluleka associated the establishment of the nature reserve with the loss of access to a place that played an important role in people’s livelihoods. As one man said “we used to do our grocery shopping there”.⁷⁰ Residents felt they lost land that not only provided natural resources, but they felt connected to. When Nosayze had a problem she would go to a specific place inside Hluleka to perform a ritual to appease her ancestors. Until that ritual was performed she could not let the problem go.

“When I am struggling, when I am sleeping I dream of being by the sea [in Hluleka] and it's the only way I can solve the problem. When I wake up I have to go to that place

⁶⁵ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁶⁶ Oral history interview with Makhiwa Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 04.05.2012, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

but that place is closed and I can't go inside so the problem stays haunting me. This then forces me to go and sneak inside the reserve to go to that place.”⁷¹

The concept of an area that was fenced off and closed to the community came with state control. When it was privately owned the owners and the community had a symbiotic relationship with the farmers. Even before the Heard's, the Strachan's had a symbiotic relationship with the community. The concept of “nature conservation” as zone from which the community was debarred was foreign and signalled a lack of respect for the community.

Throughout the 1980s, restrictions regarding the Hluleka Nature Reserve were increased. Moreover, under Matanzima's power men and women felt they could not stand up and resist oppression.⁷² But the political landscape of South Africa began to change.⁷³ Besides the resistance to the apartheid that was growing in momentum, many migrant workers were striking against unfair labour practices.⁷⁴ In the early 1990s the release of Nelson Mandela from prison confirmed that the country was changing and gave men and women at Hluleka the courage to protest against nature conservation for the first time.

⁷¹ Oral history interview with Nosayze Songuwaba, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁷² Oral history interview with Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁷³ W. Beinart, *20th Century South Africa*, (Oxford, 1994), 236-260.

⁷⁴ Kepe, *Environmental entitlements in Mkambati: livelihoods, social institutions and environmental change on the wild coast of the Eastern Cape*, 25.

Protesting “Nature”

In 1993 men from Hluleka organised a peaceful sit in protest inside the Hluleka Nature Reserve.⁷⁵ Some women participated but returned home in the evenings to run their homes. Women also brought food to the men.⁷⁶ The community wanted to negotiate with the reserve authorities. Their main problem was the closing of the land to the community. People resented having to apply for a permit to pass through the reserve to get to the other side.⁷⁷

“What made us protest was that we could not walk in there and there were many restrictions for us people of this land. There is a village on that other side you had to take a detour to get to that side, or if you were going to use the path inside the reserve you had to have a paper that you would take from the office. Let me just say that there was a permit for walking in there so we were fighting things like that. That when you are walking you needed to have a permit even though you are from here and in other places you were told that you are not supposed to walk in so that’s what we were fighting and we decided to protest and tell them to go.”⁷⁸

People resented the abuse of forest rangers.⁷⁹ Residents recalled that a man called Ndude from Ntabankulu was the first reserve manager.⁸⁰ He was reasonable. He hired many people from the community to build the fence around the reserve, allowed women to collect mussels and men to fish freely inside the reserve. After Ndude other managers followed, each with their own rules.⁸¹

⁷⁵ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁷⁶ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego and an oral history interviews with Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, and Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁷⁷ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego and an oral history interview with Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁷⁸ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁷⁹ Oral history interview with Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁸⁰ Oral history interview with Mercy Mtshazi, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁸¹ Oral history interview with Patience Songqaba and her mother Nosayze Songuwaba, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

The community also wanted the boundaries of the reserve moved as they felt the reserve unfairly encroached on their land.

“We wanted that place because that place used to not be as it is now, it was a small plot but when they took over, they took everything ... a huge land. That place they took is very big.”⁸²

The protest lasted two weeks until some of the men were arrested. They were taken to a nearby police station, statements were taken but no one was charged.⁸³

After the protest, people were allowed to pass through the reserve without a permit.⁸⁴ However, relations between the community and the Hluleka Nature Reserve deteriorated as rules became stricter. The negotiation the community hoped the resistance would bring never materialized.⁸⁵

Conclusion

The establishment of the Hluleka Nature Reserve was experienced in gendered ways. For women, reliance on forest produce, medicinal plants and thatch was compromised, and the boundaries of the reserve forced some women off their lands. Men's cattle economy was threatened as many lost access to crucial grazing lands and water sources. Throughout the 1980s, tensions grew between the community of Hluleka and conservation officials, culminating in the protest of 1993. The 1993 protest demonstrated that men and women at Hluleka had no faith in conservation management. After decades outside state control and intervention and the closing off of their forests and lands, people had little faith in the ideology and intentions behind the conservationist ideals of protecting biodiversity.

⁸² Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁸³ Oral history interview with Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁸⁴ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁸⁵ Oral history interview with Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

Chapter Five: Post 1994: Gender and Marine conservation in the Hluleka Nature Reserve

Following the election of the ANC government, the former Transkei “homeland” became part of the Eastern Cape Province.¹ Hluleka became part of the Nyandeni Local Municipality in the larger O.R Tambo Municipality.² The O.R. Tambo District Municipality covers an area of 15, 946 km and is located on the eastern coast of the Eastern Cape Province, stretching from the Mbhashe River in the south to the Mthavuna River on the KwaZulu-Natal border.³ Within Nyandeni the Hluleka Nature Reserve is situated within the Elucingweni Administrative Area under Ward 20, and since 1994 has had its own local municipal councillor. Elucingweni (Administrative Area 41A) has five izigodi or amaploti (sub-villages), namely; Elucingweni, Mdzwini, Bhucula, Igangaand and Xhuthudwele,⁴ these five villages are known as the Hluleka Community as they are situated adjacent to the reserve.⁵ The Hluleka community continues to recognize the traditional authority vested in the local chiefs. The clan are the amaKhonjwayo under Chief Dumisani Gwadiso. The senior headman of Elucingweni is Mathintela Gwadiso who took over from his late father Chief Masinda Gwadiso in 1983.⁶

¹ The term “homeland” is one termed by the apartheid regime which legitimated "separate development" by referring to the Transkei as being an independent homeland to the isiXhosa people, however, this term has been widely criticised, so it is therefore placed in inverted comma's to indicate the artificial character of the notion that the Transkei was a “homeland”.

