

**SOUTHERN NAMIBIA c.1780 - c.1840:
KHOIKHOI, MISSIONARIES AND THE
ADVANCING FRONTIER**

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ABSTRACT OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Southern Namibia c.1780 - c.1840; Khoikhoi, Missionaries and the
Advancing Frontier

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Applying the concept of the frontier zone as an area of competing social, economic and political influences, this dissertation describes the role of the missionaries in the expansion of the Cape colonial frontier into southern Namibia from 1806. The first chapter examines critically the theoretical concepts of 'underdevelopment' and 'articulation of modes of production', emphasizing the relevance of the latter for an analysis of social change among pre-capitalist African societies. Making extensive use of the missionary records in describing the interaction of the indigenous Nama and Oorlam immigrants around the mission stations at Warmbad, Heirachabis and Bethany, the study focuses on the internal structures of pastoralist Khoikhoi society. The importance of the missionaries is emphasized in chapter four and five with regard to the emergence of capitalist-oriented social and economic structures which increasingly connected southern Namibia to the Cape Colony. The temporary withdrawal of the missionaries from southern Namibia in the 1820s is explained in terms of the exacerbated struggle within the segmentary Khoikhoi social formation for access to the mission stations and for the increasingly deteriorating ecological and economic resources in

an extremely arid environment. Special attention is given in chapter six to the Cape Government's attempts to 'close' the political frontier on the lower Orange River from the 1820s, after a Wesleyan missionary had been murdered in southern Namibia. Chapter seven describes the progressive political and social 'closure' of the far north-western frontier zone in the 1830s as a result of Cape colonial frontier policy, which aimed at the creation of a buffer zone of semi-autonomous African groups on the borders of the colony in close co-operation with the missionaries. With regard to the increasing importance of capitalist trade relations, the dissertation emphasizes continuously the importance of internal factors, such as incipient class relations within the pre-capitalist Khoikhoi social formation, in contrast to external factors, such as the so-called 'Oorlam invasion'. The development of the Nama/Oorlam-Herero network in central Namibia from the 1840s, a turning point in pre-colonial Namibian history, is described in terms of the interdependency of missionaries, Nama and Oorlams in the far north-western frontier zone, which had developed from the beginning of the century. The 1840s, with the arrival of European itinerant traders and the increasing penetration of merchant capital, mark the end of the role of the missionaries as the sole representatives of European norms in peripheral southern Namibia.

The Missionaries and the extension of the frontier into early nineteenth-century Namibia; a chronology

- 1805 LMS missionaries Abraham and Christian Albrecht, Johann Seidenfaden settle at Stille Hoop and Blyde Uitkomst in southern Namibia
- 1806 Albrecht brothers establish Warmbad station; Seidenfaden at Heirachabis
- 1808 Seidenfaden leaves Heirachabis
- 1809 Seidenfaden founds mission at Pella
- 1811 Pella and Warmbad are attacked by the Afrikaner Oorlams; the missionaries withdraw from southern Namibia
- 1814 LMS missionary Johann Schmelen founds Bethany station
- 1815 LMS missionary Johann L. Ebner settles among the Afrikaner Oorlams at Afrikaner's Kraal
- 1817 LMS missionary Schmelen establishes the Steinkopf mission station in Little Namaqualand
- 1818 Ebner leaves southern Namibia; LMS missionary Robert Moffat takes up residence at Afrikaner's Kraal
- 1819 Moffat establishes peaceful relations between the Afrikaner Oorlams and the Cape Government, and then leaves southern Namibia
- 1820 The Wesleyan missionaries Shaw, Edwards and the LMS missionary Kitchingman visit Schmelen at Bethany and travel in the Fish River region
- 1821 The Wesleyan missionary Archbell works among Khoikhoi at Grootfontein South; travels in the Fish River region and to Walvis Bay
- 1822 Schmelen withdraws from Bethany to the mouth of the Orange River
- 1825 Schmelen travels to Walvis Bay, meets Jonker Afrikaner at Tsebris, west of Rehoboth
- 1825 The Wesleyan Threlfall and his two African assistants attempt to recommence mission work in southern Namibia and are murdered near Warmbad
- 1827 Threlfall's murderer is apprehended and executed with the help of various Nama and Oorlam chiefs

- 1828 Dr Andrew Smith's secret mission to southern Namibia; he surveys the political conditions among the different African groups on the north-western frontier
- 1830 The Bondelswart Nama conclude a treaty with the Cape Government in Cape Town; the chief of the Bondelswarts obtains a staff of office
- 1834 The Wesleyan missionary Edward Cook re-opens the Warmbad station and performs functions as a government agent
- 1837 James E. Alexander's journey into the interior of Namibia
- 1840 The Wesleyan missionary Tindall joins Cook at Warmbad; the Wesleyan missionaries travel to central Namibia and re-establish relations with the Afrikaners and other Oorlam groups
- 1842ff The Rhenish Mission Society re-opens the Bethany station and attempts to gain a foothold at Windhoek where the Afrikaners maintain a hegemonic position among Nama, Oorlams, San, Damara and Herero. While the RMS establishes an increasing number of stations among Khoikhoi and Herero, the WMMS withdraws from Namibia in the 1850s; the Warmbad station is transferred to the RMS in 1867.

List of Abbreviations

A	Accessions (Cape Archives)
BO	First British Occupation (Cape Archives)
BPP	British Parliamentary Papers
CA	Cape Archives
CL	Cory Library (Grahamstown)
CO	Colonial Office (Cape Archives)
ELK	Archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (formerly RMG), Windhoek
GH	Government House (Cape Archives)
LMS	London Missionary Society
MAD	Manuscripts and Archives Department, University of Cape Town
NGK	Archives of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church), Cape Town
NMS	Netherlands Mission Society (Rotterdam Mission Society)
'Quellen'	Quellen zur Geschichte Südwestafrikas
RMS	Rhenish Missionary Society
RLMS	Reports of the Directors of the London Missionary Society
SAL	South African Library, Cape Town
SAM	South African Museum, Cape Town
SBK	Records of the Magistrate of Springbok (Cape Archives)
TLMS	Transactions of the London Missionary Society
WMMS	Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society
WMN	Wesleyan Missionary Notices
VC	Verbatim Copies (Cape Archives)
WA	Windhoek National Archives

- WOC Records of the Magistrate of Worcester (Cape
 Archives)
- ZAG Zuid Africaansche Sendelings Genootschap (South
 African Missionary Society)
- ZB Zentralbüro (Windhoek National Archives)

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1. A neglected area and its historiography

This study is primarily concerned with the social transformations which took place among Khoikhoi in pre-colonial southern Namibia. The period c.1780 to c. 1840 marks a crucial phase of transition when African groups along the Orange River underwent economic and social changes that restructured considerably 'traditional' patterns.

It has been justly claimed that South African historiography for a long time neglected the history of the Cape's northern frontier. (1) This indifference to a seemingly irrelevant region reflected the contemporary view of colonial administrators. John Philip, Superintendent of the London Missionary Society, indicated in 1836 that the term 'frontier' had become predominantly associated with the eastern frontier. (2) The attention of the colonial government in the nineteenth century and, at a later stage, of historians centred mainly on the confrontations between white colonists and Xhosa in the region between the Sundays and the Kei Rivers.

This statement of general negligence concerning the northern frontier is particularly true for the history of the north-western frontier. (3) The north-western frontier, comprising the regions of Little Namaqualand and the adjacent Great Namaqualand north of the Orange River, has rarely been thought of as a geographical and historical unit which could be embraced by a

wider analytical framework. Historical descriptions of Little Namaqualand and of Transorangia have not included the regions north of the lower Orange River. There are one or two pioneering academic accounts of pre-colonial southern Namibia, but the present study is the first attempt to describe southern Namibia in the context of the advancing frontier between c.1780 and c.1840.

The interconnections of Nama groups across the lower Orange were recorded by early travellers and missionaries who reported a wide network of social relations that involved Nama, Bastards, Griqua and Oorlams. However, the Orange River became a fixed boundary for historians separating the pre-colonial history of southern Namibia from the history of Little Namaqualand, incorporated into the Cape Colony as late as 1848. There are numerous reasons why historians treated southern Namibia separately from the Cape Colony. Among those is the obvious historical development of Namibia as a German colony, anticipated by a long period of German missionary influence. Migrations of white settlers from a southern direction were barred by the ecological dry belt of Little Namaqualand and were directed to the north-east. The British government at the Cape could afford to neglect the arid regions of Little and Great Namaqualand because confrontations between white settlers and indigenous peoples took place elsewhere. Thus it seemed to be a justified approach to leave studies of Namibian history to historians who were mainly concerned with investigations into German colonialism or into the period directly preceding colonisation, in

acknowledgement of the fact that Namibia was not exposed to the impact of a settler regime until as late as the end of the nineteenth century.

Only one or two scholarly studies consider that crucial period in Namibian history in which there was a massive influence coming from south of the Orange River, the period of the so-called 'Oorlam invasion' at the beginning of the nineteenth century. (As opposed to the colonial category of Bastards, Oorlams were not defined in racial terms. Historians referred to Bastards as offspring of Khoikhoi and European ancestors. 'Oorlam' denoted a vague state of acculturation displayed by Khoikhoi who, partly as labourers for white colonists, had acquired horses, guns, wagons and spoke Dutch. (4)) According to these scholars, Oorlam groups, uprooted and dispossessed by the process of colonial penetration, were furnished with a superior culture as an acculturated society of mixed racial origin, or with a superior technology in the form of firearms and ox-wagons, or were bearers of the relations of capitalist commodity production. Social change in Namibia was thought of as the result of an outside force injecting a massive dose of modernization into more or less static indigenous societies. The studies of Kienetz and Lau have added depth to our knowledge of the decisive impact of the Oorlams on Namibian history. But their descriptions fail to explain the origin of those frontier groups who came into being in the process of social transformation on the Cape's northern frontier. This analytical deficiency is partly rooted in the artificial historical and geographical disconnection of Great Namaqualand

from the rest of the north-western frontier. The regions north and south of the lower Orange River were connected by various social and economic ties. The attention of the historian has to be drawn to this network of social relations in order to describe the dynamics of structural change.

Before the Afrikaner Oorlams secured their hegemonic position among Oorlams/Nama, Damara and Herero in the 1840s - i.e. before the relations of capitalist commodity production became entrenched among indigenous hunters, gatherers and livestock-breeders - Namibian groups underwent a crucial period of transition. This period of transformation, before social relations became dominated by merchant capital - as represented, for instance, most visibly by itinerant traders - is definitely under-researched. No historian has investigated the impact of the first mission stations in Namibia, founded by the London Missionary Society. It is impossible to describe the history of the Oorlam groups in Namibia without analysing the interaction of Nama livestock-breeders, hunters, and gatherers with acculturated Khoikhoi at those mission centres.

If it is correct to describe the far north-western frontier zone as a forgotten frontier, it is certainly true to state that the history of the first missionary attempts in southern Namibia is a forgotten history. This is also reflected in contemporary missionary sources which describe this early period of mission work. Not even the names of the missionaries and the sites of the stations were remembered correctly, and uncertainty prevailed

concerning the numbers of missionaries working at those stations. The indifference to the beginnings of mission work in southern Namibia is also apparent in official missionary accounts and early academic and semi-academic studies. (5) This trend has been followed by historians who, at the most, conceived the early missionary impact as a mere prelude to more important events in Namibian history, such as the advent of the German Rhenish Mission in 1842 or colonial annexation in 1884. (6)

1.2. 'Underdevelopment', the 'frontier zone' and 'articulation of modes of production'

It is necessary, before describing the interaction of missionaries and Khoikhoi in early nineteenth-century southern Namibia, to survey in greater detail those theoretical concepts on which previous accounts of pre-colonial southern Namibia have been based. Lau's recently completed study of Oorlam groups has described the impact of these immigrants as bearers of relations of capitalist commodity production on indigenous Namibian groups. Her analysis of 'underdevelopment', as it was brought about by merchant capital at the time of its subsumption by industrial capital, drawing indigenous groups into the circle of commodity production, is presented with an impressive amount of data. (7) Lau's theoretical approach is based on the analysis of the relations between merchant capital and underdevelopment, a concept that was developed by writers like Frank, Kay, Rodney, and Wallerstein. (8)

According to Lau, Oorlam invaders were responsible for a decisive change in indigenous social, economic and political structures. In short, her argument is as follows. After the industrial revolution merchant capital became dominated by industrial capital, thus adding an important element to the capitalist penetration of colonized countries. The reproductive processes of non-capitalist social formations were drawn into the sphere of capitalist commodity production. Thus merchant capital 'colonized' non-capitalist societies by drawing them into the circulation processes of industrial capital. As Lau puts it:

The expansion of merchant capital into areas north of the Orange River in the epoch of its subsumption under industrial capital caused commoditisation to become "locked" into the social reproduction of Oorlam groups. This ever increasing dependence upon the world capitalist economy, in its local form of the Cape trading nexus, engendered the "development of underdevelopment" by dissolving and transforming previous social relations of productions. (9)

Lau's study describes the system of interaction that connected the different Namibian groups in a complex network of alliances and conflicts. It is convincingly demonstrated that the course of Namibian history during the nineteenth century cannot be understood along 'ethnic' or 'tribal' lines. Her focus is on the forms of production in the process of social change. In this context, a major transformative function is ascribed to the Oorlam groups because these social units depended on trade relations with the Cape. Unlike the Nama livestock-breeders, the Oorlams had developed a raiding economy. The commando became a dominant feature of Oorlam society. Thus it became necessary for the Oorlams to establish close ties to the Cape nexus in

order to furnish themselves with guns, ammunition and other European commodities. Moreover, the 'emergence of commando politics' was the historical process which transformed Namibian Khoikhoi groups into social units dominated by the commoditisation process. According to Lau, the social structures of the raiding and trading Oorlam groups were not dependent on 'traditional' genealogical systems but were based on the militarised patterns of the commando-type society. The dissolution of indigenous kinship systems, social structures, and traditional ideologies was thus brought about by invasions of the Oorlam groups which forced the indigenous Nama groups into the new structures of underdevelopment. The political and military conflicts between Nama and Oorlams have to be seen as struggles to gain hegemonic access to the sphere of commoditisation. The political position of the Afrikaner Oorlams, which probably reached its zenith in the 1840s, was a hegemony that drew Nama, Damara, San and some Herero groups into a circle of raiding and trading.

Lau has presented the best description so far of social transformation in pre-colonial Namibia. However, a closer inspection of her analysis raises some serious questions, both on an empirical and a theoretical level. Though the title of the study suggests an historical description of the period from 1800 to 1870, the analysis is not really concerned with the period between 1800 and 1840. There is, for instance, no thorough evaluation of the data concerning the first missionaries in Namibia. This may be due to the general scarcity of primary

sources concerning that historical period. The amount of (written) data began to grow considerably during the time of the Rhenish Missionaries who entered Namibia in 1842. Lau's analysis is preoccupied with the origin of the Oorlam/Nama-Herero network, which became fully developed in and after the 1840s. Unfortunately, this approach excludes the important period of the so-called 'Oorlam invasion', which is only superficially described as a period of clashes and, at a later stage, alliances between invading Oorlams and indigenous Nama. (10)

Moreover, Lau's description of Nama society presents a picture of a static pre-colonial African society which was not completely isolated from the rest of the world, but lived in some sort of pastoral idyll. The precarious and fragile economy of Nama pastoralists, hunters, and gatherers is depicted as a closed system of self-sufficiency. There is no analysis of the internal contradictions and class relations of the early Nama social formation where the different segments struggled for political and economic control. Her outline of the early Nama social formation does not indicate those transhumant or nomadic patterns of Nama society which are of vital importance for the analysis of the weak political structures of Khoikhoi groups. (11) However, the unpredictability of the economic and ecological setting has to be seen as a dominant feature of Nama society. A careful analysis of the sources creates serious doubts about Lau's portrayal of a cattle-rich Nama economy abundantly furnished, at least in some areas, with grazing and fountains. (12) The first missionaries in Namibia depicted a pastoralist economy suffering

constantly from droughts and famines. This jeopardized the political relations between a chief and his followers which were predominantly based on the leadership's organisation of cattle raids and the distribution of the spoils. (13) It may be added that Lau's depiction of a bucolic pre-colonial society, living in 'self-generating "adequacy" ' (14) hardly corresponds with the information on pastoralist societies that has been gathered by researchers among livestock-breeding nomadic groups. (15)

Another criticism must be made in respect of Lau's comprehension of kinship systems. Data on the genealogical systems of the early Nama society is scarce, but the fluidity of kinship systems should not be underestimated. Kinship systems are social systems which cannot be analysed as rigid ideological formulas that regulate peoples' lives. People use ideas of kinship in every-day behaviour, and kinship systems may adapt to social change. (16) We have to be very cautious in claiming that kinship systems lose their validity at a certain point in history. Lau interjects notions about the reputed dissolution of ideas of kinship among Namibian groups. But how did those kinship systems work on a social and ideological level in pre-colonial times? What patterns of kinship systems changed, and why did they change? (17) Did genealogical systems really become completely destroyed under the attack of merchant capital, or did some patterns survive by retaining or changing their functions? True, the sources are deficient. Moreover, this is not to deny that kinship systems of non-capitalist societies experience dramatic change or erosion under the influence of capitalist penetration.

However, Lau displays an unconvincing mechanistic approach instead of analysing the structural transformations of kinship systems during phases of transition.

Apart from those problems, which seem to be connected to the general nature of her empirical research, Lau's study presents some inconsistencies on a theoretical level. As the preceding quotation indicates, Lau regards the process of 'underdevelopment' as a result of the so-called 'Orlam invasions' which drew the indigenous Nama groups into the circle of capitalist commodity production and destroyed non-capitalist structures. She presents an enormous body of empirical data to demonstrate how Nama groups adapted to the new relations of commodity production as they were imported by the invading Orlams. This process is described at one point in terms of

...the equalising influences of merchant capital which had promoted a very thorough assimilation between incoming Orlams and the original Nama groups...Soon all their social energy was directed towards the reproduction of the kommando structure along Orlam lines. (18)

Although the forces of merchant capital, as opposed to the effects of industrial capital, did not succeed in separating the direct producers from the means of production, they 'underdeveloped' indigenous Nama groups. (19) At a later stage, however, Lau's reassessment of this process reaches the following conclusion:

Thus, here we have a case in which "underdevelopment" may not be seen as a function of merchant capital penetration. It may not be conceptualised on the level of exchange only. (20)

In the introduction and discussion of her theoretical approach, Lau seems already to have discarded any analysis of underdevelopment focusing on the relations of exchange. (21) Thus is not clear whether this sudden rejection of the notion of the underdeveloping effects of merchant capital refers solely to the notion of the relations of exchange, which is vital for the concept of underdevelopment of writers like Frank, as opposed to the analysis of the relations of production which has been developed by writers like Kay. To add to this confusion, Lau continues:

Nor have I here found it possible to explain processes of impoverishment and the transformation of political and social structures by way of analysing an "articulation of modes of production". (22)

Unfortunately, the dismissal of the concept of the 'articulation of modes of production' is presented without any discussion at all, nor is there a debate of this concept in those crucial sections of Lau's study describing the transformation of indigenous Nama groups under the impact of the Oorlam 'invaders'. (23) The abrupt rejection of the concept of 'articulation of modes of production' is the more surprising considering the fact that Lau used J. Taylor's study (24), which gives an elaborate account of the then state of debate and of the 'articulation' concept, in order to summarize the history of merchant capital penetration of the Third World. (25) Moreover, if we read Lau's brief dismissal of the 'articulation' concept we are informed:

This (the inadequacy of the 'articulation' concept) is mostly due to the fact that in kommando groups, as bearers of merchant capital, old forces and relations of production did not entirely dissolve, and the

jeopardised. It was precisely this stalemate condition, reproduced by Nama groups, that made them unable to control and defeat the traders' and missionaries' claims for political and economic rights. (26)

It is, of course, the very concept of the 'articulation of modes of production' which theorizes the coexistence of non-capitalist structures with capitalist structures. Thus the question must be raised: has Lau not prematurely rejected an important theoretical concept? It is a fundamental theoretical inconsistency of Lau's description that, on the one hand, the continuation of non-capitalist relations among Oorlams/Nama is acknowledged at an empirical level, while on the other hand the dissolving of non-capitalist structures is constantly postulated.

(27) There is even a hidden indication that we are dealing here with the coexistence of several modes of production, one of which mode is dominant, an insight that should have been elaborated in the context of the disdained 'articulation' concept. (28) Before I show that the 'articulation' concept may offer a valuable approach to explain the persistence of 'old forces' among capitalist relations, it will be useful to discuss the concept of the frontier zone, which also focuses on the competition between different modes of production.

* * *

The concept of the frontier zone was developed by Martin Legassick in his study on the Griqua in Transorangia. (29) A frontier zone is a geographical and social area where different political, economic and cultural influences enter into competition. This concept stresses the process of 'mutual

acculturation'. (30) Instead of claiming mutually exclusive black and white social systems, a great amount of structural fluidity is stressed, which prevails in an area where political centralization has not yet taken place. People are engaged in different modes of production and integrated in different political systems. Personal alliances to political authorities may shift according to processes of decision-making which are characterized by a high degree of flexibility. In the frontier zone the options for interaction between the different social systems range from co-operation to conflict.

Hermann Giliomee widened this concept by differentiating between an 'open' and a 'closing' frontier. (31) While the open frontier was characterized by a lack of political control and constituted a 'disputed area' (32), the closing of the frontier saw an increasing centralization of power. Giliomee underlines three distinctive features of the closing frontier: political closure, with the emergence of a single political authority; economic closure, with growing demographical (and often violent) pressure on land resources; social closure, with the hardening of class distinctions between those who had free access to land, labour and livestock and those who had lost access to these resources.

These three different levels of European-African interaction in the frontier zone seem to be of great methodological value in the Namibian context. The process of colonial penetration as it occurred on the eastern frontier and in Transorangia north of the

middle Orange River reached its final stage much earlier than in southern Namibia. It was not until 1884 that this area was officially annexed as German South West Africa and we may not justly speak of a large-scale colonial subjugation before the end of the Namibian War from 1904 to 1907. In southern Namibia the economic frontier proceeded at a considerably faster pace than the political frontier. It was a frontier zone which was, compared to the eastern frontier, only marginally exposed to the penetration of trekboer society. Nama groups were exposed to occasional attacks from frontier farmers and other raiding bands but they did not have to compete with a white settler society seeking land. The frontier's expansion into early nineteenth-century Namibia was predominantly an economic and a social frontier represented by the missionaries, though the Cape Government made some efforts to establish political control over the southern Namibian frontier from the 1820s onwards.

However, as Legassick himself has admitted, the concept of the frontier zone has limitations. This is due to its basically descriptive approach in explaining economic and political relationships in the context of the expanding colonial frontier and to the shortcomings of 'underdevelopment' theory. While in his thesis Legassick made use of the concept of 'underdevelopment' in focusing on relations of 'unequal exchange' accompanied by various forms of colonial conquest, he acknowledged later that this approach neglected an analysis of pre-capitalist social formations and the relations between pre-capitalist class relations and capitalist class relations. (33)

The analysis of social change is restricted inasmuch as the various forms of capitalist penetration of pre-capitalist structures cannot be analysed as merely a function of capitalist economy or the colonial state. It is too simple a view to regard the pre-capitalist forms of production as static forms 'waiting' passively for the destructive impact of capitalist forms of production and exchange. The various forms of pre-capitalist relations also determine to what extent the penetration of capitalist structures created new structures where capitalist and pre-capitalist structures co-existed. A critique of this functionalist approach of 'underdevelopment' theorists has been formulated by those Marxist or materialist scholars who defend the concept of 'articulation of modes of production' against a concept of social change based on, as those critics point out, an all-too-mechanistic theorization of capitalist penetration of pre-capitalist structures.

It is not the intention of the present study to contribute to a new theorization of the 'articulation' concept; the discussion seems to have reached the high level of abstraction which often is of limited value for the historian attempting to understand a specific historical period. Moreover, the discussion has, as John G. Taylor states, not been facilitated by the fact that materialist scholars theorizing the transition from a pre-capitalist mode to a capitalist mode of production have been facing problems of interpretation, because Marx's own discourse is primarily concerned with the concept of the capitalist mode of production. (34)

However, the following brief outline of the concept of the articulation of modes of production links up with a critique of the 'underdevelopment' approach which provided Lau's study with an analytical framework. It may be argued that a study of social change among small-scale societies has to focus above all on the changing network of relations between the different groups and individuals. Though there can be no objection to the relevance of a predominantly descriptive account, such an approach must also be concerned with the different aspects of structural change. But the analysis of structural transformation needs appropriate theoretical tools. Moreover, the present study is based on written sources providing the researcher only with a fairly limited amount of data. In this context we may see the justification for the pragmatic use of a theoretical framework: to support empirical evidence.

The following paragraphs will be predominantly based on John G. Taylor's study and on Jack Lewis's summary and critique of the 'articulation' concept developed in his doctoral thesis 'An Economic History of the Ciskei'. (35) It will be suggested that the 'articulation' concept gives more analytical depth to the concept of the frontier zone. While the latter approach may serve to describe social change as a process in time on a descriptive level, the concept of the articulation of modes of production theorizes the problem of transition, which cannot be fully analysed within the terms of 'underdevelopment'.

The co-existence of pre-capitalist and capitalist structures

has been discussed in detail in the context of agricultural African peoples either reacting to nineteenth-century capitalist agriculture or to mining economy and apartheid of the South African state. (36) However, the discussion seems not to have progressed in the context of other pre-colonial African social formations, especially pastoralist nomads.

At this point, it will be necessary to define briefly the terms 'social formation' and 'mode of production' as they are used in the present context. It may suffice to say that the concept of the 'social formation' is not identical with the notion of mode of production. A social formation contains different practices, the economic, political, ideological and theoretical. Obviously, a materialist analysis stresses the determinant economic instance within the unity of the social formation. However, the different practices are relatively autonomous and cannot be reduced in a simplistic manner to the level of economic forces. (37)

Any form of production contains different elements: the producer, the means of production, the object of production, and the non-producer who appropriates the worker's surplus-labour. These different elements, as the forces of production and the relations of production, are combined in any mode of production. Many materialist scholars agree that the crucial element of this combination has to be seen in the relations of production because they structure and govern the specific form of extraction of surplus labour. Thus the relations of production dominate the forces of production, i.e. labour processes - the appropriation

of nature - are dominated by specific forms of surplus labour extraction. (38)

Modes of production differ according to the various forms of surplus extraction. The capitalist mode of production, for instance, is based on the separation of the worker from the means of production by the non-producer who owns and controls those means. Here the property connection and the conditions of real appropriation coincide; the extraction of surplus is structured by the economic instance, as opposed, for instance, to the feudal mode of production where the extraction of surplus is based on political intervention.

In the lineage mode of production the producer is not separated from his means of production. The real appropriation of natural resources is performed by productive units which form part of a specific lineage, organized according to various ideas of kinship. Surplus labour produced in those productive units is extracted by the elders. The elders possess the genealogically defined right to allocate labour and to exchange goods for women with other lineages. Thus women in kinship-orientated social formations are separated in various forms of the level of access to the means of production. (39) By these processes of extraction of surplus labour and exchange the elders control the process of reproduction, which is inseparable from the economic conditions of the mode of production. (40)

The processes of extraction of surplus labour in the lineage mode of production are thus marked by a dislocation between the

property connection and the conditions of real appropriation. The processes of surplus extraction and social reproduction cannot be structured by the economic instance alone; an intervention on the ideological and the political level is necessary, which is expressed in the language of kinship. (41) The crucial element for an analysis of the lineage mode of production lies in the conditions for the reproduction of the social unit, in its dynamics. The dynamics, as Lewis points out, has to be seen as

...the site of the major class struggles which determine the history of the social formation. (42)

The existence of class relations in the lineage mode of production determines the various forms of capitalist penetration of pre-capitalist social formations. Both Taylor and Lewis criticise those concepts which represent pre-capitalist modes of production as passive relations merely adding specific elements to the penetration with capitalist forms. This is where the theoretical framework of 'underdevelopment' falls short because the survival of 'traditional' forces among capitalist orientated structures can only insufficiently be explained as the necessary outcome of capitalist penetration, for instance as a result of a temporary decrease of capitalist intrusion. (43) As Lewis states:

...the pre-capitalist mode of production is held to be an essentially passive vehicle providing certain inputs for the development of the capitalist mode - which inputs are determined by the latter's requirements. (44)

Thus it is problematic to assert, as Lau does, that kinship structures of the Nama social formation became 'replaced' at a specific point in time by dependency on merchant capitalist

relations. (45) This statement implies that a transition from the determinant instance within Nama social formation has taken place, from the ideological-political form of intervention characteristic for the lineage mode of production, to another determinant instance somehow dominated by the demands of merchant capital, a process which is never fully analysed. This corresponds to the theoretical assumptions of the 'underdevelopment' concept which analyses the extent of capitalist penetration as a result of the demands of the capitalist mode of production:

Thus, merchant capital began to subjugate production in non-capitalist formations to the needs of expanded reproduction of the capitalist mode, even without direct colonial domination...this was only possible in the age of commodity production, i.e. when merchant capital had become an instant in the full-fledged capitalist circuit. (46)

Consequently, Lau tries to explain the capitalist penetration of Nama social formation by analysing

...the 'changing social relations that structured the forms of production of Oorlam groups. <my emphasis> (47)

In other words, Oorlams as the carriers of the capitalist bacillus provided the inputs for the penetration of pre-capitalist Nama social formation according to the needs of capitalist commodity export. This view betrays the spirit of Kay's assertion that

...merchant capital is the acid in which the structures of non-capitalist societies are dissolved. (48)

However, it seems that capitalist penetration of pre-colonial Namibia did not provide sufficient acid because some patterns miraculously survived, according to Lau, as 'pre-Oorlam support

systems'. (49)

Despite the fact that the intrusion of merchant capital brings about a transitional period of increased internal contradictions within the pre-capitalist mode of production, it does not inaugurate capitalist relations of production. In the pre-capitalist mode of production, extra-economic forms of surplus extraction may be reinforced and competition ensues between pre-capitalist and capitalist class forces. (50)

During the succeeding period of capitalist commodity export under the conditions of emerging industrial capitalism, pre-capitalist forms of production become increasingly orientated towards the production for commodities as exchange values for the capitalist mode. (51) However, the extent of the undermining of pre-capitalist structures depends not only on the 'acid' of capitalist penetration, as Lewis underlines by quoting from Marx's Capital:

Commerce, therefore, has a more or less dissolving influence everywhere on the producing organization which it finds at hand and whose different forms are mainly carried on with a view to use-value. To what extent it brings about a dissolution of the old mode of production, depends on its solidity and internal structure. And whither this process of dissolution will lead, what new mode of production will replace the old, does not depend on commerce, but on the structure of the old mode of production itself. (52)

In the frontier zone, the different modes of production competing with each other are 'linked as wrestlers', to use Foster-Carter's formulation. (53) That this struggle will finally lead to a fully developed capitalist stage cannot be predicted

within the terms of the articulation of modes of production, because this concept refutes the notion of an inherent necessity about the transition from one mode of production to another. (54)

However, the 'articulation' concept emphasizes the resistance of pre-capitalist structures to the penetration of capitalist structures. Rather than pre-supposing a necessity for indigenous forms of production and reproduction to become replaced under the influence of capitalist commodity production, we must take a closer look at the internal contradictions of a specific pre-capitalist social formation and at the various forms of capitalist penetration which may be more or less successful in changing the processes of production and reproduction.

1.3. The missionaries, the Nama and the Oorlams

Legassick has emphasized the role of the missionaries in shaping and undermining 'Griqua state-building policy' on the middle Orange. (55) In southern Namibia, the political implications of mission work were less prominent than in Transorangia, where the political functions of the missionaries were more explicitly conceptualized and controlled by the colonial government with regard to the security of the northern frontier. Government intervention in the affairs of the semi-autonomous Griqua communities, such as the attempt to use the missionary Anderson in supplying the Cape Regiment (formerly the Cape Pandoeren) with conscripts in 1814, which triggered off a revolt of one Griqua faction, was a decisive element in the interaction of missionaries and Africans in Transorangia. (56)

The political ties between the Namibian missionaries and the Cape Government were less tightly knit, partly because there was comparatively little concern with the security of the north-western frontier in the early nineteenth century. In addition, ivory hunting and trading and the illegal trade in firearms with frontier farmers attached the Griqua more closely to the colony than the impoverished Nama and Oorlam pastoralists migrating in the arid regions of southern Namibia. This, however, is not to say that the Namibian missionaries did not perform functions as representatives of government among their Khoikhoi communities. Rather, these political ties developed more reluctantly than in Transorangia, and they were less intense due to the peripheral situation of southern Namibia.

The first Namibian missionaries, who commenced their activities at Warmbad and Heirachabis in 1806 and at Bethany in 1814, played an important part in the expansion of the colonial frontier. Their work had a decisive impact on the social fabric of the Khoikhoi in southern Namibia, but at that stage the Cape Government was content to preserve the status quo on the far north-western frontier. As long as they stayed at a safe distance from the colony, the missionaries were regarded benevolently as a pacifying influence on the lower Orange by government officials. Unlike their colleagues among the Griqua, the missionaries in southern Namibia operated in a politically isolated arena.

However, in the 1820s, at a time when mission work in southern

Namibia had come to a temporary halt, the attention of the Cape Government was drawn to the north-western frontier. The direct cause of this heightened interest in the neglected Namibian section of the northern frontier was the murder of the Wesleyan missionary Threlfall near Warmbad in 1825. Threlfall had made an unsuccessful attempt to recommence mission work in southern Namibia and was killed by his Nama guides. (57) The murder raised suspicions that the chief of the Bondelswarts Nama was involved. The Cape Government decided to take the opportunity to establish a measure of control over frontier groups on the lower Orange River. Apart from the immediate reaction provoked by the killing of a missionary, the Cape Government was extremely concerned about the general state of the northern frontier in the 1820s. In 1823 the first impact of the Mfecane had reached Transorangia. A united force of Griqua, Korana and Sotho-Tswana became engaged in a battle with dispersed Mfecane bands at Dithakong. (58) The Griqua proved their value as allies of the colony by defeating the 'Mantatees'. Thus the concept of a treaty system, as propagated by the Landdrost of Graaff-Reinet, Andries Stockenstrom, which endowed frontier groups with the status of semi-independent military allies, was adopted. (59)

The secret mission of Dr. Andrew Smith, traveller, scientist, and founder of the South African Museum, in 1828 has to be seen against the background of a northern frontier in turmoil. Andrew Smith explored the chances of integrating frontier societies on the lower Orange into a treaty system similar to the one established with the Griqua. His mission led to a memorandum for

the Cape Government. (60) Smith's report represents both a fascinating contribution to the history of the northern frontier zone and eloquent support for a treaty system which would form a buffer zone of Khoikhoi, Oorlams and Bastards from the mouth of the Orange to Transorangia. These plans were not based on pure fantasy. The murder of Threlfall presented an opportunity for the Cape Government to make an attempt to 'close' the north-western frontier. While groups like the Witbooi Oorlams on the lower Orange River hoped to stabilize trade relations with the colony by regular, legal access to government-sponsored trade fairs, the colonial administrators intended to tighten political control over a region that was considered to be 'terra incognita'. In the 1820s, rather exaggerated notions about the size and military strength of groups on the north-western frontier seemed to prevail among government officials. (61) The high risks involved in a direct military intervention by the Cape Government led to considerations of an 'indirect rule' system. In the 1830s, the 'closing' of the frontier zone, in the sense of a relatively tighter political control, became evident. The government concluded a treaty with the chief of the Bondelswart Nama in 1830, and mission work in southern Namibia was resumed in 1834. When Wesleyan Edward Cook re-opened the Warmbad mission station, he soon assumed functions as a government agent. The chief of the Bondelswarts received yearly supplies of ammunition and European commodities from the Cape Government. In return, the chief, supervised by his missionary, had to deliver regular reports concerning the state of affairs in Namibia. (62)

Does the emphasis on the increasing importance of the political aspects of mission work in southern Namibia not confirm those concepts which focus on external factors in explaining social change in pre-capitalist African societies? Those external political and economic influences, though, have to be analysed in a context where their interaction with internal forces can be adequately grasped. The social transformation of pre-colonial African societies is not monocausally dependent on the 'input' provided by external forces, such as merchant capital or European colonial rule.

The coexistence of different modes of production cannot be analysed within a model where economic and social transformation occurs in more or less rigid successive stages. Thus simplified notions of a reputedly self-sustained Nama pastoralist economy that dissolved under the impact of the invading force of merchant capital have to be rejected. Capitalist penetration of pre-colonial Khoikhoi societies in Namibia was not a unilinear process or 'invasion' which destroyed 'traditional' structures, but has to be analysed in terms of the more complex articulation of modes of production. In this context, the social, economic, and political patterns of Khoikhoi groups have to be carefully analysed. We have to take the extremely fragile structures of societies into account which suffered under the harsh ecological conditions of southern Namibia.

Although the growing dependence of Oorlam groups in Namibia on the relations of commodity production became obvious during the

1840s, the internal history of Oorlam societies was marked by a variety of structural patterns. It is a conceptual simplification to describe the use of firearms and ox-wagons by these frontier groups as some kind of automatic mechanism which invariably turned them into dependants on the Cape trading nexus, compelling them to abandon pastoralist production. This process has to be analysed in the context of a wide range of economic, ecological and social pre-conditions which developed over a period of time. Historians have always mistakenly regarded the history and the 'commando structures' of the 'notorious' Afrikaner Oorlams as a model for the remaining four Oorlam groups. In fact, the different Oorlam groups displayed a varying degree of dependence on the raiding and trading circle. Different political and economic strategies were employed by frontier groups attempting to establish and secure access to the capitalist market.

The missionaries, the Oorlams and the Nama in pre-colonial Namibia interacted in a frontier zone, a 'spatio-temporal area of interaction'. (63) In the absence of competing colonists and traders, it was the missionaries who performed a crucial role in transforming the social and economic structures of the Khoikhoi in southern Namibia. Immigrant and indigenous Khoikhoi settled around the mission stations where new elites soon began to emerge. Most of the Oorlam groups did not evolve as organized social units before their structures were formed by the interaction with those mission stations. The missionaries opened new trade routes and secured previously established ones. Commodities and, most important, firearms and ammunition were

distributed among the mission elite, thus providing for new fissions and fusions in African communities. Until the crucial alliance between the Afrikaners, other Oorlam>Nama groups and the Herero cattle-breeders was formed in the 1840s, the inflow of European commodities was mainly regulated by the missionary institutions. Khoikhoi individuals and families, until then loosely denominated as Oorlams, formed the nucleus of the emerging units later called Oorlam groups or 'tribes'. By the 1850s - at a time when the 'Oorlam invasion' supposedly had dramatically changed Namibian history - only three of the five Oorlam groups had come into existence in Namibia, namely the Afrikaner Oorlams, the Bethany people and the Khauas people.

Like the Bastards or Griqua, Oorlams were furnished by the Christian religion with a new ideology. A new social context developed, symbolized by the bible and the mission church. While the impoverished sections of the mission communities received a limited amount of material supplies and also spiritual support, the mission elite made use of missionaries in order to maintain and improve positions of political power. Firearms were distributed among those who had assumed the higher ranks in mission communities as interpreters, wagon drivers and so-called native assistants. Co-operation with the mission centre exacerbated the distinctions between Oorlams and Nama to the advantage of the former. Significantly, it is in some cases difficult to assess if members of this new elite emerged from indigenous Nama groups or from immigrated Oorlam families. A clear distinction between Nama and Oorlams was difficult to

define for the missionaries because the dividing line was drawn at a cultural level, not in racial terms.

However, though the missionaries acted as carriers of external forces, such as capitalist exchange relations, social change in the Namibian frontier zone was connected to a variety of internal forces, and it is those internal factors, such as the conditions of the pastoralist economy, which the present study will continuously emphasize.

The missionary accounts on which a description of the people of southern Namibia must partly be based are often heavily biased by a paternalistic Eurocentrism. Missionaries came as social revolutionaries to indigenous Namibian groups, i.e. their intention was to transform Nama society. Hence their records emphasize those aspects of Nama culture which seemed odd or incomprehensible to the European observer. Thus we have not only to cope with the missionaries' distortions but with their omissions as well. Schapera has demonstrated that an outstanding missionary like Robert Moffat was an astonishingly superficial ethnographer, who, for example, omitted any reference to the ancestor cult of the Tswana in his letters. (64) Aspects of indigenous culture which were considered to be obscene or barbarous were not adequately analysed by Christian missionaries who, for example, took refuge in hazy terms like 'adultery' to describe a sexual permissiveness that differed decisively from European norms. The existence of initiation ceremonies among the Nama, similar to the 'andersmaak' rites as described by Kolb and other observers (65), was mentioned bashfully by the missionary

Tindall in c. 1840. (66) The concept of a Khoikhoi initiation ceremony where the elder men would urinate upon the boys obviously overstrained the missionary's moral standards. After spending more than two years among the !Kharakhoen at Heirachabis, missionary Seidenfaden claimed:

They have no religion... but I shall not speak anymore of these follies because they are too ridiculous to be mentioned. (67)

Remarks like this one point to the problem of the missionary as observer of a non-European culture. It is perhaps not too far-fetched to assume that the inability to collect data within an alien culture does not only reflect ideological misconceptions. The missionaries in Great Namaqualand were preoccupied with installing mission centres among pastoralists who led a migratory life, seasonally dispersed in a vast area that could not be controlled from the stations. Cultural traits of the Nama society may have displayed a larger variety in the veld where there were no Eurocentric missionary influences. Thus indigenous behavioural patterns have to be seen in a wider context, according to the statement of some Nama that 'there is a need for god at the station but not in the veld'. (68)

The sources for a historical description of the north-western frontier zone are undoubtedly scarce. However, as Miklos Szalay argues in his outline of 'ethno-historical' methodology in the context of Khoisan history: even scarce sources may provide us with relevant answers if we ask the relevant questions. (69)

NOTES CHAPTER ONE

- 1) Martin Legassick, 'The Griqua, the Sotho-Tswana, and the Missionaries 1780-1840: The Politics of a Frontier Zone' (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of California, 1969), p.102. See also Legassick, 'The Northern Frontier to c.1840: The rise and decline of the Griqua people', in R. Elphick and H. Giliomee (eds.), The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840, (Cape Town, 1979; new ed. Cape Town, 1989).
- 2) British Parliamentary Papers (BPP), Aborigines, vol.1, p.608.
- 3) This statement has to be qualified. The research being presently done by Nigel Penn focuses on the history of the Northern Cape in the eighteenth century. His findings will appear in a forthcoming Ph.D. thesis. See also Penn, 'The Frontier in the Western Cape 1700- 1740', in John Parkington and Marin Hall (eds.), Papers in the Prehistory of the Western Cape, South Africa (BAR International Series, 332, 2, 1987); 'Labour, Land and Livestock in the Western Cape during the Eighteenth Century: The Khoisan and the Colonists' (paper for the conference: Western Cape. Roots and Realities, University of Cape Town, 1986); 'Pastoralists and Pastoralism in the Northern Cape Frontier Zone during the Eighteenth Century', in M. Hall and Andrew B. Smith, eds., Prehistoric Pastoralism in Southern Africa, (South African Archaeological Society Goodwin Series), 5, (1986).
- 4) See Alvin Kienetz, 'The Key Role of the Orlam Migrations in the Early Europeanization of South West Africa (Namibia)', International Journal of African Historical Studies, 10 (4) (1977).
- 5) Richard Lovett, The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895, 2 vols. (London, 1899); Du Plessis, A History of Christian Missions in South Africa (London, 1911). Vedder errs in decisive details: see Heinrich Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika. Südwestafrikas Geschichte bis zum Tode Mahareros 1890 (Berlin, 1934; reprint Windhoek, 1985), pp.189-199.
- 6) See for instance Kienetz, 'Nineteenth-Century South West Africa as a German Settlement Colony', (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of Minnesota, 1976).
- 7) Brigitte Lau, 'The Emergence of Kommando Politics in Namaland, Southern Namibia, 1800-1870' (unpub. MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 1982). See also Lau, 'Conflict and Power in Nineteenth-Century Namibia', Journal of African History, 27 (1986); Lau, Southern and Central Namibia in Jonker Afrikaner's Time, Windhoek Archives Publication Series No. 8 (1987).

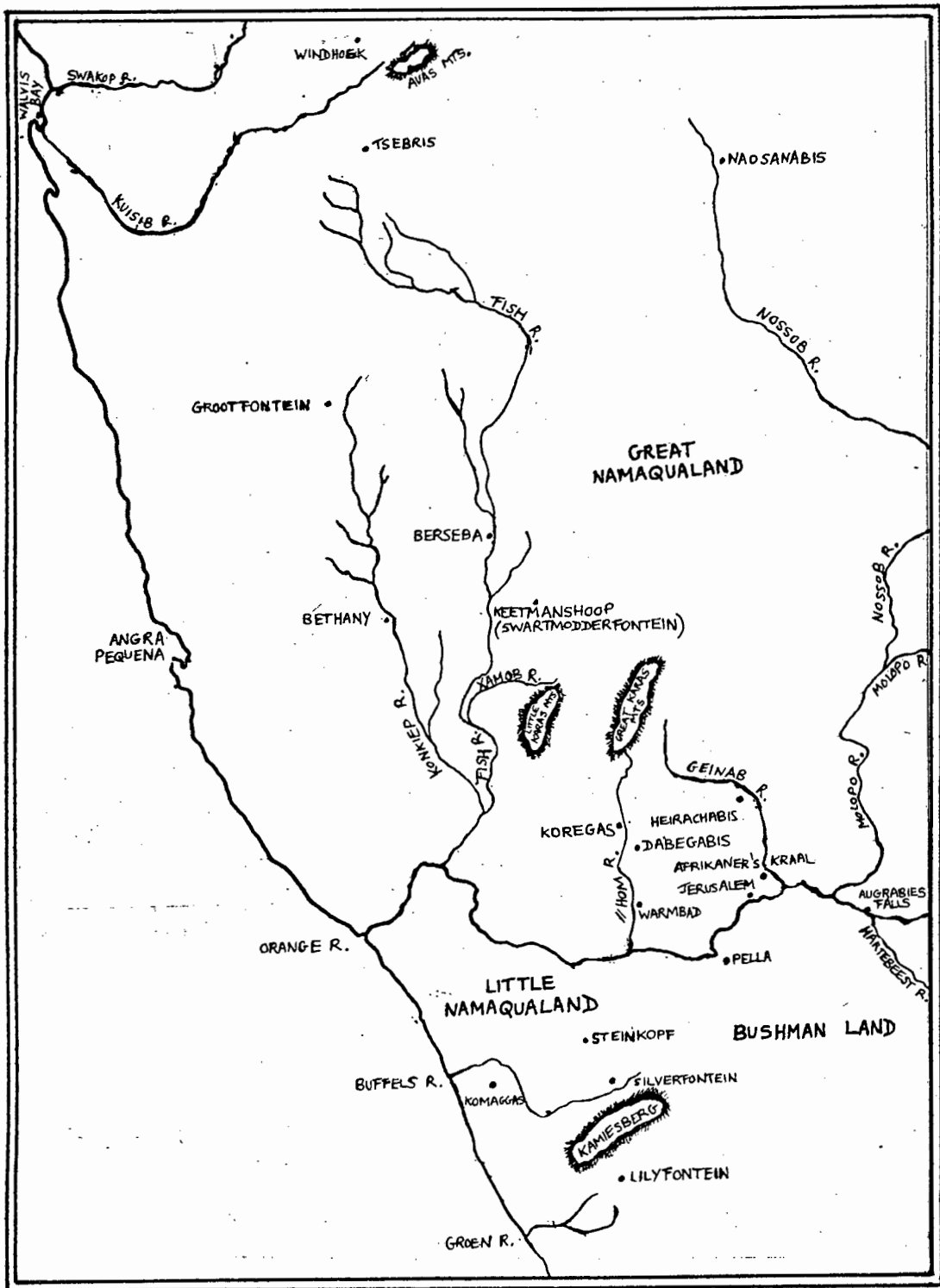
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- 9) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.22.
- 10) Lau, 'The Emergence', pp.61-68.
- 11) Lau, 'The Emergence', pp.72-90.
- 12) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.75, 76, 82, 126.
- 13) For instance Cape Archives (CA), LMS letter, J.Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811; CA, LMS letter, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 24 August 1808.
- 14) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.77.
- 15) See Théodore Monod, Pastoralism in Tropical Africa, (London, 1975).
- 16) Compare, for instance, Ladislav Holy, Neighbours and Kinsmen. A Study of the Berti People of Darfur, (London, 1974).
- 17) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.167.
- 18) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.353. See also pp.147-148.
- 19) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.354.
- 20) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.367.
- 21) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.18.
- 22) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.367.
- 23) See Lau, 'The Emergence', Ch 5: The Emergence of the Kommando in Nama Groups, 1835-1850.
- 24) Lau, 'The Emergence', pp.19-21.
- 25) John G. Taylor, From Modernization to Modes of Production. A Critique of the Sociologies of Development and Underdevelopment, (London, 1979).
- 26) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.367.
- 27) See Lau, 'The Emergence', p.105, 115.
- 28) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.110.

- 29) Legassick, 'The Griqua'.
- 30) Legassick, 'The Griqua', p.12.
- 31) Hermann Giliomee, 'The Eastern Frontier, 1770-1812', in The Shaping. See also Giliomee, 'Processes in Development of the South African Frontier', in H.Lamar and L.Thompson (eds.), The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa Compared (New Haven, 1981); Giliomee, 'Eighteenth Century Cape Society and its Historiography: Culture, Race and Class', Social Dynamics, 9 (1) (1983).
- 32) Giliomee, 'The Eastern Frontier', p.427.
- 33) See Legassick, 'The Northern Frontier', in the 1. edition of The Shaping, p.245.
- 34) John G. Taylor, Modernization, pp.152-157.
- 35) Jack Lewis, 'An Economic History of the Ciskei', (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1984).
- 36) See Lewis, 'Economic History', pp.105-115, 128-131.
- 37) Taylor, Modernization, pp.106-123.
- 38) Taylor, Modernization, p.109.
- 39) Taylor, Modernization, p.33. See also Jeff Guy, 'Analysing Pre-Capitalist Societies in Southern Africa', Journal of Southern African Studies, 14 (1) 1987).
- 40) Lewis, 'Economic History', p.112.
- 41) Taylor, Modernization, p.112.
- 42) Lewis, 'Economic History', p.112.
- 43) Taylor, Modernization, p.95.
- 44) Lewis, 'Economic History', p.111.
- 45) Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, p.42.
- 46) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.21.
- 47) Lau, 'The Emergence', p.22.
- 48) Kay, Development and Underdevelopment, p.94.
- 49) Lau, 'Jonker Afrikaner's Time', p.65. See also Henry Bernstein, 'Underdevelopment and the Law of Value: a critique of Kay', Review of African Political Economy, 6 (1976).

- 50) Taylor, Modernization, pp.187-198.
- 51) Taylor, Modernization, pp.199-205.
- 52) Lewis, 'Economic History', p.76.
- 53) Aidan Foster-Carter, 'The Modes of Production Controversy', New Left Review, 107 (1978), p.73.
- 54) Taylor, Modernization, p.141.
- 55) Legassick, 'The Griqua', pp.379-479.
- 56) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', pp.384-387.
- 57) See M. Allen Birthwhistle, William Threlfall. A Study in Missionary Vocation, (London, 1966); Thomas Cheeseman, The Story of William Threlfall, Martyr of Namaqualand, (Cape Town, 1910).
- 58) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.396. See also Julian Cobbing, 'The case against the Mfecane', (unpub. paper, Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, 1983; Margret Kinsman, 'The Impact of the Difaqane on Southern Tswana Communities with Special Reference to the Rolong', (paper delivered at the History Workshop Class, Community and Conflict: Local Perspectives, University of Witwatersrand, 1984).
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- 62) For instance CA, Government House (GH), vol.19/4, E.Cook and Abraham Christian to Sir B. D'Urban, 30 September 1837.
- 63) Penn, 'Pastoralists', p.62.
- 64) I. Schapera (ed.), Apprenticeship at Kuruman. Journals and letters of Robert and Mary Moffat, (London, 1951), pp.XXV.
- 65) Peter Kolb, Unter Hottentotten, 1705-1713, (Tübingen and Basel, 1979), pp.72-89.
- 66) B.A. Tindall, The Journal of Joseph Tindall. Missionary in

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- 67) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.
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MAP 1 SOUTHERN NAMIBIA AND THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER ZONE IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER II: THE NAMA OF SOUTHERN NAMIBIA IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

2.1. Political aspects

The fragile political and social structures of the Nama were closely connected to the peculiar conditions of an extremely harsh ecological environment, especially in the south-eastern region of Namibia. The region from the Orange River up to the present Rehoboth is in general characterized by its aridity. Veld types range from the scrub veld-type in the Rehoboth area to the sub-desert steppe-type which extends over the southern part of the plateau down to the Orange. Southern Namibia's climate is marked by periodic droughts. With the exception of the Orange, its rivers are not perennial. The low average rainfall of about 100 mm per year contributes to the extreme ecological environment. The area from the Orange to Rehoboth is generally not suited for cattle which need grassy fields for grazing. Sheep and goats usually thrive well on scrub and bushes. (1)

One can assume that these ecological conditions are partly a result of a process of deterioration that originated during the last century. Kienetz has stressed the significance of guns and horses in connection with the raiding economy of the Nama/Dorlams. (2) Raiding, large-scale hunting, and the increasing concentration of larger groups near pasturages and water-holes doubtless escalated the process of ecological degradation. Thus the extermination of game and the accelerated erosion of the natural environment were to a great extent due to

structural changes in social and economic conditions. (3) Nevertheless we have to be careful not to fall victim to monocausal explanations. Thus it is not solely the destructive forces of the Oorlam raiding economy or of merchant capital that have to be held responsible for the ecological degradation in Namibia. Such an over-simplified model falls short in dealing with the structural contradictions of a nomadic pastoralist economy. In pastoralist production itself we may discover causes for an economic instability that is intricately connected with a reduction of ecological resources (see 2.3.).

As the present study intends to demonstrate, conditions for cattle-breeding were precarious at least as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century. The low and sporadic rainfall did not counterbalance the devastating effects of periodical droughts, and the availability of fountains near mission centres could not secure the existence of steady settlements. The early missionaries continually complained about the ecological hardships of southern Namibia. The harsh natural environment inhibited the establishment of permanent mission stations because the Nama pastoralists were compelled to migrate with their flocks and herds. It was the nomadic structure of an unstable pastoralist economy that led some missionaries to utter desperation and to final retreat from their stations.