² Kobokana, 'Reconciling Poverty Reduction and Biodiversity Conservation: The Case of Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) In Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves, South Africa', 50.

³ Mbatha, 'Sharing Benefits from Coastal Resources with Rural Communities in South Africa: The Influence of Institutional Arrangements', 99.

⁴ Oral history interviews, group interviews and a baseline survey were conducted with two of these five villages, namely the Mdzwini and Xhuthudwele villages.

⁵ Kobokana, 'Reconciling Poverty Reduction and Biodiversity Conservation: The Case of Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) In Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves, South Africa', 51.

⁶ Ibid.

Map 7: Post-1994 municipal boundaries in the Eastern Cape

Source: Kobokana, S. (2007), 'Reconciling Poverty Reduction and Biodiversity Conservation: The Case of Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) In Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves, South Africa'



As previous chapters have shown, conservation ideals clashed repeatedly with the changing patterns of livelihoods and the increasing dependence men and women had on natural resources. This chapter outlines changes in post-apartheid conservation policy and how it influenced the management of the Hluleka Nature Reserve. It focuses in particular on the history of marine conservation and fisheries management and explores the changing livelihood patterns amongst men and women living in Hluleka from the late 1980s to the present. It examines how the Hluleka Nature Reserve and marine protected area (MPA) impacted on livelihoods. It discusses gendered experiences and perceptions of conservation policies, as well as resistance to and negotiation with conservation measures.

The Hluleka community did not feel the effects of marine conservation until 1991, when the coast within the nature reserve's boundaries was declared a Marine Reserve under the Transkei Environmental Decree No 9. In terms of the Transkei Fisheries Regulations (1992), Section 27, no person was permitted to catch fish or remove any marine organism within the reserve "except a person who is lawfully residing in the said reserve and angling for fish or bait".⁷ Fishing was thereby limited to overnight visitors, and local men were no longer allowed to purchase permits to fish for the day.⁸ In practice however, the authorities did not have the resources to enforce the regulations and local people were still able to fish from the rocks, although women were actively prohibited from harvesting inter-tidal resources. While the marine reserve banned full use of the sea, it was regarded by authorities as a loose marine conservation structure.⁹ In 1994 the Hluleka Nature Reserve was taken over by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) and the provincial government Eastern Cape Department of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism (ECDEAET).

Like other reserves along the Wild Coast, Hluleka was cash strapped, lacked skilled staff and was run down.¹⁰ In 2000, the DEAT promulgated the reserve as a no-take marine protected

⁷ Government Gazette: Marine Reserve Regulations, under section 34 (GNR1810/12667/46, 27 Jul90) as amended by (GNR2497/12805/9, 26 Oct90).

⁸ Email correspondence with Dr Alan Boyd, Director of Biodiversity and Coastal Research, Ocean and Coasts, Department of Environment Affairs, 02.11. 2012, Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego, Oral history interviews with Zolile Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.201, and Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁹ Interview with Jan Venter, Ecologist-Scientific Services at Eastern Cape Parks & Tourism Agency, 18.12.2012 and S. Lemm, and C. Attwood, *State of Marine Protected Area Management in South Africa*, (Report published through the WWF, 2003), 31.

¹⁰ Interview with Jan Venter, Ecologist-Scientific Services at Eastern Cape Parks & Tourism Agency, 18.12.2012

area under the Marine Living Resources Act of 1998 (MLRA).¹¹ The motivation for the establishment of the no-take MPA was in response to a national fisheries crisis and intended to protect and promote marine biodiversity along the Eastern Cape Coast. The intention was to create a spill over effect into coastal areas surrounding the MPA.¹² Scientific thinking supporting the establishment of MPAs held that it would greatly improve fish stocks for coastal communities.¹³

After 2005, control over Hluleka and other Nature Reserves in the Eastern Cape was shifted to a government conservation agency under the name of Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA). The appointment of a semi-independent government funded agency allowed for more growth and change in the reserve and a more fluid and efficient form of management that was less bureaucratic and stagnant. Over the next few years, Hluleka improved its infrastructure, employed skilled staff and radically upgraded its holiday chalets. Income flowed directly to the park and management became more effective and streamline.¹⁴ From 2008, ECPTA took up the responsibility of managing the MPA, employing compliance officers to patrol the coastline.

The community experienced increasing restrictions on their access to marine resources over the next decade in consequence of a conservation policy that declared the reserve a ‘no-take’ area and a fisheries management policy that introduced a permit system. There was also increased monitoring and enforcement. This chapter discusses the application of new conservation measures in Hluleka and community responses to them in light of the wider socio-political changes in the country in the 1990s.

¹¹ Government Gazette, 29 December 2000, Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (ACT No, 18 of 1998), MPA no 8: The Hluleka Marine Protected Area.

¹² Email correspondence with Dr Alan Boyd, Director of Biodiversity and Coastal Research, Ocean and Coasts, Department of Environment Affairs, 02.11. 2012

¹³ Interview with Jan Venter, Ecologist-Scientific Services at Eastern Cape Parks & Tourism Agency, 18.12.2012

¹⁴ Ibid.

Gender and changing livelihoods at Hluleka after 1994

People at Hluleka remember Nelson Mandela's release in 1990 as signifying the awakening of a new sense of freedom for migrant workers.¹⁵ For the first time they felt they could voice their opinions about unfair working conditions on the mines. Ironically, during the late 1980s and early 1990's most men from Hluleka lost their jobs in the mining industry, ending an era of migrant labour. Retrenchments were "a result of economic sanctions and the declining price of gold, coupled with mine union strikes."¹⁶ The yearly average total miners employed on the South African gold mines fell from 477 397 in 1986 to 324 441 in 1992. By 1999, in the face of a collapsing gold price, this figure may have fallen to around 280,000.¹⁷ Job losses resulted in a major decrease in the cash coming into rural agriculture leading to a decline in the standard of living.¹⁸ People depended on cattle to plough their fields of maize, and without money, men could not buy cows to plough. Occasionally wealthier men with cattle would lend a span of oxen to poorer neighbours, but this was not always possible.¹⁹

"The reason why it [agriculture] went down is because there was no money; money was supporting us in farming. Those who were still working in Gauteng would help those who weren't, because say for instance, one family would maybe have fewer cows and they would ask me, since I have more, to go and plough for them and other families would also do the same. However, this meant that now, as a community we no longer bought cows because we didn't have money, and I cannot plough for everyone who doesn't have cows with my cows."²⁰

¹⁵ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

¹⁶ Kepe, *Environmental entitlements in Mkambati: livelihoods, social institutions and environmental change on the wild coast of the Eastern Cape*, 45.

¹⁷ Elizabeth Francis, 'Gender, Migration and Multiple Livelihoods: Cases from Eastern and Southern Africa', *Journal of development studies*, 38, (5, 2002), 167.

¹⁸ Kepe, *Environmental entitlements in Mkambati: livelihoods, social institutions and environmental change on the wild coast of the Eastern Cape*, 46.

¹⁹ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego and oral history interviews conducted in Hluleka May-June 2011, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

²⁰ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

At the same time, those who ploughed found that the soil was less fertile than it was in the past, and yields were declining.²¹ Despite these challenges, most men took to farming more systematically, a livelihood that was usually the work of the women in the community.²² Many men still kept a few livestock such as cows, goats, sheep and horses.²³ Some augmented their incomes by cutting firewood and making poles to sell.²⁴ Also, notwithstanding its illegality, some men grew the cash crop cannabis (otherwise known as dagga).²⁵ When livelihoods became more unstable, men at Hluleka turned to fishing more regularly. In the past, they had relied on fishing during times of scarcity. From the late 1980s dependence on fishing increased as tourism created markets for crayfish and fish. This growing livelihood was not isolated to Hluleka. Research conducted along the rural Eastern Cape coast documented an increase in fishing and the emergence of a small informal fishing industry.²⁶ While men preferred fishing and diving for crayfish they also collected shellfish. One man recalled how he would collect “whatever could be eaten.”²⁷ Men usually sold fish to local tourists, however, their main market was a local crayfish buyer who bought crayfish from communities along the coast, stored them live in crayfish facilities and transported them to Port Elizabeth.²⁸ Men at Hluleka felt frustrated that they relied solely on this one buyer and hoped to someday have competition in the market. However, the inaccessible roads and the lack of refrigeration facilities limited the growth of this market.

²¹ Oral history interviews with Nongondzo Gwadiso and Robin Gwadiso, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011, Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, and Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011. All conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego. As well as a Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

²² Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

²⁵ Oral history interview with Zolile Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.201, conducted by Leila Emdon and translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

²⁶ See Raemaekers, 'Rethinking South Africa's Small-scale Fisheries Management Paradigm and Governance Approach: Evidence from the Eastern Cape', as well as research on the Mankosi community near Hluleka in Mbatha, 'Sharing Benefits from Coastal Resources with Rural Communities in South Africa: The Influence of Institutional Arrangements'. For work on Dwesa-Cwebe see Palmer, Herman and Fay, eds., *From Conflict to Negotiation: Nature-Based Development on the South African Wild Coast*, and for Mkambati see Kepe, 'Grassland Vegetation and Rural Livelihoods: A Case Study of Resource Value and Social Dynamics on the Wild Coast, South Africa.'

²⁷ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

²⁸ Observations and field notes taken from observations with the Raleigh family and their crayfish business at Hluleka, May-June 2011

The development of a small scale fishery in Hluleka facilitated a shift from migrant labour to fishing as the most important means of earning money for men. Selling fish and crayfish was a way for men to maintain their status as breadwinners in their families. They derived a sense of pride and status in their identities as fishermen.²⁹ As one man remarked: “This sea is our form of employment that is where we go to work.”³⁰ Many older men observed that those even young boys started fishing and commented that the increase in fishing reduced fish stocks.³¹

Women were accustomed to deploying a variety of strategies to support their families and to ensure food security. These included farming, collecting poles and firewood, collecting marine resources, harvesting thatch, making mud bricks to sell, doing laundry for wealthier families, and collecting medicinal plants from the forest. When the season was right, women sold thatch grass, baskets and mats. Some said that these were the most important livelihoods for women. One woman recalled how “there are people that have taken people to school to pass certain grades with the money they are getting from the mats.”³² Others regarded grass cutting and mud brick making as an essential livelihood for women’s livelihood security:

“Grass cutting and mud brick making I think are essential because if, for example you make bricks, the money you get is better. Even others, I have observed this, have built houses from the money they get from mud brick making and grass cutting. Others only buy furniture because they have built their houses with the mud bricks they were making Others have their own businesses because of mud brick making and grass cutting...”³³

²⁹ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

³⁰ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

³¹ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

³² Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

³³ Ibid.