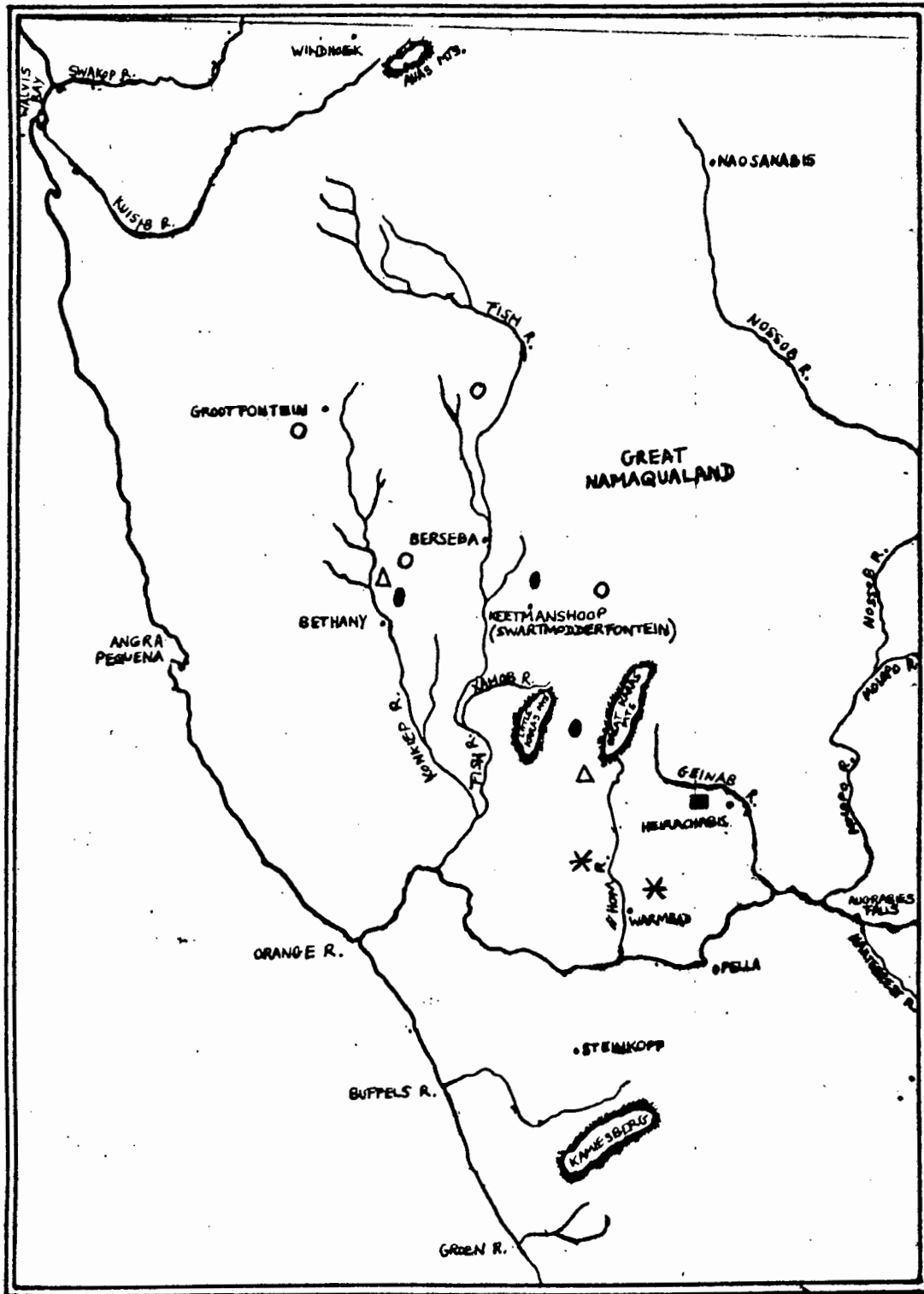
* * *

Khoikhoi once populated an area in southern Africa that extended from Namibia to the Cape Peninsula and from there to the

Great Fish River in the Eastern Cape. According to Elphick the Khoikhoi originally inhabited the region of northern Botswana. (4) Forced onwards by the 'pastoral revolution', which had slowly transformed the former hunter society into a livestock-breeding one, Khoikhoi advanced in search for pasturages to the tributaries of the Orange River. At this stage this movement, which probably occurred during the first millenium A.D., began to disperse. One group migrated to the southern coast and then in a western direction to the Cape region. The other group, which is considered to have developed afterwards as the Nama, followed the course of the Orange River as far as the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. After a split, one group moved into Namibia and the other one wandered in a southern direction to the Cape.

The societies which emerged from this 'western prong' of the Khoikhoi migratory drift - from east to west the Korana, Einiqua, and the Nama - underwent changes of social structures and group identities. Thus oral tradition among the Karosshebbers (#Nam//neikwa), who are ranked by Engelbrecht with the Einiqua, claimed another migration at a later date from the Cape back to the Orange River region. (5) The Springbok Korana may have been an off-shoot of the Kai//khaun (Red Nation) in Namibia. (6) The Katse Korana were perhaps dislodged from the Cape by the small-pox epidemic in about 1750. (7)

These and other examples demonstrate the enormous difficulties in assessing 'tribal' units and sub-units among the Khoikhoi. It is not only the lack of sources that leaves us with an



MAP 2 MIGRATIONAL AREAS AND SETTLEMENTS OF SOME NAMA GROUPS, CA. 1820

* BONDELSWARTS	(! KAMI#NUN)
○ RED NATION	(KAI//KHAUN)
△ VELDSKOENDRAERS	(//HABOBEN)
■ FRANZMANNSCHE	(! KHARAKHOEN)
● SWARTBOOIS	(//KHAU/60AN)

unrealizable task of analysing the historical origins and social interrelations of the diverse Khoikhoi groups in southern Namibia. It is especially the large amount of structural fluidity, in addition to a general similarity of linguistic and cultural traits, that accounts for this analytical problem. Khoikhoi and neighbouring groups in the Orange River region interacted on a large scale. Social and political boundaries among the African population of Little and Great Namaqualand were easily transgressed and transformed, thus giving way for the emergence of new social conglomerations. (8) A striking fluidity of ethnic structures was observed by Wikar in 1778/79. He came into contact with the /Gesikwa (Twin Folk) in the region of the present-day Upington, for example, who displayed an advanced state of amalgamation of Khoikhoi pastoralists and Tswana cultivators. Trade relations and a system of intermarriage had brought about the development of a new social unit. (9) The difficulty in tracing the origins of Nama groups in southern Namibia as defined social and political units is enhanced by the processes of fission and fusion that took place as late as at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Thus the following calculation of the missionary C.H. Hahn dating from 1853 is not representative of the demographical situation around the turn of the eighteenth century:

<u>Bondelswarts</u> (!Kam!nǀn)	4 000	
<u>Red Nation</u> (Kai//khaun)	4 000	
<u>Veldskoendraers</u> (//Haboben)	1 000	
<u>Franzmannsche</u> (!Kharakhoen)	1 000	
<u>Swartboois</u> (//Khau/gǀan)	1 500	
<u>Topnaars</u> (#Aonin or !Gomen or !Naranin)	800	(10)

This list of 12 300 people excludes the group of the //O-gain (Groot Dode) though they already existed as a social unit when the brothers Albrecht arrived in 1806 in Namibia. The missionaries estimated their number at 800 people. (11) There were also the !Kara!oan (Tseibsche Hottentots), a small Nama group of about 500 people. (12) This group does not appear in the records before the 1840s (13), although there are indications that the !Kara!oan broke away from the Kai//khaun around the turn of the eighteenth century. (14)

A similar process of fission apparently resulted in the birth of the Swartboois (//Khau/g0an). In 1808 Christian Albrecht met with a group of Nama who lived in several dispersed kraals at the Fish River, probably near the present-day Keetmanshoop. These 'Kamp-Kaups' (15) or 'Kleinrugo' (16) had sought refuge in an inhospitable area because they lived in great fear of a neighbouring Nama group in the Karas Mountains where at that time the Kai//khaun reportedly had their residence. (17)

A legend among the Nama, collected as late as 1913 by Hoernlé and supported by other sources, claims that //Haboben, !Kam!nun, !Kharakhoen and //Khau /g0an were originally founded by brothers, separating from the group of the eldest brother, the Kai//khaun. (18) Thus a hierarchy of the eldest branch, the Kai//khaun, is postulated. Almost all the relevant sources throughout the nineteenth century indicate that settlement rights of Oorlam groups had to be bought, at least symbolically, from the Kai//khaun. (19) According to Hoernlé, Topnaars and Groot Dode

were exempted from this genealogical system. However, these two groups themselves claimed to be branches of the Kai//khaun as well. (20) Vedder, on the other hand, states that Topnaars and Bondelswarts were not genealogically related to the remaining five Nama groups. (21) However, all versions of genealogical connections between the different Nama groups claim a tight network of relations, and all versions postulate the genealogical superiority of the Kai//khaun.

The constant flux of Nama 'tribal' structures has to be understood in the context of a segmentary system where no centralization of political power prevailed. At this point it is necessary once again to refer to the obstacles of an analysis of the social organisation of the Nama. The investigations of Hoernlé and Budack are of essential importance to gain insights into the social structures of Nama groups and their internal fissions and fusions. However, these studies are scientific reconstructions of an historical past and, in the case of Budack, focus on the structures of an 'acculturated' Oorlam group like the Witboois. (22) The description of Nama society by the early missionaries was not impregnated with modern scientific perceptions. Thus the Albrechts did not provide information on clan structures or on patrilineages. The German missionaries used rather diffuse concepts, such as the term 'nation', in describing the political and social structures of the Nama. Germany at the beginning of the nineteenth century was not a united national state but divided into several petty states. Thus the Albrechts and Schmelen may have readily adopted the idea that 'nations'

like the Bondelswarts and the Groot Dode waged war with each other.

Hoernlé described the social organisation of the Nama on three different levels. Patrilineal and patrilocal extended families, called !Hau!Nati, formed patrilineally organized clans called !Hau!Nati as well. (23) These patrilineal clans were the strongest social units, and the political power of the senior clan was justified by its, real or fabricated, genealogical seniority. The chieftainship was passed on within the senior clan, inherited in the male line. All members of a clan were supposed to descend from a common male ancestor. Several clans, !Hau!Nati, constructed the largest political unit, or 'tribe', called !Haos.

This system of loosely affiliated groups and sub-groups did not furnish a chief or headman with impressive political power. This was already noticed by one of the early European visitors of the Bondelswart Nama, Robert Gordon, in 1779:

They live in the vicinity of the Bath along the Löwen River and were divided into ten little kraals. They had a kau waup (gao-aob - chief), but did not care about him. His name is Owbeep and he lives close to Warmbad. (24)

The lack of centralizing political forces within the Nama social formation correlated with the custom of blood feuds. There was no institution to enforce laws or to protect the group members against any violations of the social order. Thus it was the duty of the relatives to take revenge for any crimes committed against a member of the family or clan. (25) This

custom was called //Kharab, meaning 'the doing in return'. (26)

A chief's authority was mainly based on his skill in making use of a system of reciprocity whereby he would furnish his followers with livestock in order to tie them closer to his political dominance. Thus it was particularly for the purpose of attacking other pastoralists that a Nama 'captain' (27) could assemble a larger following:

They are respected by themselves and others in proportion to their wealth which often procures them the title of captain or chief though not belonging to such a family. They have no king but the captain is considered the head of the nation...His subjects are not very obedient to him, particularly those who are richer than himself. But when the captain gives order to attack another nation, more especially the Tamaras, in order to plunder them of their cattle few are backward to obey. (28)

This statement by the brothers Albrecht, besides providing us with some information of Nama-Herero relations at the beginning of the last century, corresponds with the following observation by Seidenfaden:

The desire of possessing cattle (...) often a captain to attack some distant kraal or other which his men are willing to do. The booty then remains in the possession of the captain who thereby is enabled to maintain his men. (29)

In situations of intra-group conflict, without a convincing prospect of further enrichment, a chief's 'soldiers' would sometimes simply refuse their co-operation. (30) The chief was entitled to receive selected parts of game killed in hunting. (31) But there were very few cases where a Nama chief exerted control over the trade relations of his subordinates. An exception to this rule was when the missionary Shaw met some Nama

groups in the vicinity of the Fish River in 1820, the people did not dare to barter with the visitor because the chief was not present. (32) Magical powers were not ascribed to the chief's authority. (33)

* * *

The accounts of the LMS missionaries do not contain relevant data in regard of the pre-nineteenth-century history of the different Nama and Oorlam groups. But with the accelerating world-wide expansion of white colonial rule, European concepts of 'ethnology' and 'anthropology' became sufficiently popular to stimulate the curiosity of the Rhenish missionaries in Namibia. Inquisitive missionaries sometimes collected information among the Nama and Oorlams in regard of their historical origins and the genealogies of their chiefs. The following section will focus on the genealogy of the Bondelswarts chiefs for a specific reason. The records concerning this Nama group provide the historian with a unique opportunity to check the oral evidence collected by the RMS missionaries and at a later stage by Hoernlé against the early accounts of the LMS missionaries and other European observers. Thus it is possible to establish the genealogy of the Bondelswart chiefs beginning around the turn of the seventeenth century.

The Bondelswarts (!Kamifnûn) claimed to have lived at all times in the south-eastern corner of Namibia, close to the Orange River. (34) Hence this Namibian Nama group was mentioned at a relatively early date in European reports of travellers exploring

the region of the north-western Cape. One of the first documentary references is to be found in Bergh's account of 1682, which mentions the 'Caminge' living north of Little Namaqualand. (35) In 1685 Van der Stel was told about the 'Kamesons' (36), and the 'Comeinacquas' were mentioned by Roos and Marais, who travelled with Coetsè to Namibia in 1762. (37) Wikar, wandering in the Orange River region in 1778/79, was informed by his Khoisan companions of the

Kamingou, who live at the Warm Bath and sometimes along the bank on the further side of the Great River. (38)

At about the same time Gordon visited the 'grote namaquas van de caminoekwas' (39), and also the braggart Le Vaillant, who despite his colourful tales never crossed the Orange River, gave an account of his reputed adventures among the 'Kaminouquas' in the 1780s. (40)

In the early 1870s, RMS missionary F.W. Weber did some oral history research among the Bondelswarts. (41) He was told that the line of succession of Bondelswart chiefs began with Amachab. His successor in the chief's office was //Nanieb, who was followed by /Obib. (42) /Obib, whom Gordon met at Warmbad in 1779, was still alive in 1813 when John Campbell visited the ousted Warmbad community at Pella. (43)

/Obib must have passed on the chief's office to his son /Garem0b around the turn of the eighteenth century, because when the first missionaries settled at Warmbad in 1806 the chief 'Karrimoep' had already been installed as the leader of the

Bondelswarts. (44) /Garimǫb was called Captain Bondelswart by the Albrecht brothers. This was a literal translation of the word !Kamǫn (black bundle), which originally was only the name of the chief's clan but became associated with the whole group. (45) According to Weber, /Garimǫb was still remembered by the Bondelswarts as a very belligerent and choleric person. (46) This statement is confirmed by the accounts of the Albrecht brothers. They had many boisterous confrontations with /Garimǫb, who was given to occasional outbursts of temper, especially when under the influence of the locally produced honey-beer. (47)

The next captain of the Bondelswarts was !Naugab, who took the chief's office from his father in 1825. (48) !Naugab was apparently the first chief of the Bondelswarts to convert formally to the Christian religion. His father, /Garimǫb, had announced his willingness to be baptized to the overjoyed Albrechts, but their attempts at conversion had been without avail. (49) !Nauchab adopted the name Abraham Christian, the first names of the Albrecht brothers. Since then the chief's family has carried the surname Christian.

In 1860 Abraham Christian was followed by his son Chau!ob, whose European name was Jacob Christian. Chau!ob died unexpectedly in 1866, reputedly poisoned by his Damara servant. (50) Jacob Christian's father, !Naugab, took up the chief's office again until his death in 1868. (51)

* * *

With regard to the political relations between the different Nama

groups in Namibia, it is clear that those groups did not live in precisely marked 'tribal territories', as later apologists of the 'homeland' ideology would have it. The accelerating 'closing' of the frontier during the second half of the nineteenth century implied new population shifts and migrations in Namibia, and marked boundaries become more important when ecological and economic resources deteriorated. In the early nineteenth century the Nama groups were widely distributed all over southern Namibia. As Lau points out:

Thus, notions of territory were more typically characterised by incorporation rather than by mutual exclusion: it is not possible to delineate even an approximate area which was occupied exclusively by groups of, for example, Veldskoendraers or Bethany people or Kai//khaun. (52)

However, though the transhumant character of the Nama social formation implied a flexible management of group rights concerning the access of the migrating pastoralists to specific areas, vague notions of territorial rights seem to have existed. The question if some notions of territory were held by the Nama can not be decided either by looking at the apparent 'checkerboard fashion' of Nama settlements or by referring to the lack of military means to enforce territorial claims. (53)

Since the documentary evidence with regard to the Nama settlement patterns of the early nineteenth century is scarce, it is very difficult to come to conclusions with regards to those groups who had established only loose contacts with the LMS missionaries. Thus the Warmbad missionaries made only vague references to the residences of those Nama groups living north of

the Bondelswarts area like, for example, the !Kharakhoen near the Karas Mountains or the //Khou/goan near the Fish River. In the case of the Bondelswarts, however, the mission records depict a semi-nomadic Nama group which was migrating in a specific area, although this area was not delineated by rigid boundaries. (54)

Real or fabricated kinship ties among the Namibian Khoikhoi enabled groups and individuals to live and work together. Thus Hoernlé noted in 1913:

All Hottentots living together find some relationship existing between them even if they can't trace the exact degree. (55)

However, this does not imply that indigenous concepts of restrictive rights in regard of settlement patterns and access to water and grazing sites were non-existent. There are indications that the Nama held rudimentary notions of exclusive settlement rights. Incorporation strategies were successful in times of relatively balanced political and ecological conditions. But when this precarious equilibrium became disturbed by the fissions and fusions of splitting clans or by serious droughts, notions of exclusive settlement rights could easily be invoked. This happened at an early stage of missionary and indigenous interaction, when the different Nama groups vied among each other for access to the stations. According to the account of the Albrechts a serious conflict arose between the !Kharakhoen (Fransman Hottentots) and the //Habboen (Veldskoendraers):

During these days the eldest son of Captain Kagab <of the !Kharakhoen> came here for the purpose of being instructed in the word of God, and is informing us that disputes had broke <sic> out between his father and some of the Fieldshoeweareres, because Capt. Kagab lives at Noekoros, which place, they say, belongs to

them, and which he ought to leave. But the Capt. will not depart and rather prepare himself to go to war with them, than to return to his own country, because since Br. Seidenfaden left it <the station Heirachabis near the Karas Mountains> he has no opportunity of hearing the word of God. (56)

Those rudimentary notions of exclusive settlement rights may have been based on the priority rights each clan held in regard of water and pasture sites. In 1913, the old chief of the Bondelswarts was still able to name the different fountains in their territory which were thought of as the 'headquarters' of the different clans. (57)

This corresponds with Seidenfaden's account of the settlement patterns of the Nama living in the vicinity of Heirachabis at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As he points out, the Nama were forced to migrate with their livestock due to the harsh environment preventing permanent settlements. However, though their 'kraals have no fixed spots', the different group names were associated with specific areas of settlement:

Each kraal has its name. I shall mention some of them who are found in the southern part. Caminuquas is the name of Captain Bondelswart's kraal in whose vicinity the brethren Albrecht dwell. Cap. John Kachap is captain of the Garaekoekas (!Kharakhoen) kraal where I have been myself, more towards the north there are the Fieldshoewearers and the kraal of the Greatruggen <Kai//khaun>. (58)

This is supported by Hoernlé's observation made during her fieldstudies one century later:

Each group has its acknowledged chief and its acknowledged fountains, though before the coming of the white man and of the Orlams the boundaries between the different groups were not marked in any clear manner...the different water holes, or fountains, in the country were always thought of as belonging to certain specific groups. This did not mean that other

people could not use this water, but that one group had a prior claim to it established by habit, and had the right to expect that any other group intending to camp there for long would ask permission to do so. (59)

Thus certain names of places or cattle posts irregularly recur in the records, such as Dabe!gabis, Koregas, Narkaras, Loriesfontein, Sandfontein and a place called Lionsfontein by the LMS missionaries. (60) The Bondelswarts, in any case, displayed a stubborn attitude concerning any suggestions to leave their territory in the south-eastern corner of Namibia as the missionaries reported at the beginning of the nineteenth century. (see 4.5.).

The competition for fountains and grazing was exacerbated with the 'closing' of the economic frontier zone in southern Namibia during the second half of the nineteenth century. With the accelerated reduction of ecological and economic resources, concepts of exclusive territorial rights and of marked boundaries were more sharply defined. However, when territorial or political claims were raised, these could be based on ideas of priority rights with regard to water and pasture sites as they had existed in the pre-capitalist Nama social formation.

The RMS missionaries noted in the late nineteenth century that the political relations between some Nama groups were partly based on long-standing territorial claims dating from the beginning of the century. Thus the Bondelswarts claimed political dominance over the !Kara!oan (Tseibsche Hottentots) at Keetmanshoop in the 1870s. Those claims were not expressed in

kinship terms, because the !Kara!oan saw themselves as genealogically related to the Kai//khaun from whom they had broken away. (61) The date of this separation is obviously difficult to establish. However, it has been mentioned before that the Albrechts met with a Nama group, the Swartboois (//Khaun/góan), obviously at the time of their secession in the vicinity of Keetmanshoop in 1808; and oral evidence collected among the Swartboois supports the view that this group too split from the Kai//khaun and moved to Keetmanshoop (Zwartmorast Fontein).

There are indications that the !Kara!oan either emerged at a later stage from the Swartbooi group in a succeeding split, or that their migration to the Keetmanshoop area coincided with the arrival of the Swartboois. (62) Be that as it may, as a cohesive Nama 'tribe', the !Kara!oan did not evolve before the 1840s. (63)

Whether the Bondelswarts had regarded Keetmanshoop as their territory prior to the arrival of the newcomers, or whether these rights were claimed because it was the Warmbad missionaries who had suggested to this new Nama branch to move to 'Black Mud Fountain' and thus establish ties between Warmbad and Keetmanshoop, the Bondelswarts were a domineering political influence at Keetmanshoop during the 1870s. (64)

Without the approval of the Bondelswart chief at Warmbad, the chief of the !Kara!oan was not allowed to take up his office. (65) As RMS missionary Fenchel explicitly stated, those relations of political dependence were justified among both Bondelswarts

and !Kara!oan in terms of territorial priority rights dating back to the time Tseib's people had broken away from the Kai//khaun in the Karas Mountains about seventy years ago:

The area where they moved, with the Fish River as the northern boundary, belonged to the Bondelswarts. And from that time the people of Keetmanshoop are the vasals of the Bondelswarts. They are the masters on the land they occupy, but Warmbad has supremacy over Keetmanshoop and appoints the captains. (66)

* * *

The economic structures of the Nama were crucially connected to the pastoralist branch of production. They possessed cattle, sheep and goats. Their sheep differed from the breed that was common among the Cape Khoikhoi in not having the typical fat tail. (67) The diet of the Nama consisted generally of milk and meat with the exception of those impoverished pastoralists who were, at least temporarily, reduced to a gathering economy as the missionaries at Warmbad observed:

...some of them, who are so poor as to have no cattle at all, are obliged to live on the gum which they gather from the kameel dorn, (a mimosa), upon the bulbs and roots growing spontaneously, and upon wild honey. (68)

Hunting contributed additionally to the diet; the Albrechts provide us with an account of a communally organized hunting party. (69) With the exception of some tobacco and dagga plantings (70) the arid regions of southern Namibia were not suited to cultivation. (71)

The subsistence economy of the Nama did not exclude trade relations beyond the boundaries of Great Namaqualand. The

Albrechts at Warmbad stated:

They make use of iron and of earthen pots for boiling meat; the iron ones being purchased, by exchange, from the colonists; the earthen ones are of their own fabric. (72)

Missionary Barnabas Shaw observed Nama manufacturing iron near the Fish River. These Nama had probably adopted the necessary technical knowledge from the Damara who were renowned for their skills as blacksmiths. (73)

The scarcity of ethnographic data is particularly regrettable when we have to deal with the religious system of the early Nama. The missionaries gave in their accounts only some brief hints at the existence of healers, usually described as 'sorcerers'. (74) The advice of these religious specialists was sought in cases of sickness or misfortune. Some of them gained apparently considerable prestige. Moffat observed that sorcerers tried to keep lions away from a kraal by impersonating this predatory animal, i.e. they were considered by the Nama to possess the frightening ability to transform themselves into lions. (75) Nearly all of the missionary accounts mention various dances which had spiritual connotations and were often held during the time of the full moon. It is difficult to give more than a sketchy account of cultural patterns from the various sources, and it would only prove the scantiness of such a patchwork ethnography. But Nama culture shared many features with the culture of the Khoikhoi at the Cape. Thus Wikar was informed in 1778/79 that the Nama knew the ritual extirpation of one testicle (76) as described by Kolb and other observers of the

Cape Khoikhoi throughout the eighteenth century. (77) So-called Heitsi-Eibib graves, stone piles on which the wanderer customarily threw a pebble or a twig, have been discovered from the Cape region up to Hereroland. However, the function of this mythical ancestor or culture hero Heitsi-Eibib remains in the dark. The same can be said about the deities of Tsui//Gauab (Wounded Knee) and //Gaunab. The linguist/ethnologist Theophilus Hahn, son of Nama missionary Samuel Hahn, interpreted the former as 'Supreme Good Being' and the latter as 'Supreme Bad Being'. (78)

Although Namibia, like other African countries, was later to contribute to the history of independent churches or new religious movements, Nama culture seems never to have developed movements of the 'revivalist' type. Sometimes missionaries went on a crusade against 'heathen superstitions', burning, for instance, religious objects used by 'sorcerers'. (79) But there are no indications that elements of the traditional religious system were invoked whenever the Nama tried to defend their social autonomy against missionary interventions. Shula Marks's aphoristic statement that the Khoikhoi 'literally acculturated themselves out of existence' accurately describes the astonishing rapidity with which the loosely structured Nama culture absorbed selected elements of Christian ideology. (80)

2.2. Economic aspects

While the political organization of the Nama was characterized by its segmentary features, the economic structures of Nama

social formation were equally marked by a lack of strong centralizing influences. We have seen above that the social organisation of the Nama was based on patrilineal and patrilocal families which formed patrilineal exogamous clans (!Hau!Nati), and the latter formed the largest political unit or 'tribe' (!Haos). The basic productive unit consisted of the family, i.e. a man and his wife or wives, the children, the man's brother etc. Livestock was not owned by the !Hau!Nati, or by the !Haos, but by this basic productive unit. The basic productive unit could not claim legal possession of land. As European concepts of property did not exist, land was 'owned' by the Nama social formation as a whole. Legitimate access to land was formulated predominantly in terms of priority rights concerning the use of water holes and grazing. The chief possessed some nominal rights in distributing, at least to non-members of his group, rights of residence.

The basic productive unit lived in relative economic autarky though was not completely isolated from neighbouring units, to which it was connected by various ties. These levels of interaction were embraced by a classificatory kinship system. Social, economic and political relations were formulated in the language of kinship. The all pervading influence of the kinship system corresponded to the lack of a centralizing political institution and to a non-separation of direct producers from the means of production.

The social process of production was characterized by a sexual division of labour. The men were occupied with hunting and with taking care of the cattle. The latter task included the laborious

digging of water holes, predominantly in the beds of periodical rivers. Weapons like bows, arrows, assegais were likewise made by the men who also prepared their karosses, a kind of leather aprons. (81) The women were responsible for the production of mat houses, which they had to erect when a migrating group of pastoralists shifted their place of settlement to the vicinity of new pasturages and water holes. The preparation of food was likewise the task of the women, and like the men they made karosses, and milk and water vessels by hollowing out pieces of wood. (82) The milking of the herds was equally women's work:

...because the young men, as soon as they come of age, think it beneath them to milk a cow, and would even be banished out of the society of men, if they should stoop to this part of domestic employment. (83)

In societies where class structures have not fully emerged, there are no agencies to control the means of production, but this is not to say that the relations of production are organized in an egalitarian manner corresponding to European notions of a classless utopia. The so-called lineage mode of production implies that the relations of production are controlled via the means of reproduction (subsistence and women) instead of the means of production. (84) An analysis of the conditions for the reproduction of the productive unit leads to the crucial question of how the internal dynamics of a society is constituted. How was surplus extracted from Nama producers not yet separated from their means of production?

We have already seen that the authority of the chief's office was quite ineffective. His means of political intervention were

traditionally very limited. If members of his !Haos refused to co-operate, the chief had no sanctions at his disposal to enforce, for instance, participation in raids on other livestock-breeders. On the other hand, his high-ranking status within the kinship system endowed him with the privilege of distributing the spoils of successful raids.

Seidenfaden's description of a chief handing out livestock among his followers after successful raids refers not only to mechanisms of redistribution in order to tie followers to the chief. The chief was entitled to keep a substantial share of the booty which increased his economic wealth. Thus it is no coincidence that among the few wealthy Bondelswarts who are mentioned by the missionaries we find the chief and his brother who, in times of drought, were economically better off than the 'non-aristocratic' section of the Nama. (85)

This advantageous position enabled the chief to allocate labour. Labour-intensive activities, such as the digging of water holes, hunting expeditions etc., were organized by the chief, who would in return make use of his right to extract surplus in the form of labour and in the form of the products of the pastoralist, the hunting and the gathering branches of production.

The social organisation of matrimony was also connected to the process of labour allocation. Polygyny was practised, though probably not on a large scale because only wealthy men could afford to marry more than one woman. The control over the

exchange of women meant control over the means of reproduction of the productive unit. A tradition prescribed that a newly-wed couple was to live for one year with the productive unit of the bride's parents. Here the husband had to work for his wife's parents. This was a compensation for the transfer of the woman's productive and reproductive capacities from her parental household to the productive unit of her husband. (86) The more wives a man married, the more labour he could dispose of in the form of the reproductive and productive activities of women and the productive activities of children.

Men monopolized access to cow's milk. At least in theory, women were allowed to drink the milk of sheep and goats only. (87) This does not mean that Nama women were treated without respect by the male members of the clan or family, but social values for women were predominantly connected to the domestic sphere. Especially the relationship between siblings was an important one. A man had to speak of his sister in the most reverential terms only, and disrespectful behaviour had to be avoided at all costs. Another regulation gave the oldest daughter the exclusive privilege of milking the cows. (88)

Nama women were principally excluded from the processes of political decision-making. They were not allowed as members of the chief's council. There seems to have been only one opportunity for women to reach the higher ranks of the political hierarchy. When there was no male to inherit the chief's office in patrilinear succession, the oldest of the chief's daughters

could rightfully claim regency. (89) Some oral traditions were recorded by the RMS missionaries which mention such female chiefs or regents among the Kai//khaun and the Witboois (/Khobesin). (90) T. Hahn claims that the widow could also take up the chief's office from her deceased husband. (91) The Wesleyan missionary Tindall visited a Nama settlement near the Fish River in the 1840s where he met such a Nama 'queen'. (92)

The inferior position of women was also expressed by the old camping order of the Nama clans and families, which Hoernlé partly reconstructed and partly observed during her fieldwork in Namibia in 1913. The household head or chief had his sons's huts on his right side arranged according to the principle of seniority which pervaded the entire social life of the Nama. Any married daughter, who had not yet moved to her husband's people, and any widowed sister had to live on the left side of the household head's hut, which was also the side of a man's dependents like, for instance, his Damara servants. (93)

The lack of centralizing political forces offered the opportunity for other 'big men' to challenge the authority of the chief. A wealthy livestock-owner could gather an impressive following around him and could allocate labour and extract surplus from other household heads, uninitiated men, women and children:

Viceroy, who are higher than captains, on account of their riches, have sometimes many under them, in case they go to war with other nations, generally for the <...> purpose of plunder, and the subjects of the different captains are ready to follow them. (94)

In this manner the process of fission and fusion, as described by Hoernlé, provided for the separation of a sub-group from the cluster of clans which formed the !Haos. The dissident social unit would form the nucleus of a new !Haos. These processes were embedded in the kinship system which would endow lineages and individuals with status according to a hierarchical order of juniority and seniority. In those mechanisms we can discover the fluidity of a social system which is open to constant change. Status, as defined by rank in the genealogical order, is not defined once and for all by the rigid rules of seniority but may be altered by manipulating lineage genealogies, by adoption etc.

These mechanisms of fission and fusion have to be seen in the context of the internal dynamics of Nama social formation. The means of intervention for a chief were additionally limited within the constraints of the ecological environment. With regards to the inherent transhumant character of Nama society, the accumulation of wealth was virtually unpredictable and control over his men and over female labour was difficult to maintain. A chief who had lost his cattle and sheep could not distribute livestock in order to create relations of dependence. His ability to extract surplus from other productive units was seriously curtailed when droughts or raids had robbed his followers of their livestock. In such a situation of ecological and economic crisis, an influential junior clan head could decide to break away from the chief's senior clan.

Thus Nama social formation was characterized by an internal struggle of the different segments to gain and maintain control

over the process of surplus extraction. An internal contradiction existed between the semi-autonomous economic status of the basic productive units with free access to land and those social forces struggling for control over the circulation of cattle and women, using senior status within the kinship system to exert political power. This antagonism was exacerbated and reflected within the respective productive units because their household heads were confronted with the same difficulties in exerting control over the means of reproduction, depending on the ever changing ecological conditions for pastoralist production. This all-pervading internal struggle for control of the process of surplus extraction accounted for the notorious 'endemic flux' of Nama groups.

* When the first missionaries arrived in southern Namibia in 1806, the pastoralist branch of production was in a serious crisis. The missionaries' accounts give evidence of the deterioration of pastoral production. Generalised statements about the Nama as a people of livestock-breeders contrast significantly with repeated accounts of Nama without sufficient livestock or any livestock at all. Thus, not all of the transhumant patterns of Nama economy were connected to the migrations of pastoralists, but also to hunting and gathering activities. Those Nama who had lost their livestock either because of natural catastrophes or through raids from neighbouring groups were confronted with various alternatives. Due to a 'cattle post system', impoverished herders could acquire large and small stock from wealthier livestock-breeders. This

could provide them with a starting-point to build up a new herd. Secondly, raids on other livestock-owners offered the opportunity to replenish previously diminished resources. Thirdly, Nama without livestock turned to a hunting and gathering mode of existence.

This combination of several branches of production, such as hunting, gathering and herding, furnished the basic productive units with a certain economic flexibility. However, the crisis of the pastoralist branch of production was of crucial importance and affected radically the social structures of Nama social formation. Pastoralist economy was the dominant branch of production, i.e. the basic social relations of Nama social formation were dependent on pastoralist production. Cattle gained a crucial importance, because traditionally it was part of the 'male sphere', closely connected to male dominated power relations in Khoikhoi society, i.e. to the processes of surplus extraction and social control depending on the control of the means of reproduction, women and cattle. When the circulation of cattle became disturbed, social control via the exchange of women was also jeopardized. The Nama pastoralist economy predominantly relied on the breeding of small stock, sheep and goats. The socially more prestigious and relevant raising of large stock was heavily affected by droughts and raids, a fact that contributed to the fragile structures of Nama society.

With the advent of the missionaries, new economic resources opened up. Poor Nama could attach themselves to the mission

station and receive material assistance as domestic servants, wagon drivers, scouts and simply as members of the Christian community. However, by interfering with the Nama subsistence economy, the missionaries were responsible for exacerbating the crisis of pastoralist production. For instance, they brought more immigrants with them to southern Namibia. The population density was at least temporarily increased by the c.200 Oorlams and some additional Einiqua who gathered at the Warmbad station. (95) Thus the residence of Khoikhoi immigrants and Europeans in southern Namibia began to disturb 'traditional' patterns of the Nama social formation. It is of crucial importance, however, to keep in mind that this disturbance did not shake a static pre-colonial society out of its idyllic pastoral existence. The impact of missionary interference with pre-capitalist structures developed against the background of the internal contradictions of Nama social formation.

2.3. Pastoralism in southern Namibia

The internal struggles of Nama social formation have to be seen against the background of the critical conditions for pastoral production in southern Namibia. The scarce resources of water and grazing and an unpredictable occurrence of rainfall caused the early LMS missionaries to depict southern Namibia in the most unfavourable terms:

This country is very extensive but the worst, the most barren and sterile of the whole southern part of Africa. It is mountainous, the valleys are full of rocky parts, and thus very unproductive. It is thinly peopled and badly provided with water. There is not a single fresh water fountain, they are <old?> and

bracken, and wherever you find a piece of arable land, it is also very brackish and nothing will grow upon it. This country may well have the name of "The wild, barren and unfruitful desert". (96)

Missionary Seidenfaden's lament is representative of the descriptions by the first European settlers in Namibia of their harsh environment. The accounts by the brothers Albrecht and Schmelen were somewhat mitigated by a greater awareness of the cyclic recurrence of droughts and occasional rains. Moreover, the almost hostile attitude of the bachelor Seidenfaden towards his alien surroundings may have been partly a result of his more isolated situation among the Nama as he was the only European resident at his station Heirachabis. However, all of the missionaries realized quickly that their work was severely inhibited by the loose structures of a nomadic pastoralist society.

Let us not indulge in a debate about the terms 'nomadic', 'semi-nomadic', 'transhumant', etc., but use the 'working definition' of nomadic pastoralism as proposed by Rada and Neville Dyson-Hudson (97):

Moving livestock to seasonal pastures is a strategy regularly used in many parts of the world to convert crop residues, and grasses and herbs from areas where crops are not grown, into human food. Livestock husbandry and mobility are frequently associated because the livestock must be fed regularly throughout the year, but in areas of marked seasonality plant growth is discontinuous, occurring only when temperature and rainfall allow. In those regions of the world with marked seasonality, where the production, harvest, and storage of fodder is not an available option because of shortages of capital or of labor, migration to exploit seasonal pastures represents the best strategy for maintaining a regular supply of food for livestock. (98)

The mobility of nomadic pastoralists is, then, an organized strategy with regard to livestock-breeding. Migratory routes may in some parts of the world be characterized by traditional patterns, and in general a thorough knowledge of the environment is a necessary pre-condition for the subsistence strategy of nomadic pastoralists. (99)

The extreme climate of southern Namibia did not provide the pastoralists with regular rainfall. As the Albrechts observed at Warmbad:

The country has no regular succession of seasons, nor can we depend upon a rainy season every year, as in other parts of the Cape colony; but it is by thunderstorms that the country is watered occasionally.
(100)

These occasional showers influenced the water-carrying capacities of periodical rivers and the existence of subsoil water. However, in the words of Seidenfaden:

If there has not been any rain for some time, it is very difficult to get water out of the ground, and it is sometimes twenty or thirty feet under the sand.
(101)

It is this ever-changing availability of water and pasturage that one has to take into account in analysing the reports of the early missionaries and travellers. Enthusiastic descriptions of inexhaustible fountains and abundant pastures and livestock alternate with desperate representations of droughts, poverty, and deserted mission stations. Seidenfaden observed that the Nama often had to go through longer periods of famine and that tobacco was used by Nama herdsmen as narcotic to combat pains of

hunger. (102)

Thus nomadic pastoralism in southern Namibia depended on a high degree of mobility of people and livestock and on a general low population density near waterholes and pastures:

The inhabitants live at a great distance from each other. You may travel one or sometimes two days before you meet another kraal or village, which are very small, they contain only between four and seven families, and each family consists of five or six persons. These kraals have no fixed spots, but they move perhaps twelve times a year, on account of the scarcity of water and pasturage. (103)

Seidenfaden's report indicates that a settlement of several hundreds of Nama was a temporary phenomenon due to the seasonal improvement of natural resources or to the 'pulling forces' exerted by a mission station. Thus the Albrechts' community at Warmbad increased considerably through a large number of Khoikhoi, Oorlams and Bastards who accompanied the missionaries from Little Namaqualand. In fact, the missionaries noticed all too soon that the newly founded mission station exerted augmented pressure on the ecological environment:

And if a great many live together for a long time, they suffer very much with respect to the necessary food for the cattle and its breeding. (104)

The sources hardly allow any convincing application of the 'herding model' as developed by Neville Dyson-Hudson for an analysis of livestock populations. (105) We do not know the variety and numbers of animals, their age/sex composition, the quality of pasturages, the pastoralists' degree of dependence or commitment to livestock, the convertibility of livestock to other resources, the alternative exploitation of other resources, and

the conditions of human/stock association. The complex interrelations of livestock and human population and of the ecological environment are only touched upon in the accounts of early travellers and missionaries. But the sources do permit certain basic conclusions.

There was no cattle-rich, self-sufficient African society that perpetuated itself in a state of ecological balance. The pastoralist branch of production relied predominantly on small stock, sheep and goats, and not on cattle-breeding.

European observers at the Cape noticed that Khoikhoi generally hesitated to exchange their cattle with the Dutch colonists, this being an expression of the high social values that are usually attached to cattle among African nomadic pastoralists. (106) Small stock, sheep and goats, possess a higher rate of reproductivity, with a greater milk productivity of goats, and thrive fairly well in the arid or semi-arid regions of southern Namibia. A mixed small-stock and large-stock economy furnishes pastoralists mainly with meat from their flocks and with milk from their cattle herds. The generally slower rate of reproductivity of cattle and the scrubby regions of southern Namibia, with their unfitness for large-scale cattle-breeding, these features account for a sheep-oriented pastoralist production. Almost all reports on livestock-holding capacities in southern Namibia indicate a clear preponderance of small stock. Somewhat blurred accounts of 'stock in abundance' always seems to collide with more detailed descriptions of a pastoralist economy

where cattle was outnumbered by sheep and goats. (107) Previous analyses may have been misled by a certain grammatical vagueness in the reports by the German missionaries to the LMS directors, which describe both small stock and large stock with the term 'cattle', whereas the missionary accounts written in Dutch usually differentiate between 'beesten' (large stock) and 'klein vee' (small stock). (108) Thus the number of 9000 sheep and goats, and 1000 head of cattle in the vicinity of Warmbad in 1808 observed by the brothers Albrecht unmistakably states the preponderance of small stock. (109)

Apart from showing an unbalanced proportion of small and large stock, other figures make clear that wealth in pastoralist Nama society was very unevenly distributed. The immediate following of the Warmbad missionaries in 1808 consisted of the 700 people inscribed in the church book. (110) The actual number of mission followers, which has to be set in proportion to the given 10 000 head of small and large stock, was even bigger. (111) Moreover, among those listed members of the Christian community the missionaries apparently included the relatively wealthy Bondelswart chief and his close followers (112), about 200 people. (113) These figures must be seen in the context of the following observation made by the Albrechts:

The riches of the Namaquas consist entirely of cattle. The richest possess from 500-1000 sheep and goats and about 200 oxen, but these are very few. (114)

The missionaries pointed out that, under these circumstances, most Nama were poor (115) and had 'nothing to eat'. (116)

Seidenfaden's account of his station Heirachabis also draws attention to the incipient class differences among Nama pastoralists:

The inhabitants are excessively poor, their property consists principally of cattle, which produces them food and clothing...The richest amongst them possess about a hundred sheep and goats, and half that number of cows, but these are very few, they generally have about 5 or 6 sheep and goats, and two or three cows, and some have none at all. (117)

Consequently, those pastoralists who were unable to gain a dominant position in the process of surplus extraction suffered most from impoverishment and were not provided with enough meat or milk. (118)

Under these circumstances, livestock raiding among the Khoisan population was a far cry from the large-scale cattle raiding which became the hallmark of the later Nama/Oorlam-Herero network during the 1850s. As opposed to the 4000 head of cattle, or even 12 000 or 18 000 captured during those raids, very different figures given by the Warmbad missionaries draw a picture of a serious crisis of Nama pastoralist economy at the beginning of the last century. (119) Thus when at one stage the Bondelswarts herds and flocks were raided by the Groot Dode (//Ogain) and 103 head of cattle and 400 sheep were driven off, the missionaries depicted the Bondelswarts as being partly reduced to poverty. Chief /Garimûb who had been robbed of eight head of cattle including his last pack-ox, lost his temper with the missionaries' appeasement policy and ventured on a punitive expedition against Groot Dode and San. His commando returned with a booty of 81 head of cattle and 60 sheep and goats. (120)

It is difficult to assess with certainty to what extent this crisis was caused by ecological factors like droughts on the one hand or by the interference of raiding parties on the other hand. That both factors played a part is shown by one reference to raiding and trading parties from the colony, relating to events prior to the arrival of the missionaries in Namibia in 1806:

In some districts of the Great Namacqua country, a deal of rain fell last year (1805). By this there is now tolerably good pasture, where the Great Namacquas now are; but as soon as these fields do not answer any longer for their cattle, they remove to the vicinity of some fountain or other, to keep their cattle alive, and maintain themselves, which always is done with great difficulty, for they have not much cattle, it having been stolen from them by the Boschemen, and also partly by some, who call themselves Christians, coming to change some things for others, and who not only have robbed them of their cattle, but murdered the owners. (121)

Of course, the cattle post system mitigated economic disasters for those who lost, at least temporarily, their livestock through droughts, diseases, and cattle raids. (122) The conclusion, however, seems to be justified that the missionaries' accounts of impoverished Nama who were forced to return to a predominantly hunting or gathering mode of existence characterized a considerable section of Nama society at the beginning of the last century.

The Albrechts reported that the higher social esteem of cattle and the impeded conditions for cattle-breeding found expression in sexual stratified access to milk:

Some of the genuine Namacquas too are said to believe that their cows would not yield any milk, if their women were to drink cow-milk, this being good only for

the men: the women, consequently, must content themselves with the milk of sheep and goats. (123)

It is hard to say whether this monopolization of the milk productivity of cattle was a fully institutionalized strategy by the male population, or if the missionaries' remark referred to singular instances of male exploitation of the women's labour. This monopolization could not have been entirely controlled because the milking of cows and sheep was the responsibility of the women. However, it is a significant hint at the exclusion of women from the male sphere and to the power relations structuring the mode of production in pre-colonial Nama society.

In addition to the general scarcity of natural resources, the internal contradictions of a pastoralist economy which relied predominantly on the consumption of milk pointed to an unbalanced interrelation of economy and ecology. The degeneration of the environment as a result of overstocking has to be seen in this context, as Monod points out in his introduction to 'Pastoralism in Tropical Africa'. (124)

Where milk is the staple diet, a herd must consist of about 50% of cows. A herd with such a high proportion of cows will display a high rate of increase. Where slaughterings and sales result in a loss of about 10%, the herd can double in 4 years. This high rate of increase must of course not be severely disturbed by robberies or diseases, which very often occurred in southern Namibia. (125) A herd that has doubled during a period of sufficient pastures and rains will be exposed to the dangers of overstocking in the following period of drought. This

situation results in erosion of the ecological environment before the herd decreases through scarcity of pastures. Furthermore, competition arises between the livestock population and the human population in respect to milk. Monod states that it is the calves which are mainly affected unfavourably by the need of pastoralists for the staple diet milk. Thus the further increase of the livestock population will, naturally, be endangered. Moreover, a pastoralist productive unit in possession of only two or three cows, as Seidenfaden described, can hardly expect a considerable increase of its herd without falling back on plundering other livestock-breeding groups.

In this context it must be stressed that nomadic pastoralism cannot be understood as an economic system that succumbs solely to ecological conditions. Thus the occurrence of migrations of pastoralists and their herds does not only reflect the need for better pasturages and water-holes. Though the ecological environment is determinant in limiting the range of cultural response, as was the case in southern Namibia where agriculture was virtually impossible, the social system remains dominant in providing groups and individuals with options in respect to interaction with their environment.

Thus the causes of pastoralist migrations may sometimes lie predominantly in the sphere of political decision-making. Fear of attacks from neighbouring groups or the choice of particular kinsmen with whom one wishes to co-operate may give cause to move to a new camp site. Differing views among household heads and

internal disputes on the social level may motivate pastoralists to move, even if it is to the detriment of an optimal use of natural resources. (126)

Hence it is not only the ecological unpredictability where resources are scarce - the 'cyclical pattern of catastrophes' as Monod puts it - that prohibits nomadic pastoralists from living in a well-balanced system of exchange with nature. (127) Pastoralism as a subsistence strategy has to be seen in the context of political and social systems. Rather than acting as an intermediary agency between nature and culture and as such being only a response to the ecological environment, the pastoralist mode of existence is embedded in a reciprocal interrelation of the cultural and the ecological sphere. The cultural adaptation to the natural environment is exposed to influences from the ecological and the cultural sphere alike. Thus nomadic activities are not only dictated by natural conditions like climate, rainfall and droughts: they succumb to 'distortions' from the social field as well.

Raids on livestock-breeders formed an essential part of the political and social system of Nama society. The fragile power of a chief was to a large extent based on his ability to organize successful livestock-raids. Sometimes missionaries were criticised by their African adherents for acting as peacemakers who prevented pastoralists from expropriating other livestock-owners. In the words of the Warmbad missionaries:

We understand there are several Namacquas much dissatisfied who are going to reproach their Captain Bondelswart for having permitted the preachers of the

word of God in his country. The consequence of which was that they are in the greatest poverty. They say there are cattle and sheep enough, but on account of the word of God we are poor and cannot get them. - The fact is that before the Gospel of J.C. was known among them they always robbed and plundered other tribes. (128)

Wikar was informed in 1778/79 that livestock-raids among the Great Namaquas were the order of the day. (129) We have to take these internal dynamics of Nama groups into consideration to understand how the new social forms that were introduced by the commando system at a later stage articulated with non-capitalist structures.

NOTES CHAPTER TWO

- 1) This geographical outline is adopted from Hartmut Leser, Namibia, (Stuttgart, 1982). See also John H. Wellington, South West Africa and its Human Issues, (London, 1967).
- 2) Kienetz, 'Nineteenth-century SWA', pp.157-239.
- 3) See C.J. Skead, Historical Mammal Incidence in the Cape Province, The Western and Northern Cape, (Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation of the Provincial Administration of the Cape of Good Hope, 1980).
- 4) R. Elphick and V.C. Malherbe, 'The Khoisan to 1828', in The Shaping, p.5.
- 5) J.A. Engelbrecht, The Korana, An Account of their Customs and their History, (Cape Town, 1936), p.19.
- 6) Engelbrecht, The Korana, p.11-12.
- 7) See Engelbrecht, 'The Tribes of Wikar's Journal', in Mossop (ed.), The Journal of Hendrik Jakob Wikar (1779), The Journals of Jacobus Coetsé Jansz (1760) and Willem van Reenen (1791), (Cape Town, 1935), p.231.
- 8) The term 'Great Namaqualand' was in use at least from the first half of the eighteenth century onwards. Thus Rhenius mentioned in 1724 'Great Namaquas and Briquas <Tswana> lying beyond the <Orange> River': E.E. Mossop (ed.), The Journals of Brink and Rhenius, (Cape Town, 1947), p.145. Brink's journal of the expedition of Hendrik Hop in 1761/62 makes a clear distinction between 'Little' and 'Great Namaqualand', the southern boundary of the latter being marked by the Orange River: Mossop (ed.), Brink and Rhenius, pp.25-29. Nienaber's dictionary of Khoikhoi group names, which is based on a linguistic and historical analysis of predominantly published sources, makes an important contribution to the history of the Nama and Oorlams in Namibia, but unfortunately was published when research for the present study had already been completed. See G.S. Nienaber, Khoekhoense Stamname, 'n voorlopige verkenning, (Pretoria, 1989).
- 9) See Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsé, van Reenen, pp.81, 145, 157, 204-205, 222-224.
- 10) B. Lau (ed.), Carl Hugo Hahn Tagebücher, 1837-1860 Diaries. A missionary in Nama- and Damaraland, 5 vols. (Windhoek Archives Source Publication Series, No.8, 1984/85), vol.3, p.672. The statistical figures given by the first missionaries were considerably lower. Thus the Albrechts estimated in c. 1810 the number of Bondelswarts at 1 400

people and the whole of the Nama population at about 5 000 people: see Transactions of the London Missionary Society (TLMS) 3, p.210. Seidenfaden indicated a figure of about 600 Franzmannsche: TLMS, 3, p.239.

- 11) TLMS, 3, p.210.
- 12) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.507. This account refers to the year 1870.
- 13) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.268.
- 14) 'Quellen', vol.2, 'Mitteilungen von Johannes Daûsab, Lehrer in Keetmanshoop, über die Zeibischen Hottentotten', pp. 147-153. The San (or Bushmen) of southern Namibia are seldom mentioned in the missionary records, and it is not clear if the occasional references to 'Bushmen' livestock-raiders denote San or impoverished Khoikhoi without cattle. W.E. Wendt claims that, even before the accelerated encroachment of Khoikhoi and European livestock-breeders on their land, there were only several hundred San living in the western parts of Great Namaqualand: see W.E. Wendt, 'Ein Rekonstruktionsversuch der Besiedlungsgeschichte des westlichen Groß-Namalandes seit dem 15. Jahrhundert', Journal of the S.W.A. Scientific Society, 29 (1974/75), p.44.
- 15) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-November 1809; TLMS, 3, p.312. p.147; 'Quellen', vol.18a, Fenchel, Keetmanshoop. 19 September 1879, pp.73-77.
- 16) NGK, ZAG letter, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 22 August 1808. I could not clarify etymologically the term 'rugo' or 'ruggen'. Perhaps it derived from the name 'Red Nation' as the Kai//khaun came to be called. ('Rot'=German, 'rooi'=Afrikaans). On the other hand, this term could have been a phonetic distortion of the Nama name. The Red Nation was sometimes called 'Greatruggen', while the term 'Kleinrugo', or 'little Kaup' apparently referred to the Swartboois: see CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811; NGK, ZAG letter, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 22 August 1808; CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Journey from Pella, 13 April-10 June 1814. This interpretation seems to correspond with Vedder's interpretation of the name '//Khou/g0an' as 'children of the //Kou': Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.127. Thus the fission of the //Khou/g0an from the Kai//khaun, (or Gei//kou), would have found expression in a new group name. See also C.J. Andersson, Lake Ngami, (London, 1856), p.288; Winifred Hoernlé, 'The Social Organization of the Nama Hottentots of Southwest Africa', in P. Carstens, ed., The Social Organization of the Nama and other Essays by Winifred Hoernlé (Johannesburg, 1985), p.43.
- 17) See 'Quellen', vol.2, 'Mitteilungen von Johannes Daûsab,

Lehrer in Keetmanshoop, über die Zeibschens Hottentotten', p.147. The separation from the Kai//khaun in the Karas Mountains was confirmed by a Swartbooi captain as late as the 1920s: 'Quellen', vol.2, 'Mitteilungen von David Swartbooi', p.99-101.