Women recalled how they learnt these occupations from their mothers and explained how every livelihood had a season when it was most successful.³⁴ One woman commented that despite the decrease in farming, women still regarded agriculture as essential:

“Ploughing is also important but we don’t have cows to plough with and we don’t have tractors, because we can’t have tractors when we are this poor. I sometimes see them ploughing with their hands in their gardens when they don’t have fertilizer or seeds but all they want is to grow food.”³⁵

Environmental change has also impacted food security. “Now if you say you want to plough in December so that by February your mealies will be blossoming, there’s already sunlight then which makes the product die.”³⁶ Women also lacked proper irrigation and fertile soil, making planting vegetables challenging. “Just like cabbage and spinach they have their seasons and when they are not there we are hungry, even spinach right now it’s still small because they don’t get proper irrigation.”³⁷

The precarious business of farming led to women depending more on earning money than on subsisting off the land. “People use money more and don’t practice much of farming and agriculture because they don’t have cows for ploughing and they don’t have money and they are not working. The cows that our fathers left are also decreasing.”³⁸ Women said they liked to grow vegetables such as cabbage, spinach, onions, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and beans.³⁹ However, women regarded wage earning as a necessary means of sustaining farming.

“We want to work in projects. For instance, in projects where women are employed you can see yourself living the good life because you can afford things, because even the

³⁴ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

³⁵ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

³⁶ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

³⁷ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

³⁸ Group interview with 8 young men and women (aged between 18 and 35 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

³⁹ Oral history interview with Ncedo Ntsasela, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

spinach that we plant comes from money, but if you are working in a project then you can go and take from the garden and you relax and enjoy.”⁴⁰

From the early 1990s women like men depended increasingly on selling mussels and crayfish to tourists to earn money. At certain times of year or in a crisis, they relied solely on mussels for their family’s protein.⁴¹ For example, when Nocado Ntsalela’s husband lost his job in 1989 she struggled to support her family and relied entirely on mussels and seafood to feed her family.⁴² Selling mussels enabled her to pull her family out of extreme poverty. She was able to send her children to school from selling mussels to tourists and by making mud bricks from the dark soil near her house. The money she made also enabled her to build another home on her property.⁴³

“My husband had lost work and I had four children, I was REALLY fishing during the day and even at night. If I didn’t go to collect oysters I would go and collect mussels during the day then at night I would go and collect crayfish.... even when you are carrying the rod you have hope that you will get money.”⁴⁴

When tourism quietened down at Hluleka, women sold shellfish to families who did not collect their own, usually those who lived further from the sea.⁴⁵ A few women like Nocado, dived for crayfish, which was traditionally men’s work. Some women said that men did not collect mussels and shell fish because they did not know how, while others said men knew but were just too lazy to carry heavy loads.⁴⁶

Women regarded their dependence on marine resources as essential, especially in times of hardship or when they could not obtain protein or income from other means. Nocado

⁴⁰ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁴¹ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁴² Oral history interview with Nocado Ntsasela, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁴³ Oral history interview with Nocado Ntsasela, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

planned to teach her children the ways of marine collection so they too can rely on it in times of hardship.

“I even tell them when we go there together to catch oysters, I tell them to learn to collect oysters because maybe even for them it might happen that they experience or suffer and they will have to raise their children with this.”⁴⁷

Older women at Hluleka remember that there were more mussels when they were young and recalled how women were less dependent on mussels in the past.⁴⁸

The changing character of women's work at Hluleka in the late 1980s and early 1990s had a significant impact on gender relations. This was not uncommon for communities who faced a decrease in migrant labour systems. Elizabeth Francis's review of research on migrant labour in Southern Africa examines the extent to which the severe decrease in migrant labour and the subsequent unemployment of men impacted gender relations in rural communities. She argues that:

“When migrancy no longer looks like a safe option, rights responsibilities and powers must be renegotiated. Changes in the sources of livelihood raise new issues in rural households, and intensify old ones. Deteriorating economic conditions require households to construct livelihoods from many different resources and activities, throwing into question the material basis of household construction and maintenance, and also power relations within households.”⁴⁹

Women's' burdens were substantially relieved when government child grants were introduced for unemployed women throughout the country. Most women at Hluleka began receiving these grants from 1999.⁵⁰ Grants helped to liberate rural women by enabling

⁴⁷ Oral history interview with Ncedo Ntsasela, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 08.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁴⁸ Oral history interviews with Nolethu Silosini, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, Patience Songqaba and her mother Nosayze Songuwaba, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011 and Martha Mayethu and Doris, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego. As well as a group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, and 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁴⁹ Francis, 'Gender, Migration and Multiple Livelihoods: Cases from Eastern and Southern Africa', 169.

⁵⁰ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

them to control financial decisions in their households.⁵¹ Grants also meant that those who had children out of wedlock had better financial security.⁵² The child grants enabled women to be less reliant on men.

“It’s because I can afford something, and something I couldn’t afford before. In the earlier times, women were always depending on men. In order for them to have money they would wait for their husbands to come back from the mines, but now you always know that even if your child needs something for school, pay day is on the way so you can you can buy it and now your heart will also be free.”⁵³

Studies on migrant labour economies revealed that women who were dependent on migrants’ earnings had less domestic power than women who supported themselves. “This dependence chimes with ‘breadwinner’ ideologies of household relations that emerged in the colonial period. Women’s dependence engendered a more unified model of the household, one that gave men ultimate responsibility for feeding their families and the authority that came with the responsibility.”⁵⁴ As fewer and fewer men were able to provide this support, issues of responsibility for finding an income came to the fore.⁵⁵ Some couples began to acknowledge interdependencies and negotiate, while others disengaged, and households fragmented.⁵⁶ For many women the necessity of marriage was less pressing and some chose to hold on to their independence rather than to lose control over income and resources.⁵⁷ By the turn of the century many households in Hluleka were female headed and many women recalled how they decided to remain unmarried to maintain their independence.⁵⁸

Financial independence was expressed in different ways. Some women said that they appreciated that they were able to buy feminine products without their husbands’

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Oral history interview with Mangcitshane Silosini, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Ziphoxego.

⁵³ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Ziphoxego and Leila Emdon, translated by Ziphoxego.