- 18) Compare Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.126-129.
- 19) See, for example, 'Quellen', vol.5, Vollmer, Hoachanas, 21 May 1860, p.124; 'Quellen', vol.5, Vollmer', Hoachanas, 25 December 1862, p.144; 'Quellen' vol.10b, Krönlein und Weber, Berseba, February 1858, p.68; 'Quellen', vol.18b, Fenchel, Keetmanshoop, 30 July 1884, p.10.
- 20) Hoernlé, 'Social Organization', p.42.
- 21) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.129.
- 22) K.F.R.H. Budack, 'Die traditionelle politische Struktur der Khoe-Khoen in Südwestafrika (Stamm und Stammesregierung auf historischer Grundlage)', (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of Pretoria, 1972).
- 23) According to Budack, the families were labelled as 'om-anti': Budack, 'Khoe-Khoen', pp.56, 68.
- 24) CA, VC, vol.593, Gordon Dagboek II, entry of 12 December 1779. See also the recently published accounts of Gordon's journeys: Peter E. Raper and Maurice Boucher (eds.), Robert Jacob Gordon: Cape Travels, 1777 to 1786, 2 vols. (Johannesburg, 1988).
- 25) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811; Hoernlé, 'Social Organization', p.50.
- 26) T. Hahn, Tsuni-//goam. The Supreme Being of the Khoi-Khoi, (London, 1881; reprint Freeport, 1971), p.18.
- 27) The term 'captain' was introduced by the Dutch at the Cape since the 1690s. Nama chiefs willing to co-operate were endowed with a staff of office: see Shula Marks, 'Khoisan Resistance to the Dutch in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', Journal of African History, 12 (1) (1972).
- 28) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, September 1808-March 1809.
- 29) CA, LMS Letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.
- 30) NGK, ZAG letter, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 7 December 1806.
- 31) Barnabas Shaw, Memorials of South Africa, (London, 1840; reprint Cape Town, 1970), p.120.
- 32) CL, WMMS journal, Shaw, 'Journey to Great Namaqualand',

- entry of 14 May 1820. Compare Missionary Notices, 3 (1821-1822), pp.68-76.
- 33) See, for instance, Budack, 'Khoë-Khoën', p.204.
- 34) For instance, Tindall, Journal, p.40.
- 35) Mossop (ed.), Journals of Bergh and Schriiver, p.122; see also Elphick, Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa, (Johannesburg, 1985), p.134.
- 36) E. Moritz, 'Die ältesten Reiseberichte über Deutsch-Südwestafrika', in Mitteilungen aus den Deutschen Schutzgebieten, 31 (1918), p.60.
- 37) Moritz, 'Die ältesten Reiseberichte', 28 (1915), p.180.
- 38) Mossop (ed.), The journal of Hendrik Jakob Wikar, p.27.
- 39) CA, VC, vol.593, Gordon Dagboek II, 8 Dec 1779.
- 40) Le Vaillant, Travels into the Interior Parts of Africa by the Cape of Good Hope. In the years 1780, 81, 82, 83, 84 and 85, 2 vols. (Perth, 1791) vol.2, p. 64, and New Travels into the Interior Parts of Africa by the Way of the Cape of Good Hope, In the years 1783, 84, and 85, (London, 1796) vol.2, p.234. For a critique of Le Vaillant's fantastic claims with regard to a journey into Namibia see Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.30.
- 41) 'Quellen', vol.8a, Weber, Warmbad, 4 January 1873, p.107.
- 42) Winifred Hoernlé, on the other hand, established a genealogical table when she did fieldwork among the Bondelswarts in 1912-13, which claimed that Amachab was the son and successor of //Nanieb: see Peter Carstens, Gerald Klinghardt, Martin West (eds.), Trails in the Thirstland. The Anthropological Field Diaries of Winifred Hoernlé, (Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, 1987), p.78.
- 43) J. Campbell, Travels in South Africa, (London, 1815), p.304. It is interesting to note that Gordon refers to /Obib as 'gao-aob'. According to the Nama linguist T. Hahn gao-aob (gou-aob) means 'fat man', which was a reverential term for wealthy chiefs, whose power was based on the distribution of livestock and food to accumulate followers: T. Hahn, Tsuni-//goam, pp.16-17. Neither in Gordon's nor in Campbell's account, though, does this Bondelswart chief figure as an unusually corpulent man. Significantly, however, in the historical memory of the Bondelswarts /Obib, whose name is translated by Weber as 'the one who stinks', lived on as a gao-aob of gargantuan proportions. Legend had it that he was unable to move on his own, and that he had to be carried and fed by his people: 'Quellen', vol.8a, Weber,

- Warmbad, (1873), 'Kurze Genealogie des Bondel Zwartschen Volkes nebst einigen Bemerkungen über deren Leben', p.112.
- 44) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-November 1809.
- 45) Hoernlé, 'Social Organization', pp.42, 49.
- 46) 'Quellen', vol.8a, Weber, 'Kurze Genealogie', Warmbad, 1873, p.112.
- 47) CA, LMS journal, Warmbad, January-November 1809.
- 48) CA, CO, vol.2697, Deputy Landdrost of Clanwilliam to Chief Secretary of Government, 10 September 1827; 'Quellen', vol.8a, Weber, Warmbad, (1873), 'Kurze Genealogie', p.113; SAL, Shaw's Journals, vol. of 1823-1826, entry of 13 November 1825.
- 49) For example: CA, LMS letter, A. Albrecht, Warmbad, 4 November 1808.
- 50) CA, records of the Magistrate of Springbok (1/SBK), vol.5/1/3, Civil Commissioner of Namaqualand to Colonial Secretary, 1 June 1866.
- 51) 'Quellen', vol.8a, 'Auszug aus dem Bericht von Missionar F.W. Weber, Warmbad, Anfang September 1868-Ende Januar 1869', p.33.
- 52) Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, p.7.
- 53) Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, p.32.
- 54) See maps in Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, pp.7, 31.
- 55) P. Carstens, G. Klinghard, M. West (eds.), Trails, p.118.
- 56) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, November-December 1809.
- 57) Hoernlé, 'Social Organization', p.49.
- 58) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.
- 59) Hoernlé, 'Social Organization', p.43.
- 60) See the LMS and the ZAG records. See 'Original Map of Great Namaqualand and Damaraland by Theophilus Hahn' (1879), Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol. 5; see also the map in Mossop (ed.), Journals of Wikar, Coetsè and Van Reenen.
- 61) 'Quellen', vol.2, 'Mitteilungen von Johannes Dásab, Lehrer in Keetmanshoop, über die Zeibschén Hottentotten', (1928), p.147.

- 62) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.174, 259, 268.
- 63) See Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, p.6.
- 64) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-November 1809; 'Quellen', vol.18a, Fenchel, Keetmanshoop, 16 May 1879, p.71.
- 65) 'Quellen', vol.18a, Fenchel, Keetmanshoop, 4 October 1883.
- 66) 'Quellen', vol.18b, Fenchel, Keetmanshoop, 30 July 1884, p.10; 'Quellen', vol. 18a, Fenchel, Keetmanshoop, 4 October 1883, p.112.
- 67) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811. See also Elphick, Khoikhoi, p.21.
- 68) TLMS, 3, p.210.
- 69) TLMS, 3, p.319.
- 70) TLMS, 3, p.213.
- 71) TLMS, 3, p.209.
- 72) TLMS, 3, p.210.
- 73) CL, WMMS journal, Shaw, 'Journey to Great Namaqualand', entry of 6 May 1820.
- 74) TLMS, 3, p.213.
- 75) CA, LMS letter, Moffat, Vredeberg, 25 August 1818.
- 76) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, p.81.
- 77) Kolb, Unter Hottentotten, pp.72-77. Nearly all of the European observers were informed that this operation was believed to augment the ability to run at a high speed. See also S.P. Naber (ed.), Reisebeschreibungen von deutschen Beamten und Kriegsleuten im Dienst der Niederländischen West- und Ost-Indischen Kompagnien 1602-1797, 13 vols. (Haag, 1930/32), vol.6, p.178; vol.7, pp.31-32.
- 78) T. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, p.49.
- 79) James E. Alexander, An Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa. Through the Hitherto Undescribed Countries of the Great Namaquas, Boschmans, and Hill Damaras, 2 vols. (London, 1838) vol.1, p.168.
- 80) Marks, 'Khoisan Resistance', p.77.
- 81) TLMS, 3, p. 213.

- 82) TLMS, 3, pp.210, 211, 213.
- 83) TLMS, 3, p.211.
- 84) Claude Meillassoux, 'From Production to Reproduction. A Marxist approach to economic anthropology', Economy and Society, 1 (1) (1972), pp.93,101.
- 85) CA, LMS journal, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, May 1806-December 1806.
- 86) WA, ZB, no.714 FV. n.3, vol.1, 1897.
- 87) TLMS, 3, p.213. A sexual stratification regarding the access to beef (men) and to mutton (women) was also stated by European observers of Cape Khoikhoi in the seventeenth century. See Naber, Reisebeschreibungen, vol.7, pp.23, 45.
- 88) Hoernlé, 'Social Organization', p.55; T. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, pp.19-20.
- 89) Carstens, Klinghard, West (eds.), Trails, p.84.
- 90) 'Quellen', vol.2, 'Mitteilungen von Traugott Dausab in Hoachanas über die Rote Nation', (1928), p.123; Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.131-132; 'Quellen', 16b, Olpp, Gibeon, 12 January 1876, p.240.
- 91) T. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, p.19.
- 92) Tindall, Journal, p.31.
- 93) Hoernlé, 'Social Organization', p.51.
- 94) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-November 1809.
- 95) CA, LMS letter, A. Albrecht, March 1807.
- 96) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.
- 97) Rada and Neville Dyson-Hudson, 'Nomadic Pastoralism', Annual Review of Anthropology, 9 (1980).
- 98) Rada and Neville Dyson-Hudson, 'Nomadic Pastoralism', p.17.
- 99) Rada and Neville Dyson-Hudson, 'Nomadic Pastoralism', p.30.
- 100) TLMS, 3, pp.208-209.
- 101) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.
- 102) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.

- 103) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.
- 104) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-November 1809.
- 105) Neville Dyson-Hudson, 'The Study of Nomads', in W. Irons and N. Dyson-Hudson (eds.), Perspectives on Nomadism, (Leiden, 1972).
- 106) Elphick, Khoikhoi, p.154; see also table p.160.
- 107) See the accounts of Coetsè in 1760: Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, p.258; the Hop expedition in 1761-62: Mossop (ed.), Brink and Rhenius, pp.49, 59; Wikar: Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, pp.119, 121, 123; CA, LMS letter, C. Albrecht, Cape Town, 10 December 1812; CA, LMS journal, Kitchingman, 'Steinkopf to Great Namaqualand', <wrongly marked Wimmer> 1820, entries of 4, 20 May; CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Great Namaqualand, 1819-20. See also Alexander's interview of some old Bondelswarts in 1836. When they were asked what would be the worst thing that could happen to a Nama, the answer was: 'The death of the sheep.': Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, p.173.
- 108) See the letters of C. Albrecht (1805-1811) in the records of ZAG, NGK archives.
- 109) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 27 October 1808.
- 110) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Korreros Fontein/Great Namaqualand, 16 November 1808.
- 111) RLMS, 1810, pp.350-351; see also TLMS, 3, pp.246-247.
- 112) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 27 October 1808.
- 113) CA, LMS, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, September 1808-March 1809.
- 114) CA, LMS, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, September 1808-March 1809.
- 115) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Korreros Fontein/Great Namaqualand, 16 November 1808.
- 116) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 27 June 1807.
- 117) CA, LMS, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.
- 118) NGK, ZAG, Seidenfaden, n.d., <Heirachabis>
- 119) Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, p.42.
- 120) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 26 April 1807.

- 121) TLMS, 3, p.29.
- 122) References to a cattle post system do, in fact, not clearly emerge from the early missionary accounts. However, respective information may be extrapolated with some justification from other studies of Khoikhoi pastoralists, see for instance Elphick, Khoikhoi, p.62.
- 123) TLMS, 3, p.213.
- 124) T. Monod, 'Introduction', in Pastoralism in Tropical Africa, (London, 1975).
- 125) According to Seidenfaden diseases constantly occurred. In c. 1809, the Nama at Heirachabis had lost a considerable proportion of their sheep, leaving the wealthiest among them with about 50 animals each: CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 1811.
- 126) See P.H. Gulliver, 'Nomadic movements: Causes and implications', in Pastoralism in Tropical Africa.
- 127) Monod, 'Introduction', p. 117.
- 128) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-November 1809.
- 129) Mossop (ed.), Wikaar, Coetsê, van Reenen, p.29.

CHAPTER III: THE FAR NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER AND THE EARLY HISTORY
OF THE OORLAM

3.1. The far north-western frontier during the eighteenth century

Information on the Khoikhoi in 'Little' and 'Great Namaqualand' was fragmentarily obtained by the Dutch settlers at the Cape from the 1650s. Incited by the European colonial myth of an African 'El Dorado', expeditions were sent to the north from 1659 onwards. Economic or trade interests in regard of Khoikhoi groups in the northern Cape, however, seemed to have dwindled after a while. When some Nama visited Cape Town in 1681 and presented commander van der Stel with copper, interest in the northern Khoikhoi groups was rekindled. More journeys were undertaken, but they did not lead beyond the Groen River, south of the Kamiesberg. Accounts described Little Namaqualand as being thinly populated with about eight or nine kraals. (1)

Bergh's journey in 1682 provided some information on the northern Khoikhoi. Among several names of Khoikhoi groups who are difficult to identify, we find the 'Cobicijqua', supposedly living in the region of the Buffels or Koussies River north of the Kamiesberg, and the 'Caminge', living north of the 'Cobicijqua'. (2) While the 'Caminge' are the Bondelswarts, (other versions of the Nama name !Kam!#nun are Kamingou, Camingnoe etc.), the 'Cobicijqua' could be identical with the /Khobesin who were later to become the Witbooi Oorlams. (3)

Until the end of the eighteenth century, a modest number of

European ships touched the Namibian coast, and several expeditions, travellers and raiding-trading parties visited the region north of the Orange River. (4) The first recorded expedition of white farmers to the Orange River occurred in 1738. (5) Ten colonists, accompanied by their Khoisan servants, became involved in illegal bartering with some Nama across the lower Orange. The initially peaceful contact developed into a brutal raid on these Khoikhoi. Several Nama were killed, and the raiders returned to the colony with a booty of over 1000 cattle. The Cape Government, however, soon got wind of those events, informed by both the raiders' disappointed Khoisan servants, who had not received their share of the stolen cattle, and by some of the Nama survivors who travelled to the Cape to lay complaints before the colonial authorities. The government's attempts to restore the cattle to their owners resulted not only in a short-lived rebellion of the disgruntled burghers, who refused to part with their booty, but also in fierce attacks of incensed Khoisan along the northern Cape frontier. The war of 1739 had disastrous effects on the Khoisan population, because in the end the victorious colonists were able to extend their control over the pastures south of Little Namaqualand and west of the Bokkeveld. The final defeat of the Khoisan population in these areas opened the way for further trekboer expansion, and the frontier advanced further into the interior. (6)

After Jakobus Coetsè, commonly regarded as the first white traveller to cross the Orange River and to leave a written account of his journey, had travelled to the Warmbad region in

1760, the Cape Government equipped an expedition consisting of 17 Europeans, 68 Africans and 15 ox-wagons. (7) This expedition of 1761/62 under Hendrik Hop represented the first scientific effort to explore natural resources and trade opportunities in Namibia. It provided later travellers with the first map of the region north of the Orange River and it accelerated the settlement of European and Bastard trekboers in the north-western frontier zone. (8)

Much more information on the conditions of the Orange River region was procured the following decade by two European travellers. Hendrik Wikar was a Swedish adventurer and a deserter from the Company's services at the Cape. He never set foot on Namibian soil, but his noteworthy account is based on information obtained among the Khoisan population of the middle Orange River region which he roamed in 1778/79. (9) Of Namibian groups, Wikar mentions the Bondelswarts, the Red Nation, Veldskoendraers, Damara and Herero. Robert Gordon travelled extensively at about the same time in Little Namaqualand and along the lower and middle Orange River. Gordon, who gave the !Garib or Great River its European name, was accompanied by the well-known frontiersman Pienaar and his servant Klaas Afrikaner. With Afrikaner as a guide, Gordon spent some time in the vicinity of Warmbad, and it was there where he met the chief of the Bondelswarts. Some years later, Pienaar was killed by his servants, who retreated to the Orange River and later gained notoriety as the Afrikaner Oorlams. (10)

Both Wikar and Gordon described a network of small-scale

societies along the Orange, conducting hunting, gathering, livestock-breeding and short-distance trade. As Legassick points out, these societies were already part of an African frontier zone, before the penetration with European colonial structures. Prior to the 'overlapping' of the African and the European frontier zone, Bantu and Khoisan communities were closely interconnected by social and economic ties, rather marked by their structural similarity than by ethnic divisions. (11)

In the 1780s, African communities along the lower and middle course of the Orange River were only superficially acquainted with European culture patterns. Some of those Africans had never met white people before they were visited by Wikar and Gordon; horses were as unknown as scissors and needles. (12) On the other hand, social interaction between Khoisan and Europeans existed on a considerable scale in Little Namaqualand, which thus became the 'cradle' of the mixed population group called 'Bastards'. Racial categories were not as powerful as they were to become at a later stage, and there was a great deal of social intercourse, including marital bonds, between black and white on the frontier. As late as 1837, Alexander, on his return from his journey to Namibia, observed the uninhibited sexual mores prevailing on some farms in Little Namaqualand and was filled with indignation:

...I know for a fact that the white girls sleep with Hottentot men! (13)

When classifications of race later gained an all-pervading influence on South African society, the white population would

take great pains to deny an interracial cultural heritage. But it was not only African societies which adopted European cultural patterns; in the frontier zone the process of acculturation worked in both directions. Thus Gordon found nineteen 'vee plaatsen' held by European farmers north of the Groen River. Only five of those European settlers were married to European women; the rest of them had married Khoikhoi women in accordance with traditional Khoikhoi ceremonies. (14)

It was the offspring from those black and white relationships who, disadvantaged by colonial society, found it difficult to compete for land rights with their white half-brothers. They merged into the Bastard population and extended the frontier beyond the Orange River. (15) This vanguard of colonial penetration established hunting and trading ties with southern Namibia and Transorangia at the end of the eighteenth century. Wikar's travelling companion Claas Bastard traded with Namibian Khoikhoi groups like the Bondelswarts and the Red Nation, and was well informed about current events in Great Namaqualand. (16) According to Moffat, in 1796 some of those Bastard frontiersmen even managed to traverse the Kalahari from southern Namibia to reach Transorangia. (17)

The account of Willem van Reenen's journey in 1791/92 gives evidence of the further expansion of the frontier into Namibia. Van Reenen's expedition met two farmers at Warmbad, Pieter Brand and Barend Freyn, who apparently moved with their livestock in the area between Warmbad and Koregas. While the report does not state if these two frontiersmen were Bastards or Europeans,

another farmer living in the vicinity of Modderfontein (Keetmanshoop) is denoted as Bastard. (18) The expedition also visited Guillaume Visagie at Modderfontein, a white trekboer, who settled in Great Namaqualand since c. 1786 and had gathered a clientele among the Namibian Khoisan population. (19) In 1793, Visagie withdrew from his farm after a violent encounter with a commando of the Afrikaner Oorlams who returned from the interior of Namibia and apparently acted on behalf of the VOC. (20) There is every indication that those European and Bastard trekboers established among Namibian groups a harsh master and servant hierarchy. For decades to follow, Nama anxiously remembered the names of dreaded 'hatwearers' like Visagie and Freyn. (21)

An emphasis on the decisive impact of the Oorlam immigrants on non-capitalist structures should not let us overlook the fact that there were also migrations, contacts and clashes in the pre-Oorlam era which resulted in dramatic changes among Namibian groups. During the eighteenth century, the north-western frontier zone was the arena of constant population shifts. From the 1740s Nama groups moved from Little Namaqualand across the Orange River to settle permanently in Namibia. (22) These migrations were, at least partially, reactions to the disturbances created by the increasing colonial encroachment on Khoisan land and livestock in the Cape Colony. By 1760, Khoisan beyond the Orange River were aware of the European influence at the Cape, as noted by Coetsé, who was able to soothe suspicions among the Nama by referring to his legitimation from the Cape Governor. (23) Despite their withdrawal to Namibia, Khoikhoi immigrants were not cut off from

economic and social relations with Khoikhoi groups beyond the Orange River. When the Hop expedition crossed the Orange River in 1761, it was accompanied by about one hundred Nama who wanted 'to visit their friends among the Great Namaqua'. (24)

By the end of the eighteenth century, these Khoikhoi immigrants from the Cape Colony were commonly known in southern Namibia as 'Goedonse' (25), meaning sheep hunters. (26) This term has occasionally been taken for another nom-de-guerre of the Oorlam raiders, but it was clearly in use before the Oorlam migrations of the early nineteenth century. (27) It may be noted that the description of Nama raiders as sheep and not as cattle hunters supports the view, argued above (2.3.), that the Nama pastoralist economy during the period under investigation was mainly based on small stock. Though the effects of these migrations of Khoikhoi into Namibia remain subject to speculation, there are some indications that 'traditional' social and economic conditions were seriously disturbed by them. Both Wikar and Gordon were informed of constant violent eruptions among Namibian Khoisan groups, mainly in regard of livestock. As a consequence of continuous wars, Wikar was told, there was a surplus of women which accounted for an increase of polygamous marriages. (28)

Apart from growing military conflict, which may be seen as a result of an accelerated population density in a region of harsh ecological conditions, there seems to have been drastic alterations in the economic relations between the different

Namibian groups. This can be deduced from some reports of the Damara in Namibia. The Damara, the #Nu-khoin or black people, have been depicted by colonial historians as the long-standing serfs of Nama and Herero. The early history of these Nama speakers remains a mystery. However, the political subordination of Damara groups seems to have been an ongoing process during the eighteenth century, and their loss of political and social independence to be directly connected to the wave of Khoikhoi immigrants called Goedonse.

The Damara lived in small groups scattered over southern and central Namibia, especially in the region of the Kuisib and Swakop Rivers, the Auas and Erongo Mountains. (29) Wikar's account describes them as economically powerful intermediaries in the trade with iron and glass beads, living as blacksmiths among the Nama and exchanging iron from the Ovambo in the north of Namibia and from the Tswana east of the Kalahari. For their labour, and in exchange for copper and iron, Damara received livestock from the Nama. The vital connection between their trade in metals and their wealth in livestock was explicitly acknowledged by the Damara. According to Wikar's informants, Damara claimed

...they must have pasturages for the old cows according to the colours of the beads desired. When these cows are fat they are slaughtered. The contents of the guts are buried in the ground and have to remain there for a certain time, and when they are dug up again beads have been formed. (30)

The Damara protected their monopoly in this short-distance trade by making Ovambo and Tswana believe that the Nama were

barbarous people determined to destroy any unknown intruder into their territory. (31) In 1793, van Reenen met with Damara gatherers in the region of the present-day Rehoboth. According to their account, they had been ousted from their residences in the Auas Mountains by the Goedonse. They were not in possession of livestock because those Khoikhoi systematically prevented them from building up herds of their own. At the end of the eighteenth century, Damara blacksmiths and traders had apparently lost their powerful role as intermediaries in the iron trade with Ovambo and Tswana. The Damara claimed that this was due to the increased trade in iron, especially in weapons, that had been introduced to Namibia by Bastard frontiersmen. These weapons made military resistance against the Khoikhoi intruders ineffective. (32)

In this case the break-up of established social and economic relations among Namibian groups did not involve the extension of the firearms frontier. Although the immigration of those Khoikhoi groups can be related to the expansion of mercantile commodity relations from the Cape Colony, capitalist commoditisation was not imported by the Goedonse, who maintained pre-capitalist social and economic structures. Disruptions of the previous social and political constellation occurred through the extension of the frontier into Namibia, but it is hard to see in these raiding and trading relations established by Bastard and European trekboers more than the preliminary phase of the articulation of pre-capitalist modes of production with the capitalist mode of production. Along the Orange, trade relations were still dependent on the subsistence economy of hunters, herders and

gatherers. Those small-scale societies did not produce commodities with regard to a market. Trade relations still functioned within the social and economic setting of pre-capitalist societies. Thus exchange was influenced by social rules and accompanied by religious connotations which transcended the limits of a purely economic rationality. Often barter took place by establishing ritualised social bonds between trading partners. (33)

When frontiersmen like Guillaume Visagie settled beyond the limits of the Cape Colony, with or without the silent approval of the VOC (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie), they established relations among their African clientele which bore close resemblance to feudal relations. Surplus was extracted from indigenous societies without direct intervention in the productive processes of herders, hunters and gatherers. Of course, coerced trade and coerced labour in the frontier zone anticipated often enough an expropriation of indigenous groups. It was not an uncommon feature of frontier zone politics that frontiersmen arrived with their herds, established 'leg plaatsen', became involved in the local political and social network and decided to stay. European adventurers and runaways from the Cape like the German outlaw Jan Bloem succeeded in building inter-ethnic frontier polities of their own on the middle Orange, which proved to be more or less short-lived but nevertheless represented visible milestones of the advancing frontier. (34)

It is not necessary here to repeat an account of those aspects

of colonial politics of Dutch and British governments which accelerated the extension of the northern frontier. As Legassick and others have shown, there were two main thrusts in the colonial expansion to the north. The first saw the colonists herding their livestock beyond the Piketberg by 1712, and in the 1720s loan farms were established in the Olifants River Valley. In the 1730s white frontiersmen turned eastwards across the mountains south of so-called Bushmanland, leaving non-white frontier groups like Bastards and Oorlams with considerably more space in the north-western frontier zone, i.e. Little Namaqualand and the region north of the lower Orange River. A second thrust occurred at the beginning of the nineteenth century further to the east when the frontier beyond the Sneeuwberg began to open up with the fading resistance of the Khoisan population. (35)

The history of the origins of acculturated Khoikhoi bands in the Cape Colony, who were later to be known as Oorlams, has to be seen against this historical background of an increasing loss of social and political independence, concurrent with the extension of the frontier zone. The northward movement of the trekboers initiated fierce competition between white farmers and the Khoisan for land, labour and livestock. This process was not a peaceful one, but in the long run the resistance of the Khoisan crumbled in the face of the colonists' stronger supply-lines with the Cape providing the white farmers with firearms and other European commodities. Hunters and herders lost their land and livestock - and often their lives - under the impact of the advancing frontier, which left them with diminishing ecological

and economic resources. Those Khoisan who survived the massacres, which were often committed under the pretext of recovering stolen livestock, and refused to become dispossessed labourers in the services of the trekboers were dispersed to the social and geographic margins of the colonial society. But even those Khoisan who decided to put themselves under the protection of a trekboer as farm labourers to regain access to the limited resources of land and livestock had reasons to withdraw beyond colonial boundaries. Colonial jurisdiction proved quite ineffective in defending the rights of Khoisan labourers, who suffered from inhumane working conditions and harsh treatment at the hands of their white masters. (36) Moreover, in the 1770s and 1780s, there was increasing colonial pressure on 'Bastards' and 'Bastard-Hottentots', i.e. people of Khoikhoi-European and Khoikhoi-slave origin, such as attempts to register their particulars with regard to military conscription and taxation. The subscription of people of Khoikhoi or mixed racial descent to commando duties, especially, caused many to flee from the colony. (37) Other developments, like the abolition of the slave trade in 1808 which resulted in augmented pressure on Khoisan labour, contributed to the ever decreasing 'lebensraum' of the Khoisan population on the northern frontier.

3.2. The origin of Oorlam groups

Around the turn of the eighteenth century, South African colonial society was acquainted with basically three different terms denoting members of acculturated African groups of predominantly

Khoikhoi origin. Apart from the Bastards (Khoikhoi-European descent) and the Bastard-Hottentots (Khoikhoi-slave descent), there were the so-called 'Oorlams'. While the term 'Bastard' stressed the element of a mixed racial origin, the term 'Oorlam' rather denoted a certain adaptation to prevailing European cultural standards. Those Khoikhoi acquired Oorlam status who were acquainted with the Dutch language, had accepted some basic concepts of Christian ideology and were proficient in the use of firearms, horses and ox-wagons. Occasionally Oorlam groups too were said to consist of members of mixed racial origin, and they certainly integrated people from various ethnic groups. For the Oorlams themselves, however, patterns of modernization were evidently more relevant than any elements of miscegenation. Fluency in the Dutch language, especially, was considered to be a prerequisite to the elevation to Oorlam status; in Nama Oorlams called themselves 'Dutch speakers'. (38) Thus the term 'Oorlam', as opposed to the colonial category 'Bastard', was used outside the colonial social hierarchy, for instance among those Khoikhoi who seasonally worked for white farmers. (39) The word's origin has been traced back to the Malay 'orang lama', meaning 'a man of experience'. This expression apparently was taken over from the Malay slaves at the Cape; in a wider context it did not only refer to Khoikhoi who had worked for European farmers but to other Africans as well. (40)

While it is impossible to draw a sharp distinction between those different categories - in fact, the history of these mixed groups is closely intertwined - the term 'Oorlam' has a

connotation of greater social independence or at least of a more prominent urge towards independence. While the Bastards, if only for a relatively brief period, entertained hopes for admission to the upper ranks of colonial society, a similar political strategy did not gain overall importance for the Oorlams. The formative period of Oorlam history was rather marked by a strong element of withdrawal behind colonial boundaries with the aim of gaining or preserving a certain degree of autonomy; as will be demonstrated, the history of the Afrikaner Oorlams did not lack this characteristic trait of autonomy in seclusion.

In nineteenth-century Namibia, five Oorlam groups are important: the Afrikaner Oorlams (//Aixa//ain), the Bethany people (!Aman), the Khaugas people (Kai/khauan), the Berseba people (/Hai/khauan) and the Witboois (/Khobesin). At the turn of the eighteenth century, however, only two of these five groups were settling in Namibia, the Afrikaner Oorlams and the Bethany people. All of the Oorlam groups became closely related through social links like intermarriage and through political ties.

The Afrikaner Oorlams were the first to emerge as a cohesive group. Their early history has been well researched in comparison with the other four Oorlam groups. Their origin from trekboer society and their connections with nearly all of the frontier groups and prominent frontiersmen has drawn attention to the impact of commando patterns on the structures of Oorlam groups. It is undoubtedly correct to identify the commando, in the sense of an institutionalised form of herding, hunting and

trading with a strong element of coercion, as the essential structural core of frontier society. But this observation has led to an undue generalization with regard to Oorlam groups. The social nucleus of Oorlam bands did not in all cases develop within the structures of colonial commando groups, and the economy of Oorlam groups was not in all cases dominated by a dependency on Cape merchant capital. It was not before the second half of the nineteenth century that all five Oorlam groups assumed their characteristic features as parasitic commando societies, economically based on raiding Herero cattle-breeders. Before that time the term 'Oorlam' in the Namibian context rather referred to the Afrikaner Oorlams or denoted loosely interconnected clans and families of acculturated Khdikhoi. (41)

The problem in defining the historical place of the Oorlams at the beginning of the nineteenth century is partly rooted in the fluidity of the open frontier zone. Rigid categorizations fall short in describing those societies going through a crucial period of transition. This structural fluidity becomes also evident concerning the political status of the marginalized frontier groups. Allen and Barbara Isaacman have drawn attention to the multi-faceted causes underlying collaboration and resistance of African groups. (42) Internal stratifications and changing historical pre-conditions led to varying strategies of interaction with the colonial system. The political relations Africans established with a colonial society ranged from collaboration to resistance. Especially in an open frontier zone, where alliances and antagonisms were in a constant state of flux,

political strategies could change rapidly. The history of the Afrikaner Oorlams contains many aspects of political conformism which makes it necessary to qualify a picture of the Afrikaner Oorlams as staunch anti-colonial resistance fighters.

Vedder claims that the Afrikaners were dispersed members of the Guriqua who lived near St. Helena Bay. This Khoikhoi group reputedly had their headquarters in the region of the present-day Tulbagh, and according to Vedder, Jonker Afrikaner's grandfather, /Garuchamab, settled there with his followers. (43) Du Bruyn gives a more detailed account of the early history of the Afrikaners. One of the first documentary references to the Afrikaner clan from the 1760s mentions violent clashes between them and the Koks, a Bastard clan which later rose to prominence on the northern frontier. As a consequence of those disturbances of the peace of the frontier, the leader of the Afrikaners was banished to Robben Island where he died in 1777 after sixteen years in captivity. (44)

From the 1770s onwards the Afrikaner group was in the service of Petrus Pienaar, a farmer from the Tulbagh district who had several 'leg plaatsen' and loan farms on the northern frontier. The Afrikaner band was furnished by trekboers with firearms and sent to the northern frontier on commando, where it was involved in raiding, trading and herding activities. Thus the Afrikaner Oorlams became familiar with geographical and demographical conditions prevailing south and north of the Orange River. It was probably Klaas Afrikaner, father of Jager (Nama name /Hoa/aramab), who accompanied Gordon on a journey to the Warmbad

region in 1779. (45) When the Afrikaner Oorlams killed their master Pienaar in 1796 and fled to the Orange River, they had a long history behind them of raiding and killing Nama and San in the northern frontier zone. They were participants in the ill-famed 'Bushman hunts' of the late eighteenth century; when the Afrikaner Oorlams undertook a commando in 1792 near the Zak River they were reported to have killed 113 Khoisan. (46)

Contemporary sources claim that Pienaar's womanizing among the females of the Afrikaner clan led directly to his murder. (47) Other sources, according to du Bruyn, who so far has presented the most concise description of early Afrikaner history, indicate that general ill-treatment of his subordinates, or a deliberate attack of the Afrikaners on his farm, could have led to Pienaar's death. (48) Whatever the reasons for the Afrikaners' withdrawal from the colony, the murder of Pienaar seems to have been an unfortunate breakdown of social relations rather than a deliberate act of resistance. The Afrikaners' own version of the incident, as later presented by Jager, supports this view. (49)

It is interesting that Legassick and du Bruyn, analysing the reasons for the withdrawal of the Afrikaners to the Orange River, offer diametrically opposed argumentation. While Legassick claims that it was due to their summons to the so-called 'Cape Pandoeren Corps', which the government established in 1793 for Khoikhoi and 'Coloured' conscripts, that the Afrikaner Oorlams decided to cut their ties with colonial society (50), du Bruyn indicates that the Afrikaners were already officially acknowledged members of

the Cape Pandoeren in the 1790s. (51) In such a case the Afrikaners' incorporation into military colonial structures would rather have implied a confirmation of their superior status and a legal supply of arms and ammunition. Their higher social status as allies of the colonists was symbolically expressed by the staff of office which had been given to Klaas Afrikaner. (52)

The Afrikaners' withdrawal from colonial labour relations did not imply a drastic change of their mode of existence. They continued their attacks on cattle-breeding groups on the northern frontier, comprising the area of the Bokkeveld, Hantam and Little Namaqualand to the Orange River. One crucial difference, however, was that the expropriation of other livestock owners was now resumed without legal access to the colonial market. The Afrikaner Oorlams had lost their legal ties to colonial society which were essential concerning the supplies with firearms and ammunition, and now the former allies of trekboer society attacked other farmers in the North-Western Cape. Contemporary reports of these raiding activities and the fact that three commandos against Afrikaner proved to be unsuccessful became the core of the Afrikaner legend which depicted them either as infamous outlaws or, at a later stage, as precursors of resistance fighters against colonialism. The latter version seems to be mainly based on Afrikaner's reputed involvement in Khoikhoi resistance on the northern frontier against white encroachment in the 1790s. However, these connections seem to be very vague and there is no proof of more than a temporary overlap of Afrikaner's raiding activities and the armed struggle of Khoisan groups

against frontier farmers. (53)

Neville Alexander has warned against the mystifications of historical facts and figures brought about by a well-intended approach to African history, which prematurely conceptualizes any violent aspect of African-European interaction in the context of anti-colonial struggle:

National liberation movements in their search for evidence with which to document the exploits of the heroes and heroines of earlier resistance movements are subject to the temptations of reckless myth-making. The tendency to falsify the historical record (usually by omission or understatement of unpalatable facts) springs from the understandable importance attached within a nationalist framework to the establishment of some connection between the contemporary struggles for national liberation or national independence and the so-called primary resistance movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. (54)

One cannot call political strategies of Bastards and Oorlams at the turn of the eighteenth century anti-colonial resistance. It is anachronistic to apply the concept of collaboration-resistance to the pre-national African groups. (55) The question of political loyalty of African groups in the colonial context cannot be discussed without invoking the concept of the nation. When principles of national self-determination cannot be related to the prevailing historical circumstances, as in the case of the Afrikaner Oorlams, the differences between co-operation and collaboration become blurred. The Oorlams, 'born and bred with the farmers', were ambiguously connected to the structures of colonial domination. (56) As dispossessed, 'detrribalized' Khoikhoi they had assumed a position within colonial class society that elevated them above the status of mere farm

labourers or semi-autonomous livestock-breeders. It was the close interconnection of commando groups and colonial expansion which endowed this new class of Khoikhoi dependants with a comparatively high status, which made it possible for some acculturated Khoikhoi to regain autonomy.

Thus it was not difficult for the white frontier farmers to incite the Barends clan, another major Bastard group, to organize a commando against the Afrikaner Oorlams after their flight to the Orange River. This commando failed like all the other punitive expeditions against them. Most of those frontier raiding-trading bands had entertained friendly relations, among each other at one stage or other of their career on the margins of colonial society. However, those commandos against the Afrikaner Oorlams were often supported by leaders of other frontier groups like, for example, the Xhosa captain Danser, who roamed the middle Orange River region. (57)

After only three years of raiding activities on the northern frontier, Klaas Afrikaner must have felt the disadvantages for a commando leader who was outlawed by the colonial system. In 1799, he sent an envoy, Cobus Booy, to Stellenbosch in order to ask for peace. (58) This plea was rejected but repeated in 1800. This time Governor Yonge promised safe-conduct for Afrikaner who, for reasons unknown, refused to take the opportunity to restore peace with the colonial government. (59) From about 1800 onwards, the activities of the Afrikaner Oorlams shifted away from violent confrontations with colonial society, though Afrikaner enhanced his reputation as the most dangerous outlaw of the Orange

River by his continuous attacks on other frontier groups. New followers were drawn from groups like the San and Korana, and also adventurers and smaller bands who had reason to flee from the colony joined the Afrikaner Oorlams. (60)

After 1806, when the LMS began its activities in southern Namibia, the Afrikaners established somewhat loose relations with the missionaries. Moreover, as the Albrechts indicated in one of their journals, the Afrikaner Oorlams had already entered into, if somewhat tentatively, stabilized relations with the Cape Government:

We this day met with people called Africans, who were formerly at the heads of such who formerly did great mischief along the Great River by killing and plundering people's property. One of them had killed a white man on the West Coast of Africa, near the mouth of the great River, therefore was taken by order of the said African (who had made peace with government and the Christians) and brought before the officer to be examined concerning his crime. The said African and his followers not only made peace with the officer van der Westhuysen (veldwagtmeester of Little Namaqualand) and faithfully promised not to hurt any one in future, but were, as we heard, desirous to be taught the way to salvation which we heard from people we met. This African formerly lived upon an island in the great River, but at present lives in great Namaqualand. (61)

Despite the fact that the Afrikaner Oorlams no longer got involved in violent clashes with the white frontier society from the early nineteenth century, the myth of the Afrikaners lived on. As late as 1845, when the Afrikaner Oorlams had shifted their activities for some time into the interior of Namibia, the mentioning of their name was enough to terrify the white farmers in the vicinity of the Kamiesberg. (62) The tenacity of this myth may be explained against the background of their former close

relationship with the white colonial society. The Afrikaners had been reliable allies of the colonists, but then they turned against their white master and killed him. This was the nightmare of the white frontier population which depended on the collaboration with the Africans, and thus the Afrikaner Oorlams could never be forgiven.

It will be argued in another chapter (5.1.) that Afrikaner's famous attack on the Warmbad station in 1811 has been mistakenly treated as evidence of anti-colonial politics. It was rather a sign of the frustrations of a frontier group which was hoping to stabilize group independence by gaining regular access to the colonial market at the Cape. Afrikaner's involvement with a missionary as a middleman in the ivory trade indicates that structures began to develop which bore resemblance to those prevailing among the Griqua mission communities. Even for the 'dreaded' Afrikaner Oorlams, the catalyst forces of mission stations were not easily to dismiss.

The stubborn efforts of the Afrikaner to enter into peaceful relations with colonial society displays a strong reliance on collaborative strategies. This strategy was connected to simultaneous attempts to construct a frontier polity in which the Afrikaner Oorlams would dominate relations of exploitation. These modes of surplus extraction were similar to those of other frontier societies like the Griqua, whose economy was partly based on the forced labour of Khoisan groups. On the other hand, as Ranger has convincingly elaborated, 'sub-imperialism' of African groups does not necessarily exclude resistance against

colonial penetration, and collaboration and resistance can both be related to the same aim: group independence. (63)

The growing independence of the Afrikaner Oorlams during the 1790s, partly based on the legal supply with firearms via Pienaar, resulted in increased raiding activities. The augmented attacks on other livestock-breeding groups were probably launched in co-operation with Pienaar, who was involved in an extensive raiding network stretching from Little Namaqualand to the territory of the Tlhaping in Transorangia. (64)

The involvement of the Afrikaners in the Khoisan resistance on the Cape northern frontier was short-lived. (65) We have seen that the Afrikaners were not interested in anti-colonial struggle in the sense of an ideological stance against colonial oppression. Between about 1780 and 1820, before they moved into the interior of Namibia, the Afrikaner Oorlams attempted to build up a powerful position on the northern frontier. During this period of transition, communities had not yet assumed firm social and political structures, and ethnic or racial categories did not yet dominate the question of political power in an open frontier zone.

For the Afrikaner Oorlams, the decision to strive for a position of power in collaboration with a colonial system whose hierarchy had endowed them with considerable autonomy must have been a logical, pragmatic conclusion. Of course, this decision was not dictated by any pro-colonial sentiments either. Given the advantageous circumstances, the Afrikaners would attempt to

strengthen their position in co-operating with other Khoisan groups on the northern frontier.

Can those strategies be explained in terms of 'primary resistance'? This concept, however, falls short in describing the Afrikaners' relations with the colonial system. The model of 'primary resistance', in the sense of a 'tribal' elite or 'traditional' group striving for privileges which have become dysfunctional in the context of colonial modernization, does not converge with the acculturated social structures of the Afrikaner Oorlams. (66) When the Afrikaners began to shift their sphere of influence into the interior of Namibia during the 1820s, they instigated social change among Namibian groups on an unprecedented scale.

It was the decision to compete for independent status in the frontier zone, beyond the margins of colonial society, that dominated the Afrikaners' relation to colonialism. Rather than being relegated to the most unfavourable positions within the colonial system, as proletarianized Khoikhoi without access to resources of land and of livestock, the Afrikaner Oorlams withdrew to an area where they could, if only for a few decades, successfully dominate the competition for political power and economic wealth. Ralph Austen, in his discussion and critique of Hobsbawm's concept of 'social banditry', refers to Jager Afrikaner as the type of the 'self-helping frontiersman'. This category includes a strong reliance of the frontier bandit on 'the principles of local patron-client hierarchies', which the

Afrikaner gang, in fact, sought to establish among the different groups on the northern frontier. (67)

The course of the history of Oorlam groups like the Witboois demonstrated at a later stage that the aim of group independence could become an explicitly anti-colonial struggle. However, when the Witboois fought against German intrusion in the 1890s, and then again in the Namibian War 1904-1907, the frontier had been closed and colonial oppression had brought about the incipient unification of the different Namibian groups. Under these circumstances, something like an 'supratribal' African consciousness loomed on the horizon and leaders like Hendrik Witbooi knew very well that the confrontation with German colonialism was not confined to a competition for water and grazing sites.

It must be left to some oral history research of the future to find out if traditions exist among Namibians to connect the history of the Afrikaner Oorlams to the present-day struggle for national independence. Sometimes the collective memory transgresses the limits of factual historical knowledge, creating for instance historical precursors or father-figures of a liberation movement. These models do not necessarily correspond to historical truth; they are re-interpretations of the past. Ranger claims that there are 'direct "physical" and indirect "symbolic"' links between past and present of the African struggle for independence. (68) I am not in the position to confirm any popularized historical consciousness of this kind in the Namibian context. Attempts to create such a consciousness of

the roots of the fight for independence can perhaps be seen in the description of Jonker Afrikaner by SWAPO's Department of Information and Publicity:

His life history is typical of the manner in which the self-reliant fighting traditions of the Nama people were born. (69)

Although many Oorlams were 'born and bred with the farmers', as the missionaries Albrecht noted, not all of the Oorlam groups emerged as social entities from so closely knit an interdependence with frontier farming society as the Afrikaner Oorlams. The Afrikaners' long history of intense, if ambiguous, collaboration with trekboer society accounted for their highly militarized social structures. Their impressive record of raids all over the northern frontier during the 1790s owes a great deal to this historical background. During the period of alliance with colonial society, the structures of a commando group developed, although the Afrikaners and the other Oorlam groups also depended on a pastoralist mode of existence. When the supply lines with the Cape were disturbed or cut off and firearms and ammunition were not available, such a frontier group would return to a predominantly pastoralist economy. But military and technical skills developed, new economic needs were incited and last but not least, the Afrikaners gained an excellent knowledge of the geographical conditions of the northern frontier.

It is practically impossible to give anything but a sketchy outline of the formative period of other Oorlam families or Oorlam individuals during the eighteenth century. (70) Some

Oorlams were farm hands who decided to cross the Orange River to escape brutal labour relations. Semi-autonomous Khoikhoi bands left the colony when political pressure by the colonial government escalated, and recruited new members among the Khoisan population of the north-western frontier. Governor Caledon's so-called Hottentot Proclamation in 1809 confirmed the abolition of independent Khoisan leadership and effectively tied the majority of the landless Khoisan by pass laws to either farms or mission stations. (71) When missionaries founded the first stations in Little Namaqualand in the early nineteenth century, Khoisan labourers from neighbouring farms became attracted by the emancipatory aspects of the Evangelical message. Khoikhoi servants ran away from their masters, who often barred the access to a religion which was deemed to jeopardize the availability of cheap labour. Once those refugees became familiar with the new mission environment, they moved on to the mission stations in southern Namibia. (72)

The origin of the Bethany people (!Amas) is extremely difficult to trace. There even prevails some confusion concerning their categorization as Oorlams. Generally it is assumed that two related families, the Boois and the Frederiks, left their previous territory between the Berg and Oliphant Rivers (73) and settled at Klipfontein (/Ui#gandes) around the turn of the eighteenth century (74), after they had obtained settlement rights from the Red Nation (Kai//khaun). (75) One reason for their withdrawal from the colony to Namibia was apparently their impending military conscription during the time of the Batavian

Republic. (76) A descendant of the Boois clan told Hoernlé as late as 1912 that the old Boois fled from the Cape at the time of 'the Dutch occupation after a great fight'. (77)

However, Vedder claims that the 'Nama tribe' of the !Amas or !Aman, excluding the Boois family, settled at Klipfontein before the time of the 'Oorlam invasion'. (78) Theophilus Hahn, on the other hand, denotes the Amraal family, later to become the leading family of the Kai/khauan, and the Boois as !Amas. (79) To add to this confusion, a statement made by a descendant of the Frederik family, Kornelius Frederik, also displays ambiguity concerning the group identity of the Bethany people. At the same time it sheds some light on the fluidity of the category of 'Oorlam':

We are also related to some Witbooi families, though these belong to the Oorlams and came much later to Namaland than our ancestors. (80)

The Bethany group held close ties with the Afrikaner Oorlams. Jager Afrikaner's envoy Cobus Boooy, who was sent to the Cape in 1799 and again in 1800 to enter into peace negotiations with Governor Yonge, was certainly the Kobus Boois who was leader of the Boois family. In Cape Town, Kobus Boois received the permission of the governor to occupy 'Klipfontein in the Namaquas Country.' (81) In 1802, Kobus Boois and some followers were briefly detained and apparently erroneously released by the Fieldkornet Roussow near the Piketberg. Boois travelled under the alias of 'Breekland' to veil his activities as a supplier of ammunition for the 'Vagabond Africaander' (82); accusations of illegally providing the Afrikaner Oorlams with ammunition had

already been raised in 1799. (83) Thus Boois and his family had every reason to flee from colonial jurisdiction. However, at Klipfontein, within a considerable distance from Afrikaner's sphere of activity, they seemed to have led mainly a pastoral life. The Boois did not invade their new territory but paid a nominal tribute to the local Nama group. According to Kobus Boois, they lived in peace with their neighbours until the establishment of a mission station created a new political network among Nama and Oorlams. (84)

* * *

The Bethany mission station became the birthplace of two other Oorlam groups, the Khauas people (Kai/khauan) and the Berseba people (/Hai/khauan). The Khauas people under their leader Amraal Lambert emerged as a group with distinct features and a name of their own only after missionary Schmelen had left his station. (85) Amraal Lambert's personal data may not only illustrate the eventful life of an Oorlam; his biography reflects the history of the Cape Khoikhoi whose social structures dissolved under the impact of the expanding colonial frontier.

1774 ?
Amraal's great grandfather reputedly was the chief of a Khoikhoi group living near the Table Bay. His grandfather settled with his people in the vicinity of the Hex River in the Clanwilliam district. (86) Here Amraal Lambert was born in c. 1774. (87) His father had become a wagon driver for a Dutch farmer (88), and reportedly Amraal spent his youth as a slave in Worcester and in Cape Town. (89) In 1806, Amraal participated in

the battle at Blaauwberg near Cape Town where the British fleet landed to defeat the forces of the Batavian Republic. (90) Some time later, he moved with some followers to Little Namaqualand where he reputedly became a petty chief under the influence of the Witboois at Pella (91), while other sections of his once powerful group of Cape Khoikhoi became absorbed by Nama, Griqua and Bastards. (92) When missionary Schmelen was called upon by some Oorlams and Nama to come to Klipfontein (Bethany) in 1814, Amraal became one of the most ardent supporters of the mission community, performing functions as a guide and missionary assistant. (93) He accompanied Schmelen on his first journey to Walvis Bay in 1825. (94) When the Bethany mission station broke up in 1822, Amraal and his followers moved further north to Naosanabis and Gobabis where they became involved in the raiding and trading network under the leadership of the Afrikaner Oorlams. In 1864, Amraal Lambert died at Gobabis at the age of ninety during a smallpox epidemic. (95)

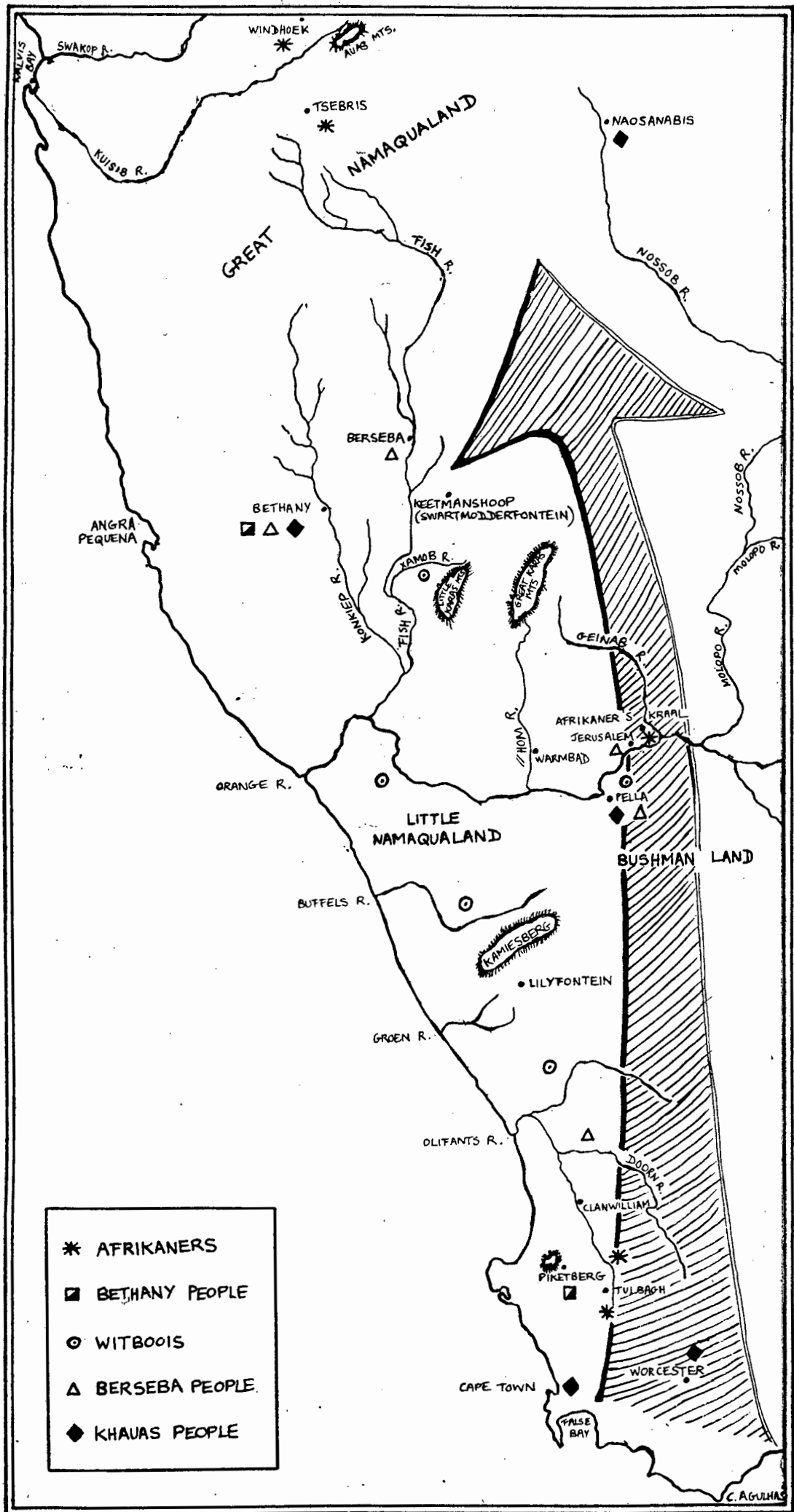
At the same time, his old companion and adversary Piet Vlermuis also died. The Vlermuis family assumed a leading position among the Kai/khauan, though continuously quarrelling with the family of Amraal. Unlike the Oorlam Amraal, with his Cape Khoikhoi background, who never learnt to speak Nama properly (96), Vlermuis may have been of Nama origin. Vlermuis resided with missionary Seidenfaden at Heirachabis until Seidenfaden abandoned his station in 1808. (97) Heirachabis was predominantly inhabited by members of the !Kharakhoen (Fransman Hottentots), and according to the missionaries' accounts, who generally took

great pains to differentiate between Nama and Oorlams, he may have risen to Oorlam status as an indigenous member of the mission community. (98)

When the Warmbad missionaries were forced to flee from the Afrikaner Oorlams in 1811 to Pella (see 5.1.), he was praised for his determined military support for the mission community. His repeated skirmishes with Afrikaner caused the missionaries to supply him with a considerable amount of firearms and ammunition. (99) Thus furnished with guns, Vlermuis returned to Namibia where he settled near Klipfontein (Bethany) in c. 1813 which place he suggested to Schmelen as a suitable missionary residence. (100) Before the Vlermuis clan merged with the Amraal family to the Kai/khauan in the 1830s, they split from the Bethany community, accelerating the conflicts which led to the final demise of Schmelen's station (see 5.3.) and roamed as raiders in southern and, perhaps, central Namibia and along the lower and middle Orange. (101) During the 1840s, Piet Vlermuis emerged again at Naosanabis and Gobabis as a close ally of the mission, performing functions as interpreter and guide for missionaries Tindall and Cook. (102) When he died in the smallpox epidemic of 1864, Piet Vlermuis had reached an age of about 100 years. (103)

* * *

The remaining two Oorlam groups, the Berseba people and the Witboois, began to play a role in southern Namibia as late as the 1850s. Their history, though, is closely intertwined with the emergence of other Oorlam groups on the north-western frontier in



MAP 3 THE NORTHWARD MIGRATIONS OF THE OORLAM'S FROM THE 1790s TO THE 1850s.

the early nineteenth century.