⁵⁴ Francis, ‘Gender, Migration and Multiple Livelihoods: Cases from Eastern and Southern Africa’, 175.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 187.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Observations taken from informal conversations with women at Hluleka during May and June 2011. Nolethu Silosini, remarked on how women nowadays have boyfriends and partners but do not necessarily marry. She, for example was widowed in 1993 but today has a partner in which she has had children with. However, she is happy not to be married and rather stays with her sisters and extended family.

permission.⁵⁹ Many remembered their mothers struggling to do things for themselves, such as, for example, if their mothers needed to build a home and their husband was away they would have to ask someone for help. These relationships created further dependencies. Child grants and other forms of income generation enabled younger women to build homes for themselves. “If I go and cut a pole, I can ask or hire any man to come and build it up.”⁶⁰ Financial independence also enabled women to support their families without having to return to their parents’ home if their marriage dissolved.

“Our mothers: when their husbands were not caring for them, they would go home to their parents and ask for money to make ilima or then go back home and give up on marriage. Now we decide that we should stay and build homes for our children so that when we die they can have a home.”⁶¹

Not all women could rely on welfare. Child grants were not available to women who did not have children. For Doris from Mdzwini, livelihood options were scarce. She did not have children so she was not eligible for the social grant. Moreover, ill health rendered her too weak to make bricks or to collect thatch or poles from the forest. She struggled to make ends meet and earned a small income taking care of old people and doing washing.⁶²

Men who were not strong enough to fish were also vulnerable to poverty. Kepe’s research at Mkambathi revealed that most families were dependent on their physical ability as well as access to, and control over, resources.⁶³ These factors made livelihood security at Hluleka unstable and precarious for many people who were infirm. For the majority of the community, access and control over resources was impeded by strict conservation measures, as well as the increasing scarcity of natural resources.

⁵⁹ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Oral history interview with Martha Mayethu and Doris, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁶³ Kepe, *Environmental entitlements in Mkambati: livelihoods, social institutions and environmental change on the wild coast of the Eastern Cape*, 10.

“The sea is not theirs but God's”: community responses to conservation at the Hluleka Nature Reserve.

Since the mid-1970s, when the department of Nature Conservation took control of marine and terrestrial conservation, the people of Hluleka have referred to conservation as “Nature”. The grouping together of all forms of conservation under this term is indicative of the type of relationship people had with conservation regulations. For most people in Hluleka, post-apartheid conservation measures did little to change past understandings of “Nature”. These understandings reflected a view of “Nature” as uncaring, authoritarian and disabling.

As this chapter has discussed, marine conservation in the 1990s remained top-down as government departments made little effort to consult the community in their planning, implementation and management of local resources.⁶⁴ Responses to conservation in the 1990s were not only influenced by strained relations between the state and the community, but reflected the acute dependence on natural resources for livelihood security. Since livelihoods were shaped by gendered divisions of labour, conservation was perceived, negotiated and resisted in gendered ways.

Many people believed “Nature” was a threat to people's livelihoods and blamed the reserve for the decline in natural resources and the availability of space for homes and gardens.⁶⁵ As one person put it, “‘Nature’ has finished us. We don’t have gardens now; we don’t have houses where we used to build, so I would like it to go.”⁶⁶ People believed that if “Nature” loosened their rules, they would not have suffered the way they have:

“We wish that Parks Board can just loosen the 'shoe lace' and not strangle us like he is doing. It's not like this in other places, why is it like this here?”⁶⁷

⁶⁴ L. van Sittert, et al., 2 ‘Benchmarking the first decade of post-apartheid fisheries reform in South Africa’, *Marine Policy*, 30, (1) 2006, 96, M. Sowman, et al., ‘Marine Protected Area Management in South Africa: New Policies, Old Paradigms’, *Environmental Management*, April 2011, Volume: 47, Issue: 4, 5 and Sunde & Isaacs, ‘Marine Conservation and Coastal Communities: Who Carries the Costs? A Study of Marine Protected Areas and Their Impact on Traditional Small-scale Fishing Communities in South Africa.’, 10.

⁶⁵ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁶⁶ Oral history interview with Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁶⁷ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

While depletion of natural resource was not directly related to the nature reserve, these popular perceptions amongst the community informed the ways in which people negotiated and resisted conservation both as an ideology and as a set of practices.

While there were numerous changes in the management plans and conservation policies of the Eastern Cape's reserves after 1994, the Hluleka community claimed they did not see any changes, and believed relations worsened when Parks Board took over in 1994.⁶⁸ Indeed, the headman of Mdzwini, the village that was most affected by the nature reserve, despaired that there could never be improved relations between the communities and "Nature," and that people lost hope.⁶⁹ People felt that "Nature" had no right to claim ownership of something that no person could own: "The sea is not theirs but God's", they said.⁷⁰ Many saw preservation of the sea's resources as Gods will; they did not trust state conservation interventions.⁷¹ Some believed the ocean has regulated itself:

"Even though you want to control it, the sea controls itself. When the sea does not want you with its crayfish and fish, it fights throughout that month and does not let you fish."⁷²

Men and women claimed to have followed conservation practices from time immemorial, throwing back fish that were too small and only collecting mussels that were big. "Nature" did not teach them this.⁷³

Reactions to conservation depended on the range of livelihood options available to men and women. For most people at Hluleka the nature reserve provided natural resources that ensured their livelihood security. Women depended on the forest to collect thatch for making