The /Hai/Khauan (Berseba People) with their leading families, the Goliaths and the Tibots, split from Bethany as late as 1850 to found Berseba near the Fish River. Before they joined the community at Bethany, they had lived in the region of Pella as a branch of the Khauas people, and like Amraal's followers the Goliaths and the Tibots were under the rule of the Witboois. (104) The captain of the Berseba people, Paul Goliath, was born at the Doorn Rivier near Ebenezer, probably in the 1790s. Described by the missionary Krönlein as 'a true colonial Hottentot', who withdrew with some followers across the Orange to escape colonial pressure, Goliath lived for a while at the Afrikaners' residence, Jerusalem, where he was baptized by Ebner between 1815 and 1818. (105)

Christoph Tibot was baptized by the Albrechts either at Warmbad or at Pella. (106) Before moving to Namibia, the family of Tibot, who was later to become the head of the Christian community of the /Hai/Khauan, lived with the Witboois at Pella. (107)

* * *

The last Oorlam group to settle in Namibia was the Witbooi people (/Khobesin). At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Witboois were living near Pella. Oral evidence collected among the Witboois is contradictory (108), but most of the available sources suggest that during the early eighteenth

century the Witboois lived as wealthy livestock-breeders closer to the Cape. (109) According to G. Meyer's unpublished study on the Steinkopf community in Little Namaqualand, a folk-tale claimed that the Witboois and the Isaaks of Berseba fled from the Cape when they heard the cannons of the Dutch colonists. Another story describes how the Witboois were tricked out of their land, when they had agreed to sell as much of their land as could be enclosed by an ox-hide. But the Dutch cut the hide into many straps, and the Witboois lost all of their land. (110)

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Witboois were regarded as the most powerful group between Steinkopf and the Orange River. Chief Cupido (Kido) Witbooi appointed Paul Links, acting captain for a branch of the Swartboois, as an 'onder-kaptein' for the western part of Namaqualand, and Vigiland Oorlam (Abraham Vigiland), the leader of an off-shoot of the Red Nation, was appointed 'onder-kaptein' for central Namaqualand. These three different Oorlam groups, though nominally under the leadership of the Witboois, possessed in fact an independent status. Before 1848, when the British officially declared the Orange River the new colonial boundary in the north, the Vigiland group and the Witboois migrated to Namibia. The Links Oorlams apparently remained in the vicinity of the Orange River. (111) Though some Witboois began to participate in the raids of the Afrikaner Oorlams from the 1820s onwards, the Witboois with the chief's family continued to live in Little Namaqualand until the 1840s or 1850s, migrating with their livestock in the most desolate area of the northern frontier. (112) Jonker Afrikaner

suggested forming an alliance between the Witboois and the Afrikaners in central Namibia, but Cupido Witbooi reportedly left it to his son to become (unsuccessfully) involved in this plan and preferred to stay on the lower Orange River. (113)

It is difficult to trace the connections of the Witboois with colonial frontier society. There are no indications that Witboois worked as farm labourers or were involved in colonial commandos. Early nineteenth-century accounts of the Witboois rarely mention their Dutch name, describing them as 'the people of Pella', 'Kubisis' etc. It may be justly assumed that their emergence as Oorlam group owes more to their close connection to missionaries in Little Namaqualand or to their Griqua neighbours in the north than to an intimate relation with frontier farmers. Thus in 1822, some Witboois travelled with missionary Bartlett from Pella to Cape Town to purchase firearms. (114) The Witboois demonstrated at various occasions their readiness to co-operate with the mission communities north and south of the Orange River and with the colonial authorities (see 6.) It seems that they made some attempts to settle with the Griqua at a time when Griqua hegemony had begun to dwindle, but eventually they established a new residence with a missionary at Gibeon in 1863. (115)

The history of this group clearly demonstrates the wide range of social and political strategies frontier groups could develop. Far from being indissolubly connected to the Cape trading nexus via a raiding economy, the Witboois remained only marginally involved in commando politics before their migration to Namibia. As a distinct Oorlam group, they got involved in the Namibian

raiding and trading network only after Jonker Afrikaner's death in 1861.

Though the Oorlam immigrants exacerbated the competition among Namibian groups for natural resources, they were initially tolerated by the indigenous Nama. Vedder claims that all of the immigrant Oorlam groups had to obtain settlement rights from the senior Nama group, the Kai//khaun (Red Nation). (116) It can be established from the RMS records that the Berseba people as well as the Witboois applied for permission from the Kai//khaun to settle in Great Namaqualand. (117) At least in some cases, the senior rights of the Kai//khaun were not merely considered as a formality, which involved the payment of a symbolic yearly tribute of a few cattle. The prerogative of the Kai//khaun to distribute settlement rights was clearly acknowledged by the Witboois. They abandoned their plan to settle at a place called Goamus, because the chief of the Kai//khaun refused his permission. (118) There are also indications that the Afrikaner Oorlams negotiated with the local chief before they were allowed to stay at Blydeverwacht at the beginning of the nineteenth century. (119) It has already been mentioned that the Boois clan 'bought' settlement rights from the Nama group previously living around Bethany. The Oorlam newcomers did not enter Namibia as conquerors. However, when the Afrikaner Oorlams had established their raiding and trading hegemony in central Namibia, the ensuing struggle for the access to European commodities resulted in increasing social stratifications and more rigidly defined territories. Some praise poems collected among the Kai//khaun

express grief that the unthankful Dorlam 'children' did not return the hospitality shown to them by the senior Nama group.

(120)

NOTES CHAPTER THREE

- 1) Elphick, Khoikhoi, p.136. For accounts of early Dutch contacts with the Nama also see I. Schapera, The Early Cape Hottentots. Olfert Dappert (1668), Willem Ten Ryn (1686) Johannes Gulielmus de Grevenbroek (1695), (Cape Town, 1933), pp.34-39.
- 2) Mossop (ed.), Bergh and Schriiver, p.122.
- 3) See footnote 109.
- 4) See Moritz, 'Die ältesten Reiseberichte', vols. 28, 31; Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.1-39.
- 5) See Penn, 'Frontier'; Penn, 'Estienne Barbier: An Eighteenth Century Cape Social Bandit?', Social Dynamics, 14 (1) (1988).
- 6) Penn, 'Frontier', pp.492-493.
- 7) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen.
- 8) Mossop (ed.), Brink and Rhenius.
- 9) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen.
- 10) CA, VC 593, Gordon Dagboek II, 27 November 1779: '...gaf onse beste schut, afrikaander, op zyn versoek wat medicyn.' If it is accurate to regard, in accordance with Legassick and du Bruyn, Pienaar's servant as Klaas Afrikaner, father of Jager, then Gordon provides us with the first documentary evidence of the Afrikaner Oorlams' connection with southern Namibia. See Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.409; Johannes du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners: from dependence to dominance, c.1760-1823', (unpub. paper, University of South Africa, 1981), p.4. In return for his medication, Klaas Afrikaner guided Gordon across the Orange River to spend a week in the vicinity of Warmbad, CA, VC 593, Gordon Dagboek II, 8-15 December 1779. For a short biography of Petrus Pienaar, see also Edna Bradlow, 'Petrus Pienaar - Ruffian or courageous pioneer?', Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library, 34 (3) (1983).
- 11) Legassick, 'The Griqua', pp.127-128.
- 12) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, pp.161, 163, 165, 167. See CA, VC 593, Gordon Dagboek II, e.g. 5 November 1779. However, Khoisan along the Orange already used a form of salutation, 'tawe' or 'twee', which had been introduced to the Cape by Malayan slaves and spread from there among the Khoisan population beyond colonial boundaries, CA, VC 593, Gordon Dagboek II, 2 November 1779; see also Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.201.

- 13) CA, A 519, The Papers of Sir Benjamin D'Urban, vol.7, Alexander, 'Notes on the North-West Frontier of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope', 2 October 1837, p.141.
- 14) 'in dit(?) namacqua land syn 19 vee plaatsen van groene rivier af, waar onder vyf getrouwde boere, de rest hebben meest(?) een hottentotten of twe, waarmede so ik hoor sy op hunnen manier trouwen. by de trouw ceremonie der hottentotten is geen pissen in gebruik...', CA, VC 593, Gordon Dagboek II, 23 September 1779. Before 1777, one Coenraad Hendrik Feijt grazed his livestock in the vicinity of Pella, an area which was seasonally used by herders throughout the nineteenth century, Mossop, Brink and Rhenius, p.IX. Along the lower Orange River, between Ramansdrift and Coboop Fontein, Gordon visited five seasonal farms, so-called 'leg plaatse'. The one in the vicinity of Ramansdrift, or Compagniesdrift as it was named after the Hop expedition, was looked after by a Khoikhoi and a black slave while their European master lived at the Cape, CA, VC 593, Gordon Dagboek II, 15 December 1779.
- 15) See J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937, (London, 1939; reprint Johannesburg, 1968); R. Ross, Adam Kok's Griquas. A study in the development of stratification in South Africa, (Cambridge University Press, 1976).
- 16) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, pp.25-29.
- 17) Schapera (ed.), Apprenticeship, p.120.
- 18) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, pp. 301-305.
- 19) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, p.307.
- 20) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', pp.6-7. In 1793, Pienaar ventured on the expedition with the 'Meermin' to Walvis Bay. In search for the missing Barend Freyn, who apparently got lost somewhere in the interior of Namibia, Pienaar wandered along the Swakop River and returned with two 'bought' Damara children, E. Bradlow, 'Pienaar', p.96. Nigel Penn's forthcoming thesis 'The north-western Cape frontier zone in the eighteenth century' will describe the activities of these frontiersmen in greater detail. According to Penn, the Afrikaners had another violent encounter with Pienaar in southern Namibia in 1790.
- 21) ILMS, 3, (1805), pp.240-241; CA, LMS journal, Kitchingman (wrongly marked Wimmer), 'Steinkopf to Great Namaqualand', entry of 20 May 1820; 'Quellen', vol.24, Krönlein, Keetmanshoop, June 1864, pp.100-102.
- 22) According to Coetsè's observation, Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, p.281. See also J. Campbell, Travels in South Africa. Undertaken at the Request of the London

- Missionary Society; being a Narrative of a Second Journey in the Interior of that Country, 2 vols. (London, 1822) vol.2, p.260.
- 23) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, pp.281-283.
- 24) Mossop (ed.), Brink and Rhenius, p.29.
- 25) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, pp.313, 319, 321.
- 26) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.32-33.
- 27) See Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.445; Leonhard Schultze, Aus Namaland und Kalahari. Bericht an die Kgl. Preuss. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin über eine Forschungsreise im westlichen und zentralen Südafrika ausgeführt in den Jahren 1903-1905, (Jena, 1907), p.172. The journal of missionary Kitchingman's journey to Namibia in 1820 refers to the Oorlam leader Vlermuis as 'goedaan', CA, LMS journal, Kitchingman (wrongly marked Wimmer), 'Steinkopf to Great Namaqualand', 1820, entry of 4 May. However, Kitchingman had an interview in the vicinity of the Liver River (Ai-!ab) with 'a chief of a nation lying N.E. called the Goedownees'. This chief, Caimap, was not a Christian, wore traditional Nama garb and proved to be very afraid of the 'hatwearers', another expression for raiders from the colony, CA, LMS journal, Kitchingman (wrongly marked Wimmer), 'Steinkopf to Great Namaqualand', entry of 20 May.
- 28) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, p.29. A raiding party of 50 San attacked the Bondelswarts and lost 15 men in the ensuing fight, CA, VC 593, Gordon Dagboek II, 1 October 1779.
- 29) See Vedder, Die Bergdama, (Hamburg, 1923).
- 30) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, p.79.
- 31) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, p.79; Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.25-27.
- 32) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, pp.313-315; Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.32-34. Barrow met a Damara blacksmith at the Kamiesberg in 1797, John Barrow, Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa. In the years 1797 and 1798, 2 vols. (London, 1801/04), vol.1, pp.389, 396. As late as 1801, the Truter/Somerville expedition was informed by the Tswana: 'The Damarahs is a name given by the Hottentots to the Bassotos who smelt the copper', Edna and Frank Bradlow (eds.), William Somerville's Narrative of his Journeys to the Eastern Cape Frontier and to Lattakoe, 1799-1802, (Cape Town, 1979), p.124.
- 33) Mossop (ed.), Wikar, Coetsè, van Reenen, p.63. Burchell reported that Tswana agriculturists hesitated to trade when

- their 'corn was in the ear' in order not to jeopardize a successful harvest, William Burchell, Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa, 2 vols. (London, 1822/24; reprint Cape Town, 1967), vol.1, p.481.
- 34) The history of those frontier pioneers has been written in detail, for instance Legassick, 'The Griqua'. At this point, mention must be made of A. Wannenburg's valuable popular account of the history of the northern frontier. Unfortunately, Wannenburg did not include any references, Alf Wannenburg, Forgotten Frontiersmen, (Cape Town, 1980). See also chapter 2, footnote 8.
- 35) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.363; Penn, 'Frontier', pp.469, 472-473.
- 36) Penn, 'Frontier', pp.468-469; Penn, 'Pastoralists', p.66. See also Penn, 'Labour', pp.7-8, 21-22.
- 37) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', pp.373-374; Penn, 'Labour', pp.26-27.
- 38) 'In Nama the Oorlams call themselves Dutch speakers, Duitschsprekers, Manada. When asked what kind of people they were, they answer: Manata-da or Manada-ta.', SAL, Grey Collection, H.-C. Knudsen, 'Südafrika. Das Hottentottenvolk. Notizen', p.9.
- 39) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.410.
- 40) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.2; Kienetz gives a survey of the etymology of the term 'Oorlam', indicating that it could derive too from 'overland', Kienetz, 'Key Role', p.554.
- 41) The Albrechts were asked by the Bondelswarts to negotiate with the Afrikaners, the 'Oorlamsche tribe', CA, LMS journal, A. Albrecht, 5 March 1806-March 1807, entry of 21 September 1806.
- 42) Allen and Barabara Isaacman, 'Resistance and Collaboration in Southern and Central Africa, c.1850-1920', International Journal of African Historical Studies, 10 (1) (1977).
- 43) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.187.
- 44) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.3.
- 45) CA, VC 593, Gordon Dagboek II, entries of 8-15 December 1779.
- 46) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.6.
- 47) See Campbell, Travels, p.376.

- 48) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.9.
- 49) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.9.
- 50) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.374.
- 51) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.7.
- 52) Which was lost in 1792 during the Afrikaners' expedition against the farmer Visagie at the present-day Keetmanshoop, Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.7.
- 53) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.10-11.
- 54) Neville Alexander, 'Responses to German Rule or The Enigma of the Khowesin', Namibian Review, 1 (1983), p.11.
- 55) N. Alexander, 'Responses', pp.18-19.
- 56) CL, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, J. Seidenfaden, 'From Cape Town to start mission in Namaqualand', 8 August-1 November 1805, entry of 12 October.
- 57) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.10; P.B. Borchers, An Autobiographical Memoir. Being a plain narrative of occurrences from early life to advanced age, (Cape Town, 1861; reprint Cape Town, 1963), pp.93-95.
- 58) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.11.
- 59) At the same time the Afrikaners were apparently involved in several raids on groups on the northern frontier, Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.11.
- 60) See, for example, Campbell's 'Account of Stephanos, an Impostor', in Campbell, Travels, pp.377-378.
- 61) CL, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, J. Seidenfaden, 'Mission in Namaqualand', 8 August-1 November 1805, entry of 1 October.
- 62) B. Ridsdale, Scenes and Adventures in Great Namaqualand, (London, 1883), p.204.
- 63) T.O. Ranger, 'African Reactions to the Imposition of Colonial Rule in East and Central Africa', in L.H. Gann and P. Duignan (eds.), Colonialism in Africa, 1870-1960, vol.1, (Cambridge, 1969), pp.302, 304-305.
- 64) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.8.
- 65) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.375.
- 66) See T.O. Ranger, 'African Reactions'.

- 67) Ralph Austen, 'Social bandits and other heroic criminals: Western models of resistance and their relevance for Africa', in Donald Crummey (ed.), Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa, (London and Portsmouth, 1986), pp.90-92. See also Allen Isaacman, 'Social banditry in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Mozambique, 1894-1907: An Expression of Early Peasant Protest', Journal of Southern African Studies, 10 (1) (1977).
- 68) T.O. Ranger, 'Connexions between 'Primary Resistance' Movements and Modern Mass Nationalism in East and Central Africa', Part I-II, Journal of African History, 9 (3) (1968); 9 (4) (1968), p.633.
- 69) 'Namibia: people's resistance, 1670-1970', Race and Class, 22 (1) (1980), p.24. See also the request of the Herero leader, Hosea Kutako, in 1970 that he be buried next to Jonker Afrikaner's grave, 'People's resistance', p.46.
- 70) For a very informative compilation of short biographies of Oorlams in Namibia see Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.5, Register and Indexes.
- 71) See Marais, Cape Coloured, pp.116-154.
- 72) See, for instance, missionary Krönlein's account of his old servant Sabina Hanse in 1869. She kept a very vivid memory of her serf status in the colony. She was baptized between 1816 and 1818 by missionary Ebner at Jerusalem, 'Quellen', vol.12, Krönlein, Gibeon, 20 April 1869; 'Quellen', vol. 12, 'Der Häuptling Paul Goliath', (1869). Shaw noted that some farmers beat up a Bastard who was travelling to Cape Town, because they believed he intended to bring a missionary to Little Namaqualand, SAL, Shaw's Journals, vol. of 1816-1818, entry of 1 February 1818.
- 73) T. Hahn, Tsuni-//goam, p.96.
- 74) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, 'Pella - Journey from Pella to explore mouth of Orange River and Great Namaqua and Damara Countries', 13 April-1 June 1814.
- 75) T. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, p.102.
- 76) According to Hahn, son of missionary Samuel Hahn, the language of the Boois and Frederiks was Cape Khoikhoi, not the Nama dialect, T. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, pp.55, 102. See also 'Quellen', vol.3b, Kreft, Bethanien, 19 January 1877.
- 77) P. Carstens, G. Klinghardt, M. West (eds.), Trails, p.25.
- 78) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.174-175.
- 79) T. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, p. 55, 102.

- 80) 'Quellen', vol.2, 'Mitteilungen des früheren Kapitäns Kornelius Frederik von Bethanien, vom Namastamm der 'Aman', (1928).
- 81) For Afrikaner's negotiations with the Cape Government, compare du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.11; G.M. Theal, History of South Africa, 11 vols, (London, 1892-1919; reprint Cape Town, 1964), vol.5, p.66. In contrast to Theal's account, the original document does not state that the Klipfontein granted to Kobus Boois was situated in Little Namaqualand: CA, BO, vol.162, 12 November 1800. Possibly this place was Klipfontein in Great Namaqualand, which later was called Bethany. It was juridically not necessary for Africans to obtain permission to settle outside the colony. However, there were cases when colonial government nominally granted settlement rights to Khoisan beyond colonial boundaries to reward their services and loyalty. During the Somerville/Truter expedition in 1801, for instance, the government officials gave permission to two San leaders to settle near the Zak River beyond colonial limits: see Borchers, Memoir, p.106.
- 82) CA, BO, vol.162, 28 April 1802; CA, 1/STB, vol.20/31, 13 May 1802.
- 83) Theal, South Africa, vol.5, p.66.
- 84) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, 'Journey from Pella', 13 April-1 June 1814, entry of 2 June.
- 85) In 1835, missionary Edward Cook at Warmbad mentions the 'chiefs of the Ombrals', CL, WMMS letter, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 23 December 1835. J.E. Alexander met Amraal in 1837 in the vicinity of Naosanabis and described him as 'the chief of the Keikouas Namaquas', Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, p.207.
- 86) Cook, The Modern Missionary, (Liverpool, 1849), pp.102-103. According to Vedder, those Khoikhoi were called Cham-!gán, Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.365; or Xam/ha, T. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, p.102; Gam Naka (Lion-wool-hair), Chapman, Travels in the Interior of South Africa, 2 vols. (London, 1868), p.428.
- 87) 'Quellen', vol.7a, Weber, Gobabis, 16 March 1864; Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.428.
- 88) Cook, Modern Missionary, pp.102-103. Backhouse, who met Amraal at Warmbad in 1840, claims that his father was a Dutchman, James Backhouse, A Narrative of a Visit to the Mauritius and South Africa, (London, 1844) pp.553-554. Tindall's version claims that Amraal's father was a 'chief of the coast about Table Mountain': Tindall, Journal, p.39.
- 89) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.176, 365.

- 90) As the traveller James Chapman was informed by Amraal in 1855: Chapman, Travels, vol.1, pp.421, 428-429.
- 91) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.444.
- 92) Chapman, Travels, p.428.
- 93) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1815, entry of 28 November. Backhouse claims that Amraal was a wagon driver for missionary Shaw at Lilyfontein: Backhouse, Narrative, pp.553-554. However, Lilyfontein was founded in 1816, and Schmelen mentions Amraal in his journals as early as 1815. No evidence of Amraal's services at Lilyfontein could be traced in the journals of Shaw: SAL, Shaw's Journals, 1816-1849.
- 94) RLMS, 1826, pp.85-86.
- 95) 'Quellen', vol.7a, Weber, Gobabis, 16 March 1864.
- 96) Missionary Gorth stated in 1852: 'Even Amraal whose people all speak Nama is not yet familiar with that language.', Moritz, 'Die ältesten Reiseberichte', 29, p.252. According to missionary Eggert, who worked at Gobabis between 1856 and 1859, Amraal only spoke Dutch: Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.326.
- 97) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, 'Journey from Pella', 13 April-1 June 1814, entry of 3 June.
- 98) Thus Christian Albrecht mentioned him as the 'Hottentot Vledermuis', NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Jan Dissels Valley, 28 July 1811. Christian Albrecht's wife, Sophie, described him as the leader of a band of 'kleine Namacquas', NGK, ZAG, Sophie Albrecht, Warmbad, 5 February 1811. See also Christian Albrecht's description of Vlermuis as a traditional pastoralist 'Hottentot' chief, ILMS, 3, p.428. When John Campbell visited the ousted Warmbad community at Pella in 1813, he met Vlermuis, the 'Namacqua chief': Campbell, Travels, p.304. In 1820, Kitchingman reported disturbances caused by 'Goedoen Vlermuis': CA, LMS journal, Kitchingman (wrongly marked Wimmer), Steinkopf to Great Namaqualand, 1820, entry of 4 May.
- 99) CA, LMS letter, C. Albrecht, Cape Town, 10 December 1811; CA, LMS letter, Van der Kemp, Cape Town, (?) December 1811.
- 100) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, 'near Pella', 26 November 1813-30 March 1814, entry of 28 March; CA, LMS journal, C. Albrecht/Ebner, Pella, 1 January-29 August 1814, entry of 2 April.
- 101) CA, LMS letter, Moffat, Vredeberg in Great Namaqualand, 20 August 1818; CA, LMS letter, Bartlett, Pella, 8 September

- 1823; R.L. Cope (ed.), The Journals of the Rev. T.L. Hodgson, Missionary to the Seleka-Rolong and the Griquas, 1821-1831, (Johannesburg, 1979), pp.192-193, 228-229.
- 102) Tindall, Journal, pp. 58, 68, 137; CL, WMS letter, Cook, Nisbett Bath/Great Namaqualand, 27 November 1838. Lau claims that there were two brothers Vlermuis, Piet and Paul: Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.5, p.1297. There are indications, however, that we are dealing with one and the same person: see CL, WMS journal, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit from Nisbett Bath to Amral's residence, and a journey from hence to Jonker Afrikaner's residence and Walvisch Bay, 1840', entry of 5 November, partly published in Missionary Notices, 1 (March 1841).
- 103) According to missionary Kleinschmidt, Piet Vlermuis was about 100 years old in 1860: 'Quellen', vol.20, Kleinschmidt, 22 February 1860.
- 104) 'Quellen', vol.17b, Olpp, 'Beitrag zur Geschichte des Witbooi-Stammes', Herford, 1897; Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.176, 241; Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, p.35.
- 105) See Krönlein's account of Paul Goliath, 'Quellen', vol.12, Krönlein, Berseba, 'Der Häuptling Paul Goliath', 1869, pp.124-129.
- 106) 'Quellen', vol.12, Krönlein, Berseba, 'Rückblick auf 2 Jahrzehnte des Bestehens der Gemeinde Berseba, 1850-1870', pp.171-177; 'Quellen', vol.10a, Krönlein, February-June 1854, p.90. See also the account of the encounter Tibot's mother had with a missionary at the beginning of the eighteenth century in Cape Town: 'Quellen', vol.12, Krönlein, Berseba, 'Missionar Ziegenbalg und das Hottentottenmägdelein', pp.80-81.
- 107) The church book of Bethany mentions several members of Tibot's people, being baptized by Bartlett, who worked at Pella during the 1820s, and by Schmelen: ELK Archives, VI, 4.1., Kleines Register der Gemeinde Bethaniens, 1843-1848; Konfirmandenregister 1843. Missionary Wimmer mentioned a Christian Tibot, who was killed during a raid with the Afrikaner Oorlams in Namibia: CA, LMS letter, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 21 July 1827.
- 108) According to the Notes of Markus Witbooi, the Witboois lived near the Orange River as early as during the seventeenth century: Petrus Jod, 'Das Witbooi-Volk und die Gründung Gibeons', Journal of the SWA Scientific Society, 16 (1961/62), p.82.
- 109) There is a note by Andrew Smith about the 'Kubisis' or 'Kubise': 'This tribe in former times inhabited the country between the Oliphant and Kausi (Koussies/Buffalo) rivers and

that part of the country was inhabited by them about 70 years ago - or in 1760. - In those times they had large herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. At that time the country between the Kausi and Gariep <Orange> was inhabited by Bushmen and from the earliest times there was a constant warfare between them and the Hottentots.', SAM, A. Smith Papers, vol.4, n.d., p.23. In 1824, the British traveller George Thompson received the following information from missionary Bartlett and his people at Pella: 'The extensive plains, lying between the Gariep and the Kamiesberg, are represented by old writers as occupied by a numerous race of people, possessed of large flocks and herds, and living in ease and abundance. Of these, the tribe now resident at Pella and its vicinity, is the only one remaining. It is named...Obseses...': George Thompson, Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa, 2 vols. (London, 1827; reprint Cape Town, 1967), vol.2, pp.63-64. See also 'Quellen', vol. 16b, Olpp, Gibeon, 12 January 1876, pp.240-241; 'Quellen', vol.17b, Olpp, 'Beitrag zur Geschichte des Witbooi-Stammes', 1897, p.2.; Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.445.

- 110) G. Meyer, 'Die Gemeente te Steinkopf (Namakwaland). Sy Wording en Ontwikkeling', (typescript, Stellenbosch, 1927), pp.14-16. See also Peter Carstens, The Social Structure of a Cape Coloured Reserve. A Study of Racial Integration and Segregation in South Africa, (Cape Town, 1966), pp.18-24.
- 111) The Links clan of Paul Links, 'captain of the Great River', entertained close ties with the Kok clan and was mentioned by several missionaries. Christian Albrecht mentions a 'Captain of the Little Namaquas, Hans Links': CL, LMS journal, 21 May 1806-10 December 1806, entry of 14 July; CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811; 'Quellen', vol.3a, Knudsen, Bethany, 1 November 1843-1 March 1844, p.32; 'Quellen', vol.3b, Kreft, January-December 1861, p.51. See also J.E. Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, p.195.
- 112) See the accounts of the missionary Michael Wimmer in Little Namaqualand between 1825 and 1834, CA, LMS records; 'Quellen', vol.10b, Krönlein, Berseba, May-September 1856, p.30; 'Quellen', vol.10b, Krönlein/Weber, September 1857-January 1858, p.63.
- 113) As Kido Witbooi told the land surveyor Moffat at Pella in 1858: CA, CCP, 1/2/1/5, p.7. I owe this reference to Brigitte Lau.
- 114) In Cape Town in 1823, Dr John Philip had a conversation with 'the son of the chief at Pella'. Philip described the Witbooi delegation as extremely poor, the wealthiest among them being in possession of one pound, two shillings, 'the sole object of his journey was to furnish himself with a gun': CA, LMS letter, John Philip, Cape Town, 24 January 1823.

- 115) At that time, the RMS missionaries in Namibia noted that the Witboois still exerted considerable influence south of the Orange, when chief Kido called up his remaining followers from places like Lilyfontein and Steinkopf: 'Quellen', vol.10b, Krönlein, Berseba, 1851-1855, 8 May 1856, pp.4-5; 'Quellen', vol.7a, Weber, Gobabis, September-December 1861, pp.26-27. When the Witboois migrated in Namibia in search for a new place of residence, they drew new members from the Bastard community at Steinkopf, though the relations between the Witboois and Bastard settlers during the first half of the last century were not always without tensions: see Carstens, Social Structure, pp.20-21. For indications of the Witboois' close ties with Griqualand, see 'Quellen', 10b, Krönlein, Berseba, May-September 1856, p.30; 'Quellen', 10b, Krönlein, Berseba, 10 June 1857, p.48; 'Quellen', vol.12, Krönlein, Berseba, 2 November 1868, p.85; 'Quellen', vol.14a, Weber, Berseba, 22 November 1858, p.13.
- 116) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.177.
- 117) 'Quellen', vol.2, 'Mitteilungen von Traugott Dausab in Hoachanas über die Rooi Nasie', (1928), pp.121-122; 'Quellen', vol. 10b, Krönlein/Weber, Berseba, February 1858; 'Quellen', vol. 18b, Fenchel, Keetmanshoop, 30 July 1884, p.10.
- 118) 'Quellen', vol.17b, Olpp, 'Beitrag zur Geschichte des Witbooi-Stammes', Herford, 1897, pp.27-28. See also 'Quellen', vol.5, Vollmer, Hoachanas, 21 May 1860, p.124; 'Quellen', Vollmer, Hoachanas, 25 December 1862, p.144. See also Jod, 'Das Witbooi-Volk', p.88.
- 119) Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.76.
- 120) K.F. Budack, 'Preisgedichte von Khoe-khoe-Häuptlingen in Südwestafrika', Journal of the SWA Scientific Society, 15 (1971), pp.66-69.

CHAPTER IV: MISSIONS AND CHANGE IN SOUTHERN NAMIBIA TO c.1808

4.1. The missionaries of the London Missionary Society in southern Namibia

A recently published biography of the director of the LMS in South Africa, John Philip (1775-1851), attempts to expound his religious and political work in the context of his Scottish origins. (1) Andrew Ross depicts John Philip as the typical product of an era which saw a dramatic transition from a pre-industrial to an early industrial society. A new prosperous middle-class emerged from the social and political upheavals in eighteenth-century Scotland, and this class was heavily impregnated by an amalgam of ideas which found expression in the Evangelical Revival. Later to become one of the most important missionary organisations in South Africa, the London Missionary Society was founded in 1795 as an interdenominational umbrella organisation, comprising several Protestant churches. Evangelicalism also dominated the influential anti-slavery movement in England. The emergence of those new ideas of human rights and a more democratic society coincided with the era of the French Revolution, and influential sections of the evangelical and missionary movement in Scotland constituted an outspoken political force against the religious establishment of the old churches. Consequently, conservatives branded the more radically inclined members of the evangelical movement as Jacobins.

Ross relates Philip's controversial political activities in

South Africa to his particular background. The history of pre-industrial rural Scotland with its feuding clans and a glorified interpretation of its Celtic past influenced Philip's view of Africans and especially of the Khoikhoi. Inspired by contemporary notions of the 'noble savage', he was convinced that the Africans could and should be roused from their innocent sleep in primitive backwardness. Radical missionaries like Philip were guided by their own experiences within an up-and-coming middle-class where social mobility was achieved through soberness and hard work. The egalitarian tendencies of evangelicalism stressed the right of the individual to fight against prejudices and the hierarchical racial order of the colonial society. According to Ross, the missionaries

believed that in turn, the Khoi, the Griqua, the Xhosa would also "get on" by following the same path. (2)

This sketchy account may suffice to describe the historical origin of emancipatory ideals as the ideological foundation for an important faction within the LMS in South Africa. Of course, not all of the LMS missionaries, in nineteenth-century South Africa, regarded themselves as in the tradition of the enlightenment and the radical political variety of evangelicalism. It has been said that the LMS missionaries were basically 'theological revolutionaries and political and social conservatives'. (3) Hence, the impact the missionaries had on the reality of pre-colonial and colonial Africa cannot be measured only in terms of their ideological motivations, honest and nonconformist as they may have been. Despite the bitter hostility missionaries often provoked among white settlers due to their

humanitarian teachings, and though they often raised their voices in protest against inhumane practices, missionary thinking was marked by ideas of ideological expansion. The extension of mission work beyond colonial boundaries and the creation of an ideological frontier zone anticipated or coincided with the expansion of colonial rule. Those ideas of 'taking the Gospel to the heathens' were sometimes brought forward in an aggressive manner which bore a striking resemblance to imperialist notions of colonial conquest. Missionaries, who had died of diseases, sheer exhaustion or had been killed by Africans, were described in mission accounts in reverential terms reminiscent of military obituaries celebrating fallen heroes. The Albrecht brothers at Warmbad had high-flying ideas of extending mission work to Namibian groups further north at a stage when their work actually showed only very modest results. Schmelen, after his withdrawal from Namibia in 1822, relentlessly propagated the expansion of the missionary frontier into Hereroland. He spoke up for his Nama community if necessary, but also did not hesitate to destroy the traditional religious paraphernalia of his adherents to promote Christianity.

In this context, the question arises whether the German background of most of the LMS missionaries in early nineteenth-century Namibia provided African-European interaction with any characteristic ideological features, which deviated from the dominant English element within the LMS. The data is too limited to draw any conclusions from, for example, the fact that several of those early missionaries were of Prussian extraction. And

apart from the problems of empirical research, it is beyond the scope of the present study to give extensive biographical accounts of the various missionaries and their differing regional and social milieus in Germany. But it should be taken into account that early nineteenth-century Germany and its political and ideological setting provided for a considerably different backdrop for the missionary movement than contemporary Great Britain.

Early nineteenth-century Germany was politically divided into several states. (4) Before the process of industrialization began in earnest in the 1850s, Germany largely remained an agrarian society where agricultural production was just beginning to become orientated towards the modern capitalist market. On the level of industrial technology, especially when compared to England, Germany was an 'underdeveloped country'. (5) Labour relations were paternalistic and influenced by pre-industrial concepts of authority and economic rationality. The social and economic life of artisans from whose ranks the missionary movements drew most of their disciples was still more characterized by the traditions of the old craft guilds than by ideas of capitalist productivity. There was, however, an element of social protest among artisans based on the experience of their impending proletarianization in the towns. Politically this class was oscillating between conservative and modern attitudes, attempting to preserve a traditional way of life and at the same time often radically opposing the newly developing forms of economic exploitation in the factories.

The origins of the Protestant missionary movement in Germany were decisively marked by the orthodox-pietist interpretation of evangelicalism. (6) In contrast to the politicised strain of evangelicalism as it became personified by John Philip, the spiritual subjectivity of the individual marked by ideas of personal conversion and anti-intellectualism played a pivotal role in pietism. The focus was on charity work and on the kind of religious devoutness which did not seek to antagonize the powers that be. Wuppertal, Elberfeld and Barmen in the Rhineland, where the Rhenish Mission Society came into being, was a centre of this conservative movement of pietist farmers, artisans and factory owners. (7)

The early origins of the RMS, which came to play so crucial a role in Namibian history from 1842, are closely connected to the Evangelical Revival in England. The LMS initiated the founding of a prayer-group in Elberfeld as early as 1799, which in return gave rise to the establishment of the Barmer Mission Society in 1818. Subsequently, new mission societies were founded in the Rhineland (in Cologne and Wesel) until the Rhenish Missionary Society was established in 1828. (8) The interrelations of the German and English societies were so close that LMS superintendent John Philip was present at the ordination ceremony of the first four RMS missionaries in Barmen, who were to be sent to South Africa in 1829. (9)

However, before the different German mission societies could operate independently and send out their own missionaries from

the 1820s onwards, the theological seminary of Pastor Jänicke in Berlin, established in 1800, was an important centre of missionary education. In this seminary German mission enthusiasts were trained for their future tasks in the services of the LMS and the Netherlands Mission Society (sometimes also denoted as Rotterdam Mission Society). Before they were sent to their new destinations, the German missionaries stayed for some time at the headquarters of the respective mission society, in London or in Rotterdam. Four of the early Namibian missionaries were educated in Jänicke's seminary in Berlin: Abraham and Christian Albrecht, Johann Leonhardt Ebner, and Johann Heinrich Schmelen. In addition, three other missionaries, who later worked in Little Namaqualand and in the Orange River region, obtained their basic religious training in Berlin, namely Heinrich Helm, Christoph Sass, and Michael Wimmer. (10)

Ebner is the only one of this generation of missionaries who left an autobiographical account of his life and his experiences in southern Namibia. (11) He was born in 1778, the son of farmers in Prussian Ansbach and became a trained weaver. Though Ebner spent six years at Jänicke's seminary, from 1804 to 1810, his notes on the kind of education those young Germans received in Berlin are not very informative. The mission candidates took German and English classes, in addition to Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. One should, though, not overrate the seminary's scholarly standard. For example, the students had also to be instructed in basic skills like writing. (12) In his published account Ebner makes a revealing comment, which may reflect the general attitude

prevailing in the Berlin seminary. In true pietist fashion, he claims that too much studying would only jeopardize the simplicity of the true believer. (13) And indeed, such an environment of quiet religious devotion was hardly the breeding-ground for a man of Philip's standing.

In addition to the relatively apolitical character of German mission Protestantism, the absence of a unified German state accounted for a relatively underdeveloped nationalist consciousness. Significantly, Ebner mentions the occupation of Berlin by Napoleon's army from 1806 only in a perfunctory manner, and it seems that the ensuing collapse of the Prussian state with its political and social turmoils left no impression on the young man at all. (14)

Moreover, Germany was not a colonial power, and thus concepts of mission work among non-Europeans were not that popular. The idea of a special vocation for the higher cause of a German colonial empire of the future or for the propagation of German culture or German industry, is completely absent from the written testimonies of the early German missionaries in southern Namibia. There was no German equivalent of the Wesleyan missionary Cook's proud reference to his Nama converts at Warmbad in the 1830s being 'neatly clad in English manufacture'. (15)

Other students of Pastor Jänicke were more robust characters than the luckless missionary Ebner, who did not enjoy a great prestige among his colleagues in South Africa. He returned to Europe in 1819 and eventually established a bookshop in Berlin. (16)

Johann Heinrich Schmelen, unlike Ebner, was an outstanding mission pioneer. Schmelen, born in 1777 near Bremen, the son of well-to-do parents, was an unusually energetic and adventurous man, who seemed to have developed a genuine interest in Nama culture. In his first marriage he was married to a Nama woman. This was not so unusual for the first generation of European missionaries in South Africa. Apart from the 'notorious' Van der Kemp, some missionaries working among the population of the northern frontier were married to African women, like Michael Wimmer in Little Namaqualand and Christopher Sass on the middle Orange River, who married the daughter of the local Bastard or Oorlam leader Paul Engelbrecht. (17) Schmelen never returned to Europe and died in Little Namaqualand in 1848.

But there is nothing in the letters and journals of the first LMS missionaries in southern Namibia to indicate an independent political spirit. On the one hand, this reflected the pietist approach of the German LMS missionaries. On the other hand, as will be shown later, their willingness to comply in the wishes of the colonial authorities was also due to the peripheral situation of the Namibian mission stations. In the isolated regions of the north-western frontier, the early missionaries were not forced into those conflicts which often developed around the stations in the colony. There the missionaries were often accused of interfering with the white colonists, who wanted to gain access to a cheap African labour force. Significantly, the controversial Van der Kemp, always willing to champion the cause of the Khoikhoi, thought Christian Albrecht to be unfit for the

difficult task of an intermediary between the Africans and the government (see 5.1).

* * *

The first missionary attempts in South Africa were made by the Moravians, a small Protestant church founded in Germany. Moravian missionaries established the station Baviaanskloof among the Khoikhoi in the eastern Cape as early as 1737. But the station was abandoned in 1743 and re-opened again by the Moravians under the name of Genadendal in 1792. (18)

The LMS sent its first missionaries to South Africa in 1799. Johannes Theodorus Van der Kemp had initiated the founding of the Netherlands Mission Society on behalf of the LMS during a visit of Rotterdam in 1797, and when he and his colleagues Kicherer, Edmond, and Edwards arrived in Cape Town he launched the South African Society (or Zuid-Afrikaansche Sendelings Genootschap). (19) The SAS co-operated closely with the mission societies in England and Holland, providing its members in South Africa with financial and logistic support, though its missionary activities were largely confined to the slaves and the so-called free blacks of the western Cape. (20) In 1806 the SAS became the official representative of the NMS in Holland, although soon all communication between LMS director Van der Kemp and the SAS ceased due to tensions between the eccentric Dutchman and the mission society. (21)

Thus at the arrival of the Albrecht brothers and Johann Seidenfaden in 1805, the LMS missionaries had already extended their activities to the northern Cape and further across the middle Orange River. Kicherer and Edwards, supported by a colonist, Cornelius Kramer, had commenced their work among the Khoisan at the Zak River in 1799. (22) This station was occupied by different missionaries in irregular intervals and eventually given up in 1806. But from there the LMS missionaries advanced further into the interior. In 1801, William Anderson and Kicherer crossed the middle Orange River and established the Rietfontein station. The next year saw the founding of Klaarwater, which later became Griquatown. (23) William Edwards and the colonist J. Kok went with the Truter/Somerville expedition of 1801 as far as the Kuruman River. Though Edward's connection with the LMS ceased in 1802, further missionary attempts at Kuruman were made in 1805, which led eventually to a more successful launch in 1816. (24)

In January 1803 Kicherer went on a visit to Europe accompanied by three converted Khoikhoi, a married couple and another woman. (25) Johann Schmelen lived in London at this time, because he wanted to avoid military service in his mother-country. In London the young German became acquainted with the pastor of the expatriate German community, Dr Steinkopf. Schmelen was so impressed by Kicherer and his Khoikhoi showpieces that he decided to become a missionary. On Steinkopf's advice, he later joined Jänicke's seminary in Berlin, where he studied with Ebner from about 1806 to 1810. (26)

When Kicherer returned to the Cape in January 1805, he brought with him the Albrecht brothers and another missionary, Johann Seidenfaden. (27) Very little biographical details concerning the first missionaries in Namibia can be collected from the sources. Abraham and Christian Albrecht were born in Leitkirch, Suabia, in 1778 and 1773 respectively. They must have been among the first students to be trained at Jänickes's seminary in Berlin before they spent some time in Rotterdam with the NMS. (28)

Seidenfaden's origins remain even more obscure. Some sources claim that he was a Dutchman by birth (29), but his German name seems to confirm Vedder's statement that Seidenfaden was a native of Germany, who was educated at the seminary of the NMS in Rotterdam. (30) Seidenfaden left southern Namibia in 1808, worn out and frustrated by the harsh conditions for mission work in the arid surroundings of his station Heirachabis, 80 kilometers east of the present-day Karasburg. In 1808 he married Maria Schonkin^e in Cape Town. From 1809 to 1811 he was active at his new station Pella south of the lower Orange River. His application to settle at the Kamiesberg had been previously rejected by the colonial authorities. Seidenfaden enjoyed the reputation of a troublemaker among colonists and government officials. This was apparently less due to any political altercations between the missionary and the authorities than to his difficult personality, as can be deduced from those mission accounts which describe him as a despotic character. (31) In 1811 Seidenfaden began to work at the Caledon station (Zuurbraak) near Swellendam. There he became a major embarrassment to the LMS when he was accused of

turning his station into a profitable enterprise for his own benefits. Against the wishes of the LMS, but with the support of the Cape Government, Seidenfaden refused to leave his post. Eventually John Philip managed, with great difficulty, to have him suspended in 1825. (32)

For a relatively brief period, from November 1809 to January 1811, the missionary Bastian Tromp and his wife Jetje stayed at the Warmbad station, partly during the absence of the Albrechts. The Dutchman Tromp had come to South Africa in 1800. He worked for some time at Wagenmakersvallei, and from 1805 to 1807 at Bethelsdorp. After a spell in Stellenbosch, where he married the daughter of missionary M.J. Bakker, he joined Seidenfaden in his futile attempt to settle at the Kamiesberg. The Seidenfadens and the Tromps then moved on to Pella, where Tromp eventually broke up with Seidenfaden and crossed the Orange River to join the Albrechts at Warmbad. After the flight of the Warmbad community from the Afrikaners in 1811, the Tromps returned to Stellenbosch. (33) There Tromp's connection with the LMS was soon dissolved, because the LMS directors heavily criticised him for his incompetence. (34) The Wesleyan missionary Barnabas Shaw, who eventually managed to establish a mission station at the Kamiesberg in 1816 with Schmelen's support, was moved to find the Tromps desolate and impoverished in Stellenbosch in 1830. (35)

Data on the missionaries' wives are even more difficult to establish. They are usually not mentioned by name in the missionary records and only referred to as 'Sister Albrecht',

'Sister Tromp' etc. But Heese's account of Abraham's marriage to a Catharina Schültz in 1806 seems to contradict at least the SAS (ZAG) records, housed by the Dutch Reformed Church in Cape Town, which indicate that Abraham Albrecht married Carolina Nippoldt in Cape Town in February or March 1807. (36) They had a son and a daughter, but their son died at the age of nine months in 1809 at the Warmbad station. (37) After Abraham's death in 1810, his widow married his freshly arrived colleague Ebner. (38)

More is known of the wife of Christian Albrecht. Sophie Elisabeth Burgmann was born in Mülheim on the Rhine in 1767. Her father was a Lutheran church minister and provided her with an education, which was unusual for women at that time. At the age of seventeen she was sent to Rotterdam to study. There she met Van der Kemp and established close ties with the missionary movement. In Rotterdam she worked until 1809 as a teacher and social worker. During this period she also met the Albrecht brothers for the first time. Sophie Burgmann was not content with the prospect of becoming a missionary's wife. She wanted to become a missionary herself, and according to Heese, she was accepted as a missionary candidate. After a probationary period and a stay in London between October 1809 and February 1810, she arrived in Cape Town in July 1810. She married Christian in August 1810 in the presence of Governor Caledon. (39) Her life ended tragically after less than two years in South Africa. Exhausted and in poor health after the violent break-up of the Warmbad station by the Afrikaner Oorlams in 1811 (see 5.1.), she died in April 1812 giving birth to her first child at the age of

forty-five, three years before her husband Christian died of exhaustion in Cape Town. She and her child were buried at Silverfontein in Little Namaqualand. (40)

Originally, Seidenfaden and the Albrecht brothers were supposed to work among the Khoikhoi population at the Kamiesberg. Due to Van der Kemp's ongoing quarrels with the Cape Government, though, the establishment of further mission stations within colonial boundaries was prohibited. In 1805, Governor Janssen defined the northern boundary in such a manner that the Kamiesberg area was incorporated into the colony, thus forcing the three newcomers to give up their original plan. (41) The three missionaries travelled to the Orange River.

4.2. The Wesleyan missionaries in Namibia

The Wesleyan Methodist Mission Society undertook its first attempts in Namibia in the early 1820s, at a time when the LMS was about to suffer its final defeat and abandon its last Namibian station. The following section will give a brief account of the historical background and the development of the Wesleyan Methodist mission in early nineteenth-century South Africa. The history of the Wesleyan missionaries in Namibia until the 1840s will be described later in greater detail (see chapters 6 and 7).

The name of John Wesley (1705-1791) is indissolubly connected with the history of the Evangelical Revival in England. The activities and teachings of the Methodist innovator stimulated the new religious enthusiasm from which mission societies like

the LMS evolved. (42) The Wesleyan teachings were a reaction against the petrified structures of the religious establishment. Especially through the prominent lay element within Methodist church organization, the new religious fervour protested against what was considered to be an emotionally dissatisfying 'Age of Reason'. Religious agitation was thus combined with humanitarian and social issues, and even before the founding of the WMMS in 1813 Methodism extended its influence by individual initiatives in Europe and the British colonies like Canada and India. (43)

The first missionary sent by the WMMS to South Africa, J. McKenny, arrived in Cape Town in 1814. However, McKenny left for Ceylon after a short while, because the colonial government was not yet prepared to permit mission work among the soldiers and slaves of Cape Town. But in 1816 Barnabas Shaw was sent to the Cape, and he was eventually given permission to settle at the Kamiesberg where he established the Lilyfontein station the same year with the help of Schmelen. About two years later, E. Edwards became Shaw's assistant at Lilyfontein. From the Kamiesberg the Wesleyans extended their activities further north in 1818 when James Archbell and his wife founded the Rietfontein station in Bushmanland. In 1820 Shaw, Edwards and the LMS missionary Kitchingman, who worked - also partly in collaboration with Schmelen - at Steinkopf in Little Namaqualand between 1818 and 1820, visited Schmelen at his station Bethany in southern Namibia, and the missionaries travelled in the region of the Fish River. In 1821/22 Archbell made a shortlived attempt in southern Namibia, before he was eventually transferred to the Rolong. (44)

Another attempt of the Wesleyans to gain a foothold in Namibia ended tragically when the young missionary William Threlfall and his two African assistants were murdered in 1825 in the vicinity of Warmbad (see chapter 6). Eventually the Warmbad mission station, which was abandoned by the last LMS missionary in 1818, was re-opened by Edward Cook in 1834 (see chapter 7).

The approach of the WMMS to mission work in early nineteenth-century South Africa differed in some important aspects from the policies of the LMS. To start with, the LMS mainly concentrated on mission work among the Khoisan population. When the Sixth Frontier War erupted in 1834, the LMS had twelve stations within the colony, four among the Griqua north of the Orange River, one Khoikhoi station on the borders of what was then called Kaffraria, and only one station among the Xhosa. The WMMS had six stations on the eastern frontier among the Xhosa population and three stations beyond the Orange River. (45)

Both mission societies and their personnel from time to time created suspicion among colonial authorities and white colonists. But while the LMS missionaries soon acquired, rightly or wrongly, the reputation of political subversives, the Wesleyans rather aroused mistrust as religious dissenters. Mainly operating on the eastern borders of the Cape Colony, the WMMS entered into a close alliance with the colonial government and the white settler society from the very beginning of massive British settlement on the eastern frontier in the 1820s. In contrast to the LMS, the WMMS also provided its services for the white settler community.

On the eastern frontier, the WMMS played an essential role in colonial frontier policies by building up a string of mission border posts. Due to their close ties with the European settler society, the Wesleyans would not unequivocally take sides with the Africans. (46) Seton, in his account of the WMMS in Southern Africa, describes the tensions between the LMS and the WMMS as they developed over questions of the eastern frontier policies in the 1830s, which 'helped to identify the W.M.M.S. as pro- and the L.M.S. as anti-colonial for many years to come' (47):

During the first few decades of its existence, however, the W.M.M.S. was staunchly loyal to British traditions. This loyalty was more than a sentimental attachment to the home country of most of its missionaries. Other societies drew their personnel from similar sources without becoming subject to that form of imperialism that appeared to possess the Wesleyans, especially in South Africa. (48)

It was only a coincidence that the Wesleyans gained a more permanent foothold in Namibia from the crucial year 1834 onwards, when the Cape Government revised its frontier policy. As will be shown later (see chapter 7), the re-opening of the Warmbad station has to be seen against the background of Cape colonial policies of intensified co-operation with African groups on the frontiers.

Tensions between the two mission societies arose occasionally, but those differences revolved essentially around organizational and not theological matters. An intense rivalry between the LMS and the WMMS would develop, for example, when missionaries from both societies were at loggerheads over rights of influence over the same African community. (49) However, despite the fact that

the mission societies would sometimes act 'like rival imperialist states fighting over colonial territories', the personal relationships between LMS and WMS missionaries on the north-western frontier were marked by friendship and close co-operation. (50) LMS missionary Schmelen, especially, was held by missionaries from both societies in high esteem as an authority on southern Namibia and the Khoisan population. The expedition into southern Namibia in 1820 consisted of both LMS and WMS missionaries.