⁶⁸ Oral history interviews with Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego and group interviews with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years), 03.05.2012 and 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012, Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁶⁹ Oral history interview with Mpulolelo Siphango, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁷³ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

baskets, and wood to build kraals and fence gardens.⁷⁴ Young women depended on collecting wood for fuel when they could not afford paraffin. “We have limited wood outside, if they can just open for a few days inside the reserve... we don’t have money to buy paraffin because wood also helps us because we also sell it to get money”.⁷⁵ They also depended on the strong poles found inside the reserve forest, for building fences, kraals and for selling. Communities requested that “Nature” allow them to collect firewood for funerals, but this was denied.⁷⁶ People living in Mdzwini were particularly vulnerable to the reserve closing time which did not consider this community’s dependence on the road that ran through it. After 10pm they were unable to pass through the road which was a half an hour by foot and ten minutes by vehicle. The gate times have posed a serious threat to pregnant women, Fanelekile Nkosine’s remembers his niece giving birth at the gate, and another woman whose baby died because she could not get to a clinic.⁷⁷

Restrictions on fishing were a serious bone of contention. With the introduction of fishing regulations along the coast, men and women found the bag limits of their fishing permits unrealistic.⁷⁸ Outside the nature reserve people were allowed 50 mussels a day and five line fish. There were also restrictions on the sizes of fish and crayfish. People struggled with the limited scope they were given to market their catch as permits only allowed them to sell at Hluleka and forbade sales in surrounding areas. The headman from Mdzwini tried to reconcile differences between the community and fishing restrictions but no consensus was met.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁷⁵ Group interview with 8 young men and women (aged between 18 and 35 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁷⁶ Oral history interview with Martha Mayethu and Doris, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁷⁷ Oral history interview with Fanelekile Nkosine, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

⁷⁸ Group interviews with 8 young men and women (aged between 18 and 35 years), 03.05.2012, 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years), 03.05.2012 and 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) 04.05.2012, all from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, and conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego. Also observed in various oral history interviews recorded in May and June 2011.

⁷⁹ Oral history interview with Mpulolelo Siphango, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Nosipho Kraai and Zipho Xego.

“We also cannot go in to catch those fish and crayfish that are full [many] in there, and we cannot go in and take mussels inside there because they closed and that thing [MPA] really hurt our hearts as it still hurts us even today.”⁸⁰

To show their disdain for the MPA men deliberately caught fish and crayfish inside the Hluleka MPA in defiance. Those who were caught MPA or without their permits had their fishing gear confiscated.⁸¹ Men said that in the past, they were hired by the reserve to clean, cut grass, and maintain the fence and hiking trails. However, the decline in tourism in the late 1990s led to a reduction in work opportunities in the reserve.⁸²

Some people negotiated their way around fishing permits that only allowed marine resources to be sold in Hluleka and created underground fishing networks. Some tourists hid people’s catches in buckets of cold water and fridges. To avoid road blocks, fishermen took taxis at 6pm at night into Libode or Ngqeleni (the nearest towns) where illegal buyers purchased it. Some would taxi in the early hours of the morning before the police mounted road blocks.⁸³ Permit rules also stipulated that they could only be issued to those over the age of 18 and consequently did not consider that some children had to fish and collect mussels for their families. Since Makhiwa Peter became too old to collect shellfish, she depended on her thirteen year old grandson to do so; however he would often get caught and have his catch confiscated.⁸⁴

Women’s resistance to the Hluleka Nature Reserve reflected their dependence on marine resources.⁸⁵ Women from Mdzwini were particularly dependent on marine resources inside the reserve, as permits only allowed them to collect from a small area of about 300 metres outside the reserve. This forced them to collect from inside the Hluleka MPA and at Port St

⁸⁰ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁸¹ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁸² Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁸³ Oral history interview with Makhiwa Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 04.05.2012, conducted by Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Group interviews with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years), 03.05.2012 and 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

John's.⁸⁶ Those who collected mussels from Mdzwini risked getting their mussels confiscated as they passed through the reserve. "If you catch it [fish or shellfish] and you go inside with it, they confiscate it even if you got it from Qhodi [outside the MPA], you get arrested and they return it to the water, even if you are going to sell on the other side."⁸⁷ If rangers caught them collecting wood, medicinal plants or mussels from inside Hluleka they would be chased and even beaten by park rangers. Women recalled injuring themselves running through the reserve at night and without light.

"They [rangers] chase you and you have to run for your life and there is no light so you'll be injured. They beat you, sometimes you are on your own and they are four so they over power you."⁸⁸

Post-apartheid resistance to the Hluleka Nature Reserve was a result of people's anger over regulations and management of the reserve. Men were angered that tourists who stayed at the reserve fished outside the reserve in their areas which were already depleted. In defiance they continued their traditional fishing practices inside the MPA.⁸⁹ However, many fished inside the reserve because they felt they had no other alternatives due to depleted stocks outside the MPA and their increased dependence on marine resources.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Group interview with 7 women (aged between 35 years and 50 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Ziphox Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Ziphox Xego.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Testimony from a young woman from a group interview with 8 young men and women (aged between 18 and 35 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Ziphox Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Ziphox Xego.

⁸⁹ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Ziphox Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Ziphox Xego.

⁹⁰ Group interview with 8 young men and women (aged between 18 and 35 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Ziphox Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Ziphox Xego.

The Hluleka Land Claim

In 1998, the Hluleka community lodged a claim to be compensated for the land taken from them by “Nature”. This section briefly outlines the grounds for this claim.

After 1994, the new government instituted its land restitution programme. Under the Land Restitution Act (1994), people who had lost land because of racially discriminatory legislation after 1913 could file for restitution with the Land Claims Commission and Land Claims Court. Following from the provisions in the Constitution cited above, the Act further stipulates that only rights or land alienation on or after 19 June 1913 qualified, and claims would have to be lodged within three years of the commencement date for such claims. This was legislation designed primarily for the “victims of apartheid”, communities that had been removed from “black spots” in “white” South Africa, or in terms of the Group Areas Act.⁹¹ However, communities who were dispossessed due to forced removals for protected areas were also considered. The notion of ownership of a prime nature reserve reverting to community ownership was met with dismay by many conservationists. It was assumed that this would imply de-proclamation and change in land use from conservation to subsistence agriculture.⁹² Due to this, provision was made to ensure that land which fell under protected areas would remain protected under various settlement agreements.