4.3. The first mission stations in Namibia: Warmbad (1806-1811) and Heirachabis (1806-1808)

In May 1805 Abraham and Christian Albrecht and Johannes Seidenfaden left Cape Town. In September 1805 the missionaries met Cornelius Kok at the Kamiesberg. This outstanding Bastard frontier pioneer (51), whose logistic support would later prove to be indispensable for the missionaries, suggested the establishment of a mission station at Warmbad:

..where there is a kraal in which sometimes people of the Great Namaquas are to be found. (52)

Following Kok's advice, the Albrechts and Seidenfaden did not travel directly to Great Namaqualand but proceeded to the so-called Rhenoster Kop near the junction of Hartebeest and Orange rivers where Adam Kok, son of Cornelius, settled with his followers. (53) As soon as the Albrechts and Seidenfaden reached Kok's place on the middle Orange in 1805, Nama chiefs or 'big men' signaled their interest in accepting the missionaries in

Namibia. Messengers from Stille Hoop and Blyde Uitkomst tried to hasten the missionaries' journey to southern Namibia by assuring them that there would be enough food available. The missionaries were told that the Nama had already planted 'potatoes' for them. (54)

After a closer inspection of their environment, the missionaries had second thoughts with regard to future prospects for a mission in Namibia. They noted that the Khoisan on the middle Orange were poor livestock-breeders and that southern Namibia was a drought-stricken region; thus another scheme of opening a mission station among the Southern Tswana was taken into serious consideration. (55) However, the Koks helped to establish contacts with Great Namaqualand (56), and after an exploratory trip by Christian Albrecht in September/October 1805 (57) the missionaries settled in southern Namibia near Kouwis Fountain/Stille Hoop and Kames/Blyde Uitkomst in January 1806. (58)

Here the missionaries commenced their work among a mixed following of Oorlams, Nama and Einiqua. (59) Being already terrified by the apparently omnipresent hordes of the notorious Afrikaner which roamed about the middle Orange (60), the missionaries, if somewhat reluctantly, soon entered into friendly relations with the 'old African', Klaas Afrikaner, who sent his children to the mission school. (61) During the following months the missionaries expanded their activities when Seidenfaden settled at Heirachabis, residence of the !Kharakhoen

(Fransman Hottentots) under Jantje Kagab. (62) When the chief of the !Kamî#n0n (Bondelswarts), called 'Captain Bondelswart' by the missionaries, demonstrated his interest in acquiring a missionary the Albrechts decided to move to Warmbad. (63) The persistent drought which had forced the missionaries to abandon their agricultural schemes prompted their decision to leave Blyde Uitkomst and Stille Hoop. (64)

Apart from the economic motivations underlying the chief's invitation - the hope of benefitting from the ties which the missionaries had extended to the Kok family in Little Namaqualand and to the Cape - Captain Bondelswart exposed his political plans even before the Albrechts were to arrive at Warmbad. According to the chief's expectations the missionaries should serve for diplomatic purposes in a conflict between the Bondelswarts and the Groot Dode (//Ogain). The latter had raided Captain Bondelswart's livestock, and the chief intended to make use of the missionaries in order to form a military alliance with the 'Oorlamsh tribe', a reference either to the neighbouring Afrikaner Oorlams or to the Oorlam following of the missionaries. (65) Captain Bondelswart's demand was outrightly rejected by Abraham Albrecht:

It was however by no means consistent with my views to intermeddle in such a war... (66)

But this incident indicated from the start of the Warmbad mission station in September/October 1806 how precarious the situation was for the European agents of social change. (67)

Very soon after their arrival at Warmbad, the missionaries

found themselves fully involved in the economic and political structures of the surrounding Nama groups. Because of drought, the missionaries moved to an outpost of the Bondelswarts, Koregas, from where they had to withdraw again quickly because of the continuing conflict between the Bondelswarts and Groot Dode. (68) The missionaries, being now aware of the nomadic structures of Khoikhoi society, tried to cope with the seasonal migrations of Nama bands through a division of labour. One of them was to stay at Warmbad in order to build up a functioning acculturation centre that would possibly attract a larger following, while the other was compelled to accompany the wandering pastoralists. (69) According to the missionaries' assessment, the territory of their livestock-breeding followers had to have the length of a five day's-journey and the width of a three or four day's journey in order to secure a living. (70)

Captain Bondelswart's attempt to use the missionaries as diplomatic intermediaries was also an attempt to gain access to firearms. The chief's promise to search for a better place for a mission station on the coast was connected to a plea for muskets:

... (the chief) should wait for the return of my brother from the Cape, that we might well be supplied with guns, which are very necessary on such an expedition as in the country one is continually surrounded with savages and hostile tribes. (71)

However, the chief's expectations were apparently not realized and from then on the persistent efforts of the captain to benefit from the open 'firearm frontier' became a constant source of strife. After some futile attempts to obtain muskets, Captain Bondelswart unsuccessfully tried to exert pressure on the

missionaries, indicating that he did not feel at ease with the 'Oorlamsche and Bastaards Hottentotten' who had accompanied the missionaries to Warmbad, where they constituted an unwelcome economic and political challenge to the Khoikhoi chief. (72) After the Albrechts had threatened to transfer the station to Kamas (Pella), another temporary residence of the Kok clan, the chief gave in and reaffirmed his co-operation. (73) Captain Bondelswart, however, withdrew with his followers and his livestock to an outpost a couple of months later. (74)

This demonstration of missionary influence was facilitated by the chief's weak political authority and failure to gain sufficient military support for a punitive expedition against the Groot Dode among the Bondelswarts. The missionaries reported the Bondelswarts as saying:

...we are all chiefs, and we should recover our livestock, which has been stolen by the Okeis/Bergsche Hottentotten <Groot Dode>, by ourselves. (75)

Besides, a most important aspect of mission work thus emerged. Participation in the socio-economic network established at mission stations required the maintenance of peaceful relations among the Khoikhoi population. Controversies among acculturated Khoikhoi newcomers and indigenous Nama could not be entirely subdued by the missionaries; in fact, missionary activities created new divisions among followers, but access to the station was necessarily based on non-violent strategies. The Albrechts noted that, especially among those Nama groups which were not yet connected to the mission network, any immigrants were regarded with suspicion:

...because our daily experience teaches us that some of the Oorlams (Oorlamsche Hottentotten) do not get on well with the Nama, and that many problems arise when they have to live together at one place, especially, when water and grazing is bad. (76)

Thus when the missionaries heard that seventeen Oorlams had been killed during an attempt to steal livestock from a Nama group, they noted in dismay:

...17 have been killed, and they got what they deserved. Those <Oorlam> Hottentots increasingly confirm by their unjustified actions the prejudices against well-meaning Christians, Bastards and Oorlams among the northern Nama (achttertse natien)...(77)

The aversion of indigenous Khoikhoi was not only directed to 'some of the Oorlams'. In this context, the term 'Oorlam' was used for all strangers from the colony. Namibian groups had made acquaintance with the raiding and trading vanguard of the open frontier, and therefore all people not wearing traditional garb were at first identified as hostile intruders:

...<the Nama> who are full of suspicion against other nations and especially against Hottentots who wear clothes, and also against Bastards and Christians... (78)

In some cases, references to violent incidents may relate to previous conflicts among indigenous Nama livestock-breeders. The Albrechts noticed that the three missionaries had attracted some followers

...who had caused trouble among the northern Nama some time ago and could not go there again without running the risk of losing their lives. This could easily develop into a war... (79)

However, the missionaries' settlement aroused the attention of

several Nama groups and their leaders. Partly through exploratory trips, partly through visitors from neighbouring groups, the Albrechts established contacts with the Kai//khaun (Red Nation) (80), the //Khou/goan (Swartboois) (81) and the //Haboben (Veldskoendraers). (82) The relationship with Jager Afrikaner persisted since their temporary stay at Stille Hoop and Blyde Uitkomst, where some of the Afrikaner Oorlams visited the mission school. But the Oorlam leader's residence at what was later called 'Afrikaner's Kraal' was a constant source of suspicion for Abraham and Christan Albrecht, who never trusted the notorious outlaw. (83)

At the end of 1806 two mission centres existed in Great Namaqualand. Johann Seidenfaden continued his work at Heirachabis among a mixed following of !Kharakhoen, Oorlams and 'Little Namaquas' (84), and Abraham Albrecht optimistically wrote:

Our institution consists at present of different heathens, and we are convinced that a great part of them have great desire to be instructed in the Word of God and particularly show much inclination to spell and read and many of them make considerable progress. (85)

The community of Warmbad consisted in March 1807 of 300 Bondelswarts, 200 Oorlams and 'some River Hottentots', i.e. Einiqua. (86) In the orbit of the station, a more or less uneasy balance of power between indigenous Nama and Khoikhoi immigrants prevailed. The initial suspicion of the Nama, that they had to feed the European newcomers and their following, was allayed by the obvious determination of the missionaries to procure a considerable amount of livestock for their community. (87) While

the missionaries claimed that the Nama were 'still wild, suspicious and unpredictable', they noted at the same time that the number of Oorlams around the station grew daily. (88)

4.4. Mission stations and economic change

Mission work among the Nama was severely impeded by the fragile social and political structures of pre-colonial Namibian groups. Far from being able to transform the patterns of a semi-nomadic society into those of a sedentary one, the missionaries had to adapt to the harsh ecological environment and the social conditions prevailing in southern Namibia. Without the back-up of a colonial order and without adjustments to make to a land-seeking colonial society, mission work had to comply to the political autonomy of Nama and Oorlam groups. However, despite innumerable reports showing that the missionaries were forced to adapt to the transhumant patterns of Nama social formation, European ideas of permanent farming settlements stubbornly persisted. Instead of developing a more realistic stance, mission ideology displayed a fixation on concepts of civilization and spiritual conversion which were characterized by an aggressive Eurocentrism.

The migratory routes of Nama herders, hunters, and gatherers did not lead to fixed settlements where the missionary could control his community. How was a missionary to preach to his adherents who would disperse in irregular intervals? Moreover, missionary experiences had demonstrated that the fragile economic structures of Nama society dramatically increased the expenses of

the mission societies involved. The Albrechts had never succeeded in building up a functioning economic system that would support both missionaries and followers. On the contrary, missionary efforts were constantly accompanied by the warnings of the directors of the LMS to cut costs down. The financial situation concerning the stations at Warmbad and Heirachabis was a bottomless pit. The high expenses for the mission societies even led to temporary considerations of withdrawing the missionaries altogether from southern Namibia. Soon after the missionaries had commenced their work, mission directors were inclined to question mission work in southern Namibia in general. As South African Society Director Overbeck wrote to Governor Caledon:

That among the different missionaries employed for the conversion of the heathen to Christianity, there are some who have been sent to a people called the Great Namaquas Hottentots beyond the boundaries of this Colony, that those missionaries being now for about two years there, to the great expence of the Society and after having experienced many difficulties and troubles, have not as yet found a proper place to establish an institution where they could by agriculture as being the first step towards civilization, be enabled to lessen the expence they are at to the Society for their support. (89)

Every note and letter from Great Namaqualand carried new requests for European goods and money. The latter was desperately needed to buy livestock for the missionaries and their followers. Though the sources do not provide a comprehensive picture of the missionaries' finances, it is significant that in 1807 the LMS administration wished to restrict the expenses for the Warmbad mission to £200 per year. (90) (The expenses of the LMS worldwide for missionaries and mission stations were £5.589 the same year.

(91) The financing of the LMS was mainly based on donations of annual subscribers. The first of the so-called 'auxiliary societies' was called into being in 1807 with the aim of giving mission work a more solid financial foundation.) (92)

The references to the prices of livestock and to the money paid for labour indicate that the missionaries paid an average of two rixdollars for one sheep. (93) The missionaries seemed to have paid in kind for the labour of their domestic servants, wagon drivers and for the swimmers who carried the goods across the Orange. Livestock was nearly always bought from the Kok clan at the Kamiesberg. When the missionaries brought, amongst other items, a wagon-load of corn from the Kamiesberg to Warmbad, they had to pay 40 rixdollars for the corn; another 40 to their accompanying servants and 80 rixdollars for the swimmers. (94) The transport of goods across the Orange was costly; for eight days of work an unknown number of swimmers were paid five sheep, one ox and one cow. (95) A wagon driver was given 12 rixdollars per year, and the food he was entitled to during a journey to Cape Town cost 29 rixdollars. (96) The LMS directors renewed their complaints about the costs of the Warmbad station in 1808. Financial expenditure by the Namibian missionaries had exceeded the limit of £200 per year. (97)

Discouraged by the financial costs, alternatives were sought. However, the mission directorate continued to cling to the concept of an agricultural mission economy which would supplement its needs by manufacturing of goods and by trade. The introduction of such a European model was designed as a radical

method to destroy traditional African structures. The missionary Protestant Ethic justified this strategy with a paternalistic reference to the inherent sinfulness of indigenous societies. A European right to force Africans into the process of acculturation, because it was for their own good, was assured. Such a concept was expressed in a paper presented to the directors of both London Missionary and South African Society in the 1820s:

Next perhaps in importance to the preaching of the Gospel is the cultivation of the soil. The introduction of agriculture is the most likely means of breaking the African tribes of their desultory habits so injurious to their spiritual welfare as well as to their temporal interests. - This can only be done by degrees, - they must be taught the value of bread before they will learn the use of the plough, - as when the Namaquas and several other tribes of savages in South Africa became attached to tobacco they learnt the value of the spade. It is absolutely necessary besides spiritual instruction to propose some powerful, immediate and temporal advantage in exchange for the practice of wandering in search of the necessaries of life. This can only be effected by putting the people in a way of supporting themselves by agriculture or manufactures and by furnishing them with a market for the product of their labours...(98)

The eagerness of the mission to celebrate any modest indication of structural change bore some resemblance to the equally unrealistic expectations of the German colonizers at a later stage. At least until the end of the 1880s, observers from Germany stubbornly claimed that Great Namaqualand offered agricultural potential. (99)

Moreover, those mission ideologists did not realize the dangers involved for a missionary who was unable to control trade relations of politically autonomous groups. The practical

experiences of Schmelen during the slow decline of his station (see 5.4.) did not correspond to the following enthusiastic statement made in the same paper:

The people of the missionary station Bethany, Great Namaqualand, make a kind of knives and axes, and other articles used in that country and exchange them with the other Namaquas and Northern Tribes for cattle etc. Mr Schmelen, the missionary, says the Namaquas at his station are so eager to learn the smith's business that whenever he was employed in the smith's shop, every one wanted to assist him. (100)

Schmelen acknowledged at a later stage that the demise of his station had something to do with his inability to control the political and social mechanisms prevailing among his followers. However, what most of the missionaries did not understand was that this failure was the result of the ecological and cultural environment they were dealing with. Mission stations could only introduce features of capitalist commodity production which could be connected to the given structures of Nama society. While it was to a large extent ecological reasons that made Nama and Oorlams reject the 'values of the spade', the internal contradictions of Nama social formation also impeded the penetration of capitalist elements.

Since the first missionaries arrived in Namibia, Nama herders, hunters and gatherers had become increasingly acquainted with European commodities. Hence, the introduction to the sphere of capitalist commodity production, according to the mission's strategy, was achieved in the orbit of mission stations. However, instead of a subjugation of non-capitalist structures to the relations of capitalist commodity production, 'traditional'

forces persisted. We have already seen that this was the case partly because of the geographical remoteness of the Namibian section of the north-western frontier. Capitalist penetration of the north-western frontier zone occurred at a relatively slow pace. This process was slow because it was not accompanied by the invading forces of a colonial settler society and, in consequence, of an effective military and political intervention from the colonial government. The competition between different modes of production, hallmark of the open frontier, could neither be settled in favour of a capitalist mode of production by a centralizing European political power nor by the forces of the capitalist market.

Nama groups in southern Namibia had become acquainted with European commodities before the arrival of the first missionaries. Contacts with Bastard hunters and herders may have accompanied a limited exchange of European commodities. The iron pots which were, according to the Albrechts, bartered from 'the colonists' (see 2.2.) provide proof of trade relations connecting Great Namaqualand and the Cape Colony. Other items of European manufacture, like the grenadier's cap that was presented to the Bondelswart chief, /Obib, by Gordon in 1779 (101) also may have reached southern Namibian groups, heralding the beginning of a new era. (102)

Those occasional contacts, however, could not result in any decisive transformations of the economic structures of Nama social formation. Compared to the trade relations the Griqua communities had established with the Cape Colony, exchange of

commodities was limited. Thus a subsistence economy prevailed among the Nama, relatively unaffected by relations of capitalist commodity production; the Nama did not make an organized effort to produce commodities for the capitalist market.

However, the internal dynamics of Nama social formation was decisively influenced by the rival economic, social and political forces represented by the missionaries. The missionaries allocated labour by employing domestic servants, wagon drivers or, for instance, workers to construct the first Christian church in Namibia. Thus labour was temporarily withdrawn from the non-capitalist process of production, and in the introduction of paid labour we may see the first rudiments of colonial wage-labour and the initial step to a separation of producers from their means of production. But at this stage, the missionaries' interference directly affected only a limited number of impoverished Nama. Those who decided to accept the economic alternatives offered by the missionaries could not rely on permanent support in the form of commodities and livestock, though co-operation with the missionaries promised to provide for an irregular inflow of European commodities and food. But by introducing those elements of capitalist oriented labour relations, new wants and needs became locked in the structures of a pre-capitalist social formation.

Although the first mission stations in Namibia constituted a massive initial phase of contact with European commodities, European structures and values, pre-capitalist structures

persisted. As was demonstrated, the influence of merchant capital did not become dominant in the form of Oorlam 'commando politics', nor did merchant capital successfully infiltrate Nama society in the form of a trade-orientated, agriculturally based mission economy. Apart from the nature of merchant capital, which does not achieve any direct control over non-capitalist labour relations, the structural peculiarities of mission economy set limits to this process of social change. This was due to the particular form merchant capital assumed when it gained access to non-capitalist processes via the early mission stations.

The missionaries imported European commodities like clothing, tools, sugar, brandy etc. to Namibia, but predominantly they imported livestock: cattle, sheep and goats, which the missionaries bought on the market. These products were not bartered for goods that were produced within the subsistence economy of Nama social formation; they were distributed among the mission followers. But except for their labour, which some Nama and Oorlams exchanged on a very temporary basis for European commodities and livestock, no surplus was extracted from pre-capitalist productive processes. Though the missionaries sometimes succeeded through political pressure in redistributing livestock within the community to the benefit of paupers (103), Nama herders hesitated in general to exchange their livestock with the missionaries. (104) Thus the import of livestock and commodities was a one-way flow into the subsistence economy of Nama social formation, where livestock was rapidly absorbed and both factions, Nama and Oorlams, lived basically a pastoralist

life. Such one-sided economic hand-outs sometimes led Nama chiefs and followers to have an unrealistic assessment of the missionaries' role. In the 1820s, even those Nama who had not established contact with a mission station came to regard a missionary as an inexhaustible source of material wealth which would be distributed outside the traditional relations of production. (105)

A Nama captain like the Bondelswart chief had to tolerate these new economic relations stimulated by the missionaries, because he had only very limited means at his disposal to cut off Nama individuals and families from the competing influence of the mission station. Significantly, the relations between missionaries and Bondelswart chief were not very intense as became evident by the chief's refusal to move to the mission station. The chief, as one of the relatively wealthy pastoralists, was predominantly interested in acquiring firearms from the European residents and in making use of their political and diplomatic functions.

The internal stratification of the Nama social formation was exacerbated by the settlement of acculturated Khoikhoi around the mission stations. Missionary politics provided for an uneasy state of balance between indigenous and immigrated Khoikhoi groups. The missionaries imposed sanctions either by barring troublemakers from access to the economic and social benefits of mission activities or by threatening to withdraw entirely from Namibia. These sanctions were formulated in the language of mission ideology which called for peaceful social relations. Thus

the organization of livestock-raids became more difficult, at least for those Nama who lived in the orbit of the mission station and could be supervised by the missionaries. (106) The competition between Oorlams and Nama for economic support and for access to the agency of social change was often decided in favour of acculturated Khoikhoi, with whom the missionaries found it easier to communicate.

When the missionaries began to build a (reed) church at Warmbad in 1807, both Oorlams and Nama were used as labourers. The acculturated Khoikhoi, however, accommodated more readily to the new labour processes. For want of sufficient livestock the missionaries at this stage were not in the position to provide their Nama labourers with food. Although grazing and water sites were satisfactory at the time, the conditions for hunting were reportedly bad, perhaps an effect of the unusual temporary population density of c.400 people at Warmbad. Now the missionaries hoped for the additional immigration of Oorlams who were expected to possess better work ethics than the indigenous Nama and to be more successful with hunting, probably because of their firearms. (107)

4.5. The colonial government, missionaries and political control

The edict of Governor Janssen in 1805 at the time of the Batavian regime expressed the government's concern about controlling the missionaries, particularly those residing outside the colonial boundaries. (108) The Cape Government regarded missionary

activities with mixed feelings. On the one hand, government officials reacted very sensitively towards missionaries who had acquired, especially among the farmers depending on cheap labour, a reputation as troublemakers. Missionaries like Van der Kemp, married to an African woman and constantly transgressing the rules of white colonial culture, enhanced this dubious public image considerably. On the other hand, government officials quickly became sympathetic to the concept of missionary influences as pacifying forces for the benefit of the colony in keeping the Khoisan population at bay. (109) As long as missionary activity was considered not to challenge the status quo of master-servant relations or, furthermore, as long as mission centres proved to be conducive to these relations as reservoirs of cheap labour, mission work was tolerated. (110)

Thus missionaries working in southern Namibia at the beginning of the nineteenth century found themselves in a precarious position. Their contribution in exerting a substantial influence on their communities in terms of creating a valuable labour force for neighbouring white farmers was negligible. The demographic situation of Little Namaqualand with its dispersed farms, mainly in possession of non-white frontiersmen, excluded any prominent government interest in a labour force recruited among the independent Khoikhoi groups beyond the Orange River. Rather than worrying about the unknown regions of southern Namibia, the Cape Government was far more concerned about the situation on the middle Orange, where Bastard communities had established themselves among San, Korana and Gortho-Tswana since c. 1800. The

considerable interest of the Cape Government in Transorangia was marked by two expeditions to the northern frontier in 1801 and 1805. (111) During the Khoikhoi rebellion on the eastern frontier in 1799, there were increased Khoikhoi attacks on farms in Little Namaqualand. (112) Jager Afrikaner was supposedly involved in this uprising and that led to heightened military presence of colonial troops as far afield as the Roggeveld. (113)

However, mission work in southern Namibia was apparently not considered to be of use for the security of the north-western frontier zone, despite the fact that the Afrikaner Oorlams were marginally integrated into the mission community since 1806. The government's attitude may have been due to a sober assessment of the political impact of missionary activity among Namibian groups. Unlike the missionaries at Klaarwater/Griquatown, the Albrechts and Seidenfaden could not lean on the support of a relatively stable section of an acculturated frontier group like the Griqua. The economic ties of the Griqua to the Cape Nexus provided the Transorangian missionaries with a wider range of feasible interventions in the affairs of their community than the Namibian missionaries had at their disposal. Jager Afrikaner was known to have retreated to southern Namibia, but the Cape Government apparently set no great political hopes on a mission institution at this section of the northern frontier.

A general uncertainty in regard of the Namibian mission prevailed and became explicit in 1807 when Fiscal Ryneveld proposed to Abraham Albrecht in Cape Town a withdrawal of the missionaries 'into the vicinity of the Colony', i.e. to Little

Namaqualand. (114) This request was not formulated as a result of a potential precarious security situation for European residents outside colonial boundaries, or by distrust of the Albrechts and Seidenfaden, but rather because of a general uneasiness concerning the relatively uncontrolled mission centres in southern Namibia.

It is difficult to establish the part the South African Society played in the interaction between Cape Government and LMS missionaries concerning the discussion of a withdrawal from southern Namibia. Apparently the directors of the South African Society at least consented to this proposal, due to the high costs involved for the mission societies (see 4.4.).

The SAS directorate proposed as an alternative to establish a new mission centre at the Kamiesberg, apparently under the impression that mission work would be easier among those Khoikhoi who had already been in close contact with the colonists. (115)

For a time, Abraham Albrecht managed apparently to convince government officials and mission directors alike of the promising future of the Namibian mission. He pointed out that the Bondelswarts were, unlike the Griqua communities, stubbornly opposed to the idea of migrations under the missionaries' surveillance. This referred not only to attempts of establishing the Warmbad community south of the Orange and closer to colonial control as explicitly stated by Abraham Albrecht:

Our people have declared themselves against travelling with us in their country which would be most preferable to us and the safest. But the Captain

Bondelswart requested us never to leave his country, saying that they would keep in their country that great (...) word which we make known to them. (116)

Significantly, some of the missionaries' letters from Warmbad show concern about the expectations of their superiors. Thus the Albrecht took great pains to explain again and again that their failure in establishing a fixed settlement plus an agricultural branch of production was rooted in the realities of Nama society, not in the incompetence of the missionaries. (117) There is an almost touching naiveté in the Albrecht's endeavour to demonstrate to the mission directors their ceaseless evangelical efforts, culminating in the request for twenty-five more missionaries to work in southern Namibia. (118) Another suggestion to the mission directors was submitted in a similarly unrealistic vein. The Albrechts indicated that once they were furnished with spinning wheels and looms, the Nama could be instructed in weaving cotton. Perhaps this proposal of the German missionaries has to be seen as a desperate attempt to demonstrate to the English directors that the Protestant Work Ethic was soon to be introduced to nomadic pastoralists. (119)

The sources do not explain why it was decided to allow mission work to continue at Warmbad. Distrust against the political implications of mission work in general had not been removed. This became clear in 1809 when government officials had to consider an application by Seidenfaden, who had abandoned his station Heirachabis in 1808 (see 5.1.). When Seidenfaden asked for the government's permission to open a new mission station at the Kamiesberg, he met with the open hostility of the Landdrost

of Tulbagh, Hendrik van de Graaf. The Landdrost indulged in detailed depictions of the future confrontations between the 'Christians' and neighbouring Khoikhoi in whom he already reputedly had noticed

a degree of stubbornness...with which they were formerly totally unacquainted. (120)

Warnings of an increasing 'cheeky-native-attitude' among Khoikhoi who would deprive white farmers of cheap labour and give asylum to deserted farm workers were, if somewhat unconvincingly, supplemented by pointing out that the local Nama chief, Wildschut, held legal rights of possession at the Kamiesberg area.

Landdrost van de Graaf's attitude to mission work changed considerably when he dealt with the Albrechts in the same report. Christian Albrecht had applied to make use of Bysondermeid (later Steinkopf) and five adjacent water and grazing sites in Little Namaqualand, namely Kookfontein, Klipfontein, Hartebeestfontein, Tweefontein, and Van-Wyksfontein. These places were situated in a distance of about 50 kilometers from the Orange River. The Landdrost's statement confirms that he wanted the political isolation of the mission. The work of the Albrechts was regarded as harmless as long as the missionaries and their Warmbad community did not move too close to the colonial boundaries where a mission centre might enter into competition with surrounding farmers:

I felt the less scruples granting those places to the Brothers Missionaries Albrechts when I considered, that the extending of their institution could tend

to the prejudice of no person whatever, nor could the Bosjesmen, Hottentots or any other nation suffer from it. On the contrary, I can assure Your Excellency that the granting of those lands will be of the greatest advantage for the inhabitants of the boundary in general, and more particularly for those people who have settled themselves in its neighbourhood. (121)

Thus the missionaries could be used to exert a pacifying or neutralizing influence on roaming Khoisan groups close to the colonial boundary, while at the same time the mission would have no opportunity to disturb master-servant relationships within the colony. This assessment even led to an astonishingly positive evaluation of mission work in southern Namibia by Landdrost van de Graaf:

Whilst the well known good order preserved by the said missionaries in their institution, their good correspondence with the Bosjesmen and other Hottentots as well as their unanimity with the farmers is deserving of high esteem. (122)

This benevolent verdict betrays a conspicuous absence of conflicts as they often occurred between mission, farmers and government elsewhere in the Cape Colony. (123) But even if Namibian Khoisan had been drawn into the process of colonial proletarianization as labourers on surrounding farms, it is hardly imaginable that the Albrechts would have raised their voices in protest against colonial subjugation. The missionaries at Warmbad did not hesitate to invoke the authority of the Cape Government when necessity arose. At one stage, for instance, the missionaries saw themselves entangled in hostile inter-group relations after the Bondelswarts had led a commando against neighbouring Khoisan. The Veldwagtmeester of Namaqualand and the Landdrost of Tulbagh were immediately notified by the Albrechts

who above all seem to have been anxious about demonstrating to the colonial authorities their intention to act according to the government's expectations. (124)

A stricter political control of the Namibian mission was not considered to be necessary, except for the usual prescriptions to missionaries. The missionaries in southern Namibia had theoretically:

...to request the Governor to grant us more fields to sow corn, and to allow us some building materials, that we may be enabled to build a better place of worship ... (125)

But the existence of those regulations affirms that the process of acculturation was not allowed to develop freely as a reciprocal process of cultural exchange. The colonial administration observed the education of Africans lest elements of social emancipation should disturb master and servant relationships. Missionary education in Namibia took place within those restrictions of colonial control. Thus Governor Janssen's edict forbade the teaching of writing (126) and the Albrechts seemed to have complied with this regulation. (127)

The Cape Government's interest in the Namibian mission at this stage went hardly beyond supervising its influences on the Khoisan population near the Orange River. More important than the remote area of southern Namibia was Little Namaqualand with its northern boundary running along the Koussie (Buffels) River, about 25 kilometers north of the Kamiesberg. The first tentative approach of the colonial government to close the frontier on the

lower Orange did not occur before 1826 as a result of the murder of the missionary Threlfall. This incident led the Cape Government to consider new strategies in respect of the Namibian section of the northern frontier (see 6.1.).

In Great Namaqualand, the first missionaries operated under circumstances which differed considerably from those within colonial boundaries or in Transorangia. A very important factor relating to mission work was the absence of a large-scale trekboer encroachment on Great Namaqualand. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the migrations of non-white settlers had taken an eastward direction to the middle Orange. (128) Thus the missionaries were exempted from those conflicts which arose in the colony when they either tried to protect their adherents from exploitation as farm labourers or when they were requested, as in Griquatown, to assist the government in the recruiting of community members for military service. (129)

On the other hand it was much more difficult for missionaries who were at loggerheads with the indigenous leadership to invoke colonial powers for support. When for example in 1824 missionary Barnabas Shaw at Lilyfontein in Little Namaqualand was opposed by the local Nama chief, the above-mentioned Wildschut, he could afford to request help from the Landdrost of Worcester. Thus the missionary was officially installed as the only legitimate political authority at his station. (130)

In southern Namibia the missionaries could not rely on massive political or administrative support by the colonial government.

They made only one serious attempt to seek military assistance from the Cape Government in the first half of the nineteenth century. When the Warmbad missionaries in 1811 anticipated a raid by Afrikaner they asked the Landdrost of Tulbagh to send a commando to Great Namaqualand. Missionary involvement in organizing a military operation turned out to be a complete failure and was heavily criticised by the mission directors (see 5.1.).

In addition to the geopolitical situation of southern Namibia which endowed the indigenous inhabitants with a considerable degree of political autonomy with respect to European colonial power, missionaries were not considered to be competitors for grazing and water resources. The history of the first missionaries in Namibia displays the remarkable ability of indigenous groups and their leaders to make use of European agents of social change.

4.6. Social change and religious response

In southern Namibia the Khoikhoi did not regard mission work as merely providing technical development aid. There was a discernible eagerness to make use of newly imported rituals, such as church services and prayer meetings. In 1804, Kicherer at Klaarwater/Griquatown reported highly emotional gatherings where vinegar had to be at hand in order to revive the fainted. (131)

Similar accounts were given by the Warmbad missionaries, and impressive reports of 'pentecostal' reactions like incessant

weeping and shouting during prayer ceremonies were to become a familiar topic of the first missionaries in southern Namibia:

Even among the Namaqua nation, we meet here and there with someone kneeling behind a bush or a rock, and pouring out his heart before God in his own native tongue, with such simplicity and confidence as a child talks with his father. (132)

Syncretist religious movements are well-known phenomena within a colonial context, where they partly perform functions as agencies of stress-relief. With regard to the period under consideration, however, Khoikhoi in southern Namibia displayed symptoms of emotional stress which can only very superficially be connected to colonial penetration of the north-western frontier. Rather than being an expression of cultural and social alienation due to colonization, those outbursts by highly agitated Khoikhoi seem to reveal frustrations as they may have existed in a pastoralist economy which was affected by a serious crisis. The offer of spiritual and ideological innovation attracted a larger following of Africans, in particular women and others who found themselves excluded from socially rewarding positions. After a missionary had once received the chief's permission to stay, it was especially women who supported mission work. People without livestock, impoverished by the economic and ecological fluctuations of a pastoralist society, were eager to accept the offers of the Christian community, not only with the prospect of economic support. The mission church, although far from representing an egalitarian organizational model, would harbour the poor and give them some kind of social status and prestige. Particularly in times of need, the missionary would become the

social and economic substitute for the traditional chief and his functions. Sometimes the missionary would find himself endowed with supernatural powers. For example, Ebner's singing of hymns during a funeral was interpreted as sorcery. The missionary's pious description of death as a joyful spiritual experience did not easily correspond with indigenous philosophy. (133) The Albrechts were made responsible for the prevailing drought by some Nama, who had no confidence in their newly introduced rituals. (134)

Leaders from different Nama groups would compete for the social, political and technical services of a missionary. The Albrechts gave repeatedly accounts of 'jealousy' among the different groups and leaders. (135) The ceremonies of the Christian community did not solely have the effect of unifying the proselytes. The Albrechts reported a Nama woman as saying:

It is painful for me that I see those who are baptized only with our teachers receive the Lord's supper. We are already separated from them upon earth. They only can be saved, but we not. There is a vast difference between them and us. They are much more serious than we. (136)

Those Nama living close to a mission centre could, at least periodically, benefit from the inflow of goods and livestock:

... we wander from one place to another to have a drop of milk, and we almost starve. Those at Warm Bath have still some, though their pasture is worse than here. (137)

Nama leaders realized that the missionaries depended on the co-operation of the Bastard/Oorlam mission elite. When the wife of the Bondelswart chief's brother lay dying and the missionaries

hesitated to visit her at an distant outpost, husband 'William' knew how to persuade the Albrechts and :

...declared if she died without having spoken to us, he would endeavour that no more of the Oorlam Hottentots should come to us. We were therefore under the necessity of visiting her, though she was dwelling from us more than a day and a half's journey. (138)

The admission to the inner circle of the missionary network was much more uncomplicated for those who already had made their experiences with European cultural patterns. It was above all the command of the Dutch language, 'lingua franca' of acculturation, that formed a pre-condition for the access to the higher ranks of the mission community. The missionaries had to depend entirely on the assistance of indigenous interpreters. The Albrechts at least had given up hope of learning the Nama language. As Abraham explained:

It would be almost impossible to write or to learn this language, and in general the natives of this country are fond of the Dutch language, and the sound of it is familiar to them. (139)

Prayers at meetings were not translated to the Khoikhoi community, a method that doubtless left considerable space for indigenous interpretations of the Evangelical message. (140) Preaching, however, and communication in general was performed with the help of interpreters. Significantly, it was a Bastard interpreter of the Albrechts who apparently was allowed to partake of the sacraments as the first indigenous community member. (141) Members of the Bastard/Oorlam elite enjoyed often a better economic position and possessed a greater mobility in using trade routes or communication channels that interconnected

the different Bastard communities and mission centres. Thus the Bastard Engelbrecht, 'one of our brightest students', was described as having much livestock, and another of the missionaries' Bastard adherents endowed Abraham's wife and their newborn son with a cow. (142) Bastards/Oorlams acted as middlemen between the European cultural agents and indigenous Nama. The interpreter of the Albrechts, for example, received visitors late at night, who came with the purpose 'of being instructed in the word of God'. (143) Some of those assistants were later to rise to positions of considerable influence. As mission helpers they had to address meetings, to enter into diplomatic relations with Nama groups and their leaders and frequently, as at Schmelen's station Bethany (see 5.2.), they had to fulfill the proper tasks of missionaries. Thus Bastard/Oorlam co-workers could actually rise to more influential positions than the common term of 'native assistants' suggests. (144) In particular, being an interpreter furnished a Bastard/Oorlam with power and prestige. Being highly perceptive of the circumstance that a European missionary without a sound knowledge of the Nama language lost a sometimes decisive element of social control, Nama speakers hesitated to give away this very position of social independence. As the Rhenish missionary J.G. Krönlein, a pioneer of Nama linguistics, was to comment in the 1850s:

Hence they do not agree at all with me seizing upon their language. When they assemble to have a chat and I interfere according to my abilities, you should see them gesticulate and they say: "Pas op! Onze leeraar sprekt al onze taal". (145)

LMS missionary Wimmer in Little Namaqualand indicated that

Schmelen at his station, Bethany, had problems because his wife was a Nama:

They said they will have a missionary, but he must have a Christian wife. (146)

• The missionaries had to rely on the linguistic capability and spiritual sensitivity of their assistants who would often come to theological interpretations of their own. Elements of the Christian religion which did not easily correspond to indigenous cultural patterns could receive transformations which, in the eyes of the missionaries, represented gross distortions of Evangelicalism. RMS missionary Vollmer discovered in about 1854 that his community among the Kai//khaun used the term 'wooden nail' for the Christian symbol of the cross and translated 'sacrifice' as 'supper of the eldest'. Thus the missionary stated:

I cannot understand why the first interpreters translated such a nonsense. They replied to my inquiries: "We only did like our forefathers did and thought this must be right". Thus the people has never heard of the expiatory death of Christ, though we believed that this was intelligible to them. (147)

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Nama philosophy seemed to respond - as far as can be deduced from the few recorded examples - to the all too obvious differences between Nama and European culture. Based on traditional cultural patterns which tightly wove together the spheres of material and of spiritual well-being, the indigenous approach to the mission comprised material as well as religious demands. The gap between Nama (poor, no access to technological innovations) and Europeans (materially well equipped, in possession of new

religious rituals) had to be explained in order to participate in the offers of acculturation. Notwithstanding the fact that Nama society knew stratifications between rich and poor, such as between livestock-owners and those who were restricted to a gathering economy, social norms prescribed egalitarian behaviour. Missionaries of the Rhenish Mission Society would at a later period constantly complain about the inherent 'communism' of Nama society which demanded the sharing of everyday commodities, clothing etc. The permanent begging for food, clothes, and tobacco that irritated every missionary reflected social standards that compelled the individual to share and to distribute commodities. These material wants and needs represented to a certain extent the traditional relations between chief and commoners, relations that were projected into the new context of mission communities and their European leaders.

With the introduction of technological and social innovations through the missionaries, traditional ideological models had to be adjusted. The apparent unequal relations between whites who had, if somewhat irregularly, an impressive range of commodities at their disposal and those who tried to gain access to these goods had to be explained. These ideological adjustments could not solely be developed under the auspices of Christian missionaries; traditional mythological models still retained an impact on Nama society.

In this context, traditional mythologies have to be understood as 'repositories of truth', as ideological models which

experience changes in reaction to social and historical changes. (148) Far from being invariable expressions of eternal truths, myths contain generalized statements which may be transformed if society has to deal with substantial challenges. Thus myths are connected dynamically to social reality and may contribute to a conceptualization of social change.

Some examples will illustrate that the appearance of the first Europeans may have been closely associated with the powerful manifestation of a superior culture and with control over material wealth.

In 1836, some Nama related a mythological tale to the traveller James E. Alexander which at first seems to exhibit a striking parallel with a racist joke. Alexander, busy collecting oral history interviews and samples of indigenous mythology, was told that god had created the white man. The envious devil attempted to imitate god's creation. However, the devil failed and accidentally made the black man. In anger the devil punched the nose of his creation and that is why black people have flat noses. (149) The case in point is not, as it could be argued, that the indigenous association with god/white man and devil/black man might reflect more political relations between Khoikhoi and Damara or Herero. Even if the significance of the colour black in this anecdote may not be clearly connected with Khoisan people, even if Alexander collected just a campfire story that was invented to amuse the white traveller, the cultural connotations should not be easily dismissed.

During his stay at Warmbad, Alexander collected another tale that displays its content along the lines of the traditional Nama myths of origin. The captivating feature of this version of traditional sun-mythology is the association with the European element. (150) According to this story the sun is a ball of fat that immerses each night in the ocean. When this happens, a European captain, the 'chief of a white man's ship', seizes the sun to cut out a big chunk. Then the white man kicks the sun into the ocean. The sun wanders underneath the sea until it rises again in the east. (151)

The association of ships (commodities), whites, and their supernatural power is also manifested in one of those religious interrogations conducted by Schmelen. When he conversed with some Khoisan in 1815 on the subject of life after death they reported to have known about the whalers on the coast for some time:

You shall see all our people who have died there in the ships. Those people are masters over them. (152)

The stories cited above, in connection with the enthusiastic approach to the Christian religion should not be misinterpreted as an ideological expression of 'culture shock'. The readiness of Khoikhoi to accept the superiority of some European social, technical and spiritual patterns did not imply a conscious abandonment of cultural or political autonomy. Tentatively formulated concepts of social change and the willingness of many Khoikhoi to become attached to a missionary did not include a general acceptance of unequal social relationships. Often missionary efforts would meet with stubborn resistance:

And in general will this nation not hear or receive instruction about outward things. If we speak of cleaning their bodies - karosses, houses, pots - and soon they get angry and will not listen to what we say...(153)

In fact, there were innumerable attempts of Nama and Oorlam leaders to control missionary activities. In particular, Captain Bondelswart never abstained from his efforts to exert pressure on the missionaries. His repeated intimidations in order to receive a 'snaphaan' (flint-lock gun) became a familiar issue in the journals and letters of the Warmbad missionaries. That the chief did not settle at the mission station for years, however, indicates that the question of political control of the missionaries was not yet of major concern for traditional leadership, although the missionaries had disappointed the chief's expectations

...as it was impossible for us to comply with all his wants and needs. (154)

From time to time the chief expressed his dismay at the missionaries' unwillingness to co-operate by making threats to deprive them of grazing rights or of community members. (155) However, these quarrels never led to open conflict between Captain Bondelswart and the missionaries.

NOTES CHAPTER FOUR

- 1) Andrew Ross, John Philip (1775-1851). Missions, Race and Politics in South Africa, (Aberdeen, 1986), see chapter 1: The London Missionary Society and the Cape before 1819.
- 2) A. Ross, John Philip, p.80.
- 3) Harry Gailey, 'The London Missionary Society and the Cape Government, 1799-1828', (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1957), p.3.
- 4) This account of early nineteenth-century Germany is based on Thomas Nipperdey Deutsche Geschichte, 1800-1866. Bürgerwelt und starker Staat, (München, 1983). See especially chapters 2 and 4.
- 5) Nipperdey, Deutsche Geschichte, p.132.
- 6) See also Karl Hammer, Weltmission und Kolonialismus. Sendungsideen des 19. Jahrhunderts im Konflikt, (München, 1978), pp.83-89.
- 7) See Nipperdey, Deutsche Geschichte, pp.423-426.
- 8) Elfriede Strassberger, The Rhenish Mission Society in South Africa, 1830-1950, (Cape Town, 1969), pp.xiii-xv.
- 9) Strassberger, Rhenish Mission, p.9.
- 10) Strassberger, Rhenish Mission, pp.66-69; see also James Sibree, London Missionary Society. A Register of Missionaries, Deputations etc. From 1796-1925, (London, 1929).
- 11) Johann Leonard Ebner, Reise nach Südafrika und Darstellung meiner während acht Jahren daselbst als Missionair unter den Hottentotten gemachten Erfahrungen. - so wie einer kurzen Beschreibung meiner ganzen, bisherigen Lebensschicksale, (Berlin, 1829).
- 12) Ebner, Reise, p.33.
- 13) Ebner, Reise, p.34.
- 14) Ebner, Reise, p.43.
- 15) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 4 November 1835.
- 16) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.195.
- 17) Ido H. Enklaar, Life and Work of Dr J. Th. van der Kemp, 1747-1811. Missionary pioneer and protagonist of racial equality in South Africa, (Cape Town and Rotterdam, 1988);

Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, p.140. For more biographical notes on the LMS missionaries, see Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.5; Sibree, Register.

- 18) See Marais, Cape Coloured, pp.134-140; Strassberger, Rhenish Mission, pp.2-3.
- 19) Enklaar, Life, pp.55, 80.
- 20) See du Plessis, History, pp. 91, 101; William Freund, 'The Cape under the transitional governments, 1795-1814', in The Shaping, p.340.; Marais, Cape Coloured, pp.168-169; Strassberger, Rhenish Mission, p.6.
- 21) Enklaar, Life, p.176.
- 22) See ILMS, 1 (2) (1804), titled 'Kicherer's Narrative of his Mission to the Hottentots and Boschmen'; ILMS, 2 (1806); Hinrich Lichtenstein, Reisen im südlichen Afrika. In den Jahren 1803, 1804, 1805 und 1806, 2 vols, (Berlin, 1811; reprint Stuttgart, 1967), vol.2, pp.299.
- 23) See Borchers, Memoir, pp.71-95; John Campbell, Travels in South Africa (London, 1815; reprint Cape Town, 1974), p.260; Legassick, Northern Frontier, pp.376-379; Lichtenstein, Reisen, vol.2, pp.395-396; Richard Lovett, The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895, 2 vols. (London, 1899), vol.2, pp.524-526; Strassberger, Rhenish Mission, p.66; ILMS, 3 (1813), pp. 15-21.
- 24) Du Plessis, History, pp. 107-111; Gailey, 'The London Missionary Society', p.87; B. Le Cordeur and C. Saunders, The Kitchingman Papers, Missionary letters and journals, 1817 to 1848, (Johannesburg, 1976), p.11.
- 25) Strassberger, Rhenish Mission, p.76.
- 26) Ebner, Reise, p.43; Strassberger, Rhenish Mission, p.66; Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.197.
- 27) Lovett, History, vol.2, pp.524, 527; Du Plessis, History, p.112.
- 28) Heese states that the Albrechts stayed in Rotterdam for two years before they left for South Africa in October 1804: C.P. Heese, 'The Albrecht Brothers. First Missionaries in Great Namaqualand, (1806-1811)', South West Africa Annual, (1983), p.110. Thus the Albrechts could have spent about two years at the Berlin seminary.
- 29) See Sibree, Register, p.6.
- 30) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.189.
- 31) See the letters of Bastian Tromp to the SAS (ZAG), NGK, VI,

2/3.

- 32) Gailey, 'The London Missionary Society', pp.156-157. See also BPP, vol.20, 'Report upon Hottentot Population at the Cape of Good Hope and of the Missionary Institutions' (1830), pp.291-292.
- 33) CA, LMS letter, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 12 May 1810; CA, LMS letter, Tromp, Cape Town, 27 September 1811; CA, LMS journal, A. a. C. Albrecht, November-December 1809; NGK, ZAG, Tromp, Groot Namaqualand, 10 May 1810.
- 34) NGK, ZAG, VI, 2/4, LMS to SAS, London, 17 January 1810.
- 35) SAL, Shaw's Journals, vol. of 1828-1835, entry of of 13 December 1830.
- 36) Heese, Albrecht Brothers, p.111; NGK, ZAG, A. Albrecht, Tulbagh, 11 February 1807; NGK, ZAG, LMS to SAS, London, 12 January 1807; see also CA, LMS letter, A. Albrecht, (Cape Town), 17 May 1807; TLMS, 3, (4 November 1808), p.247.
- 37) Abraham and Carolina Albrecht's son was born in March 1808: NGK, ZAG, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 20 April 1809. Their daughter was born 26 August 1809: NGK, ZAG, Warmbad, 7 November 1809.
- 38) Ebner, Reise, p.85.
- 39) ELK, V 35, Chronik von Warmbad, p.9; C.P. Heese, 'Sophie Elisabeth Burgmann (1767-1812)', South West Africa Annual, (1983), p.110.
- 40) CA, LMS letter, C. Albrecht, Silverfontein, 10 April 1812.
- 41) Heese, 'Albrecht Brothers', p.110; Du Plessis, History, p.113.
- 42) See Joseph Whiteside, History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in South Africa, (London, 1906).
- 43) B.E. Seton, 'Wesleyan Missions and the Sixth Frontier War, 1834 to 1835', (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1962), pp.1-4.
- 44) Du Plessis, History, p.168; B. Le Cordeur and C. Saunders, Kitchingman Papers, p.12; W.G.A. Mears, Wesleyan Missionaries in Great Namaqualand, 1820-1867, (Cape Town, 1968); Whiteside, History, pp.36-47, 52-62.
- 45) Galbraith, Reluctant Empire, p.86.
- 46) See Galbraith, Reluctant Empire, chapter 5: The Missionary Influence in Southern Africa.

- 47) Seton, 'Wesleyan Missions', p.155.
- 48) Seton, 'Wesleyan Missions', p.7.
- 49) Galbraith, Reluctant Empire, p.90.
- 50) Galbraith, Reluctant Empire, p.89.
- 51) See, for example, Ross, Kok's Griquas.
- 52) CL, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, J. Seidenfaden, 8 August-1 November 1805.
- 53) On some maps marked as 'Orlam Kraal': see Campbell, Travels.
- 54) CL, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Seidenfaden, Namaqualand, 22 November 1805-24 May 1806, entry of 1 January.
- 55) CL, LMS, A.a.C. Albrecht/ J. Seidenfaden, 'Mission in Namaqualand', 8 August-1 November 1805.
- 56) Jantje Kagab of the !Kharakhoen sent a messenger to Orlam Kraal: TLMS, 3, p.25. At Orlam Kraal lived Korana, Damara and Tswana: CL, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, J. Seidenfaden, 8 August-1 November 1805.
- 57) CL, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, J. Seidenfaden, 'Mission in Namaqualand', 8 August-1 November 1805.
- 58) The geographical site of both places is difficult to assess but Stille Hoop seems to be identical with Afrikaner's Kraal/ Peace Mountain/Blydeverwacht, while Blyde Uitkomst is probably identical with the later Jerusalem.
- 59) CL, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, J. Seidenfaden, 'Mission in Namaqualand', 8 August-1 November 1805.
- 60) CL, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, J. Seidenfaden, 'Mission in Namaqualand', 8 August-1 November 1805.
- 61) CL, LMS journal, A. Albrecht, 5 March 1806-March 1807, entry of 16 June.
- 62) TLMS, 3, p.32; CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, September 1808-March 1809.
- 63) CL, LMS journal, A. Albrecht, 5 March 1806-March 1807, entry of 17 September.
- 64) TLMS, 3, p.29; CL, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, J. Seidenfaden, Namaqualand, 22 November 1805-24 May 1806.
- 65) CL, LMS journal, A. Albrecht, 5 March 1806-March 1807, entry of 17 September; NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 7 December 1806.

- 66) CL, LMS journal, A. Albrecht, 5 March 1806-March 1807.
- 67) CL, LMS journal, A. Albrecht, 5 March 1806-March 1807, entry of 27 September, arrival of Abraham; CL, LMS journal, C. Albrecht, 21 May 1806-10 December 1806, entry of 15 October, arrival of Christian.
- 68) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 7 December 1806.
- 69) CA, LMS letter, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 14 December 1806; CA, LMS journal, CA, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-June 1808.
- 70) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Korroros Fontein/Great Namaqualand, 16 November 1808.
- 71) CL, LMS journal, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 21 May 1806-10 December 1806.
- 72) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 7 December 1806.
- 73) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 7 December 1806; CL, LMS journal, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 21 May 1806-10 December 1806, entries of 2, 3 December.
- 74) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, September 1808-March 1809.
- 75) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 7 December 1806.
- 76) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 22 August 1808.
- 77) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Kamiesberg, 21 May 1808.
- 78) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Korroros Fontein/Great Namaqualand, 16 November 1808.
- 79) NGK, ZAG, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 27 October 1808.
- 80) CA, LMS letter, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 14 December 1806; CL, LMS journal, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 21 May 1806-10 December 1806.
- 81) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-November 1809; NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 22 August 1808.
- 82) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, November-December 1809; ILMS, 3, p.209.
- 83) CA, LMS journal, 'Continuation of Br. Albrecht's Diary', 1810, entry of December.
- 84) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Kamiesberg, 21 May 1808.

- 85) CA, LMS letter, A. Albrecht, Cape Town, 16 May 1807.
- 86) These figures do not refer to baptized adherents: CA, LMS letter, A. Albrecht, March 1807.
- 87) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Rynosterkop, 17 September 1806.
- 88) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Rynosterkop, 17 September 1806.
- 89) CA, CO, vol.2560, Overbeck to Governor Caledon, Cape Town, 1 June 1807.
- 90) NGK, VI, 2/4, LMS to SAS (ZAG), London, 12 January 1807.
- 91) Lovett, History, vol.2, p.751.
- 92) Lovett, History, vol.1, p.82.
- 93) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Rhenosterkop, 17 September 1806.
- 94) CA, LMS letter, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 12 May 1810.
- 95) CL, LMS journal, A. Albrecht, 5 March 1806-March 1807, entry of 22 December.
- 96) NGK, ZAG, A. Albrecht, Cape Town, 8 May 1807.
- 97) NGK, VI, 2/4, LMS to SAS, London, 31 August 1808.
- 98) NGK, 4/1, n.d., untitled, p.86.
- 99) See Kienetz, 'Settlement Colony', chapter 5: European Penetration and the Question of Agricultural Settlement in Pre-colonial SWA.
- 100) NGK, 4/1, n.d., untitled, p.87.
- 101) CA, VC, vol.593, Gordon Dagboek II, entry of 12 December 1779.
- 102) For pre-colonial trade routes see Elphick, Khoikhoi, pp.65-67.
- 103) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1815, entry of 5 December 1815.
- 104) TLMS, 3, p.30.
- 105) CL, WMMS journal, Archbell, Orange River, 11 November 1821, entry of 10 March.
- 106) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-November 1809.
- 107) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 26 April 1807.

- 108) For Janssens's proclamation of 1805 see BPP, vol.20, Colonies Africa, pp.457-458.
- 109) CA, WOC, vol.11/1, Secretary's Office to Magistrate Hendrik van de Graaf, 5 August 1809.
- 110) See Freund, 'The Cape', pp.339-343. A condensed - and highly critical - analysis of the ambiguities of mission work among the Khoisan population is given by Szalay, Ethnologie, pp.143-188.
- 111) See Borchers, Memoir; Lichtenstein, Reisen.
- 112) See Borchers, Memoir, pp.165-166.
- 113) 'In 1800, the inhabitants of Roggeveld were kept in a state of continual alarm by Afrikander and the banditti, his followers, and a squadron of dragoons was ordered to be stationed between Cape Town and the Karoo, for the protection of the inhabitants.': Borchers, Memoir, p.169.
- 114) CA, LMS letter, A. Albrecht, <Cape Town>, March 1807.
- 115) CA, LMS letter, A. Albrecht, <Cape Town>, March 1807. See also CA, CO, vol.2560, Directors of the South African Society to Governor Caledon, 1 August 1807.
- 116) CA, LMS letter, A. Albrecht, Cape Town, 16 May 1807.
- 117) RLMS (1810), pp.349-355.
- 118) RLMS (1810), p.353.
- 119) RLMS (1810), p.352.
- 120) CA, CO, vol.2568, Landdr. of Tulbagh to Governor, (received) 21 October 1809.
- 121) CA, CO, vol.2568, Landdr. of Tulbagh to Governor, (received) 21 October 1809.
- 122) CA, CO, vol.2568, Landdr. of Tulbagh to Governor, (received) 21 October 1809. Governor Caledon consented to Van de Graaf's decision: CA, WOC, vol.11/1, Secretary's Office to Hendrik van de Graaf, 31 October 1809, however not without reprimanding the Landdrost for his 'arbitrary' judgement in this matter. Van de Graaf encountered this rebuke with a detailed comment on Janssen's edict of 1805: CA, CO, vol.2568, Landdrost of Tulbagh to Governor, 10 November 1809.
- 123) See Szalay, Ethnologie, chapter 5.
- 124) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 26 April 1807.

- 125) TLMS, 3, pp.316-317.
- 126) Paragraph 11 of the Janssens Proclamation stated: 'In none of the already established or still to be formed schools or institutions will writing, which is not absolutely required for the first rudiments of civilization, be taught to the natives; but the instruction thereof will be put off until his Excellency's express permission thereto shall have been obtained.': BPP, vol. 20, Colonies Africa, p.458.
- 127) CA, LMS letter, A. Albrecht, Cape Town, 16 May 1807; NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 26 April 1807.
- 128) See Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.373.
- 129) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.384.
- 130) CA, WOC, vol.11/6 Colonial Office to Landdrost of Worcester, 24 December 1824. Shaw fails to mention his plea for governmental support in his Memorials, p.91.
- 131) TLMS, 2, p.28.
- 132) RLMS, (1795-1814), (1807), p.305; see also CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-November 1809.
- 133) Ebner, Reise, p.206.
- 134) TLMS, 3, p.212.
- 135) CA, LMS letter, A. Albrecht, Cape Town, 16 May 1807; CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-November 1809; CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, November-December 1809.
- 136) CA, LMS journal, 'Continuation of Br Albrecht's diary', 1810.
- 137) CA, LMS journal, 'Continuation of Br Albrecht's diary', 1810.
- 138) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-November 1809.
- 139) CA, LMS letter, A. Albrecht, Great Namaqualand, 'Observations', n.d. (probably 1810); see TLMS, 3, p.209.
- 140) TLMS, 3, p.212.
- 141) TLMS, 3, p.242.
- 142) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 27 October 1808; TLMS, 3, p.243.
- 143) TLMS, 3, p.315.