In 1998, Hluleka Chief M.G Gwadiso lodged a land claim on behalf of the Hluleka community.⁹³ The claim asked for the amount of R21 240 000.00 to be paid as financial compensation for the “rights lost in respect of residential structures that were demolished at the time of dispossession.”⁹⁴ The claim also requested that R 6 924 750.00 be paid to claimants in the form of restitution grants and R1 024 325.00 paid in the form of additional financial aid for the management and sustainability of Hluleka settlement.⁹⁵ The verification of the claimant households and beneficiaries was conducted by a private service provider called Kula Development Facilitators. The claimant verification process took into

⁹¹ Palmer et al, ‘Chapter six: Regaining the Forests: Reform and Development from 1994-2001’, in Palmer, Herman and Fay, eds., *From Conflict to Negotiation: Nature-Based Development on the South African Wild Coast*, 127.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Department of Land Affairs: Memorandum submission in terms of section 42D Read with section 14 (3) of the restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994) ACT No. 22 of 1994 as amended for finalising the matter of the Hluleka Community concerning the land known as Hluleka.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

consideration gender issues, and identified households headed by females.⁹⁶ The claimant community originally comprised 472 households who were dispossessed. However, this number rose to 1050 households and included the direct descendants of the people who were originally dispossessed of their rights to land.⁹⁷ The community endorsed the establishment and the registration of the Hluleka Communal Property Association (CPA) which would take ownership of the restored land on their behalf.⁹⁸

The total extent of the land under claim was 1238, 7553⁹⁹ hectares which comprised the Hluleka nature reserve and the Hluleka forest reserve. The community claimed land on the basis of four historical acts and laws that led to their dispossession. The first was the fencing of the land in 1926 when it was owned by Mr. Heard. People were also denied access to grazing lands when some portions of land were re-demarcated and the Hluleka Forest was established and proclaimed as a forestry Reserve through Declaration No. 111 of 18th January 1929. The dispossession of the Hluleka community was further entrenched when the Sea Shore Act 21 of 1935 was passed and people were forced to move if they resided near the high water mark. The final act was for when homesteads and arable land were reduced into smaller extents through “betterment planning” that was effected by the Transkei’s Department of agriculture at the same time of the establishment of the Hluleka Nature Reserve. In 2005 the claim was finally settled, the settlement package included options to use some of the land for development purposes, while maintaining the land in the protected area’ be co-managed by the state and the community.¹⁰⁰ At the same time, Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism launched its Peoples and Parks Programme with the goal of building better partnerships and relationships with community stakeholders of their parks.¹⁰¹

While most households received R68 000 each in compensation, a portion of the money was set aside for development. The CPA (Communal Property Association) drafted a plan

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Department of Land Affairs: Memorandum submission in terms of section 42D Read with section 14 (3) of the restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994) ACT No. 22 of 1994 as amended for finalising the matter of the Hluleka Community concerning the land known as Hluleka.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Email correspondence and a telephone interview with Mazwi Mkhulisi, Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA) Manager of the People & Parks Programme January 2013.

detailing what the community planned to do with their compensation.¹⁰² These included the empowerment of women and youth through the establishment of small traditional shops and the establishment of a clinic nearby, many women were raped and attacked walking along a dangerous route to get to the nearest clinic.¹⁰³ The CPA also worked with the Hluleka Nature Reserve to begin plans to build relationships, however plans fell apart when the Tribal Authority ultimately disbanded the CPA.

Many people in the community preferred the more democratic CPA and regarded the Tribal Authority as untrustworthy and easily bribed and manipulated.¹⁰⁴ They felt the Chief did not recognize their unhappiness with conservation and did not support their claims to more rights and resources in Hluleka.¹⁰⁵ Some said he did not acknowledge their dependence on marine resources or appreciate the value of the small fishery in the area.¹⁰⁶ He was criticized for dominating the land claim, and doing things according to his will and with the perspective that the communities are his subjects.¹⁰⁷ However, others have speculated that the CPA, while operating under democratic provisions, has been guilty of nepotism.

The stalemate between the CPA and the Traditional Authority caused the ECPTA to delay any plans for co-management and further development of the reserve. This stale mate only results in the further marginalization of the community and the nature reserve.¹⁰⁸ This land claim and the community tensions around it are deeply embedded in power politics. This story requires comprehensive study and analysis beyond the scope of this thesis. It is not yet clear how the land claim will affect livelihoods and conservation in Hluleka.

¹⁰² Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

¹⁰³ Interview with Jerry Mandlenkosi Landule, chairperson of Hluleka's Communal Property Association (CPA, Tralso NGO, Mthata Eastern Cape, 08.05.2012

¹⁰⁴ Group interview with 8 young men and women (aged between 18 and 35 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

¹⁰⁵ Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

¹⁰⁶ Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Jerry Mandlenkosi Landule, chairperson of Hluleka's Communal Property Association (CPA, Tralso NGO, Mthata Eastern Cape, 08.05.2012

¹⁰⁸ Email correspondence and a telephone interview with Mazwi Mkhulisi, Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA) Manager of the People & Parks Programme January 2013.

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated how the increase in marine conservation and tighter conservation measures after 1994 brought little benefit for communities living adjacent to the Hluleka Nature Reserve. Top-down conservation measures mirrored those implemented under the apartheid regime and were perceived by the community in negative ways. The notion of conservation as an outside institution designed to separate people from their livelihood resources remained deeply entrenched in collective memory. This chapter also demonstrated that increased marine conservation in Hluleka was accompanied by increasing dependence on marine resources as other livelihood options were diminishing. It has argued that gendered differences in livelihood strategies led to differences in perceptions and resulted in men and women negotiating and responding to conservation in different ways. However the settlement of the land claim gave the Hluleka community an opportunity to negotiate the terms in which conservation would be implemented on their land. It is as yet unclear what effect the settlement received by the community will have on lifestyles.