- 144) For a detailed biography of a 'native assistant' see V.C. Malherbe, 'The Life and Times of Cupido Kakkerlak', Journal of African History, 20 (3) (1979).
- 145) 'Quellen', vol.10a, Krönlein, Berseba, 9 January 1854, p.82. For more examples of the difficulties of missionaries to become accepted as Nama speakers, see 'Quellen', Krönlein, Stellenbosch, 1 March 1880, p.116; Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.3, p.666.
- 146) CA, LMS journal, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 1827.
- 147) 'Quellen', vol.5, Vollmer, Hoachanas, August 1854-April 1855, p.73.
- 148) The concept of 'repositories of truth' was taken from Burridge's description of the so-called cargo cults in Melanesia: K.G. Burridge, Mambo. A Melanesian Millenium, (London, 1960).
- 149) Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, p.120.
- 150) See also Sigrid Schmidt (ed.), Märchen aus Namibia, (Düsseldorf, 1980).
- 151) Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, p.168.
- 152) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1813, entry of 23 May 1813. See also Moffat, Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa, (London, 1842), p.123.
- 153) CA, LMS journal, C. Albrecht, Ebner, Pella, 1 January-29 August 1814, entry of 26 <28> August.
- 154) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, January-June 1808.
- 155) Captain Bondelswarts perfunctory attempts to control the missionaries: NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Warmbad, 7 December 1806; CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, Warmbad, September 1808-March 1809.

CHAPTER V: MISSION WORK AND CONFLICT, 1808-1828

5.1. The decline of Heirachabis and Warmbad

In September/October 1808, Johann Seidenfaden became the first missionary in southern Namibia to leave his station. In explaining why he left Heirachabis, Seidenfaden referred to the devastating poverty of Khoikhoi pastoralists, suffering from extreme ecological conditions. Seidenfaden left Heirachabis with the usual Eurocentric resentment of the 'idleness' of Khoikhoi society where progress was barred by filthiness and incessant merry-making. (1) After the Cape Government prohibited him from working at the Kamiesberg, not wanting another mission station within colonial boundaries, he settled in October 1809 at Pella. (2)

While Abraham and Christian Albrecht continued their work at Warmbad, they were reinforced by Bastian Tromp and his wife who arrived at the end of the year 1809. (3) All European residents at Warmbad were confronted with a deteriorating health situation. Not accustomed to the extreme heat and to the monotonous diet of milk and meat, a general state of mental and physical exhaustion seemed to prevail. When Abraham Albrecht travelled with his family to the Cape in 1810 in order to restore his health he died near the Piketberg at the age of thirty-two. (4)

On the same journey Christian Albrecht fetched his bride, Sophia Burgmann, from Cape Town; he had already met his wife-to-be in Europe before his departure to South Africa. (5) Christian

Albrecht returned at the end of 1810 with his brother's widow and his wife to Warmbad. Bastian Tromp and his wife had taken care of the mission station in the meantime. However, it took only a couple of months and the mission station came to a dramatic end when Afrikaner attacked Warmbad, an event which became an essential ingredient of the myth of the fearsome Afrikaner Oorlams. (6)

At the turn of the year 1810, Jager Afrikaner and some of his followers terrorized Nama groups on the lower Orange, robbed them of their firearms and ammunition supplies and raided the place of the absent Seidenfaden at Pella. The direct cause for these attacks was the appropriation of some cattle which Afrikaner had sent to the colony with the intention of exchanging them for a wagon. A farmer took the cattle away from Afrikaner's servant, Hans Drayer, claiming that Drayer owed her some money. Drayer tried, in fear of the consequences, to hide at first at Warmbad and then at Seidenfaden's place. (7) There he was found and killed by Jager Afrikaner who was now reported to threaten the missionaries at Warmbad. (8) Seidenfaden's house at Pella was plundered and the rest of his belongings destroyed. The missionaries, after a futile attempt to negotiate with Afrikaner, were soon in panic and decided to flee with all of their community. Supported by Vlermuis and his men, about 1500 people from different Nama groups wandered aimlessly around until they finally settled in the vicinity of the Karas Mountains. Vlermuis from time to time engaged in skirmishes with the Oorlam leader's mixed following of Korana and San (9), using the opportunity to

steal cattle from Afrikaner. After some weeks the missionaries and their adherents ran out of food and ammunition supplies. At this stage another Nama chief, probably of the Swartboois (10), tried to draw the missionaries to his place at Zwartmodder Fontein (Keetmanshoop) but the refugees deemed it to be safer to cross the Orange and to settle at Pella. (11)

Although the chronological order of events is difficult to work out, it was apparently a political mistake of Christian Albrecht that led to an escalation of conflict and to the attack of Afrikaner on the deserted mission station which was completely destroyed. Before the Warmbad community left, Christian Albrecht had sent a letter to the fieldcornet at Tulbagh and requested the organization of a commando against Afrikaner. (12) However, the procedure of assembling a commando proved to be too time-consuming, and before this expedition was launched in August 1811 Afrikaner had already laid the Warmbad station waste. (13) When the commando was finally assembled it could not, like other commandos in the years before, trace the Afrikaner Oorlams. (14) As soon as the missionaries realized that their military involvement had brought them into even greater danger they left Pella in September 1811 for Cape Town where the governor granted them 'two hundred pounds of weight of gunpowder, four hundred of lead, and twenty firelocks.' (15)

Obviously Afrikaner's attack on the mission stations of Warmbad and Pella was not part of an Oorlam strategy to achieve hegemony over Nama groups. In fact, apart from peaceful participation in the mission school and church, Jager Afrikaner

had never demonstrated any particular concern about the Warmbad mission. The Oorlam leader did not seem to worry about the political control of the missionaries. The Afrikaner leadership had obviously benefitted from the missionaries' presence in southern Namibia and regarded it as a non-competitive influence. We have (see 3.2.) seen that from c. 1800 onwards, the Afrikaner Oorlams had abstained from interfering with white colonists. As early as 1803, Jager Afrikaner had demanded a missionary. (16) Why then the Oorlam leader's rage against the mission station?

Unlike the Warmbad missionaries, Seidenfaden at Pella seems to have been involved in trade relations with the Afrikaner Oorlams. The Afrikaners were apparently engaged in the ivory trade (17) which had been originally established by Bastard frontier traders in Transorangia. (For the period under consideration, 1806 to c. 1840, no references to elephant hunts and ivory trade in southern Namibia could be traced). After Afrikaner had raided Pella in Seidenfaden's absence, the latter complained about the loss of the equivalent of 4000 rixdollars. (18) At the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was particularly Bastard/Oorlams who were engaged in the ivory trade with the Sotho-Tswana. These trade relations had assumed stabilized patterns (19) and Bastard/Oorlams travelled to Cape Town to exchange ivory for European commodities. (20) The Afrikaner Oorlams were at that time predominantly engaged in Transorangia, their residences in southern Namibia having more of a reclusive character. In about 1805, the Afrikaner band had committed raids on the Tlhaping, and they were engaged in the trade with firearms with the Tiharo near

the Langeberg. (21) For the transportation of tusks, wagons became essential, and the fury of Jager Afrikaner against the missionaries was instigated by the theft of his cattle which prevented him from obtaining the necessary wagon. (22)

The Afrikaner group attempted to become involved in the promising trade nexus with the Cape. In connection with Afrikaner's reputation as the most famous outlaw of the northern frontier, control of the trade had to be exercised through middlemen who were free to enter the colony. Missionary Seidenfaden's economic involvement with the Afrikaner group offered a perspective of stabilizing trade relations with the Cape. The confiscation of Afrikaner's cattle constituted a serious threat to these developing interconnections and, of course, the Oorlam leader had no access to colonial jurisdiction of his case. (23) Afrikaner's servant, Drayer, had sought the missionaries' protection at Warmbad and at Pella. Furthermore, Afrikaner held some complaints against Seidenfaden with respect to some ivory which he had sold to the missionary. (24) The missionaries' retreat from Warmbad with their ally Vlermuis had assumed the character of a military operation, and their attempt to get military support from the colony represented an overestimation of the protection the colonial government could extend to Great Namaqualand. During a phase of relative political tranquillity, the Oorlam leader undoubtedly interpreted the appropriation of his exchange goods as a breakdown of his aspirations, which seemed to be supported by the intricate involvement of the missionaries. Eye-witnesses of Afrikaner's

attack on Pella reported him saying:

...dat als het hem gelukt, al de buitenmensen naar de Caap te verjagen, dat dan de Gouverneur zelve voor hem en voetval moet doen, en om vrede smeken. (25)

The missionaries' involvement in a punitive expedition against Africans provoked a fierce reaction from Van der Kemp, one of the directors of the South African Mission Society, who criticised the Warmbad missionaries heavily. He compelled Christian Albrecht to give a full account of Afrikaners motivations to the government. (26) Van der Kemp accused Christian Albrecht of naiveté, insinuating, not without reason, that the missionaries had simply been used by their followers who only wanted to obtain guns and ammunition. (27)

For a time the Warmbad station remained deserted. The LMS, however, did not relinquish its plans to work in Great Namaqualand. Christian Albrecht returned with the missionaries Ebner, Sass, Helm and Schmelen, who had arrived at the Cape in 1811 to Pella. (28) When they were visited at their new station by the LMS inspector, John Campbell, their following consisted of more than 600 people, including Captain Bondelswart and Vlermuis. (29) Due to the prevailing severe drought around Pella, the missionaries took up a nomadic life with their people who wandered in small groups with their livestock.

One result of Jager Afrikaner's attack on Warmbad was a consolidation of the bonds between missionaries and the community. It was not only the fear of another attack that kept

the mixed following at Pella together. After their withdrawal from Warmbad the missionaries had procured a considerable amount of muskets and ammunition and could perhaps procure more. When Campbell in 1813 wrote a 'conciliatory letter' to Jager Afrikaner the LMS stressed its important function as a peacemaking institution. (30) Only a few months later, in April 1814, the Afrikaner group asked for a missionary, for bibles and for hymn-books. (31)

5.2. The second phase of mission work: Afrikaner's Kraal and Bethany

Encouraged by these overtures of peace, Christian Albrecht travelled in May 1815 to Afrikaner's Kraal. Thus the missionary had the opportunity, shortly before his death in July 1815, to confirm the renewed relations between the LMS and Afrikaner. (32) In June 1815 Johann Ebner and his wife, Abraham Albrecht's widow, arrived at Afrikaner's Kraal, the former 'Silent Hope', which he now rechristened with the somewhat unduly optimistic name of 'Peace Mountain'. (33) As early as July 1815, Ebner baptized Jager Afrikaner. (34)

After the customary phase of mission enthusiasm on both sides it became clear that Ebner was not endowed with the necessary stamina to deal with the Afrikaner Oorlams. (35) Like his mission colleagues before him, Ebner also failed because ecological conditions made a permanent settlement for a larger community impossible. There was only enough of an inflow of European commodities under the missionary's supervision to tie a minority

of impoverished pastoralists to the station. (36) As Ebner noticed, the Afrikaner Oorlams made several attempts between 1815 and 1818 to leave their residence in southern Namibia: the 'pulling forces' of the Griqua/Tswana network were far more compelling than the desolate area around Afrikaner's Kraal. Jager Afrikaner refused to settle permanently at Ebner's station (37) and left it to his brother Titus to continue the usual intimidations to receive guns and ammunition from the missionary. (38)

Ebner's community at Afrikaners Kraal, also consisting of members of surrounding Khoikhoi groups (39), repeatedly showed signs of extreme emotional agitation (40), conceived by the missionary as 'the effusion of the Holy Ghost'. (41) Married women especially seem to have been susceptible to those expressions of mental stress, particularly in response to sermons held in the Nama language. (42) This susceptibility to the spiritual and emotional sides of mission work seems to reflect the hopes and expectations, which had been raised among the Oorlam and Nama pastoralists eking out a living in southern Namibia. Social structures were in a phase of transition; as the missionaries accelerated the expansion of the frontier, social values and norms of indigenous groups were not left untouched. The records of missionaries working at that time in Little Namaqualand and along the lower Orange describe their Khoikhoi communities in a continuous state of emotional excitement. A missionary would find some of his followers, often young people and women, somewhere in the veld ecstatically praying. (43) Ebner

observed that the arrival of new missionaries in southern Namibia was associated with the arrival of rainfall: an impressive metaphorical expression of the expectations the European agents of social change were confronted with. (44)

The influences exerted by missionary Ebner on his community followed the patterns which had become established by the first missionaries in Namibia. The stratification of indigenous and acculturated Khoikhoi was confirmed and exacerbated by the mission's politics of admittance and exclusion:

Only the baptized are permitted to use guns like in Europe, the others still use bow and arrow like the bushmen. (45)

Among Oorlams too, mission work contributed to the formation of an intra-group elite. When Ebner came to Afrikaner's Kraal, he found eight people who could read, namely the 'kaptein', most of his brothers and two of his sons (46), most of whom had been visitors of the Albrechts' mission school. Only a minority among the Afrikaner Oorlams understood Dutch. (47)

Years before the Afrikaner chief had reputedly told the Albrechts that he gladly accepted British but not Dutch missionaries. (48) Now Jager Afrikaner explicitly requested an English missionary, which indicates that the German Ebner, whose journals give evidence of his fierce battle with the English language, was not deemed to be fit for the task of a political intermediary between a frontier group and the Cape Government. (49)

* * *

Robert Moffat was considered to be able to deal with the Afrikaner clan. Together with Ebner he travelled from Cape Town to Afrikaner's Kraal where he received an enthusiastic welcome in January 1818, and Ebner had to withdraw to Warmbad soon afterwards. (50) Moffat observed how fierce the competition for a missionary was among the different groups in the frontier zone. When he had crossed the Orange River with the help of some Bondelswarts, they were about to throw themselves in front of his wagon to make him come to Warmbad instead of Afrikaner's residence. (51)

The picture Moffat drew of the Afrikaner Oorlams differs considerably from that of a powerful commando band terrorizing the population on the northern frontier. His accounts describe a frontier group without any major political influence in the Orange River region, trying to eke out a living as pastoralists under the harsh ecological conditions of southern Namibia. At this point in time, the struggle of the Afrikaner Oorlams to gain access to more regular political and economic relations with the Tswana and Khoisan of Transorangia seemed to have become more desperate. As the leaders of the Afrikaners made clear to Moffat a few days after his arrival, they did not intend to stay in the desolate south-eastern corner of Namibia. At the same time, co-operation with a missionary had proved to be indispensable for a group which sought to establish a powerful position on the northern frontier. Jager Afrikaner opened the conversation by pointing out to Moffat how desperate a situation the Afrikaner

Dorlams were confronted with:

He immediately turned the conversation to the propriety of leaving this inst<itution> and to seek another place better adapted to become a miss<ion> stat<ion> or dorp and that he found it impossible to continue with his people on the present station from the <...> barrenness of the country, seldom rains and the smallness of the two fountains. Thus says he having no land to sow grain (or rather no rains to make it grow), no grass for our cattle, the cause of so many of our calves dying, not being able to keep sheep from the sickness which prevails among them, our chief article of food being milk and when this is scarce we are in the greatest want and many time obliged to eat anything as the shins of beasts etc. etc. (52)

Moffat noted, in fact, that the captain of the Afrikaner Dorlams was not exaggerating. The people dispersed in quest for pasture and water over a wide area without being able to secure a living:

Some time ago several individuals died of hunger in the neighbourhood - many of my own people live almost entirely on the gum of Mimosa trees which I once or twice eat <sic> but do not relish. (53)

As Seidenfaden had observed ten years ago at Heirachabis, tobacco and dagga served as narcotics to combat hunger. (54)

The Afrikaner Dorlams hoped that this time they would succeed in taking a missionary with them to settle with the Barends family near Griqua Town where some members of the Afrikaner group temporarily resided. (55) Moffat hesitated because, as he tried to explain to the Afrikaner chief, he did not have the permission of the Cape Government to work in Transorangia. He agreed, though, to accompany the Afrikaner Dorlams on a journey into the interior of Namibia to look for a better place for a station. Jager Afrikaner's announcement not to move anywhere else without

the support of a missionary was also an expression of the weak military force of the impoverished Afrikaner Oorlams who rather used the ammunition occasionally handed out by the missionary to shoot game (56):

He then spoke of going northward to what they call the great Namaquas to se swarte Morraast Fountain (sic) or some other place in that direction. (I being acquainted with the critical state of affairs between the Namaqua chiefs and him on account of former wars and his having children and cattle which were then taken) I stated that I was anxious to take a journey for that purpose. But suppose that he and his people should remain, also could the Namaqua chiefs harmonize with him as it regarded political affairs. To this he at first gave no answer but soon stated that he also thought that there was a irreconcilable difficulty in that respect, fearing I suppose that they would claim their cattle and commence a war. (57)

The expedition of Moffat and the Afrikaner Oorlams in June/July 1818 probably went as far as the region between Fish River and Karas Mountains. Here they met with a band of Bondelswarts who told them not to continue their journey, because some mission separatists from Bethany under Vlermuis (see 5.3.) had become involved in violent clashes with Nama groups further to the north. Significantly, even those Nama fighting with 'Oorlams and Bastards' had realized the importance of a mission station:

They profess to have a strong desire to have a missionary, but this is only to procure guns (and) powder and as they see that those who are on institutions have a better opportunity of procuring these articles than those who are without a missionary they have an insatiable thirst for such articles and would have compelled my people to have sold some of their guns which I could not allow. (58)

Although, as Moffat stated, the Afrikaner Oorlams had always been 'on such good terms' with those Nama groups, Jager Afrikaner was afraid to continue the journey and the expedition returned to

the station. (59)

The failure of the search for a new residence enforced Moffat's doubts about the future prospects of mission work in southern Namibia. The original plan to move with the Afrikaner Oorlams to Transcrangia gained new impetus when Moffat spoke to a group of Tswana who had come to the station to trade with the Afrikaner Oorlams:

On our return I found a chief and a considerable number of his people, Botchuanas from a tribe to the westward of Lattakoo. They said they were very glad to hear I had found no place for they were very determined to take me to their station. These Botchuanas are great friends to Afrikaner's people and are in the habit of exchanging to them karosses, knives etc... (60)

There are indications that those relations between the Tswana and the Namibian Nama and Oorlams had developed some time earlier, maybe before the arrival of the first missionaries. (61)

Before Moffat went on the journey to Griqua Town and Lattakoo in September/October 1818 in order to investigate his future sphere of activity he declared to the mission directors:

...that it was not my intention to remain at the present institution, nor was it the intention of the people. They now desire to remove to a situation some distance to the north of Griqua Town. This has been long proposed to them by the Barends Brothers...(62)

Apart from the usual problems jeopardizing mission work in southern Namibia, Moffat felt additionally affected by the final withdrawal of Ebner to whom he bade a last farewell on the northern bank of the Orange River on his return from Griqua Town. (63) Ebner had spent only six months at Warmbad. Captain

Bondelswart, who had returned to the Warmbad region in May 1815 after the mission had restored peaceful relations with the Afrikaner Oorlams (64), violently attempted to get guns from Ebner. In addition, the persistent drought had resulted in famine. (65) He quit mission work completely and returned with his family to Germany. Ebner was certainly not fit for the demanding task of mission work under conditions as they prevailed in the desolate south-eastern corner of Namibia. Galbraith's characterization of the culture shock English missionaries had to cope with is also a description of Ebner who left a defeated man:

But many were beset by mental afflictions, ranging from pettiness and querulousness to pathological conditions of morbid introspectiveness and delusions of persecution. For personalities highly susceptible to emotional illness, the transition from the urban British society to the wilderness of South Africa was a traumatic experience which sometimes proved too intense. Whatever the background of the missionary and his mental characteristics, the loneliness of life among an alien people imposed a tremendous strain. (66)

Before, however, the energetic Moffat could think of leaving southern Namibia with the Afrikaner Oorlams, there was a major problem to solve. Jager Afrikaner was still considered by the Cape Government to be a dangerous outlaw, although Moffat realized that this reputation was more a thing of the past. Merely the myth of the dreaded Afrikaner raiders was still alive; only seven years ago they had razed the Warmbad station and, most important, colonial society could not forget that the Afrikaner Oorlams had once killed their white master before they deserted beyond the colonial boundary. Moffat convinced Jager Afrikaner to accompany him to Cape Town after he allayed the fears of the

Afrikaner chief on whose head had been offered 1000 rixdollars.
(67) Moffat clearly saw his diplomatic efforts as the opportunity to enhance the prestige of the LMS:

I have requested Africaner to accompany me, he immediately consented and is now making preparations. This will be a wonderful event to hear of Africaner accompanying a missionary to Cape Town. It will also be very acceptable to the government who has often requested him to come that some sort of peace might be established. For particular reasons he would not go nor would do now was it not that he esteems and puts the strongest confidence in me. I have much reason to believe this unexpected event will be the means of doing much good both in a political and eclesistical (sic) point of view. The government will see the fruits of our labour and be convinced that we are indeed messengers of peace... (68)

Jager Afrikaner achieved a sensational political break-through in March/April 1819 when he and his son Jonker travelled under the protection of Robert Moffat to Cape Town. The government was delighted to have finally pacified the most fearsome outlaw of the Orange River region. As foreseen by Moffat, the Superintendent of the LMS, John Philip, celebrated Afrikaner as the living proof of the mission's civilising influence among the Africans. (69) Now Jager Afrikaner was rewarded officially with an ox-wagon and a passport; his legal access to the colony was herewith restored. This political success enabled the Afrikaner Oorlams to make another attempt to enter into more regular relations with the Griqua and the Sotho-Tswana which were not based on a raiding economy alone. Moffat did not return to southern Namibia and headed for new tasks among the Tswana. It was also due to Philip's initially cordial relations with the Cape Government that Moffat was now granted permission to settle among the Southern Tswana. (70)

When Moffat arrived in 1820 at his new station, Lattakoo, he found Jager Afrikaner and two of his brothers performing missionary functions like preaching and teaching. (71) Jager Afrikaner had transported Moffat's books and furniture with his wagon from Afrikaner's Kraal to his new station. (72) Some forty years later when the different Oorlam groups had eventually moved into the interior of Namibia, Moffat encouraged relations across the Kalahari between the Tswana from Kuruman and the Nama and Oorlams at Gobabis. (73)

Despite the efforts of Jager, the history of the Afrikaner Oorlams took another swing back to Namibia. It seems that Jager returned to southern Namibia soon afterwards. (74) It is difficult to say why the old Afrikaner chief decided to return to the desolate area around Afrikaner's Kraal instead of finally settling among his Griqua friends. According to Campbell's observation the former enemies, Barends and Afrikaner (75), were now like biblical patriarchs, 'kings, fathers, and priests in their domestic connections'. (76) But apart from personal reasons or simply old age, it might have turned out too difficult a task for the Afrikaner leader to gain a foothold in the densely populated Transorangian network of the 1820s. Power relations among the various Khoisan and Tswana groups and the different Griqua 'states' were complicated and violent. In 1822, Jager apparently entrusted his son Jonker with the captain's office; and the Afrikaner Oorlams sent envoys to the Kamiesberg pleading for a new missionary. (77) After the death of Jager Afrikaner in 1823, a faction under the more ambitious leadership of his son

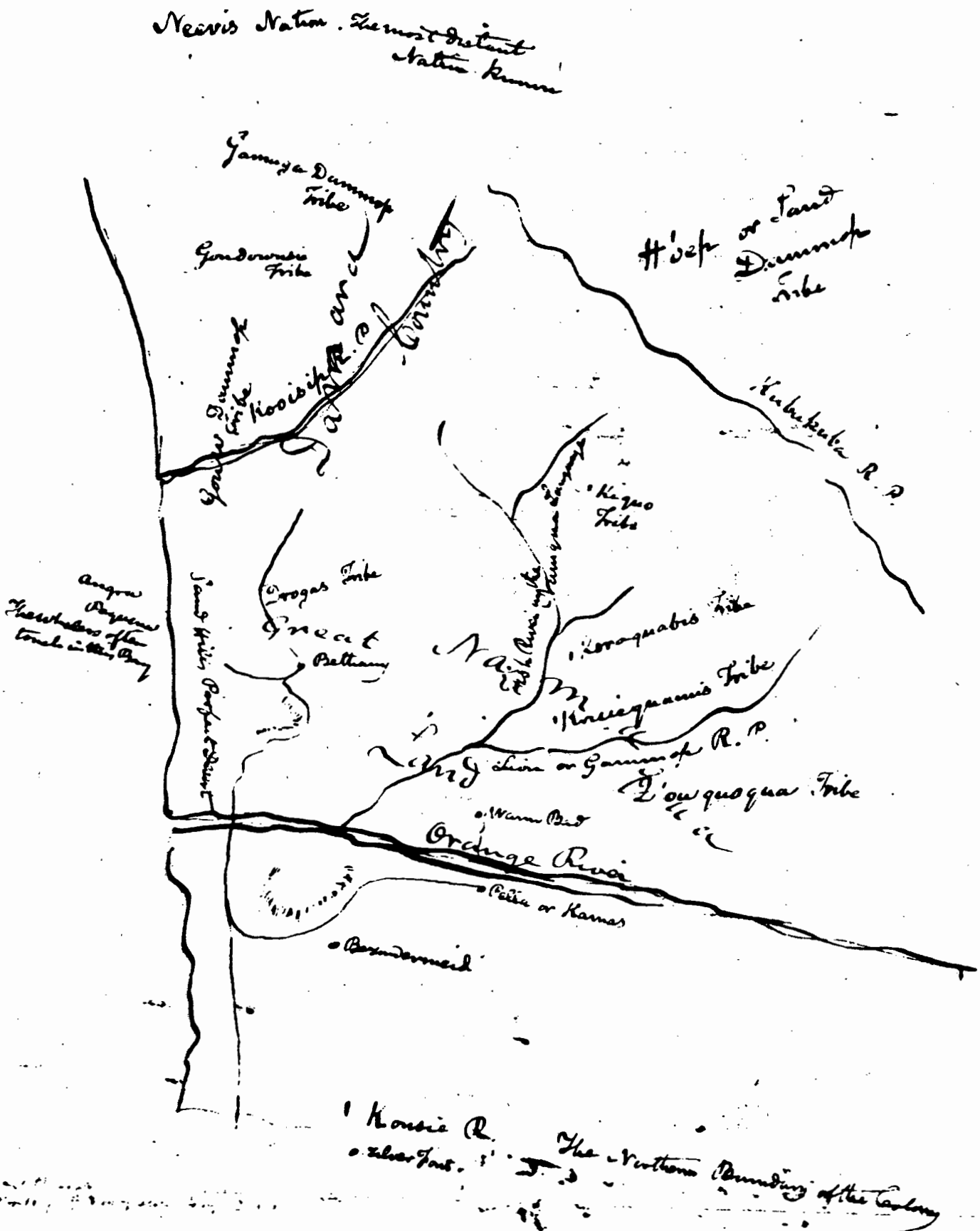
Jonker began to move closer to the rich Herero cattle-breeders; east of the Kalahari the situation had become even less promising since the first waves of the Mfecane had hit Griqua, Tswana and Khoisan. Moreover, repeated military clashes with the Bondelswarts of Warmbad may have precipitated the northward migration into Namibia. (78) One of Jager's brothers, Jacobus, was killed in a fight with the Bondelswarts. (79) Another faction of the Afrikaner Oorlams under Jonker's uncles, David and Titus, stayed behind at Afrikaner's Kraal (Blydeverwacht). But a new frontier zone was opening in central Namibia, and in this process Jonker Afrikaner's people were to play a prominent part.

* * *

Jager Afrikaner was not the only leader who was eager to secure the co-operation of a missionary. The foundation of Bethany as a mission station originated in the political network which had come into being during the terminal phase of the Warmbad mission. Piet Vlermuis, the former military ally, was busy looking for a suitable place for a mission station in Great Namaqualand. It may justly be assumed that the ample supplies of firearms and ammunition the missionaries had procured from the Cape Government for their threatened community added considerably to Vlermuis' rise to Oorlam status. Schmelen, wandering with his followers in the vicinity of Pella, received in March 1814 a message from Vlermuis, proposing a new place for a mission centre. (80)

In April 1814 Schmelen and his followers travelled to the

"A VIEW OF THE TRIBES BEYOND ORANGE RIVER, ACCORDING TO INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE REV. D. MR. SCHMELEN AND THE NATIVES OF GREAT NAMAQUALAND, WITH HIS TRACK FROM PELLA TO BEZONDERMEID AND FROM BETHANY TO WITHIN 3 DAYS JOURNEY OF THE KOOSIP RIVER AND FROM BETHANY TO THE COLONY."
 CAPE TOWN, AUGUST 1816, (MAD, ROBERT MOFFAT PAPERS, BCZA 80/89)



mouth of the Orange River, and in the following month the party arrived at Klipfontein, later called Bethany. Here the missionary met Kobus Boois and his group. Boois, who had reason to flee from the Cape Colony (see 3.2.), had purchased settlement rights in 1804 from the Nama group originally living around Bethany. Schmelen established formalized relations between Kobus Boois and Piet Vlermuis, thus enabling the different parties to have equal access to the future mission station. (81) Soon Schmelen and his assistants attracted a mixed following of Nama, Oorlams and Damara. Groups of Veldskoendraers had moved to the Bethany region (82), and on exploratory expeditions in the vicinity contacts with the Kai//khaun (Red Nation) and the //Khou/g0an (Swartboois) were established. (83) The initial reaction to the missionary's spiritual activities at Bethany was also characterized by an almost ecstatic demeanour. (84)

Prominent feature of Schmelen's mission work was that his assistants possessed a high degree of independence. Members of the mission elite - among them now Vlermuis and Amraal Lambert who was later to become chief of the Kai/khauan (Khaus People) - travelled through Great Namaqualand and established relations with neighbouring groups. These mission assistants contributed decisively to the developing interaction of mission centre and indigenous groups and individuals. They explored the route from Bethany to Angra Pequena, an issue of major importance (85) and organized the daily affairs of the community in the missionary's absence. (86)

The religious activities of Schmelen's 'chiefs' contributed to a large extent to the initial progress of mission work and to the formation of new Oorlam groups. (87) Bastard/Oorlams who were endowed with the coveted insignia of modernization such as horses, guns and wagons carried the promises of acculturation with them. An Oorlam assistant, being the first Christian missionary ever to appear at a Nama kraal, must have seemed a personification of social change. It may be justly assumed that these indigenous missionaries had the most persuasive ideological impact on Namibian groups. They spoke the same language and were not hampered in the Eurocentric ideology of Schmelen who was fond of involving overawed Khoisan in complicated religious interrogations. (88) The emergence of highly independent Bastard/Oorlam leaders in the course of missionary activities exerted of course an ambiguous influence on mission politics. The opponents of Schmelen among Nama and Oorlams who caused his withdrawal in 1822 had developed their internal leadership and their political network within the context of mission politics.

The interaction of mission centre and indigenous groups did not evolve as a linear acculturative or modernizing process. A system of interaction evolved which depended on the varying political aspirations of the different parties involved and on the ecological conditions of pastoralist economy, being the still dominant branch of production for the Bethany people. Relations between the interacting groups oscillated on a large scale, comprising the options of co-operation, mutual exploitation and outspoken resistance.

A distinctive feature of mission work was the development of strikingly similar phases through which all the missionaries and their adherents usually went. The first phase of mission work was always marked by a considerable degree of enthusiasm on both sides. The expectations of Africans and missionaries alike were expressed with fervour. The inhabitants of the Bethany region reacted with very strong emotions to the newly introduced Christian religion as Schmelen repeatedly stated:

The greatest part of my hearers were (sic) drowned in tears, others were unable either to sit or to stand.
(89)

On the side of the mission this impassioned approach to the church resulted often in an unrealistic confidence in the power of the 'word of God'. The susceptibility of a missionary to scenes of emotional excitement was pre-conditioned by the Protestant belief in personal conversion and adult baptism; baptism ceremonies or prayer meetings which assumed an almost hysterical character were not unknown in Europe.

The second phase of mission work meant a step towards more down-to-earth social interaction. Usually the missionaries were by now aware of indigenous expectations concerning firearms and commodities. When the initial phase of enthusiasm had evaporated, a crucial stage of interrelations began. Many of the formerly ardent supporters of the missionary cause were compelled to withdraw from the station. The problems for mission work among nomadic Khoikhoi groups, as they had visibly emerged for the Warmbad missionaries, remained the same at Bethany. Due to a lack

of capital, the mission could not offer a workable alternative to hunters, gatherers and livestock-breeders. Again, the transformation of a 'savage' society into a 'civilized' agricultural society succumbed to the extreme ecological environment of southern Namibia. Expectations on both sides were disappointed. Schmelen noted after two years of residence at Bethany:

There is not now the solemnity amongst my people, than there has been some time back... (90)

This phase of depression could occasionally end in a missionary's utter contempt for the indigenous culture and in his final retreat. At other times, depending for instance on temporary improvements of the climatic situation or on the rapid fluctuations of pastoralist economy, a mission centre would regain its force of attraction that was significant for the first phase of interaction. Schmelen, married in his first marriage to a Nama woman, Anna, seems to have developed a stubborn paternalistic attitude to Nama society. (91) Even after his withdrawal from Bethany in 1822 he made several attempts to return permanently to Great Namaqualand.

The few statistical figures provided by Schmelen reflect the rapidly changing attitudes towards the mission. At the end of the year 1815, 105 people had been baptized by the missionary; 19 men, 46 women, 25 boys and 15 girls. (92) However, in the following years there was a considerable decrease of mission enthusiasm. Settlement sizes displayed accordingly a great fluidity. While Schmelen counted in 1815 100 huts at Bethany

(93), apart from 150 huts of the Veldskoendraers and some dispersed Damara kraals in the vicinity of the mission station (94), he complained continuously during the following years about the migrations of his people to outposts and new settlements. In 1821 Schmelen was left with 30 huts only at Bethany. (95) In 1818, Schmelen recorded no baptisms at all at Bethany. (96)

Between about March 1817 and September 1818 Schmelen worked mainly at Steinkopf in Little Namaqualand where the LMS had sent him to build up a new station. But it seems that Schmelen never lost contact with the people in Great Namaqualand during this period, and he may have occasionally visited Bethany. (97)

The fluidity of settlement patterns was to a great extent due to the unpredictable occurrence of rainfall. Some rain was expected to fall from December until April, coming with 'thunderstorms for three or four days' (98), but these showers of rain did not come in regular seasonal intervals and could not secure the existence of larger settlements. (99) The ecological environment deteriorated from drawing, at least for short periods, too many people near the mission station, and competition became fiercer among those who strove for access to the missionary's services.

The site of Bethany implied certain advantages for a leader like Piet Vlermuis who had put considerable effort to secure the co-operation of Schmelen. Bethany was not too close to Afrikaner's residence with whom the Vlermuis group had been recently involved in military clashes. Secondly, Schmelen's

station was not too far away from the colonial boundaries, thus relations with Bastard communities and mission stations could easily be maintained. Moreover, Bethany was situated close to Angra Pequena, seasonal anchorage of whalers who were to become involved in trade relations with Namibian groups. From the start of his mission station, Schmelen was eager to find a road to Angra Pequena with the intention of establishing trade relations with the ships and furthermore, to open a direct supply line with Cape Town. Both Vlermuis and Kobus Boois had reportedly never been to the Namibian coast before Schmelen's arrival at Bethany. (100) In May 1815 Schmelen and some of his followers launched an expedition to Angra Pequena. One of his travelling companions was furnished with an ox-wagon. Apparently it was only Vlermuis and some of his people who finally reached Angra Pequena after the tedious journey through the coastal desert. When Vlermuis exchanged two oxen and several sheep for unspecified goods with a whaler, trade relations became loosely established which could in the long run not be supervised by the missionary. (101) For another expedition to the coast in January 1818 without Schmelen's participation the people from Bethany were endowed with a covering letter of their missionary and exchanged goods with 'Captn Barker's ship Timor, South Sea whaler.' (102) Schmelen's adherents agreed with the captain upon a renewed meeting in the following year and brought on their return to Bethany commodities for their missionary like wine, beer and biscuits. Schmelen tried desperately to contact the sailors as well but arrived too late at Angra Pequena. (103) When the missionaries Shaw, Kitchingman and Edwards visited Bethany in

1820, Kitchingman noted:

Brother Schmelen's people had been employed for some time in mending the road in hopes of in some future period obtaining some necessary articles from thence.
(104)

Very soon it became clear to Schmelen that his followers made use of these trade relations in order to gain access to firearms. Moses Vlermuis, a son of Piet, had joined the mission station in c. 1816 but could not be subjugated to church discipline. Apparently, he antagonized his father who relied more on co-operation with the missionary. After a futile search for whalers with whom to barter firearms Moses raided neighbouring livestock-breeders. Schmelen did not succeed in obtaining assistance from Piet Vlermuis to discipline his son and after some of Schmelen's followers had restored the remaining cattle to their owners, father and son Vlermuis withdrew from Bethany. Thereupon the Vlermuis group was reported to have attacked some more kraals and to have entered into renewed relationships with Jager Afrikaner.
(105)

In June 1821 the Wesleyan missionary James Archbell and his wife visited Schmelen at Bethany. Archbell worked energetically for the establishment of a supply line by ship to the Cape, closely co-operating with the missionary Barnabas Shaw at the Kamiesberg. Though Archbell's endeavours failed and he was transferred to a different sphere of activity in 1822, he has left us some revealing notes on the contemporary state of affairs. (106)

When he was not busy travelling between Little and Great

Namaqualand, Archbell attempted to open a mission station at Grootfontein South with his followers of the Kai//khaun (Red Nation). Much to the surprise of Archbell the missionary was briskly confronted with the growing demands of the Nama. Without any circumlocutions Nama leaders, like Gammag, requested guns (107):

...saying he was the greatest man in the land and could never before have a gun... (108).

Thus even Nama groups which were relatively unaffected by the expanding frontier associated the arrival of a missionary with free dispensation of firearms and commodities:

He being gone, the people to my no small astonishment, came to demand of me hats, jackets, knives, handkerchiefs etc. which they had been told, would be given to them on my arrival. Matters were explained but much to their dissatisfaction. (109)

The claims for guns and clothing assumed a threatening undertone which Archbell tried to counter with the remark that the weapons of the Gospel were not carnal. The Nama leader is reported to have replied that he was disappointed because his request for a missionary had been a request for a gun and otherwise he would not have accepted a missionary at all.

Archbell became aware of the clashes between Herero and Nama pastoralists, probably in the region of the Kuiseb River. These conflicts may have exacerbated the demands for firearms. It was the Red Nation who lived close to those Herero groups which migrated with their herds southwards across the Swakop and Kuiseb rivers. These clashes were reputedly the direct cause for the

later alliance of Jonker Afrikaner with the Red Nation. (110)
Another Nama leader, Tsaumap, informed Archbell that violent conflicts between Herero and Nama groups had already occurred for several years. (111)

5.3. The decline of Bethany

Generally the 1820s seem to have been a period of escalating conflicts. Though it is very difficult to assess any clear patterns of inter-group relations, we have seen that the idea of an Oorlam 'invasion' wrongly implies a static pre-colonial society which was massively disrupted by outside interference. Rather than representing a large-scale penetration of indigenous social and political structures, the development of Oorlam groups took place within the Namibian frontier zone. For the period under investigation, southern Namibia remained an open frontier where different modes of production and different political influences were in competition:

A problem which arises however is that it is not always possible to regard the societies within a frontier zone as though they are distinct and isolated entities for the hallmark of such a zone is interaction and change. Only as a frontier zone closes do identities and categories crystallize. (112)

It was only from the 1840s onwards that the economic frontier lost much of its fluidity which was so significant for the period the present study is concerned with. Merchant capital did not come to play its domineering role before Nama/Oorlam groups and Herero cattle-breeders entered into a complex network that was regulated by conflicts and alliances alike. The structural

differentiations between Nama and Oorlams developed within an historical process which intertwined both societies intricately with each other. The dynamics of social change, far from being dependent only on interrelations with the Cape trading nexus, were formed and amplified by the acculturative institutions the missionaries had established in southern Namibia.

Notwithstanding the antagonisms between acculturated Oorlams and indigenous Nama, both groups lived side by side at mission stations. The following of the Albrechts at Warmbad consisted of Bondelswarts, Oorlams and Khoikhoi from the middle Orange. Indigenous Nama pastoralists did not live under a constant threat of a massive 'Oorlam invasion'. There is only one reference to a cattle raid of the neighbouring Afrikaner group on the Bondelswarts between 1806 and 1811. (113) It was partly due to the pacifying influences of the mission station, that the relations of Oorlams and Nama around Warmbad were marked by a certain balance of power. Partly this also had to do with the fact that the Afrikaner Oorlams at this stage were more concerned about their relations with Griqua and Tswana groups east of the Kalahari. The other group of acculturated Khoikhoi living at that time in Namibia, the Boois at Klipfontein (Bethany), does not appear at all in the records of the missionaries.

In this context the question arises as to whether the immediate military impact of firearms has not been overemphasized, despite the indisputable importance guns had for the expansion of the frontier. However, the flint-lock muskets

that were in use at the beginning of the nineteenth century had considerable shortcomings. Flint-lock 'snaphaans', as they were commonly called, were muzzle-loaders and afflicted with a misfiring rate of about one in five. (114) Damp weather affected the powder, and because a certain amount of time was necessary to reload a gun a single marksman was quite helplessly exposed to attacks by bands which did not even have to have firearms. (115) The military strength of commando groups depended on the combination of horses and firearms. This enabled the marksmen to take aim from a close range and to reload in safe distance, a tactic that indeed could have a devastating effect. (116) Be it for want of horses, or because of ineffective firearms, not all Oorlam raids on Nama pastoralists serve as impressive examples for a superior military technology. (117) Thus the Warmbad missionaries heard of the defeat of an Oorlam commando which had lost 17 men in a raid, presumably against the Kai//khaun. (118) It has been mentioned in the previous chapter that even the later withdrawal of Jonker Afrikaner from his residence near Warmbad in the 1820s seems to have been partly due to a military victory of the Bondelswarts. The latter may have had some firearms, but on the other hand this Nama group never developed into a commando society of the Oorlam type; the introduction of firearms did not automatically result in the emergence of commando structures. To a certain extent status and prestige were the driving forces which compelled a chief to acquire guns. Thus Kitchingman noted during his stay with the Kai//khaun in 1820:

Of horses they are much afraid. But there is nothing, perhaps, on which their hearts are so much set as beads and guns, for the latter they would give

anything, six or more fine oxen are not too much for them to give for one old gun. I believe that a Namaqua with a gun, tho' without powder and lead considers himself more safe than his Majesty when surrounded with his life-guards. (119)

Sometimes commandos used not only firearms but also traditional weapons like assegais; use of the prestigious guns was restricted to a small elite. (120)

Oorlams in the north-western frontier zone depended to a large extent on pastoralist production. Raids on indigenous livestock-breeders were launched more with the prospect of a future attachment to the sphere of commodity exchange than being an expression of firm connections with the Cape market. The commando of Moses Vlermuis is a case in point. Significantly the returning commando, after an unsuccessful attempt to find whalers from whom they hoped to receive firearms, used the robbed cattle for immediate consumption. (121)

Without contacts with itinerant traders, who did not enter Namibia before the 1840s, the channels which could be used on the north-western frontier to acquire firearms were limited. Trade with other Bastards or Oorlams was the most unlikely way to obtain guns because these frontiersmen traditionally hesitated to give away what they had received with immense difficulties. (122) Trade with trekboers or farmers within or without colonial boundaries did occur (123) but was impeded for those Khoikhoi who had fled colonial labour relations and migrated to Namibia. (124) Trade with the ships at Angra Pequena hardly assumed regular patterns or impressive proportions. Finally, the obtaining of

guns and ammunition through the agency of a mission institution was not a reliable factor either. Missionaries hesitated to distribute firearms when they were afraid of losing control over their followers. In some cases, frontier groups like the Afrikaner Oorlams attempted to circumvent direct and illegal trade links with the colony by raiding other frontier groups, especially in the middle Orange River region where the circulation of firearms was certainly far more impressive than in southern Namibia. (125)

Certainly, the more guns and ammunition were at a commandos's disposal, the more successful cattle raids could be. But the Oorlams in Namibia at the beginning of the nineteenth century were not firmly interlocked with the Cape nexus, nor did they carry the 'merchant capital factor' on their backs across the Orange like they carried their guns.

* * *

The mission's concept of a station of self-sustained agricultural and livestock-breeding communities which could be supported, if necessity arose, with additional goods from the mission station determined the rise and decline of Bethany. Schmelen explicitly stated that only his close following could benefit from the supplies he would irregularly procure from the colony:

Those, whom I cannot employ, I cannot, neither do I wish to, assist them, neither with this (guns) or any other thing. (126)

Moreover, it was rather the task of the mission community to

support the missionary:

...those who preach the gospel must live upon it or they must get their living from their hearers. (127)

In 1822 Schmelen had to face serious impediments of his work. Occasionally accompanied by Archbell and his wife, Schmelen was compelled to migrate with an ever decreasing following in the vicinity of Bethany. The mission station comprised in September 1821 thirty huts only. (128) This was partly due to drought. The rain season would begin in December and would continue with scarce, unpredictable showers till March/April. This may be the reason for Kitchingman's surprising praise of the ecological conditions around Bethany, claiming an 'abundance of cattle and some sheep.' (129)

However, the deterioration of the situation was partly the result of internal conflicts arising from the ambiguities of missionary activity. Schmelen could not hinder some of his followers from getting involved in violent clashes with neighbouring pastoralists. (130) It is difficult to reconstruct the patterns of these conflicts but it seems that Schmelen's main adversaries were Vlermuis (131) and Jantje Kagab (132), the latter being one of Schmelen's 'chiefs' and certainly the same Jantje Kagab, chief of the !Kharakhoen who had established close relations with the Warmbad missionaries. In one of his journals Schmelen reports of 'disturbances' in February 1822:

My chief and several more intended to attack Kubas <perhaps Guibes in the Southwest of Bethany> that peace might be restored in Namaqualand. We therefore sent people to other Namaqua chiefs that they should come here to consult with us what best might be done. (133)

And two days later:

Several of my people from an outpost and the chief of the Fieldshoewearers did come here to consult with our chief to attack Kubas. They agreed that they would go and that Afrikaner would join them. (134)

It is not possible to deduce from the sources what exactly the essence of these controversies was. It emerges quite clearly, however, that new fissions and fusions among acculturated Khoikhoi and indigenous Nama had evolved due to the system of interaction introduced by the mission.

In June 1822 Schmelen returned from an unsuccessful attempt to reach Angra Pequena. Scarcity of water had forced the travellers to break off their expedition. (135) Schmelen's subsequent report gives a detailed account of the fight at Bethany that must have started immediately after his return. Schmelen accused Vlermuis of having attempted to cut his communication ties with the colony by stealing and destroying the missionary's journal. Moreover, Jantje Kagab 'did rise against me and my people' because, as Schmelen claims, he was not furnished with guns and ammunition by the missionary. During the absence of Schmelen some Nama had attacked the missionary's kraal at night and broken the legs of 23 sheep. This was not one of the usual raids but intended as an act of revenge. The culprits demanded from Schmelen the payment of several sheep as reparation because, they claimed, their sheep had died from the same disease.

This has to be explained. Unfortunately, medical causes of this mysterious disease remain in the dark. However, this disease

is described by many observers of that period. Seidenfaden at Heirachabis had called it the 'breaking disorder' and gave the following account:

It is certainly a very strange appearance and I should not have credited myself if I had not been an eyewitness of it. The sheep stand all together and in apparent health, to about 30 in number, and unexpectedly there are 3 or 4 among them whose hindlegs break, and by others this happens with the second joint and is completely broke as if a sharp knife had severed it. (136)

The same phenomenon was observed by Campbell at Pella. (137)

Schmelen refused to pay the requested sheep, claiming that the offenders had been his herdsmen who were responsible for the loss of 145 sheep from the mission flock. According to the journal of the missionary Wimmer in Little Namaqualand, Schmelen might have taken some sheep from Kagab's kraal as reparation for this loss. (138) Be that as it may, the debate led to a shoot-out. Both Schmelen's people and his former herdsmen had firearms. The conflict dragged on for several days, and at least two people were killed. For unknown reasons Schmelen twice declined overtures of peace from the other party. Finally Schmelen's antagonists handed their nineteen muskets over to the missionary, who suspected an expectation that these guns would be restored once peace was concluded. Schmelen decided to move with the group of followers that was still loyal to him to the mouth of the Orange. His decision to leave Bethany was not only prompted, as Schmelen explicitly stated, by the 'persecution' but also by the devastating drought. (139)

Although the reasons for Schmelen's withdrawal focused on the

firearm complex it is hardly plausible to analyse this incident in the context of an Oorlam onslaught against the Nama. If an Oorlam group intended to monopolize a missionary in order to control the access to firearms, it would have been very irrational to chase him away. (140) Schmelen still retained a mixed group of followers after he actually emerged victoriously from the fight. This violent confrontation mobilized Nama and Oorlams on both sides, and both sides possessed firearms. As late as 1837 James Alexander was told that this fight had been instigated by a Nama chief Habusomop while Lambert Amraal and Kobus Boois had kept their alliance with Schmelen. (141) Moreover, the breaking-up of Schmelen's station was directly connected to his activities as a livestock-owner among Nama/Oorlam pastoralists.

While Schmelen continued his attempts to revive his station between 1825 and 1828, the missionary analysed the causes for his withdrawal from Bethany:

Before Angra Pequena was found out, my people had very little powder and that little what they had was used sparingly to kill a game now and then and they could live together upon our station and I could govern them. (142)

The missionary's 'government' was based on his control of the firearm traffic:

None of them could get any powder from the farmers except they could show a written paper from me, and if they behaved disobedient I declined to give them a paper. (143)

But the opening of trade relations via Angra Pequena, though intended by the missionary for his own purposes, loosened the

control of mission followers:

But since that time that Angra Pequena has been found out those ship-captains gave to them for their cattle an abundance of powder without a paper from me, yes even encouraged them to bring more cattle. Some of them brought there 10, others 20 to 30, 60 lbs of powder each of them. If they could not get enough or as much as they wanted from those ships, some of them returned home with what they had bought there and returned to Angra Pequena again with other cattle to buy more. (...) of them ruined themselves with their traffic and sold of every living thing they had and then they had nothing to live upon it afterwards. This gave rise to quarrel and (...) among themselves and disobedience towards me for every one seemed now to be a sovereign in his own eyes, threatening one another ... (144)

However, it was not only the unstable centralization of missionary power in the frontier zone that led to an escalation of internal struggles. The erosion of ecological resources became of crucial importance for the mission which could neither introduce an agricultural alternative nor regular mercantile trade relations:

But another thing must be observed here ... I have indeed seen here that the Lord has turned a fertile place into a barren wilderness, a place upon which between 5- and 600 people could live, I am sure that not at present 10 can live in a decent way. (145)

These accounts of droughts and of a generally deteriorated ecological environment were constantly repeated by Schmelen in the following years and culminated in his report from the year 1829:

At present very little can be done in Great Namaqualand. Several from there have paid me a visit this year and all do assure that the whole land has had very little rains and Bethany is till now entirely barren. (146)

NOTES CHAPTER FIVE

- 1) See J.M. Coetzee, 'Idleness in South Africa', Social Dynamics, 8 (1) (1982).
- 2) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.
- 3) CA, LMS journal, A.a.C. Albrecht, November-December 1809.
- 4) TLMS, 3, p.421.
- 5) TLMS, 3, p.422.
- 6) See for example Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.187-192.
- 7) CA, LMS journal, C. Albrecht, 1810, entry of December; TLMS, 3, pp.427-428; CA, CO, vol.2575, C. Albrecht to Fieldkornets/ Wachtmeesters, Warmbad, 28 January 1811; CA, CO, vol.2575, C. Albrecht to Fieldkornets/ Wachtmeesters, Warmbad, 5 February 1811. <both letters bear also signatures of B. Tromp, Jan and Gerhardus Engelbrecht>
- 8) These threats were significantly not aimed at the lives of the missionaries. It was reported to the Warmbad missionaries: '...dat zy ons hier zouden naakt uitplundern, de Geweere en het Kruit wegneemen, en ons slegts een span ossen laten om wegtekomen, - dat zy dit alles wilden doen tot naar den Kamiesberg toe...': NGK, ZAG, Sophie Albrecht, Warmbad, 5 February 1811.
- 9) CA, LMS letter, C. Albrecht, Cape Town, 10 December 1811.
- 10) CO, vol.2575, C. Albrecht to Fieldkornet/Wachtmeester of Tulbagh, Warmbad, 28 January 1811.
- 11) The withdrawal from Warmbad: CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811; CA, LMS letter, Tromp, Cape Town, 27 September 1811 (with the letter of Bakker); CA, LMS letter, C. Albrecht, Cape Town, 10 December 1811; CA, LMS journal, C. Albrecht, 1810; NGK, ZAG, Sophie Albrecht, Warmbad, 5 February 1811; NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Jan Disselsvalley, 22 June 1811, CA, CO, vol.2575, C. Albrecht to Fieldkornet/Wachtmeester of Tulbagh, Warmbad, 28 January 1811; CA, CO, vol.2575, C. Albrecht to Fieldkornet/Wachtmeester of Tulbagh, Warmbad, 5 February 1811.
- 12) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811, with the copy of C. Albrecht's letter to the fieldcornet at Tulbagh, February 1811; NGK, ZAG, Sophie Albrecht, Warmbad, 5 February 1811.
- 13) CA, LMS letter, C. Albrecht, Cape Town, 10 December 1811.
- 14) The Afrikaner Oorlams may have had a secret stronghold in

southern Namibia. The ruins of a fortress-like structure in the vicinity of the Bak River have been recently rediscovered by Klaus Dierks. See Klaus Dierks, '//Khauxa!nas-Schans Vlakke: Oldest Urban Settlement in Namibia?', InFormation, 1 (1987/88).

- 15) TLMS, 3, p.433; CA, CO, vol.33, C. Albrecht to Governor Cradock, <Cape Town>, 28 November 1811.
- 16) Du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.11.
- 17) '...<Afrikaner> demolished some things, belonging to Br. Seidenfaden, against whom he had took <sic> some claims, arising from elephants teeth, which he had sold to Br. Seidenfaden.': CA, LMS letter, Van der Kemp, Cape Town, 30 October 1811.
- 18) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.
- 19) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.371.
- 20) See Barrow, Travels, vol.1, p.305; Burchell, Travels, vol.1, p.154.
- 21) See Legassick, 'The Griqua', pp.237, 257, 260.
- 22) See Borchard's description of Bastard hunters: 'The more affluent amongst them possess wagons, which they repair with the neatness of a Cape Town workman, and several have excellent muskets, which they use with great dexterity and precision, ball practice being a favourite pastime amongst them.': Borchards, Memoir, p.117.
- 23) CA, LMS letter, Van der Kemp, Cape Town, 30 October 1811.
- 24) CA, LMS letter, Van der Kemp, Cape Town, 30 October 1811.
- 25) NGK, ZAG, Sophie Albrecht, Warmbad, 5 February 1811.
- 26) CA, LMS letter, Van der Kemp, Cape Town, December 1811.
- 27) 'I apprehend that the wandering hordes of Br. Albrecht, abusing his pliable character, have sent him to the Cape as a tool to obtain by his instrumentality as much powder and firearms as possible to commit more depredations as Afrikaaner ever is said to be guilty of, and that upon this reason they ly fake or exaggerate representations of <...> dangers, drove my amiable <...> Br. to the Caroo <...>': CA, LMS letter, Van der Kemp, Cape Town, December 1811.
- 28) CA, LMS letter, C. Albrecht, Silver Fountain, 10 April 1812.
- 29) Campbell, Travels, pp.304-306.

- 30) Campbell, Travels, p.305.
- 31) CA, LMS journal, C. Albrecht/Ebner, Pella, 1 January-29 August 1814, entry of 15 April.
- 32) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, Pella, 24 May 1815.
- 33) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, Orangerivier, 28 August 1816.
- 34) Ebner, Reise, p.200.
- 35) Ebner's poor qualities as a missionary were criticised in many accounts of his colleagues. See for example Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.93.
- 36) In July 1817, Ebner received the following articles: '2 rolls blew linen, every one about 29 yards, 2 peaces flannel, 10 hats, 6 large cloth of different colours, 20 sak cloth, 2 dozen knives and 1 dozen forks, 1 and a half ream paper, 7 books, english ones.': CA, LMS letter, Ebner, Cape Town, 8 October 1817.
- 37) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, Orangerivier, 28 August 1816.
- 38) Ebner, Reise, p.297; CA, LMS letter, Moffat, Great Namaqualand, 22 June 1818.
- 39) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, Orangerivier, 28 August 1816.
- 40) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, Orangerivier, 28 August 1816.
- 41) Ebner, Reise, pp.247-249. The number of people living at Afrikaner's Kraal fluctuated seasonally between 150 and 400 persons: Ebner, Reise, pp.218, 299, 307-308.
- 42) Ebner, Reise, pp.201-202.
- 43) See CA, LMS journal, C. Sass, Silverfontein, 1812; CA, LMS journal, C. Albrecht/Schmelen, 'Bezondermaid to Orange River', 13 July-December 1812; CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, 'near Pella', 26 November 1813-30 March 1814. Schmelen also noted religious excitement among the Veldskoendraers near Bethany: CA, LMS journal, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1815.
- 44) Ebner, Reise, pp.303-304.
- 45) Ebner, Reise, p.132.
- 46) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, Orangerivier, 28 August 1816
- 47) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, journal, 20 February 1818.
- 48) Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.72.

- 49) Ebner, Reise, p.280.
- 50) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, letter to parents, Afrikaner's Kraal in Great Namaqualand, 8 April 1818.
- 51) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, letter to parents, Afrikaner's Kraal in Great Namaqualand, 8 April 1818.
- 52) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, journal, 29 January 1818.
- 53) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, letter to parents, Vredeberg in Great Namaqualand, 15 December 1818.
- 54) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, letter to parents, Afrikaner's Kraal in Great Namaqualand, 8 April 1818.
- 55) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, letter to parents, Afrikaner's Kraal in Great Namaqualand, 8 April 1818.
- 56) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, letter to parents, Afrikaner's Kraal in Great Namaqualand, 8 April 1818.
- 57) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, journal, 29 January 1818.
- 58) CA, LMS letter, Moffat, Vredeberg in Great Namaqualand, 20 August 1818.
- 59) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, journal, 11 and 18 July 1818.
- 60) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, letter to parents, Vredeberg in Great Namaqualand, 15 December 1818.
- 61) Alexander was informed about contacts between the Nama and the Tswana occurring in about 1805: Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, p.219.
- 62) CA, LMS letter, Moffat, Vredeberg in Great Namaqualand, 20 August 1818.
- 63) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, letter to parents, Vredeberg in Great Namaqualand, 15 December 1818.
- 64) Ebner, Reise, p.185.
- 65) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, Pacaltsdorp, 20 August 1819.
- 66) Galbraith, Reluctant Empire, p.87.
- 67) Moffat, Missionary Labours, pp.173-175.
- 68) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, letter to parents, Vredeberg in Great Namaqualand, 15 December 1818.
- 69) CA, LMS letter, Philip, Cape Town, 24 Januar 1823.

- 70) A. Ross, John Philip, p.85.
- 71) Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.181.
- 72) Campbell, Second Journey, p.150.
- 73) 'Quellen', vol.7a, Weber, Gobabis, 14 July-December 1863, p.65.
- 74) Campbell, Second Journey, pp. 240-241.
- 75) See du Bruyn, 'The Oorlams Afrikaners', p.10.
- 76) Campbell, Second Journey, p.238.
- 77) CA, LMS letter, Edwards, Kamiesberg, 10 December 1822.
- 78) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Kamiesberg, 29 August 1823; SAL, Shaw's Journals, vol. of 1823-1826, 12 May and 20 December 1824; Backhouse, Narrative, pp.561-562.
- 79) Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.114.
- 80) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, 26 November 1813-30 March 1814, 'near Pella', entry of 28 March.
- 81) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, 'Journey from Pella', 13 April-1 June 1814, entry of 3 June.
- 82) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Cape Town, 5 September 1816; CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1815, entry of 3 July.
- 83) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Great Namaqualand, 1819-1820, entry of March 1820.
- 84) For example: CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1815, entry of 9 July.
- 85) 'In January last I dismissed some of my people to examine the seaside.': CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Great Namaqualand, 1819-1820.
- 86) Religious services were held in the absence of the missionary: CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Pella and Steinkopf, 1817-1820.
- 87) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Orange River, 26 August 1821-2 May 1822, entry of 27 August: 'my chief called Ammeral'; CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Great Namaqualand, 1819-1820: 'A chief of my institution called Vleremuis'; CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Great River, 26 September 1822: 'chief' Jantje Kagab.
- 88) These interrogations included questions about a life after

- death, about the 'sinfulness' of Nama culture etc.: CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1815.
- 89) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1815, entry of May.
- 90) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Cape Town, 5 September 1816.
- 91) Schmelen defended his marriage to Anna, his former servant, by saying that he had been in danger of 'falling into sin' with her: CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Bethany, 6 November 1818.
- 92) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1815.
- 93) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1815.
- 94) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Cape Town, 5 September 1816.
- 95) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Orange River, 26 August 1821-2 May 1822, entry of 30 September.
- 96) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Great Namaqualand, 1819-1820.
- 97) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Steinkopf, 20 March 1817; CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Pella and Steinkopf, 1817-1820; see also Strassberger, Rhenish Mission, pp.67-68.
- 98) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, 'Journey from Pella', 13 April-1 June 1814, entry of 2 June, information by Kobus Booï.
- 99) Schmelen was very well aware of the difficulty to entertain larger settlements that would reduce ecological conditions. 'The first chief I came to is called Tsaugamap, he has a large kraal of about 150 houses, but the country being so dry they cannot live together.': CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Great Namaqualand, 1819-1820.
- 100) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, 'Journey from Pella', 13 April-1 June 1814, entry of 3 June.
- 101) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1815, entry of 26 May.
- 102) The year of this journey is not clearly indicated: CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Great Namaqualand, 1819-1820.
- 103) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Great Namaqualand, 1819-1820.
- 104) CA, LMS journal, Kitchingman (wrongly marked Wimmer), 'Steinkopf to Great Namaqualand', 1820, entry of 29 May.
- 105) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Great Namaqualand, 1819-1820.

- 106) Archbell and his assistant Paul Links tried to build up trade connections at Angra Pequena. Schmelen had proposed to Dr John Philip to initiate trade relations between Walvis Bay and St. Helena. These plans were abandoned when Napoleon Bonaparte died in his exile in 1821. See W. Mears, Wesleyan Missionaries, p.2.
- 107) Gammap was frequently mentioned in the journals of Schmelen and also in Kitchingman's journal.
- 108) CL, WMMS journal, Archbell, Orange River, 11 November 1821, entry of 10 March.
- 109) CL, WMMS journal, Archbell, Orange River, 11 November 1821, entry of 10 March.
- 110) See Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.182-184; 'Quellen', vol. 30b, 'Wie Jonker Afrikaner mit den Damras zusammengekommen ist', (1873), pp.64-65.
- 111) CL, WMMS journal, Archbell, Orange River, 11 November 1821, entry of June.
- 112) Penn, 'Pastoralists', p.63.
- 113) CA, LMS journal, 'Continuation of Br Albrecht's diary', 1810. Seidenfaden stated in 1811 that Afrikaner had not attacked groups in Namibia 'these six years past': CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.
- 114) Standard Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa, vol.4, p.525.
- 115) See Borchers, Memoir, p.100; Campbell, Travels, p.147.
- 116) See for example Moffat's description of the battle between the Griqua and 'Mantatees' at Old Dithakong; Schapera (ed.), Apprenticeship, pp.90-96.
- 117) In Namibia horses often died of the 'horse-sickness', a form of peripneumonia. This disease appeared during the summer rainy seasons: see Kienetz, 'Settlement Colony', p.221. B. Shaw reported that horses were not in use at all at Bethany. Schmelen made his expeditions on ox-back: CL, WMMS, Shaw, 'Journey to Great Namaqualand', 1820, entry of 11 May. Even a brother of Jonker Afrikaner was met by Alexander riding an ox: Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, p.207.
- 118) NGK, ZAG, C. Albrecht, Kamiesberg, 21 May 1808.
- 119) CA, LMS journal, Kitchingman (wrongly marked Wimmer), 'Steinkopf to Great Namaqualand', 1820, entry of 20 May.
- 120) Thus Alexander gave an account of a commando of Amraal's people who would use 'guns and bows': Alexander, Expedition,

- vol.2, p.207. When the Vlermuis band threatened the Pella community in 1823, they were apparently in possession of eight muskets only: CA, LMS letter, Bartlett, Pella, 8 September 1823.
- 121) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Great Namaqualand, 1819-1820.
- 122) Control of the access to firearms was an important pattern of the trade relations Bastards had established among the Sotho-Tswana: see Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.372.
- 123) Archbell could press a farmer into a more co-operative stance towards mission work by threatening to unveil his illegal trade with ammunition: CL, WMMS journal, Archbell, Orange River, 11 November 1821, entry of May.
- 124) Alexander was informed by some Nama that they were afraid of exchanging their cattle with frontier farmers in the colony: '...they never took their cattle into the Colony but preferred going to Angra Pequena Bay with their herds...': Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, p.102.
- 125) According to Thompson, Afrikaner took 60 muskets during a raid on some Korana in the 1820s: BPP, vol.20, p.433.
- 126) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Great River, 26 September 1822.
- 127) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Great River, 26 September 1822.
- 128) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Orange River, 26 August 1821-2 May 1822, entry of 30 September.
- 129) CA, LMS journal, Kitchingman (wrongly marked Wimmer), 'Steinkopf to Great Namaqualand', 1820, entry of 4 May. Shaw, Edwards, and Kitchingman arrived at the beginning of May 1820 at Bethany.
- 130) 'Coobus, an apostate from the church of Bethany had made war against some Namaquas by the Fish River...': CA, LMS journal, Kitchingman (wrongly marked Wimmer), 'Steinkopf to Great Namaqualand', 1820, entry of 11 May. This Coobus/Koobus is not identical with Kobus Boois of whom Kitchingman gave a detailed description: see MAD, UCT, Kitchingman Papers, diary of journey to Great Namaqualand, 1820.
- 131) CA, LMS journal, Kitchingman (wrongly marked Wimmer), 'Steinkopf to Great Namaqualand', entry of 4 May; CA, LMS letter, Bartlett, Pella, 8 September 1823.
- 132) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Great River, 26 September 1822.
- 133) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Orange River, 26 August 1821- 2 May 1822, entry of 16 February.

- 134) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Orange River, 26 August 1821- 2 May 1822, entry of 18 February.
- 135) CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Orange River, 26 August 1821- 2 May 1822, entry of June.
- 136) CA, LMS letter, Seidenfaden, Cape Town, 26 June 1811.
- 137) Campbell, Travels, p.303.
- 138) CA, LMS journal, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 1827, entry of December.
- 139) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Great River, 26 September 1822.
- 140) Compare Lau, 'The Emergence', pp.63-68.
- 141) Alexander, Expedition , vol.1, pp.251-253.
- 142) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Komaggas, 29 December 1828.
- 143) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Komaggas, 29 December 1828.
- 144) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Komaggas, 29 December 1828.
- 145) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Komaggas, 29 December 1828.
- 146) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Komaggas, 28 August 1829.

CHAPTER VI: THE COLONIAL AUTHORITIES AND SOUTHERN NAMIBIA IN THE

1820s

6.1. Oorlams and the closing of the frontier

Robert Ross has suggested that at the beginning of the nineteenth century there were five models of existence prevalent among the inhabitants of the Orange River region. Some were hunters and gatherers, others worked as seasonal farm labourers, wagon drivers etc., others were nomadic pastoralists. Then there was the commercial model of existence, as represented by Griqua democratic oligarchy with its close connections to the Cape, and there was the model of the semi-feudal frontier polity as represented by groups like the Afrikaner Oorlams. (1)

The conflicts between Nama, Oorlams and missionaries as they evolved around the declining mission stations in Namibia do not only provide evidence of group antagonisms: these struggles reflected structural divisions which cut across Nama and Oorlam groups. Indigenous hunters, gatherers, livestock-breeders and acculturated Khoikhoi had begun to merge into a new social context, where new political agencies strove for hegemony and where different modes of production were in competition. Thus it is difficult to identify the nature of those conflicts within clear-cut categories in terms of a penetration of indigenous pre-capitalist structures by mercantile capitalist structures. The mission-based economy had connected Namibian groups closer to the sphere of capitalist commodity production, but capitalist structures - in the form of raiding or hunting

for the capitalist market, trade relations etc. - had not gained predominance over the pre-capitalist branches of production. Neither can pre-capitalist or capitalist structures be easily identified with a specific group; Oorlam bands in Namibia still depended more on pastoralist production than on trade relations with the colonial market. However, notions of capitalist commodity production had begun to infuse those groups which assembled around the Namibian mission stations. The influence a Nama chief would traditionally exert on his followers was no longer exclusively connected to previous forms of control over the process of production and reproduction. Traditional elites were challenged by a rival new elite which had crystallized around the mission stations. The fact, that members of the indigenous elite, like the !Kharakhoen chief Jantje Kagab, established close ties to the Heirachabis and Bethany stations, indicates that those processes of social change were not totally monopolized by the acculturated Oorlams. It cannot satisfactorily be established from the sources to what extent Nama social structures underwent change during the period of the first mission stations. The recorded incidents of spiritual excitement, however, reveal intense frustrations and highly strung emotions as they have been observed among peoples elsewhere going through a phase of transition. The new social units which began to emerge from the nucleus of a newly formed mission elite, with leaders like Amraal and Vlermuis, were still oscillating between the different options offered in an open frontier zone.

The violent conflicts around the dissolving Bethany station

left a noticeable impact on the different parties involved. In the first place, these clashes were continued south of the Orange River and involved the community of missionary Bartlett among the Witboois at Pella. Vlermuis, whose rise to Oorlam status seems to have been closely connected to the military supplies granted to him by the ousted Warmbad missionaries in 1811, constituted a much greater threat to Namibian groups than the dreaded Afrikaner Oorlams. (2) After renewed raids in Namibia and clashes with the Afrikaner Oorlams, the Vlermuis group appeared again at Pella. Vlermuis tried to take refuge from Afrikaner at the mission station to the utter dismay of Bartlett. Captain Witbooi demanded that Vlermuis first make peace with Schmelen and sent him away after the Afrikaner Oorlams indicated that they would not hesitate to regain their livestock. After Witbooi had received a letter from Afrikaner, the two leaders formed a military alliance and defeated the Vlermuis group in a bloody skirmish near Pella. Captain Witbooi protected his missionary Bartlett by sending him to Steinkopf. In August 1823, the three parties involved made peace. (3)

After these violent clashes with the Afrikaner Oorlams and the Witboois, the Vlermuis group shifted its activities to the middle Orange River region (4), where several Oorlam bands roamed throughout the 1820s. (5) In 1824, missionary Hodgson visited the Vlermuis Kraal near the junction of the Orange and Hartebeest Rivers, and the Vlermuis family professedly repented its falling-out with the Namibian missionaries. (6)

The previous visit of the Witboois and their missionary in Cape Town and their continuous active support of the mission on the north-western frontier were part of a strategy which predominantly relied on co-operation with colonial structures. (7) As Captain Witbooi signaled in 1823, he was prepared to hand criminals over to the colonial authorities, even if they lived under his jurisdiction. (8)

The Witboois' policy towards colonial power gives evidence to the multi-faceted strategies in the open frontier zone, in accordance with Legassick's statement that the expansion of the northern frontier was inextricably linked to different forms of both co-operation and conflict. Moreover, in the 1820s it had become obvious to frontier groups that power depended on access to firearms and on regular trade relations with the colonial market. While the Vlermuis clan temporarily tried to gain a dominant position by chiefly military means, other groups like the Witboois and the Bondelswarts attempted to do the same by using more collaborative strategies. In the following years it became evident that those frontier groups did not only play an important part in the closing of the economic frontier. The attempt to gain or preserve dominant positions by making use of the colonial powers implied at the same time co-operation on a political level. To find allies among Africans to close the political frontier, heretofore only discussed in the Transorangian context, became a viable strategy for the government in regard of the north-western frontier.

6.2. The case of Threlfall

It was a particular incident that drew the heightened attention of the Cape Government to the Namibian section of the northern frontier. When in 1825 the Wesleyan missionary William Threlfall was murdered in Great Namaqualand, it was an event which produced more than the subsequent glorifications of Christian martyrdom in missionary circles. (9)

The murder of a British subject beyond colonial boundaries resulted in the most intensive government activities concerning Great Namaqualand since Afrikaner's attack on Warmbad in 1811. Of course it was not only the killing of a missionary that rekindled government interest in the north-western frontier. There had been some dispute among government officials as to whether the Griqua community in Transorangia should be regarded as a stabilizing or as a negative influence with regard to the northern frontier. Stockenstrom, Landdrost of Graaff-Reinet, had suggested the Griqua be treated as allies in securing the colonial boundaries against the depredations of Korana and San. (10) This approach was justified by the events of 1823 when the so-called Mantatees, who were dispersed by the Mfecane and extremely terrified the colonists, were defeated by Griqua horsemen near Old Dithakong. (11)

In government circles there existed a growing awareness of the need for the security on the northern frontier in connection with a strong desire to demonstrate the long arm of European law to African groups beyond colonial boundaries. The murder of

missionary Threlfall was taken as an opportunity to scrutinize the situation on the north-western frontier and to augment political control.

William Threlfall had arrived at the Cape in April 1822. He was stationed in Albany until he assumed mission work in Delagoa Bay in 1823. Here his health deteriorated considerably, a situation that apparently forced him to return to Cape Town. When his ship arrived in April 1824 at Table Bay the crew had been decimated by fever and the ship was subjected to a quarantine of six weeks. (12) Notes written by Threlfall at that period display strong religious convictions and missionary zeal, if not spiritual fanaticism. An almost martyr-like attitude seemed to have been intensified by experiences of cultural alienation and dramatically degrading health. Threlfall probably met Schmelen in Cape Town, who informed him about the conditions prevailing in Great Namaqualand. After he had given up the plan to go with the Wesleyan missionary Barnabas Shaw to Madagascar, Threlfall expressed his wish to work among the Nama in his typically exalted manner, which exceeded the usual rhetoric of religious fervour prevalent among his colleagues:

Probably some of us <missionaries> are on the verge of the grave and the object of death's aim. But O Death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory! (13)

At the end of 1824 he accepted an invitation by Barnabas Shaw to come to his station Lilyfontein at the Kamiesberg. After his health had improved, Threlfall went in June 1825 with two indigenous assistants, Jacob Links and Johann Jager, to Warmbad. From here Threlfall intended to explore the country in order to

open a new mission station in Great Namaqualand. (14)

Since 1820, when Shaw, Edwards and Kitchingman had visited Schmelen at Bethany, the Wesleyans had vague plans of founding a mission centre beyond the lower Orange. After Archbell's brief interlude at Bush Fountain (Grootfontein South) in 1821/22, Threlfall was the first Wesleyan missionary to attempt the resumption of mission work in Namibia.

At Warmbad, Threlfall and his two assistants became confronted with an extremely hostile attitude towards the mission in general. It became evident to the missionaries that this prevailing bitterness was rooted in the violent break-up of the Bethany station. Renewed violence had flared up, and some Nama chiefs emerged from these fights without livestock and followers. Threlfall and his companions met the chief Tsaumap, probably of the Kai//khaun (Red Naton), at Warmbad. His statement, quoted by Shaw as an extract from Jacob Link's journal, gives evidence of the animosities some indigenous chiefs seem to have developed with regard to the uncontrollable forces set free from the new context of the mission station.

After Schmelen had retreated with his loyal followers from Bethany, the Nama chiefs Tsaumap and Tsaugammap were reported to have returned temporarily to the deserted station in an attempt to draw Schmelen again to Bethany (15), while other members of the community wandered as far as Transorangia. (16) Tsaumap informed the three missionaries that several chiefs, probably also from the Kai//khaun, with whom Schmelen, Shaw and

Kitchingman had previously made acquaintance in the vicinity of Bethany, were reputedly dead. (17) Tsaumap's followers had been dispersed by the Afrikaner Oorlams and 'Schmelen's people'. Significantly, despite the anger directed at the missionary as a political rival disturbing traditional relations of political control, the following statements betray unabated intentions to make further use of missionaries. Tsaumap continued by saying that he was willing to accept missionaries once again:

...but it should be on condition that the missionary first promise him that he would not do as Mr Schmelen had done. When the missionaries come into the land, they come as teachers, but when they are received then they are no more teachers but judges or chiefs and they do as they please with us, taking our property away and then <crossed out: shoot us dead> order us to be shot dead with the guns they have given us. We accept the peace of which they speak, thinking that they are men of peace, and yet they are our greatest enemies and make no <time?> in order to kill us. On this account we trust not the peace as we formerly did. They say one thing and do another, and we are <...> only deceived. (18)

Captain Bondelswart, though reportedly the only chief who was not affected by those developments, linked up with Tsaumap's complaints:

...if a teacher should come to him, he must live on the place which he <the chief> should point out. He said he was tired with all the sweet-tongues, of the people, of the land. It is no new thing, said he, but an old one. The sweet-tongues we know too well. Behold what Mr Schmelen has done. That sort of men will have us to think that they are good men, but they are only murderers, therefore we have no confidence in the peace which they make. The young chief said he was tired of the wars which had been carried on from time to time in the land. If a teacher should come, said he, then will all these wars have an end, and we shall live in peace with each other. They will also give us powder, since the time the first teachers left us, we have not been able to obtain any. (19)

There are indications that some of Schmelen's fellow missionaries in Little Namaqualand shared the criticisms brought forward by the two chiefs. Letters of Bartlett and Wimmer suggest that Schmelen's involvement in the violent conflicts at Bethany was regarded as counterproductive to mission work. (20)

Several notes sent from Warmbad to Lilyfontein indicate that Threlfall was at pains to find support among the Bondelswarts for his journey into the interior. (21) Threlfall's refusal to furnish Captain Bondelswart with ammunition (22) did not make it easier for the expedition to receive supplies of food and the necessary guide from the Nama. (23) Jacob Links noticed that some Bondelswarts ostentatiously left during church service. (24)

However, in view of the actual dangers involved for a missionary at this specific point in time, the initial refusal of the Bondelswart captain to let Threlfall and his companions pass was probably also based on a realistic assessment of the situation. Finally a guide was granted to Threlfall and his two companions, and before leaving, against the urgent warnings of Captain Bondelswart, Threlfall issued a note which explicitly exculpated the captain from any potential accusations. (25)

In the middle of August 1825, a couple of days after their departure from Warmbad, Threlfall, Links and Jager were killed. Their guide, Naugaap, had instigated some Nama and San whom they had met on their way to murder the three travellers when the party pitched camp near the present-day farm Dabakabis near Warmbad. (26) Some time later, Naugaap was apprehended in Namibia

by a commando sent by Jonker (or Titus) Afrikaner, 'Captain of the Great River.' Another Nama involved in that incident, Congaap, was apparently under the jurisdiction of Kobus Boois and was ordered by his captain to appear as a witness at the legal proceedings in the colony. (27)

The government officials were unable to decide if the three travellers had been killed on instructions by the Bondelswart chief, named Oobibmob Tjaribob in the sources. When the Cape civil servants finally met the Bondelswart chief on occasion of the execution of the murderer, they learnt that a new captain, Abraham Christian, had taken over the chief's office from his father. Abraham denied emphatically that his father was responsible for the killing of the missionary party. (28) The old Captain Bondelswart had as early as in October 1825, two months after the murder, personally notified missionary Wimmer at Steinkopf of the events in Namibia. (29) In the month of November, the young captain visited Shaw at the Kamiesberg and informed him that the murderer, Naugaap, was the brother-in-law of Tsaumap, and that the latter had disappeared from Warmbad after the killing driven by a bad conscience. Moreover, Schmelen's life was now in danger, as Shaw was warned. (30)

The records of the interrogation of Naugaap and Congaap do not substantiate the insinuation that there existed an organized attempt to kill the missionaries in Namibia, although the warnings regarding Schmelen proved to be justified. Concerning the San accomplices of the main culprit, Naugaap, this was a

relatively simple case of murder and robbery. Naugaap claimed that he had received orders from Captain Bondelswart. Significantly, however, Naugaap had fled into the interior instead of returning to Warmbad after the killing. In addition, the statement of the witness, Congaap, that the captain and the council at Warmbad had immediately assembled a commando to pursue Naugaap convinced the colonial authorities that they should enter into diplomatic relations with the Bondelswart captain. (31) None the less these accusations against the Bondelswarts had introduced a strong element of suspicion. Moreover, the captain probably had misgivings concerning the unusually intense search for chiefs and 'big men' beyond the Orange with whom communication ties could be established, proceedings which involved the Fieldcornets of the Kamiesberg and of Namaqualand and the Landdrosts of Clanwilliam and of Worcester. (32) It needed the diplomatic services of missionary Edwards at Lilyfontein whose messengers persuaded the intimidated captain that his presence at the execution of the murderer would not involve personal risks for the Bondelswart chief. (33)

The Cape Government chose Silverfontein 'laying nearly on the boundary line of this Colony' near the mission station Steinkopf, as the scene for the punishment of the two prisoners, Naugaap and Congaap. (34) The Bondelswart chief failed to show up on the fixed date of 27 August 1827, because of his suspicion that he might be held responsible for the murder. These fears may have been reinforced by the strong military presence the Deputy Landdrost of Clanwilliam demonstrated with no less than fifty-

seven armed men at Silverfontein. Again messengers had to be sent to Captain Bondelswart to confirm the peaceful intentions of the colonial authorities.

Abraham Christian eventually appeared at Silverfontein on the 2 September 1827 followed by twenty-three armed men, 'offering many apologies for detaining us eight days in so wretched a wilderness.' (35) Shortly before, an unexpected visitor had arrived at Silverfontein, namely Captain Kido Witbooi in the company of some armed horsemen.

In the early morning of the 3 September 1827 the two prisoners were ceremonially handed over to Abraham Christian. After a speech and a prayer, a Bondelswart firing squad executed Naugaap, while Congaap was ordered by Captain Bondelswart to receive 'forty-one severe blows' with a sjambok. (36)

It is not clear in the records whether the life of Congaap was spared because his hesitant participation in the murder of the missionary party was found to justify extenuating circumstances. Certainly this decision was thought to be demonstrative of the leniency of the Cape Government while being at the same time a manifestation of the wide operational range of colonial rule. Captain Bondelswart had been informed that the Cape Government insisted on capital punishment for the instigator of the killing. On the other hand, the chief's juridical authority was explicitly acknowledged:

In regard to the second prisoner Congaap alias Andries, although certainly concerned as aiding and abetting in said murder, the Lieutenant Governor will feel inclined to leave the extent of his punishments

to the discretion of his Chief and as he was not the actual perpetrator of the murder and as he reported it to the aforesaid Chief on his return to the Warm Bath. (37)

The government's policy of involving the Bondelswarts in the enforcement of colonial law was motivated by several reasons. In the first instance, the decision to look for the co-operation of groups on the north-western frontier resulted from sheer necessity. For the colonial administration, the region between the boundaries of the colony and the Orange River was more or less 'terra incognita'. Officially, the burghers were not allowed to leave the colony though these regulations could not be enforced too rigidly - the frontier zone extended beyond colonial boundaries. Thus farmers, whites and non-whites, had for decades driven their herds and flocks to temporary grazing sites beyond the north-western boundary. (38) In particular Bastards were presumed by the colonial administration to be familiar with the region of the lower Orange. Thus the Deputy Landdrost of Clanwilliam stated in respect of the travelling distance between Silverfontein and the mouth of the Orange River:

...it is a journey of many days, this however is only <known> from reports of Bastaards, no inhabitants being permitted to pass the frontier. (39)

In the 1820s, rather exaggerated notions about the size and military strength of groups on the north-western frontier seemed to prevail among government officials:

I am further informed and consider it important to state, that the tribes near the mouth of the Orange River are numerous <sic> and well armed, which arms and ammunition it is supposed they received from ships calling there, and if this information is correct, I submit that the sending of an armed force to such an

immense distance over the boundaries through barren deserts (however desirable that such an act of barbarous murder should be punished) would require much consideration. (40)

When James E. Alexander crossed the Orange River into Great Namaqualand ten years later, he scoffed at the timidity of the white frontiersmen who had the most sinister conceptions concerning the unknown regions of the lower Orange:

It was very laughable to see the view which the Boors and their wives and daughters took of the journey to the Orange River. Some of the women came to take leave of my escort on the first day's march. The vrows cried and roared, and the Boors joined them with tears running down their cheeks. Truly it ought to have been very affecting, for it seemed as if the bulky bodies of the escort were assuredly destined to feed the hungry lions of Great Namaqualand, or to be butts for Boschmans' darts. (41)

These notions of well armed frontier groups were doubtless inspired by reports of LMS missionaries like Schmelen. At the time of the murder of the missionary party, Schmelen still had his residence among his followers at the mouth of the Orange River where he had withdrawn after the breaking-up of the Bethany station. He had heard the first rumours of the murder of Threlfall during his expedition to Walvis Bay and the Kuiseb River. Schmelen was in search for a site for a new mission station, accompanied by Amraal and Kobus Boois and some of their people. (42) Moreover, Schmelen seemed to have been threatened by Naugaap who reputedly had appeared at his station. When he met only with Schmelen's Nama wife, Naugaap withdrew without achieving his purpose. (43)

Eventually, the risks involved in sending an official

expedition to Namibia were considered to be too high. The government did not accept the offer of the irate Schmelen that was made to the police in Cape Town:

The Revd. Mr. Schmelen requested me to propose to His Honor the Lieutenant Governor that he should be furnished with authority to get a few military at Worcester or Clanwilliam and that this party should be authorized to demand the assistance of the missionary at Khamiesberg, and proceed together to Isammaup and demand of him either the execution of the murderer or to give him up to the party. (44)

Apart from the dangers involved in a government commando being sent to Namibia, like the ecological barrier of Little Namaqualand and the prospect of fighting an unknown enemy, there existed a more formal legal aspect. As the crime had happened beyond colonial boundaries, it seemed to be a logical conclusion to search for possible allies among the frontier groups in order to give weight to colonial jurisdiction. As the Colonial Office advised the Deputy Landdrost of Clanwilliam:

As however this atrocious murder was committed beyond the jurisdiction of the civil tribunals of this Colony and as it will consequently be impossible to bring the prisoners to trial before such courts, the Lieutenant Governor desires you will forthwith open a communication with the chief Oobibmob Tjaribob at the Warm Baths ... (45)

At this stage the colonial authorities realized that their knowledge of affairs in Great Namaqualand was limited. The frantic search for any influential leaders beyond the lower Orange betrayed a general state of ignorance. Thus government officials and missionaries were for a while preoccupied with investigating the whereabouts of an Isammaup, apparently thought of as an important headman of the Nama. This Isammaup or Isammaup

was considered somehow to be involved in the murder of Threlfall (46) and became temporarily identified with Captain Bondelswart. (47)

Apart from Schmelen, who had to struggle in order to gain a foothold, there was no missionary influence in southern Namibia during the 1820s. The missionaries in Griqua Town had set a model, in spite of some uneasiness on the side of the government, of how a certain measure of control could be exerted in order to secure the co-operation of a frontier group. Now government officials realized that a similar institution at this section of the north-western frontier was badly needed. A mission centre was expected to control travellers into the colony by granting passes and by maintaining communication ties with the African population on the frontier. (48) Under these circumstances, the Cape Government was doubtless even more committed to give a demonstration of the dangers involved for killing a missionary. But there was another aspect with regard to the security of the colony. In 1825 there were increasing tensions among the white colonists of the northern districts. The impending slave emancipation had raised heightened expectations among the slave population, and in the district of Worcester rumours abounded concerning a conspiracy of the slaves and the Khoikhoi population. (49)

After the execution of Naugaap, the two captains Abraham Christian and Kido Witbooi took the opportunity to enter into diplomatic negotiations with government officials present at Silverfontein. The government was requested to legalize and

facilitate trade relations of frontier groups with the colonists. Abraham Christian suggested the institution of a border fair, either at Ezelsfontein or at Lilyfontein, where the Nama could exchange hides and cattle for European goods. The Bondelswart captain would control other Nama groups in Namibia and organize their coming to the fair. This concept of a border fair was of course inspired by the fairs the government had established on the eastern frontier and by the trade relations the Griqua and the Cape Government had established at Beaufort West. This suggestion of the two captains seemed to have been met with some reluctance on the side of the government officials. The Cape Government had in 1818 decreed to install a border fair for the Griqua in order to control the traffic across colonial boundaries. Since that date it had become clear that such a control was highly superficial. Both Africans and colonists were engaged in illegal trade in the frontier zone, avoiding when opportunities arose supervision of missionaries and government officials. (50)

Another suggestion by Captain Bondelswart and Captain Witbooi was rejected outright by Deputy Landdrost Ryneveld. The two captains requested firearms and ammunition in order to procure, as they argued, skins and hides for the proposed border fair. However, both chiefs let it be seen that firearms were not only needed for the purpose of hunting. The Landdrost was informed that Jonker Afrikaner and the Boois of Bethany had reputedly formed an alliance to attack the Witboois and the Bondelswarts; a claim which cannot be substantiated from the records. Both of

the former groups would buy their firearms from whalers at Angra Pequena. In response to the question of the Deputy Landdrost concerning the whereabouts of a certain Diergaard, apparently wanted by the colonial authorities, the two captains proved to be excellently informed. Though they claimed that it was at the moment impossible to apprehend this man, Witbooi and Bondelswart promised to perform duties as a border police and to arrest all persons without valid passes and return them to the colony. (51)

The developing Herero-Oorlam>Nama network in Namibia, as Witbooi and Bondelswart had indicated, had not left the state of affairs in Little Namaqualand untouched. In this context, it is interesting to note that the attempt of the Witbooi captain to establish regular trade relations with the colony reflects the co-operative policy the Witboois customarily pursued towards colonial institutions. Though individuals and small bands among the Witboois crossed the Orange in the 1820s to join the raiders of Herero cattle in Namibia, this frontier group neither left its territory, which represented the most desolate area of the lower Orange River region, nor did they turn to the parasitic mode of existence of a commando society.

LMS missionary Wimmer at his station of Steinkopf was frequently visited by the Witbooi captain and some of his followers in the 1820s and 1830s. Wimmer's notes on the living conditions of the Witboois are scattered throughout his letters and journals, illustrating the pastoralist mode of existence of an Oorlam group. Participation in cattle raids in southern

Namibia was not unknown among the Witboois, but the casual inflow of livestock obviously could not improve economic conditions of this acculturated frontier group. Due to droughts and the general scarcity of water, the Witboois were unable to live permanently at Pella, commonly regarded as their main place of residence. (52) This situation provided for internal tensions as can be deduced from Bartlett's observation that at that time practices of witchcraft flared up among the Witboois. (53) However, there is nothing to support the assumption that the role of the captain was transformed according to more militarized patterns of commando society.

Wimmer noted as early as 1824 that southern Namibia seemed to be in a general state of upheaval, connected to the raids of the Afrikaner Oorlams. While only two families stayed at Pella, the bulk of the Witbooi people was wandering along the Orange River. Kido Witbooi indicated a vague plan to settle near Zwartmodderfontein in Namibia (probably the present-day Keetmanshoop), rejecting any suggestions to move to Griqualand/Transorangia. (54) Four months later, in December 1825, Wimmer stated that Pella was entirely abandoned by its inhabitants who partly sought refuge at missionary Wimmer's station of Steinkopf. (55)

Wimmer's fears about an impending famine in Little Namaqualand became reality during the following year. The missionary even noted one case of cannibalism at Steinkopf where a woman 'killed her own child to eat it.' (56) Small wonder that Jonker Afrikaner's inroads on the cattle-rich Herero attracted an ever

growing following from Little Namaqualand, as the missionary had to observe among his people. (57) This situation of poverty and despair did not change in 1827. Complaining about the depressing situation at Steinkopf, Wimmer added that things were going even worse at Pella where seven people had just died of hunger. (58) Throughout the year 1827 the missionary expressed his resentments concerning the people in Little Namaqualand participating in robberies beyond the Orange River. (59)

One may justly assume that this devastating situation prevailing in Little Namaqualand during the 1820s was not entirely different from conditions in the arid regions of southern Namibia. The general willingness of frontier groups and frontiersmen to enter into relations with the Cape found almost ironic expression in the plea of Congaap, only surviving defendant of the case Threlfall, for legal admittance to the colony, being 'desirous of engaging himself to some of the inhabitants.' (60)

The dead body of Naugaap, the executed murderer of the Wesleyan missionary, was not allowed to rest in peace. In 1830, the corpse was exhumed by a German collector of museum curiosities, Carl Friedrich Drège, who was travelling with his brother in Little Namaqualand. In what may aptly be described as an act of scientific headhunting, the skull was severed from the corpse to find its final resting-place as a showpiece in a museum somewhere in Europe. (61)

6.3. The buffer zone concept

Throughout the 1820s the Cape Government had been warned by numerous reports that the illegal traffic with firearms on the northern frontier had reached proportions which provided for an explosive situation beyond the Orange. Closing the frontier thus implied a twofold strategy. Firstly, since the battle between the Mfecane bands and the Griqua in 1823, the government had come to accept the concept of an alliance with a nominally independent Griqua state, though it was not before the 1830s that a treaty state policy visibly emerged, which also had repercussions on the north-western frontier. (62)

Secondly, the escalating internal conflicts in Transorangia became more and more irritating to the government because the marauding bands of Khoisan, European adventurers and Griqua separatists illegally obtained supplies of firearms from the frontier farmers. This illegal frontier trade, the exchange of basically stolen livestock for muskets and ammunition, jeopardized both a peaceful frontier and government control within the colony. The advice of explorers like George Thompson, recommending in Cape Town the extension of northern colonial boundaries to the Orange River, apparently did not fall on entirely deaf ears. (63) As Thompson had argued, the procedure of distributing passes to those who wanted to traffic across colonial boundaries was too bureaucratic a measure to be of practical use. In fact, control over transgressions of the boundary was practically impossible. Moreover, instead of prohibiting illegal trade between colonists and Africans beyond

the boundary, those restrictive regulations had the effect of playing into the hands of frontier farmers who sought to monopolize trade relations. As Thompson stated:

At present they <Africans beyond the boundary> labour under a belief that they are not allowed to proceed to Cape Town, or indeed to come within the colony, an impression which the Boors upon the frontier have given them, in order that they might enjoy the whole traffic themselves; and the independent tribes are thus obliged to dispose of their goods at the lowest rates to those Boors; although aware that they could obtain much higher prices for them in Cape Town, or in the interior of the colony. (64)

Thus gunpowder was sold by white farmers labelled as 'onion seed' (65), or trade beyond the boundaries was conducted by exchanging 'presents' of firearms for 'presents' of ivory and hides. (66)

An attempt to control trade relations was made by establishing border fairs where licensed traders could legally barter with frontier groups. Since 1819, the first year of such a fair at Beaufort West, the realization of government controlled market places had proved to be difficult. This was partly due to ecological reasons because Africans who wanted to bring their livestock to the fair faced considerable problems in crossing the arid regions of Bushmanland or Little Namaqualand in the dry season. (67)

On the other hand, as Moffat observed, Griqua traders showed discontent with the fair because they were fobbed off with goods of inferior quality; and trade with guns and ammunition was of course not legalized. (68)

The appointment of the government agent Melville at Griquatown

from 1822 to 1826 did not have the effects the government had hoped for because Melville became hopelessly entangled in the internal divisions of the Griqua communities. (69)

However, missionaries on the northern frontier remained of crucial importance as political agents. A missionary was entitled to commission Africans with passes legalizing trade in the colony. The application of the Witbooi and Bondelswart captains for access to border fairs significantly occurred at a time when no missionary was resident among them. Colonial officials deplored the fact that with Bartlett's removal from his station at Pella in 1825, applicants for passes had to travel as far as Griqua Town. (70)

Against this background, the year 1828 is of special relevance for the further development of European and Khoisan relations. In July 1828, Ordinance 50 was promulgated in Cape Town, an event characterized by J.S. Marais as one of the two most important political decisions concerning the European colonisation in South Africa. (71) Ordinance 50 put the Khoisan population of the colony legally on a par with the white settlers, repealing the previous legislation like Caledon's law of 1809 whose pass regulations had drastically reduced the freedom of movement of the Khoisan. Those restrictions were related to the abolition of the slave trade by the British in 1807, a measure which generated much concern among the farmers who wanted to retain access to a cheap labour force. The Ordinance of 1828 ameliorated the working conditions for the Khoisan, who had been tied to either farms or mission stations. Their children could not be apprenticed without

the parents' consent, freedom of movement was restored for those, who wanted to leave their masters, and now the previously dispossessed Khoisan were given back the right to own land. (72)

On the side of the colonial government, these new emancipatory tendencies were partly an expression of the structural changes which had occurred on the labour market. As Szalay points out, there was an impending shortage of labour in the growing population centres of the colony since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Thus the mobilization and unrestricted circulation of cheap labour was to the advantage of the increasing urban development in the context of the more commercialised agricultural economy. (73) The intention of the colonial administration was to facilitate the proletarianization of the Khoisan population. (74)

There can be no doubt, though, that Ordinance 50 represented an impressive success of the political efforts and ideological fervour of the London Missionary Society and its superintendent, Dr John Philip. The year 1828 also saw the publication of Philip's 'Researches in South Africa', his critical account of the appalling conditions among the Africans in the Cape Colony, which enthusiastically supported the emancipation of the Khoisan population. (75) Credit for those amendments, apart from the scorn heaped on the missionaries by contemporaries, was given to the influential Dr Philip, especially by later liberal historians like Macmillan. But another chief protagonist and important propelling force of Ordinance 50 was Andries Stockenström, former

Landdrost of Graaff-Reinet, who was appointed Commissioner General when the old system of the Board of Heemraden was replaced by a more centralized (and anglicised) form of administration in 1828. Stockenstrom, being in charge of the Eastern Districts and a man of vision and certainly far ahead of his time, envisaged and formulated a concept which stressed political and social integration of the African population of the Cape Colony. In his memorandum in preparation of Ordinance 50 Stockenstrom suggested putting white settlers and Africans legally on the same footing:

...it would be advisable to form one comprehensive law, embracing all free inhabitants without reference to colour or name of the tribe. (76)

It is beyond the scope of the present study to analyse the many ambiguities, consequences and repercussions of Ordinance 50 with regard to the further relations of Africans and white settlers in the Cape Colony. However, inasmuch as the colonial frontier policy is concerned, the year 1828 marks the emergence of the concept of a buffer zone on the frontier, as envisaged by the energetic Stockenstrom. With the increasing mobility of the Khoisan in the colony and the precarious situation beyond the colonial limits, the need for the stabilization of the frontiers became more urgent. With the passing of Ordinance 49, just a few days before Ordinance 50 was issued, a new attempt was launched to control the effects of frontier trade by tightening up the regulations concerning the links between colonists and independent Africans. These regulations confirmed the weight given to the role of missionaries as political agents. Access to

the mission station within the colony, for instance, was declared to be lawful when Africans were provided with passes by colonial authorities and with permission by the missionary. (77)

With the emancipation of the Khoisan population, ideas of European-African co-operation to secure the borders seemed to receive a more realistic foundation than ever. The most famous example of the buffer zone policy, as conceptualized by Stockenstrom, is the Kat River Settlement in the so-called Ceded Territory between the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers, where Khoisan from different parts of the colony were placed by the Cape Government to protect the frontier against the neighbouring Xhosa groups. (78)

* * *

Against the background of these new political developments and in the wake of the Threlfall murder, the Cape Government launched an expedition to Namibia. The military surgeon, agent, explorer - and founder of the South African Museum in Cape Town - Dr Andrew Smith was commissioned to investigate the state of affairs in Great Namaqualand. The fact that Smith's journey bore all the signs of a secret mission indicates that the government was deeply concerned about the north-western frontier.

It is difficult to establish from the sources what the precise content of Andrew Smith's directions was. Moreover, it is not known if there was any personal communication between Stockenstrom and Smith at that time. However, Smith's 'Northern Frontier Report' betrays the spirit of Stockenstrom's frontier

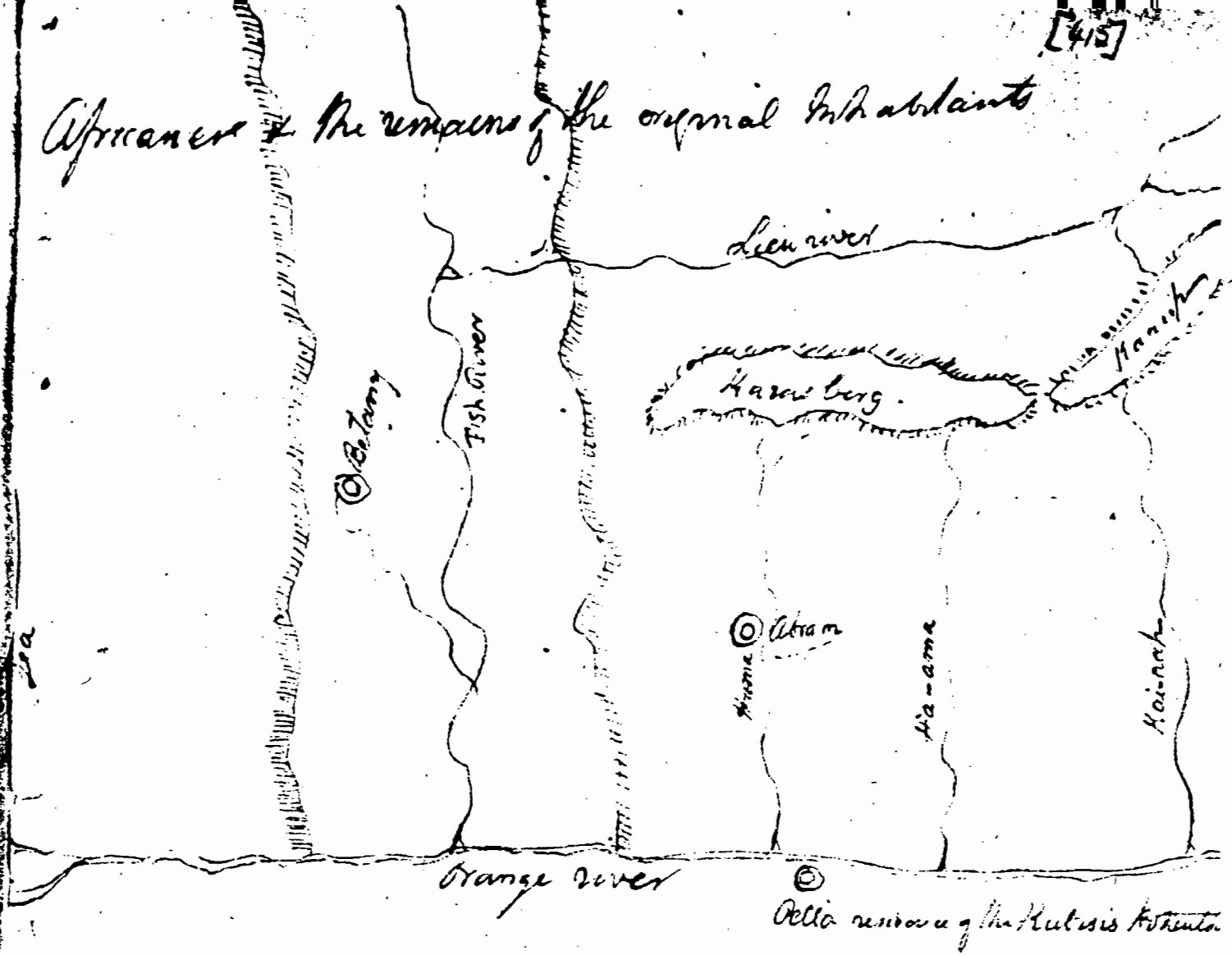
policy. (79) Commissioner General Stockenstrom urged the Colonial Office in February 1828 to develop a policy which would be based on co-operation with African leaders on the northern frontier. Secrecy, as Stockenstrom argued, was essential in forming alliances between the different chiefs to the advantage of the colony:

I cannot take upon myself in the present disturbed state of the interior to recommend any particular chief as mediator on the part of government between the contending parties. The jealousy thereby excited would cause a result directly opposite to what is contemplated. The missionaries could in my opinion be employed with much better effect, but a person deputed by His Honor I conceive could do much good, by prudent discreet measures towards bringing about a reconciliation between the principal chiefs, and making them unite for the maintenance of order and peace among themselves and their people and the protection of their savages <sic> neighbours. (80)

Stockenstrom concluded by stating that he was at the moment personally not available for such a secret mission.

In his biography of Andrew Smith, Kirby gives an account of the almost mysterious circumstances of Smith's investigation. (81) No diaries relating to this journey could be found, but Kirby roughly reconstructed the journey by extrapolating from Smith's ornithological notebooks. According to Kirby, Smith must have travelled in southern Namibia for about six weeks, between the 2 October and 15 November 1828. Missionary Schmelen noted in December 1828 that Dr Andrew Smith, collecting information on 'the cruelty in Great Namaqualand', had visited him at Komaggas (82), and Smith dispersed some hints relating to his journey to Namibia among his notes. (83) Both Kirby and Lye have claimed that the report of this expedition was written at a later stage

Africans & the remains of the original Inhabitants



Leeu river five days journey from the Orange river
Betang once a station of the L.M. Society.

© Killyfonteyn once a L.M. Station

Boundary of the Colony

© Kammahos L.M. station

ANDREW SMITH'S MAP OF HIS JOURNEY TO THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER IN 1828.

(CAPE ARCHIVES, GH, 19/4)

MAP 5

© Killyfonteyn L.M. Station.

between 1832 and 1834. (84) The map in Smith's handwriting, however, which Kirby found attached to the report bears the date 1828. (85)

Smith's map represents a rough sketch of the north-western frontier, extending between the colonial boundary north of Komaggas to the Lion River (Löwen River; Nama name Xamob) north of the Karas Mountains. Notes on this map indicate that Smith travelled as far as the Xamob River south of the present-day Keetmanshoop. Under the headline 'Hottentot population beyond the Orange River 1828', Smith mentions the Afrikaner Oorlams, the Amraal's 'Hottentots', the Boois, the Bondelswarts and the Links.

Thus the question remains open when precisely the original 'Northern Frontier Report' was written and presented to the colonial government. Kirby suggests that Smith's report might have been shelved for some time for bureaucratic reasons; Governor Bourke was replaced by Sir Lowry Cole in September 1828 before Smith returned from Namibia. (86)

Stockenström wrote a letter to the government in November 1828, which does not indicate if he was informed of Smith's journey. But in this letter mainly committed to the developments on the eastern frontier, the Commissioner General pressed the governor for a new political concept for the protection of the northern frontier:

...I must recall your attention to my said letter of the 22nd ult., relative to the Northern Borders; and though, as I have stated, no rupture with the chiefs of the parties is likely soon to take place, yet the state of the country, and the nature of the people

there, is such that (considering the want of military protection and the impossibility of guarding so exclusive and open a frontier, by a regular line of posts) I hope His Excellency the Governor will be able, before I return to the interior, to make up his mind to some efficient system of defence. (87)

The report of Dr Andrew Smith represents a radical approach to the 'closing' of the frontier. In order to form a string of border posts consisting of allies among frontier groups, Smith suggested the colonial boundary be extended to the Orange River, thus catching on to proposals which had been made by other observers like George Thompson. The Witboois, and the Bastard population of the North-West under one Gert de Klerk would become British subjects, recognized as government authorities, while Abraham Christian of the Bondelswarts and Andries Waterboer would gain the status of military allies. (88) Especially Captain Witbooi, as Smith pointed out, would serve as a faithful ally of the colony:

...on the colonial side of the Orange River, is a tribe called Kubisis. Whiteboy is the name of the chief who governs it and to the station he was elected by the people. He and his adherents are more advanced than the Bondel Zwarts, but less powerful. He is a promoter of peace and good order and though some of his subjects are strongly opposed to the colony yet there would be no difficulty in soon rendering these its friends. Whiteboy was born in the colony and reads and writes moderately well whereby he is generally regarded by the inhabitants in that quarter as a learned man and his opinion is viewed with considerable deference. (89)

With the help of those chiefs, officially recognized as representatives of their subjects, the frontier could be secured against the depredations of Korana and San and against uncontrolled expansion through trade and expropriation of land.