Conclusion:

This inquiry into the history of conservation in the Ngqeleni district and at Hluleka specifically, has demonstrated how people responded to conservation in gendered ways, and how responses have changed over time as gender relations and livelihoods shifted.

Chapter one began by exploring the gendered division of labour and discussed the various livelihoods and tasks men and women performed. It analysed land disputes to reveal how widows, women whose husbands were away and single women were most vulnerable to losing land. It showed how patriarchal gender relations influenced who had control over land. It demonstrated that women who lacked land and livestock were more dependent on natural resources, and were at the immediate receiving end of conservation schemes that restricted their access. It argued that men were predominantly dependent on migrant labour but regarded animal husbandry as a measure of true wealth. Migrant labour resulted in men working far away from home for long periods of time leaving the burden of agriculture and subsistence on the shoulders of women. Women made use of a multitude of livelihood practices but their inability to earn wages left them dependent on men's income and natural resources. Women also found ways to earn a small income by selling forest timber, shellfish and thatch.

Chapter two traced the path of conservation in Ngqeleni from livestock restrictions and monitoring and agricultural education to the declaration of forest reserves. During this time, conservationist discourse framed Africans as reckless with their environment.

Chapter three discussed betterment and conservation schemes in the 1940s and 1950s. It showed how, in Ngqeleni, chiefs and headmen welcomed and requested rehabilitation, while their followers were more equivocal. It argued that betterment undermined men's ability to secure the safety of their herds and to accumulate their wealth and maintain status. Women often bore the brunt of forced removals. Reactions to betterment illustrate people's unhappiness with the state's inability to follow through with the benefits betterment was promised.

Chapter four explored the history of forest conservation in Ngqeleni and argues that official discourse framed forest use as rebellious and criminal. It documented how the Forest Department implemented various measures to restrict people's access by taking control out of headmen's hands and placing it in the control of forest rangers. It illuminates how extended

forest boundaries pushed people off their land causing more alienation. Finally it examines how the establishment of the Hluleka Nature Reserve in 1976 enabled conservationists to close the forest completely without regard for the impact it would have on livelihoods.

Chapter four concluded by exploring how the Hluleka Nature Reserve impacted livelihoods and the gendered division of labour. It argued that men lost access to important grazing land resulting in a decline in cattle numbers. A decrease in cattle numbers inhibited people's ability to plough and so women depended far more on marine resources for subsistence. It shows how the closing of the Hluleka reserve affected women who depended on forest produce.

In 1994, a new democratically elected government took power and sought to make radical changes in nature reserve policy. Chapter five discussed the increase of marine conservation in Hluleka after 1994 and how it was received by communities living adjacent to the reserve. Coincident with the increase in conservation, livelihoods and gender relations were changing which shaped how people negotiated and responded to the marine protected area. This chapter argues that most men in Hluleka who had historically depended on migrant labour had to turn to fishing as their primary income. Women became more dependent on shellfish collection as men's livelihood security became unstable. The ability of women to cross over into men's work, such as crayfish fishing, where there are buyers who purchase local catch has given women more control over their lives and enhanced their ability to support their families.

This history of Hluleka ends with the land claim that was settled in 2009. This claim enabled the community to be compensated for the forced removals that the establishment of the Hluleka Nature Reserve caused. It also enabled the community to develop a closer partnership with the conservation authorities who manage the protected area. While this claim could mean the beginning of a new era in Hluleka's long and troubled history, a political stalemate currently prevents this community from moving forward.

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Faniswa Silosini, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 02.06.2011

Makhiwa Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 04.05.2012

Mangcitshane Silosini, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011

Martha Mayethu and Doris, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011

Mercy Mtshazi, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011

Mpulolelo Siphango, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011

Nocedo Ntsasela, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 08.06.2011

Nolethu Silosini, Mdzwini Village Hluleka, 07.06.2011

Nongondzo Gwadiso and Robin Gwadiso, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011

Patience Songqaba and her mother Nosayze Songuwaba, Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 08.06.2011

Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011

Zolile Peter, Xhuthudwele Village Hluleka, 09.06.2011

Group interviews held in May 2012

Group interview with 21 men and women (aged between 35-88 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka, 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego.

List of Participants:

Zwelithobile Ngcala, Msen iPhangelo, Zolile Peter, Nowezile Magudu, Nothembekile Ndabazithethwa, Nothembekile Ndababzithethwa, Nonasosi Khwelo, Makhiwa Peter, Nocedo Ntsaselo, Nosakhele Majombozi, Mathozamile Ngcali, Edward Ngcali, John Ngqokotho, B. Peter, Patrick Mpangelo, Qhekeza Khwaza, Mazwanzima Ndabazithethina, Wiseman Siloseni, Mdunyelwa Ntsukentsuke, Nopotyi Phakelo, and Zamukudunga Zani.

Group interview with 8 young men and women (aged between 18 and 35 years) from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 03.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego

List of participants:

Xolani Sontlamba, Nompi Zimasa, Nompatheko Mbikwana, Mthetheleli Mgebhuzo, LithembaMbikwana, SivuyileNgwaza, NgcalaMawusive and ZandileNondondoyiyana

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List of Participants:

Nothamsanqa Peter, Nokhanyo Jeremiah, Nombulelo Ntuna, Nonkoliso Mntuyedwa, Nomfuneko Nkosini, Nontobeko Landule and Nosakhiwo Sigxokwana

Group interview with 5 men (aged between 39-65 years), from Hluleka and held at Xhuthudwele Village, Hluleka 04.05.2012. Conducted by Philile Mbatha, Zipho Xego and Leila Emdon, translated by Zipho Xego

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