Concurrently, as proposed by Smith, the Khoisan population of the lower and middle Orange should be granted legal possession of land and assembled around mission stations. This string of independent and semi-independent African groups under the supervision of missionary and political agents would of course require payments to the chiefs involved. Andrew Smith drew up a proposal according to which the Witbooi and Bondelswart chiefs would receive an annual salary of 25 pounds. (90)

* * *

Smith's scheme to close the frontier was not fully translated into reality. However, his secret mission was not entirely without results as became evident in 1830. The chief of the Bondelswarts, Abraham Christian, required military assistance from the Veldwagtmeester of Clanwilliam against the Afrikaner Oorlams. In political terms, the chief based his request on his previous support of the government on the occasion of Threlfall's murder:

He (Abraham Christian) called here yesterday, stating that Jonker and Titus Africander, who constantly attack the kraals of different tribes beyond the limits and rob them of their cattle, which they bring into the colony and exchange with the farmers on the frontier for horses, have lately attacked him also and taken away five hundred head of cattle and four hundred sheep besides all his firearms, killed two of his men and wounded two others besides himself, and as said Africander is in possession of firearms and ammunition, he begged to be supplied with some also, stating at the same time that as he had complied with the government's wishes about three years ago respecting the execution of Nogap he hoped that government will assist him in this instance. (91)

Chief Abraham Christian and seven companions proceeded to Cape

Town where they were accommodated by missionary Barnabas Shaw and furnished with provisions by the Cape Government. (92) The chief's depiction of the Afrikaner Oorlams as a serious threat to the peace on the north-western frontier was successful and supported by colonial officials like Truter, the Civil Commissioner of Worcester. (93) In Cape Town the chief was received by Governor Lowry Cole, and due to the intervention of Shaw and 'Dr Smith knowing them' he obtained supplies of firearms and ammunition. (94) Thus Abraham Christian entered into a treaty which laid the foundation for the future close political relations between the Bondelswarts and the colonial government. (95) He was endowed with a staff of office, four years before Waterboer obtained his silver staff, underlining Abraham's new status as a semi-official government ally. (96) In addition, the Cape Government, which was inclined to believe Abraham's exaggerated accounts of the Afrikaner Oorlams' military power, made sure that the captain could return to the Orange River with an impressive official escort of twenty-eight armed men headed by Fieldkornet Engelbregt of the Kamiesberg. (97)

There are indications that the captain saw to it that his newly acquired reputation as an important force on the lower Orange was spread among the inhabitants of the north-western frontier. The traveller Drège was apparently impressed by rumours which grossly exaggerated the captain's status as ally of the colonial government:

I heard that Abraham Naugap Saumap received a "Captain stick" from the government, which gives the owner the hereditary right (of chieftainship < Kirby>). He also received guns, powder and lead. Everyone who wants to

travel or trade across the Gariep River has to announce himself to him, and to obey his commands. He has the right to put to death those who act contrary to his orders...(98)

NOTES CHAPTER SIX

- 1) Ross, Kok's Griquas, pp.9-10.
- 2) CA, LMS letter, Moffat, Vredeberg in Great Namaqualand, 20 August 1818.
- 3) CA, LMS letter, Archbell, Little Fountain, 14 March 1823; CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Kamiesberg, 29 August 1823; CA, LMS letter, Bartlett, Pella, 8 September 1823.
- 4) Cope (ed.), Journals, pp.192-193.
- 5) Hodgson met Oorlams at the junction of the Modder and Riet Rivers in 1822: Cope (ed.), Journals, pp.72, 75, 92. See also pp. 325, 397, 400.
- 6) Cope (ed.), Journals, p.229.
- 7) CA, LMS letter, Philip, Cape Town, 27 January 1823.
- 8) As Captain Witbooi stated, when five people from Pella were accused of murdering some San near Steinkopf: CA, LMS, Bartlett, Pella, 8 September 1823.
- 9) See M. Allen Birthwhistle, William Threlfall. A Study in Missionary Vocation, (London, 1966); Thomas Cheeseman, The Story of William Threlfall. Martyr of Namaqualand. With some account of Jacob Links and Johannes Jager who fell with him, (Cape Town, 1910).
- 10) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.390.
- 11) See the account of witness Robert Moffat: Schapera (ed.), Apprenticeship, pp.90-96.
- 12) Shaw, Memorials, pp.269-274.
- 13) CA, A 768, Threlfall, Cape Town, 22 July 1824. When Threlfall was placed in quarantine while anchoring at Table Bay in 1823 he noted: 'I have been, and still am, living on the verge of real heaven, and have frequently felt a joyful desire to depart. Death, though my last enemy, has no depressing effect on my mind.': Cheeseman, Threlfall, p.59.
- 14) Shaw, Memorials, pp.275-277.
- 15) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Kamiesberg, 29 August 1823.
- 16) CA, LMS letter, Wimmer, Namaqualand, 27 December 1824.
- 17) See CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, 'Journey from Pella', 13 April-1 June 1814; CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Bethany, 3 January-18 December 1815; CA, LMS journal, Schmelen, Great

- Namaqualand, 1819-1820; CA, LMS journal, Kitchingman (wrongly marked Wimmer), 'Steinkopf to Great Namaqualand', 1820; CL, WMMS, Archbell, Orange River, 11 November 1821.
- 18) SAL, Shaw's Journals, vol. of 1826, 'A short extract from the journal of Jacob Links'.
 - 19) SAL, Shaw's Journals, vol. of 1826, 'A short extract from the journal of Jacob Links'.
 - 20) CA, LMS letter, Bartlett, Pella, 8 September 1823; CA, LMS journal, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 1827.
 - 21) Shaw, Memorials, pp.221, 277; Birthwhistle, Threlfall, p.128.
 - 22) CA, CO, vol.2696, 'Extract out of the Diary of the Deputy Landdrost of Clanwilliam', 21 June 1827.
 - 23) A note of the 6/8 August 1825 stated: 'Being rather unkindly handled by this people, in their not finding, or permitting us to have a guide, we returned here (Warmbad) yesterday, after having been to the north four day's journey ... We are obliged to beg hard to buy meat.': Shaw, Memorials, p.278.
 - 24) SAL, Shaw's Journals, vol. of 1826, 'A short extract from the journal of Jacob Links'.
 - 25) SAL, Shaw's Journals, vol. of 1823-1826, entry of 13 November 1825.
 - 26) The Wesleyan missionary Edward Cook had the remains of Jacob Links, Johannes Jager and William Threlfall buried in 1835: CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 23 December 1835. They were discovered again in 1986 about 40 kilometers from Warmbad; a memorial was erected on the farm Dabakabis: see 'Allgemeine Zeitung', Windhoek, 14 September 1987.
 - 27) CA, WOC, vol.11/9, Colonial Office to Landdr. of Clanwilliam, 17 July 1827. Congaap referred to his 'Captain Klein Kobus Breekland': CA, CO, vol.2696, 'Extract out of the diary of the Deputy Landdrost of Clanwilliam', 21 June 1827. Kobus Boois was known for continuously changing his pseudonyms when he made his way from the colony to Namibia: see 'Quellen', vol.3 b, Kreft, Bethanien, 19 January 1877. Boois was known under his nom-de-guerre 'Breekland' (see 3.2.) at least until the 1820s: see CA, LMS journal, Wimmer, 1 January-28 December 1826.
 - 28) CA, CO, vol.2697, Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam to Chief Secretary of Government, 10 September 1827. As late as the 1860s, RMS missionary Weber at Warmbad was told the story of Threlfall's murder. It does not emerge clearly from the different sources if Abraham Christian (!Naugab) held the chief's office at the time of Threlfall's arrival in

- Namibia. Oral history evidence among the Bondelswarts maintained that Threlfall had problems to receive support from the captain without indicating a further involvement of the latter in the murder. See 'Quellen', vol.8a, Weber. Warmbad, 'Kurze Genealogie', (1873), pp.113-114.
- 29) CA, LMS journal, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 27 December 1825, entry of 30 October.
 - 30) SAL, Shaw's Journals, vol. of 1823-1826, entry of 13 November 1825.
 - 31) CA, CO, vol.2696, 'Extract out of the Diary of the Deputy Landdrost of Clanwilliam', 21 June 1827.
 - 32) CA, CO, vol.2696, Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam to Landdr. of Worcester, 5 July 1826; CA, CO, vol.2696, Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam to Landdr. of Worcester, 9 June 1826; CA, CO, vol.2696, Fieldkornet Aggenbag to Landdr. Ryneveld, Namaqualand, 11 June 1827.
 - 33) CA, CO, vol.2697, Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam to Chief Secretary of Governor, 19 August 1827; CA, CO, vol.2697, E. Edwards, Lilyfontein, 14 August 1827.
 - 34) CA, CO, vol.2696, Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam to Landdr. of Worcester, 9 June 1826.
 - 35) CA, CO, vol.2696, Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam to Chief Secretary of Government, 10 September 1827.
 - 36) CA, CO, vol.2696, Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam to Chief Secretary of Government, 10 September 1827.
 - 37) CA, WOC, vol.11/9, Colonial Office to Landdr., 17 July 1827.
 - 38) See Marais, Cape Coloured, p.26.
 - 39) CA, CO, vol.2680, Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam to Landdr. of Worcester, 9 June 1826.
 - 40) See similar statements: CA, CO, vol.2680, Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam to Landdr. of Worcester, 9 June 1826., Landdr. of Worcester to Secretary of Government, 20 June 1826; CO, vol.2696, Landdr. of Clanwilliam to Landdr. of Worcester, 5 July 1826.
 - 41) Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, p.132.
 - 42) CA, CO, vol.2696, 'Deposition taken at the Police Office Cape Town relative to the murder of the Revd. Wm. Threlfall who lost his life on his route into Great Namaqualand', 23 May 1827. See also RLMS (1826), pp.85-86; Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.199.

- 43) CA, CO, vol.291, Wesleyan Mission House, Cape Town, to Lieutenant Governor, 22 May 1826. Naugaap claimed that it was Captain Bondelswart who had sent a commando in order to kill the missionary: CA, CO, vol.2696, 'Extract out of the Diary of the Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam', 21 June 1827. Missionaries in Namibia were generally held in high esteem. Throughout the nineteenth century, the crucial period of the Namibian War 1904-1907 included, only two members of missionary societies were killed. Missionary technician Holzappel was executed by the Witboois, when they declared war on the Germans in 1904. Holzappel refused to hand over his ammunition and announced the disarming of the Witboois: see H. Loth, 'Die Ketzereibewegung in Südwestafrika, ihre Vorgeschichte und ihre Grenzen im Freiheitskrieg', Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig, 3 (9) (1959/60). The prestige missionaries customarily enjoyed should not only be seen in a political context. Though the role of missionaries as mediators with colonial government was certainly perceived by Namibians throughout the last century, one also observes a fundamental respect for the spiritual implications of mission work.
- 44) CA, CO, vol.2696, 'Deposition', 23 May 1827.
- 45) CA, WOC, vol.11/9, Colonial Office to Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam, 17 July 1827. A similar statement was made by the Fiscal: CA, CO, vol.300, Fiscal's Office to Chief Secretary of Government, 9 July 1827.
- 46) CA, CO, vol.291, Wesleyan Mission House, Cape Town to Lieutenant Governor, 22 May 1826; CA, CO, vol.2696, 'Extract out of the Diary of the Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam', 21 June 1827.
- 47) CA, CO, vol.300, Fiscal's Office to Chief Secretary of Government, 9 July 1827.
- 48) CA, CO, vol.2696, Deputy Landdr. of Clanwilliam to Landdr. of Worcester, 9 June 1826.
- 49) CA, WOC, vol. 11/7, Colonial Office to Civil Commissioner of Worcester, 22 February 1825; CA, WOC, vol.11/7, CO to Landdr. of Worcester, 22 April 1825.
- 50) See Marais, Cape Coloured, p.39.
- 51) CA, CO, vol.2697, 'Extract from the Diary held by the Deputy Landdrost of Clanwilliam on his journey to the frontier', 3 September 1827.
- 52) This is why most travellers visiting the region of Pella failed to mention the Witboois in their accounts. For instance: Barrow, Travels; Campbell, Travels. Even the LMS missionaries Abraham and Christian Albrecht, Ebner, and

Schmelen who worked in the Pella region between 1812 and 1815 omitted any references to the Witboois in their letters and journals. Other travellers like Thompson during his journey in 1824 gave somewhat blurred accounts of the so-called 'Obseses', the Nama name of the Witboois being /Khowesin, /Khobesin etc.: Thompson, Travels, vol.2, p.62.

- 53) SAL, Shaw's Journals, vol. of 1823-1826, 17 March 1824.
- 54) CA, LMS letter, Wimmer, Bysondermeid, 31 August 1825.
- 55) CA, LMS journal, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 27 December 1825.
- 56) CA, LMS journal, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 1 January-28 December 1826, entry of 21 May.
- 57) Wimmer noted on the 16 May 1826 that the Afrikaner and the Boois from Bethany were said to have robbed the Herero of 3000 head of cattle, CA, LMS journal, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 1 January-28 December 1826, entry of 16 May.
- 58) CA, LMS letter, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 21 July 1827.
- 59) CA, LMS letter, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 21 July 1827. Apparently the second half of the 1820s were generally a period of ecological and economic degradation along the lower and the middle course of the Orange. Thus missionary Wright reported of severe famines at Griquatown too: CA, LMS letter, Wright, Griquatown, 23 July 1827.
- 60) CA, CO, vol.2697, Deputy Landdr. Office Clanwilliam to Secretary of Government, 27 December 1827.
- 61) Percival Kirby, 'William Threlfall and his Hottentot Murderer', South African Journal of Science, 39 (1943), pp. 307-310, 309.
- 62) See Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.390.
- 63) BPP, vol.20, Evidence of George Thompson, 1824, pp.431-432.
- 64) BPP, vol.20, Evidence of George Thompson, 1824, p.430.
- 65) BPP, vol.20, 'Report upon the Hottentot Population of the Cape of Good Hope and of the Missionary Institutions', Moffat, 20 April 1824, p.422.
- 66) M.H. Lister (ed.), Journals of Andrew Geddes Bain. Trader, Explorer, Soldier, Road Engineer and Geologist, (Cape Town, 1949), p.15.
- 67) BPP, vol.20, 'Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry upon the Trade of the Cape of Good Hope', 1829, p.223.
- 68) BPP, vol.20, , Moffat, 20 April 1824, p.422.

- 69) See Marais, Cape Coloured, pp.38-39.
- 70) BPP, vol.20, Deputy Landdr. Ryneveld, Clanwilliam, 3 July 1826, p.419; BPP, vol.20, , Fieldcornets of Under Bokkaveld, Camiesberg, Namaqualand, Kamiesberg, 26 June 1826, p.420; see also CA, CO, vol.2696, Deputy Landdr. Ryneveld to Landdr. Trappes, Clanwilliam, 9 June 1826.
- 71) The second most prominent decision, according to Marais, was to make South Africa a slave-owning country: Marais, Cape Coloured, p.156.
- 72) See W.M. Macmillan, The Cape Colour Question: A Historical Survey, (London, 1927), pp.211-237; Marais, Cape Coloured, pp.155-178.
- 73) M. Szalay, Ethnologie, pp.160-164.
- 74) S. Newton-King, 'The Labour Market of the Cape Colony', in Shula Marks and Anthony Atmore (eds.), Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa, (London, 1980).
- 75) John Philip, Researches in South Africa, (London, 1828).
- 76) C.W. Hutton, The Autobiography of the late Sir Andries Stockenström, 2 vols. (Cape Town, 1887; reprint 1964), vol.1, pp.288-289; J.L. Dracopoli, Sir Andries Stockenström 1792-1864. The Origins of the Racial Conflict in South Africa, (Cape Town, 1969); Galbraith, Reluctant Empire, pp.132-150.
- 77) BPP, vol.20, Ordinance 49, 1828, p.542.
- 78) See Marais, Cape Coloured, pp.216-245.
- 79) William F. Lye (ed.), Andrew Smith's Journal of his expedition into the interior of South Africa 1834-36. An authentic narrative of travels and discoveries, the manners and customs of the country, (Cape Town, 1975), pp.290-293.
- 80) CA, CO, vol.336, Commissioner General to Lt. Bell, 28 Februar 1828; CA, CO, vol.336, Commissioner General to Lt. Bell, Cape Town, 22 November 1828.
- 81) Percival Kirby, Sir Andrew Smith, His Life, Letters, and Works, (Cape Town, 1965), pp.66-76.
- 82) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Komaggas, 29 December 1828.
- 83) SAM, Andrew Smith Papers, vol.1, note under: 6 April 1827, Worcester.
- 84) Lye, Andrew Smith's Journal, p.120.

- 85) See CA, GH, vol.19/4. Apart from his report and map, the only official document pertaining to Smith's journey which could be traced in the Cape Archives consists of a permit to cross the colonial boundaries, requiring the respective civil servants and burghers to give him every assistance: CA, CO, vol.5760, p.46, Lieutenant-Governor Richard Bourke, Cape Town, 16 April 1828.
- 86) Kirby, Sir Andrew Smith, p.71.
- 87) Hutton, Autobiography, vol.1, pp.304-305.
- 89) Lye, Andrew Smith's Journal, p.291. There is oral evidence collected among the Witboois that some 'English "Grootmanen"' 'anointed' Kido Witbooi as the captain of his people: see Jod, 'Das Witbooi-Volk', p.82. It is difficult to establish the date of this event, but it reputedly took place when the LMS missionary Bartlett lived among the Witboois at Pella (1816-1825). The same source claims that before that time the Witboois did not have a chief, which contradicts most of the other available sources stating that Kido took the chief's office in c. 1800. LMS missionary Wimmer at Steinkopf refers to Captain Witbooi as early as 1825: CA, LMS letter, Wimmer, Bysonderheid, 31 August 1825. Jod's account could refer, on the other hand, to the visit of Kido Witbooi and Bartlett in Cape Town in 1823 (see 3.2.), which could have been interpreted by the Witboois as an official acknowledgement of Kido's status by the Cape Government. But Jod's description, which is based on the account of Hendrik Witbooi's son, Klein-Hendrik, states explicitly that the English official(s) visited the Witboois at Pella. It seems unlikely that this is a reference to the (Dutch) government officials whom the chief of the Witboois met on the occasion of the execution of Threlfall's murderer at Silverfontein. But Andrew Smith most certainly visited the Witboois on the lower Orange in 1828. His 'Northern Frontier Report' suggests that he discussed his political concept of semi-independent African chiefs on the border with the Witboois. Thus Smith may have been remembered as the English 'big man' who 'anointed' Kido as the chief of his people.
- 90) Lye, Andrew Smith's Journal, p.293.
- 91) CA, CO, vol.2723, Veldwagtmeester of Clanwilliam to Civil Commissioner of Worcester, 28 July 1830.
- 92) CA, CO, vol.381, Barnabas Shaw to Secretary of Government, John Bell, 11 August 1830; CA, CO, 5100, p.139, Secretary of Government, John Bell, to Rev Barnabas Shaw, 12 August 1830.
- 93) CA, CO, vol.2723, Civil Commissioner of Worcester to Secretary of Government, 4 August 1830.
- 94) SAL, Shaw's Journals, vol. of 1828-1835, entries of 10 and

31 August 1830. Compare Shaw, Memorials, p.139.

- 95) A written document could not be traced. But Governor Benjamin D'Urban in a letter to Abraham Christian in 1834 - the first letter ever written by the Cape Government to a Namibian chief - explicitly mentioned 'the principles of the treaty' of 1830: CA, CO, vol.560, Governor D'Urban to Abraham, Chief of the Bondelswarts residing in Great Namaqualand, 26 March 1834, pp.113-115. See also chapter 7.
- 96) Shaw, Memorials, p.139.
- 97) CA, CO, vol.560, Governor Lowry Cole, Cape Town, 30 August 1830, pp.65-66; CA, CO, vol.4900, Secretary of Government to Civil Commissioner of Worcester, 31 August 1830; CA, CO, vol.2723, Fieldkornet Engelbregt of Kamiesberg to Civil Commissioner of Worcester, 17 October 1830; CA, CO, vol.2723, Civil Commissioner of Worcester to Secretary of Government, 11 December 1830; CA, CO, 4901, Secretary of Government to Civil Commissioner of Worcester, 29 December 1830, p.54.
- 98) According to the diary of the museum collector Drège in 1830, quoted by Kirby, 'William Threlfall', p.309.

CHAPTER VII: THE EXTENSION OF THE FRONTIER IN THE 1830s AND THE
1840s

7.1. Southern Namibia in the context of colonial frontier
politics during the 1830s

The problem of securing the colonial borders increasingly gained weight in Cape colonial politics during the 1830s. The north-western frontier continued to play a subordinated role in the political considerations of the Cape Government, whose main concern remained the interaction of Africans and Europeans on the eastern frontier. New political concepts concerning an efficient safeguarding of the colonial boundaries developed, and they were to have repercussions on the north-western frontier. The political relations between the Cape Government and Namibian groups began to evolve more distinctively during this period.

Hence the 1830s marked for the southern Namibian mission, now represented by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, a phase of growing political significance. The Wesleyan missionaries became actively involved in a scheme of border posts on the eastern frontier, and for the first time a missionary in Namibia explicitly and consciously performed functions as a political agent, though on a considerably smaller scale than his colleagues among the Xhosa. For the first time a Cape Governor sent a letter to a Namibian leader, confirming the chief's status as a political ally and giving additional support to a missionary.

Government officials increasingly turned their attention to

the Orange River region, especially with regard to the ongoing illegal trade with firearms and ammunition. In a report of January 1834 by Acting Governor Lieutenant-Colonel T. Wade, the situation on the northern frontier was depicted in a gloomy light. The trade in gunpowder boomed in the early 1830s, despite some nominal control exerted by the colonial authorities. Although the sale of gunpowder within the colony remained illegal, private merchants were allowed to import powder from the United Kingdom in 1832. Regulations as to the amount of powder which could be kept in private storages were completely disregarded, and the state-controlled trade was undermined by traders underselling increasing amounts of gunpowder. Apart from the safety problems involved in the storage of large quantities - 30 000 pounds had arrived in less than six months in Cape Town in 1833 and was transported through the bustling streets in open wagons - the government was worried about the trade beyond colonial boundaries:

It is not pretended that of late years there has been any increased demand for powder for the usual purposes within the colony itself, and there is not the slightest doubt entertained that from these places <Grahamstown, Somerset, Cradock, Graaff-Reinet> it finds its way across the frontier, where it is profusely supplied by sale or barter to the Bastards and Corannas, and other native tribes...all classes residing near the frontier are, more or less, interested in this illicit traffic, and are all liable to the imputation of, if not supplying the natives with the means of desolating the colony, at the very least of not interfering to prevent others from doing so. (1)

Against this background, the danger the Xhosa represented to the white settlement on the eastern frontier was somewhat belittled. Since the Xhosa inroads were rarely accompanied by

bloodshed on a larger scale, Wade argued, those groups could be considered 'uncivilized', but not 'savages':

The true savages, the banditti, on the north and north-eastern frontier, are not a nation, but consist in mixed bands of Bastards, all immediately or remotely derived from the colony itself, of Corannas, Griquas, Bechuanas &c., and worst of all, of the outcasts of this settlement. These men are all accustomed to firearms, and generally well mounted.
(2)

While the Xhosa, continued Wade, 'may be affected by mildness and forbearance', the situation on the northern and north-eastern frontier was seriously neglected and

...there is not one soldier, or any organized means of defence whatever, that can be depended upon to oppose the merciless invaders of the districts of Somerset, Graaff Reynet, Beaufort and Clanwilliam. (3)

As matters turned out, it was wrong to believe that the Xhosa groups, mostly not being in possession of firearms, could not seriously disturb the white farmers. In December 1834, the tensions on the eastern frontier violently erupted into what colonial terminology called the 'Sixth Kaffir War'. However, the Cape Government's attention had been drawn to the northern frontier, even if it did predominantly focus on the regions of the middle and upper Orange River.

With the arrival of a new governor, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, in South Africa in January 1834, some steps towards the implementation of a treaty system were taken. In order to secure the colonial boundaries, D'Urban was ordered to abolish the commando system, which had caused so much instability for African-European relations. For a time, closer ties with African chiefs on the borders were now taken more seriously into

consideration to control the expansion beyond colonial boundaries and to secure the colony against uncontrolled transgressions of the boundaries from within and without. D'Urban was furnished with a special budget of £600 to finance political agents, who were to keep close contact with peaceably-inclined chiefs on the border. Herein he was influenced by the representations of John Philip, who in turn had listened to Stockenström's advice. (4)

In addition, Andrew Smith, who had just visited the Zulu leader, Dingaan, repeated in a letter to Governor D'Urban his concept of a treaty system. Since the outlaws, Smith argued, would always manage to obtain firearms and ammunition, it was justified and necessary to sell arms to allied frontier groups. (5)

At the end of 1834, only a few days before the outbreak of armed hostilities on the eastern frontier, D'Urban made a treaty with the Griqua leader Andries Waterboer at Griquatown. Waterboer agreed to co-operate with the colonial government for the protection of the northern border. In return he was to receive firearms, ammunition, a yearly salary of £100 and an additional sum of £50 for distribution in his community. (6)

As to the role the missionaries were to play for the security of the borders, Stockenström, newly appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Eastern Province, emphasized again in 1836 before the Aborigines Committee in London his concept of the political functions of the missionaries. Significantly, he referred to the importance of missionaries as political agents beyond colonial

boundaries when he said:

...there are other officers and other means of getting the same thing done within the colony, which I would have done by missionaries or consuls beyond the frontier; for the object I have in view is more of a diplomatic nature, merely to have a person there upon the spot; and I think it would be the cheapest way. Those missionaries have the greatest influence upon the natives, and they would gain the goodwill of those people, and by their influence be very useful indeed.
(7)

After Stockenstrom had thus stressed the necessity for closer co-operation between the colonial government and the mission societies, the secretaries of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and the London Missionary Society were given an opportunity before the committee to heap praise on different missionary institutions in South Africa. One mentioned was Edward Cook's Nisbett Bath (Warmbad) in southern Namibia. The murder of Threlfall in 1825 was presented as an outstanding example of missionary sacrifice. (8) John Philip recapitulated his view the Griqua were necessary allies of the colony, and continued:

While it was thought necessary to maintain a large military establishment on the eastern frontier to defend it against the inroads of the Caffres, the defence of the northern frontier has been left entirely to the people at the missionary stations, and the efforts of the boors...The dangers to the colony, from the tribes on the northern frontier were formerly less known than those that threatened us on the eastern boundary, but our ignorance cannot be longer pleaded as an apology...(9)

As will be shown in the following section, the newly envisaged policy of treaties with allies among the African population of the northern frontier had effects in the Namibian context. Thus the year 1834 can be said to mark the beginning of a new phase of the frontier's extension into Namibia.

7.2. The Wesleyan Mission at Warmbad from 1834

After his return to Warmbad in 1830, the captain of the Bondelswarts continued to petition for a missionary at the station of Steinkopf in Little Namaqualand, where Wimmer was jealously regarded by the Witboois as 'their' missionary. (10) In missionary circles the idea of a renewed expansion into Namibia had suffered only a temporary setback from Threlfall's murder in 1825. In particular, LMS missionary Schmelen did not refrain from reminding his mission society of the opportunities north of the Orange River. He never lost contact with the people from Great Namaqualand after his withdrawal from Bethany in 1822. His last journey across the Orange River took place in 1828, but he continuously received visitors from Namibia at his new station, Komaggas, in Little Namaqualand, and they asked for missionaries. Though his picture of the ecological and political conditions of southern Namibia was customarily bleak, Schmelen always maintained that a station like Bethany, situated near the coast, was the 'gate' to Namibia. Still inspired by his journey into the Namibian interior in 1825, he envisaged not only Great Namaqualand but also Hereroland as the target of future missionary efforts. (11)

But financial or other considerations must have discouraged the London Missionary Society with regard to a renewed Namibian adventure, and the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society decided to become involved again in Great Namaqualand. Since Barnabas Shaw, who originally had planned to accompany Schmelen to

Namibia, opened his station Lilyfontein at the Kamiesberg in 1816, the Wesleyans had always maintained ties with southern Namibia. The two Wesleyans Shaw and Edwards, and LMS missionary Kitchingman had visited Schmelen at Bethany in 1820, and there was a great deal of personal communication between the missionaries of the WMMS and the LMS. After all, Archbell's interlude of 1821/22 near the Fish River and the tragic Threlfall expedition of 1825 had not been forgotten. In 1834 the Wesleyan Methodist Mission Society decided to send a missionary to Warmbad, enabled by the financial donations of a supporter of the mission, James Nisbett. Sixteen years after the withdrawal of the last missionary resident, Ebner, the station was re-opened by Edward and Mary Cook and called Nisbett Bath, a name which never became really popular.

The twenty-six-year old Edward Cook, the son of farmers in Leicestershire, had arrived in Cape Town in January 1832. In 1834 he married Mary Frances Thornhill, with whom he would have five children. On their journey to southern Namibia the Cooks were accompanied by Peter Links, the brother of Threlfall's murdered assistant Jacob. (12)

Cook was the first Namibian missionary to carry a letter from the Cape Government to a Nama chief. Governor Benjamin D'Urban reminded Abraham Christian

...to act in conformity of the principles of the treaty entered into between yourself and the Colonial Government in the year 1830; and he wishes from you every six months, (through the medium of Mr Cook) a report, descriptive of the state of Great Namaqualand, - of the arrivals and departures, as far

as you may be acquainted with them, - of the conduct and disposition of the neighbouring tribes, and likewise of your own public transactions. (13)

The governor's view of the missionary as an important link between the Bondelswarts and the Cape Government was underscored by an impressive number of gifts: European clothing, tools and, of course, ammunition.

Thus the only missionary settlement in Namibia during the 1830s was considered by the Cape Government to perform functions as an out-post of colonial rule, providing the authorities with information on the conditions among the different groups in southern Namibia and along the lower Orange. This was a distinctive development of the influence exerted by the first missionaries in Great Namaqualand, whose political functions had not been clearly defined but, rather observed with suspicion by the colonial government.

Apart from the political implications, the Wesleyan station at Warmbad also differed from the early LMS institution inasmuch as the frontier had by now expanded further into the interior of Namibia. Some Oorlams, especially the Afrikaners and the Khauas people, were reportedly raiding Herero livestock-breeders in central Namibia on a larger scale disturbing the political and social relations between the Khoikhoi, Damara and Herero. The Oorlams had thus opened a new frontier, for a time without the support of missionaries as teachers, technicians and traders. However, with the 'discovery' of the large Herero herds, Oorlams and Nama became more convinced than before that a powerful economic and political position in the frontier zone depended on

the alliance with a missionary. Groups like the Khauas people or the Vlermuis clan, which had emerged as new social units from the interaction with mission stations, soon vied for missionary support; before long they made contact with the new missionary at Warmbad.

From the beginning Cook was confronted with the demands of his community for economic support. Initially the Bondelswarts refused to sell their cattle to the missionary, because it was considered to be his task to procure the coveted provisions. Before the Albrechts had arrived at Warmbad in 1806 and 'brought an abundance of cattle to feed them', so Cook was told, the Nama had sometimes eaten the corpses of their starved relatives. (14) Small wonder that the Albrechts were still represented to the European newcomer as 'good people' in contrast to the 'bad' Ebner, whose quite unimpressive performance among Afrikaners and Bondelswarts had forced him to leave southern Namibia in 1818. (15)

Like other missionaries before him, Cook pointed out to the chief that his task was to preach and not to hand out goods to his community. Abraham Christian's reply indicates that this view still clashed considerably with the indigenous perception of the missionary's role:

Yes, that is true, but I thought if I was in want of anything which you had, you would give <it> to me. (16)

Those expectations of the Bondelswarts and their chief led quickly to the usual conflicts within the mission community. Cook complained that his Nama servants stole his provisions and his

livestock. (17)

For unknown reasons, a fierce controversy between the chief and another African resident at Warmbad, David Bally, ensued, which Cook interpreted rightly or wrongly as a faction fight between the missionary's and the chief's party. The situation escalated considerably, and Cook began to fear for his and his family's safety. He secretly prepared his retreat across the Orange River with the support of people from the Kamiesberg and of Kido Witbooi at Pella, who once again proved his loyalty to the mission by sending some men on ox-back to Warmbad and two wagons to the Orange. However, the way Cook handled this crisis demonstrated unmistakably to the Bondelswart chief that he would not hesitate to invoke massive support from outside Namibia in case he met with opposition among the Nama:

After this we were greatly annoyed expecting every day to be attacked till it got circulated that I had sent to the colony for soldiers and when fear took the place of enmity and (sic) our circumstances suddenly changed. (18)

Cook used the opportunity to create a new political body, which could act in favour of missionary politics.

The male part of the people were called together to hear the proposed regulations for the government of the station, to which they assented, when nine of the most eligible of the people, with the chief, myself, and Peter Links, were appointed to superintend their administration...I called the selected persons together in the afternoon, that they might fix a time when they could come to reside on the station, as also to afford me the opportunity of giving them advice. I found, however, that for want of a proper understanding of the rules to which they had assented, they were raising many objections...(19)

Although this measure could not establish strict control over

the political and social affairs at Warmbad, Cook had openly and quite successfully challenged the chief's authority by appointing councillors whose power was based solely on co-operation with the missionary. It also seems that the murder of Threlfall and its consequences had left some impression on the Bondelswarts, which made it easier for the missionary to discipline his unruly community. The captain, in any case, had to give in unconditionally at this stage, and Cook triumphantly noted:

Thus began and ended the affair which bears every appearance of having advanced the interests of our cause. (20)

Cook's attitude reflected the modified political conditions for mission work in southern Namibia. Soon after his arrival in 1834, Cook confirmed the ties between the Warmbad mission and the Cape by taking up a correspondence with the Cape Governor. Though these letters were nominally written on behalf of the chief and possibly occasionally inspired by Abraham's demands, their diction betrays the all-pervading missionary influence. Cook gained a relatively powerful position by handing out yearly provisions of ammunition and commodities to the chief, in accordance with the agreement between Bondelswarts and Cape Government established in 1830. The 'liberal presents' for which Cook let the chief express his gratitude in his first letter to the government (21) consisted of commodities of hundred rixdollars worth, fifty pounds of lead and twenty pounds of gunpowder. (22)

Since the chief's reputation as a trustworthy ally of the

colonial government was to a certain extent based on his depictions of the threat the Afrikaner Oorlams reputedly constituted to the colony, it is not surprising that Abraham Christian's periodical letters predominantly referred to Jonker Afrikaner's activities in central Namibia.

The Governor's reply, written in the unctious style of the 'Great White Father' who cared about his 'children', stressed again the importance given to the pacifying impact of the missionary agent:

His Excellency trusts, that the good feeling and desire for instruction, which you manifest, will continue and be strengthened the more you become acquainted with the "Great Truths" which the missionary has come to you purposely to teach, so that neither he, nor the Society to which he belongs, may ever regret the sacrifices he has made, or the privations to which he has exposed himself in quitting his country, and giving up his personal conveniences for the spiritual as well as temporal benefit of you and your followers. His Excellency therefore hopes, you will feel the importance of receiving the missionary's lessons with the attention they deserve, and of seeking and cherishing his advice on all occasions, of using every means to meet his views in the advancement of religion, in spreading "God's Holy Word", and in his exertions to instruct you and your people in the acts of civilized life, in the cultivation of your gardens and fields and in the erections of decent and comfortable dwellings. His Excellency rests assured He may rely with confidence on your good dispositions in these respects, and that no opportunity will be lost of proving that this confidence is not misplaced, for it is from your treatment of the missionary, that H.E. will know whether you remain a friend of the colony, and it must be from your earnest endeavours to act up to his precepts, that H.E. can judge whether you are sincere in the gratitude you express for his residence amongst you. (23)

As usual the letter was accompanied by substantial presents of commodities, and the prospect of receiving more goods was held out to the chief.

Significantly, there are indications that Cook did not always generously present the captain of the Bondelswarts with those goods provided by the Cape Government. He distributed these yearly allowances in a way which would augment his political influence and stimulate new wants and needs, a policy which was designed to induce the Nama to get attached to an envisaged network of trade relations with the colony. The enhanced status of the missionary as political intermediary with the Cape provided him with more efficient means to implement sanctions against the indigenous leadership. At least one occasion is documented in the records when Cook did not hesitate to withdraw those government supplies from the captain for longer periods to punish him for an alleged lack of co-operation. (24) Though this strategy did not always prove to be successful, it sometimes provided the missionary with the means to force the leadership into co-optation. Thus the new generation of missionaries possessed a tool of control which was missing in the political arsenal of the first missionaries who resided at Warmbad. His colleague and successor, Joseph Tindall, applied the same strategy to force the chief and his family to dissolve polygamous marriages. (25)

Despite Cook's relatively strong influence, the measure of control which could be exerted by the missionary in his capacity as a political agent was not unlimited. Occasionally Abraham Christian also tried to make his newly acquired political status work for him. When the chief was in need of support against

livestock-raiders, he conveniently reminded the Cape Government of his concern for the safety of the north-western frontier. The interest of frontier groups in undisturbed communication and travelling across the Orange River increased during the 1840s with the arrival of the first itinerant traders and the Rhenish Mission Society in central Namibia. In 1845, for instance, Chief Abraham joined forces with the Fieldcornet of the Pella district, Jacob van Nel, and a commando of seventy men against a frontier outlaw, whose activities had also troubled the Bondelswarts. This man, Nousop, reportedly constituted a threat to 'the two public roads leading from the Bath through the Bushmanland to the colony', and Abraham stressed that the commando was necessary 'also for the protection of British subjects travelling in this country'. (26)

On the other hand, James E. Alexander, who gave a very unfavourable account of Captain Abraham Christian in his book, 'An Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa', (27), complained to Governor D'Urban on his return to Cape Town. (28) Despite being paid by the Cape Government, the chief had by no means gone out of his way to support Alexander's expedition into the interior of Namibia. Moreover, Alexander correctly accused the captain of the Bondelswarts of being involved in the internal trade with stolen Herero cattle, for which the chief in his reports conveniently blamed the Afrikaner Oorlams and others (29)

Governor D'Urban's subsequent letter to Abraham Christian did not only serve to remind the chief of his obligations, but was also a thinly veiled appeal to Cook to perform his functions more

effectively:

It is from your conduct on such occasions, and not from the mere words of your letters - or even your good treatment of the missionaries only who come into your land - that His Excellency will judge whether your professions are sincere or not and whether you deserve the continuance of his favor, that must depend hereafter upon proofs more convincing than the words of letters dictated by you to Mr. Cook, for the purpose of obtaining benefits that appear to be little deserved. (30)

Cook, of course, made attempts to discourage the Bondelswarts in their trade relations with 'the marauding tribes' of Nama and Oorlams in the interior. (31) However, respective appeals of the missionary mainly generated hostility among those groups because they did not want to give up their traffick with the people in the south of Namibia. (32)

Cook made persistent efforts to build up an economic support system, which differed from the relations the early LMS missionaries had created at the Warmbad station. He continued to assist impoverished newcomers to the mission station with economic hand-outs like milk and meat from the mission herd, but he consciously attempted to introduce economic relations and a new capitalist-orientated ideology in favour of a closer connection with the colonial market. (33) Thus he supplied unspecified 'articles in exchange' (34), probably for livestock, and he outrightly refused to part with a shirt or a hat for other than a fixed price. (35) In this vein, the missionary rejoiced at the sight of the first few Nama he was able to baptize at the end of 1835, who 'were neatly clad in English manufacture'. (36) Cook also took great pains to obtain assistance from the Cape

Government in order to furnish Abraham Christian with a wagon, which he did with the explicit intention of enabling the chief to trade with the colony. (37)

On his arrival Cook found the Bondelswarts living in utter poverty. They were slaughtering their young livestock, a sure sign of despair among pastoralists because this measure seriously jeopardizes the reproduction of their flocks and herds. Some of the Bondelswarts, as Cook remarked, were visibly reduced to 'mere skeletons', a situation which was partly due to raids of the Groot Doode (//O-gain) and those Afrikaners who had stayed at their residences near Warmbad. The attacks of the Groot Doode on the livestock of the Bondelswarts were, judging from earlier accounts of the Albrechts, a constant source of strife for the people at Warmbad. Thus Cook became soon acquainted with the vicious circle of ecological deterioration and inter-group conflict; at this stage the Groot Doode raids were reportedly triggered off by the inroads the Afrikaners had previously made among them. (38)

Although he understood that the people could not live at the station in greater numbers, his strategy differed from the one of previous missionaries, who had quite regularly accompanied their followers with their herds and flocks and ventured on expeditions to contact other Khoikhoi groups. Cook seldom accompanied his migrating community, but concentrated on activities at his station where he had to perform functions as a blacksmith, carpenter, bricklayer, teacher and doctor. (39) Moreover, Cook

was not at his station for long periods. He travelled to Cape Town, for instance, for a whole year, between July 1836 and July 1837, and his colleague Joseph Jackson looked after the Warmbad station. It took Cook about a year to realize that the number of Bondelswarts exceeded his initial assumptions of only 1600 people. (40) It was not before 1838 that he travelled the relatively short distance of c. 75 miles from Warmbad to Afrikaner's Kraal to visit David and Titus Afrikaner (41).

The mission school at Warmbad consisted of 100 to 150 pupils, including some adults. Cook was assisted by a Nama, Johannes Kaffer, who had been educated at the mission school of the Albrechts. (42) It seems that missionary education was at first more concerned with the boys, judging from Cook's reference to 'a female writing class' planned for the future by his wife. (43) Among those Nama who obtained religious instructions were the captain and his leading men. (44) The Christian teachings were accepted by the Nama with the customary religious fervour of which, for instance, Abraham Christian's wife gave proof during the church service in the form of hysterical outbursts. (45)

Although Cook's activities were initially more or less restricted to the immediate vicinity of Warmbad, his station became something like a focal point of communication for the different Nama/Oorlam groups, which showed a great interest to establish more regular contact with a missionary. Among the visitors of his station were members of the Barends clan in Griqualand, who temporarily planned to settle in southern Namibia. (46) The access to a mission station became increasingly

important with the development of the Nama/Oorlam-Herero network in central Namibia, because at a time when traders did not yet find their way across the lower Orange River missionaries were the vital link between those livestock-raiders and the colonial market. In 1838 a trader named Janson resided for some time among the Witboois at Pella (47), and in 1843 James Morris, himself one of the first European traders to enter Namibia, met a man at the Orange River who reputedly was the first trader to visit Amraal at his residence Naosanabis at the Nosob River. (48) Significantly, the African population of the north-western frontier found it difficult distinguishing between traders and missionaries. Morris was taken for a missionary and was asked to hold church service when he did business near Pella in 1843. (49)

Envoys from other groups like the Khauas people, Veldskoendraers, Swartboois etc. arrived at Warmbad, amongst them some veterans of the early Namibian mission stations like John Kagab of the !Kharakhoen (Fransman Hottentots), Adam Lambert, brother of Amraal, and Piet Vlermuis:

The two leading men of the party, Adam Lambert and Piet Vleermuis, are very interesting characters. They were baptized by Mr Schmelling <sic>, and the latter was his interpreter <sic>, and although they have greatly fallen, they evince at present a sincere desire to save their souls. (50)

Under the impression of a tightly woven network of social ties between the different Nama and Oorlam groups, Cook developed his concept of a Namibian 'mission circuit', drawing from the Methodist scheme of several interconnected institutions. Those mission stations would be economically dependent on trade

relations with the colony:

For grazing a thin proportion of stock, the pasture is good, cattle increase amazingly and after the rains fatten in a very short period. The people have a few skins, wooden bowls, ostrich-feathers, thatching-cord (which they make from the bark of a mimosa tree) et cetera <sic> to dispose of. They kill a few wild animals for food, but most frequently the zebra and the cameleopard <giraffe>. In the season, they gather a considerable quantity of honey, ostrich-eggs and a very nutritional and useful kind of bulb, which multiplies at the root something like a potatoe and when dried and prepared very much resembles arrow-root. To prevent the people from wandering and to train them to the usages of civilized life, I urge them to bring these productions and store them for their use on the station; and as an encouragement occasionally purchase from them. The plan of exchanging cattle for corn I mentioned before and also that of keeping cows to supply the most destitute with milk, the latter of which plans has already done considerable good. The increase of the cows I have determined to appropriate to the same destitute class, which measure will enable some poor natives to hear the Gospel, who otherwise would not. I think a sort of general bartering warehouse would be a valuable acquisition, and perhaps hats and cutlery might be manufactured. (51)

Moreover, Cook suggested to appoint a mission trader to procure livestock for the mission station. (52)

For once, European designs of 'social engineering' among African groups referred to the close cultural and social interrelations and not to real or alleged incompatibilities between Nama and Oorlams. Cook understood very clearly that Nama and Oorlam groups had many features in common and that they were not sharply divided along ethnic or cultural lines. At this stage, however, missionary politics could not yet be based on a position of power to implement some sort of 'divide et impera' policy. But the determination of the Wesleyan missionaries to destroy fundamental features of Namibian social formations was

clearly in accordance with more utilitarian notions of colonial expansion. Later strategies of RMS missionaries like C.H. Hahn, who accepted military means to promote mission politics, were still blocked by the political status quo, which called for cautious handling of African decision-making institutions. (53)

Apart from those more pragmatic considerations, missionaries like Cook perceived the prospect of an integration of Namibian groups into the relations of the capitalist market also as an opportunity for Africans to find a socially and politically acceptable place in the hierarchy of colonial society. With regard to the yet unexplored conditions among the Herero, the envisaged opening of trade relations was also considered to be justified, because it would furnish them with firearms to defend themselves against the Oorlams' depredations. (54)

These concepts of a larger African community on the frontier under the control of the mission harmonized with the concept of missionary border posts. As Cook said:

The affinity which exists between all the various divisions and the fact of their origin, persons and habits being so exactly similar, gives them a tendency to union which is perhaps only prevented by the separate interest of their petty and generally worthless leaders. They have constant communications with each other, and therefore the substance of what the followers of one chief learn and embrace will be conveyed to the others. I have lately invited the chiefs of the Ombrals (Khaugas people) and Veldschoendraagers to visit us for the purpose of trying to accommodate matters for them to live in Abraham's territory and enjoy more directly the advantages of our instructions. And there are at present with us the elder son of the one and the brother of the other, from whose professions it is probable the plan will succeed... This measure, while it is important for the two tribes, is more especially so for the mission establishment, the circumstances of which are always, from the coalition of these and

other tribes of Namaquas with the murderous hordes under the Afrikaander and Boeys, in some degree critical. In reference to the Bundle Zwaarts, the circumstance of the chief having consented to the regulations of the mission institutions induces all the people, whether resident with us or not, to consider themselves amiable <sic> to the same and to regulate their affairs by constant appeals to us. Hence they receive more or less instruction and are under a constant restraint, but more especially in reference to their traffick with the marauders and their plundering excursions to the Damaras. (55)

Cook's confidence in the growing social and political hegemony of the mission also found expression in his destruction of the musical instruments of the Nama to prohibit their 'vitiating' feasts and dances, and in inducing the chief and his council to declare any marriages without the missionary's consent to be illegal. (56)

From 1838 onwards Cook regularly visited the Afrikaner Oorlams under David and Titus Afrikaner at Blydeverwacht (Afrikaner's Kraal, Peace Mountain) and Jerusalem. This Oorlam group was politically quite isolated before they were visited by the missionary Joseph Jackson and Alexander in 1837. The Afrikaners did not dare to visit Cook at Warmbad from fear of the Bondelswarts (57), whose military defeat of their Oorlam neighbours in c. 1825 reputedly had contributed to Jonker's decision to move further into the interior. (58)

Mission-educated David Afrikaner, brother of old Jager, had not forgotten his reading and writing skills. Under Moffat he had been the teacher of the 'female congregation'. (59) This time he had to write several times to draw Cook's attention to Afrikaner's Kraal. In one letter, he said:

As we have already written, we long to see you, but our longing as <sic> hitherto been in vain, as also has been our desire to receive an answer. May it not be so this time. Again I write that we wish from our hearts to see you and hear from you all things that are commanded there of God. "For we are as sheep having no shepherd." My brothers have seen a country suitable for an institution, and two fine fountains and I (...) have gone to seek a missionary that I may return with him to the situation above mentioned. For I obtained the late Mr Albrecht, but he left me, then I obtained Mr Ebner, and he also left me, and for the 3rd we obtained Mr Moffat, and him we also lost and all in consequence of the sterility of the land and the scarcity of water. On these accounts they left us, and therefore we will now remove with a missionary to where the country is better. O Sir have compassion upon us, have compassion upon us and hear us and the expression of our longing as Christ had compassion on the multitude. We are but few at present, but if we had a missionary we should become a large number. Ameral has <sent> his brother Adam to say that I must seek a missionary (...) with him myself, for Ameral is married to my sister. Fear not, Sir, to come to us, for although we are murderers <we> are not wolves and tigers and lions, we are, after all, men, (...) fear not. I should have written more, but ink and paper fail me (...) you have the kindness to send me a little and also a <testa>ment. The bible which I obtained from Mr Moffat is too <heavy> to carry on short journeys. Greeting to you and all and all friends (...) We wish from our hearts to see you and shall expect you (...) return with our people. I am your friend, David Affrikaner. (60)

Among the Afrikaners Cook observed a great deal of religious agitation (61) and he reported some time later that Titus Afrikaner had given up honey beer and destroyed his dagga gardens. (62) Cook appointed David Afrikaner a missionary assistant for the Blydeverwacht/Jerusalem community of c. 200 people. (63) David received for his activities 'a few pounds sterling per annum from our society, furnished in goods at the Cape Town prices.' (64)

Missionary functions were also performed independently by Piet

Viermuis and Adam Lambert, who often visited Cook at Warmbad and accompanied him on his trips to the Afrikaner community. (65) These two men had been members of the mission elite since the first missionaries had entered southern Namibia; Adam Lambert was depicted by Cook as a highly spiritual character occasionally prone to weeping fits. (66)

Those visits gave new impetus to independent religious activities among distant Nama/Oorlam groups. After Lambert and Viermuis had come to Warmbad for the first time in 1838, they began to preach and teach at Naosanabis, the new residence of the Khauas people, where they reputedly organized school classes for people from 'seven different tribes, four of which are black':

...consisting of about thirty persons, their number being recorded upon a neat-cut piece of wood, such as those upon which they kept the account of their sheep, and a distinguishing mark was made between the higher and lower classes. The leading part in the management of these classes, as well as the other means of grace, was taken by Piet Viermuis. (67)

In 1839, the missionary travelled to Cape Town with some Nama and Oorlams. Among them were Captain Amraal Lambert, his brother Adam and Peter Links, Cook's former 'mechanic and interpreter', who had left the station two years ago, discontent with his salary as a so-called native assistant. (68) On behalf of his people Cook sold ivory, skins etc. of £60 worth. (69) But Adam Lambert and Peter Links died during a dysentery epidemic raging in Cape Town. (70)

It has to be regarded as a significant economic and ideological break-through for the mission that Namibian

livestock-breeders now began to accept the idea of giving away large and small stock, which was sold by the missionaries in the colony. (71) Before the 1840s, missionaries in southern Namibia continuously complained about a general unwillingness of their communities to exchange livestock. Missionaries were regarded as sources of material wealth, which they had to distribute to keep their followers together. But now Nama and Oorlams tentatively became engaged in exchange relations anticipating the large-scale livestock trade of the 1850s and 1860s when European traders drove livestock to the Cape numbering between 200 and 1500 head of cattle. (72) Among the missionaries it was considered to be a sensation when their adherents were eventually willing to donate some of their livestock to the benefit of the mission community. When the Wesleyan Thomas L. Hodgson visited Blydeverwacht in 1841 on a tour of inspection of the north-western frontier, he noted that the Warmbad community gave c.18 head of large and 128 head of small stock as a subscription to the WMMS:

It is worthy of remark, that when Mr Cook first arrived at the station with the people whom he brought with him from Kamiesberg, it was with the utmost difficulty he could obtain a few sheep of the poorest kind; and that his supplies, as to food, were for some time afterwards drawn from the colony, but now he people have, under the blessing of God, on the industry and economy enforced upon them by the Gospel, not only cattle to sell for clothes, but are able, at the first missionary meeting ever held in Great Namaqualand, to present liberal subscriptions in cattle as a thank-offering to heaven...(73)

In June 1842 Cook collected again twenty pounds worth of cattle at Blydeverwacht. (74) These collections were made more and more often among the different groups of Nama and Oorlams in

the orbit of the Warmbad station (75), though some members of the community seemed to have interpreted the subscriptions as some kind of tax enforced upon them by the missionaries. (76) There are also indications that the indigenous leadership regarded these missionary collections with suspicion, because they interfered with the chief's right to extract surplus. Thus the chief of the Bondelswarts made one futile attempt to get hold of those donations, because losing control over the distribution of livestock among his followers meant a further loss of political influence. (77)

7.3. The expedition of Sir James Edward Alexander in 1836/37

Vedder and other authors have emphasized the importance of Alexander's journey into the interior of Namibia (78), and since Alexander's account of his expedition was published in two volumes as early as 1838, the following section does not comment in detail on his ethnographic and geographical observations. (79) However, although his journey was sponsored by the Royal Geographical Society as a scientific project, its significance has also to be seen against the political background of the Cape Colony during the 1830s.

Dr Andrew Smith, after his return from his mission to the north-western frontier in 1828, had repeatedly drawn the attention of the Cape Government to the necessity of investigatory expeditions beyond the colonial boundaries to enter into treaties with African leaders, who would co-operate in securing the colonial borders. After performing functions as a

government agent on the eastern frontier, Smith ventured upon his extended journey to the different African population groups north and north-east of the middle Orange River from August 1834 to January 1836. As a preliminary step to the conclusion of treaties, Smith handed out so-called government medals bearing the King's cipher to several chiefs, for instance to the dreaded Mzilikazi of the Ndebele in the western Transvaal. (80)

Alexander originally had planned to explore those regions beyond the north-eastern colonial boundaries. But his arrival at the Cape at the beginning of 1835 coincided with the eruption of the Sixth Frontier War between Xhosa and white settlers. Alexander, an officer on leave from the 42nd Royal Highlanders, joined the staff of Governor D'Urban as his private secretary. (81) When the war had come to an end and Alexander could think of resuming his plans, Andrew Smith's journey had rendered another exploratory trip to the North-East superfluous. Thus Governor D'Urban, possibly acting on the advice of Smith, suggested an expedition across the lower Orange into Namibia, where the treaty with the Bondelswarts had already furnished the Cape Government with some sort of foothold. (82)

Alexander and his companions travelled altogether for about 4000 miles. His published account is supplemented with the first detailed map of the whole of Great Namaqualand from the Orange River to the Kuiseb and Swakop Rivers. (83) The expedition received a considerable backup from the authorities, and Alexander enjoyed the full status of a government official.

Before his arrival on the border of Little Namaqualand he sent messengers to the chiefs of the Bondelswarts and the Witboois to summon them to the Kamiesberg. (84) Furthermore, it was arranged with the navy that a warship should be sent to Walvis Bay in assistance of the expedition, although, for reasons which could not be established, the ship did not arrive there. (85) After exploratory trips through Little Namaqualand, where he met the missionaries Edwards, Wimmer and Schmelen, and a prolonged stay at Warmbad, the party travelled as far north as Walvis Bay. The expedition was accompanied and assisted by several Nama and Oorlams, among them Jan Boois, his brother Hendrick and Willem Swartbooi, the leader of the //Khau/gōan. (86)

At Niais, near the present-day Rehoboth, Alexander met Jonker Afrikaner, who had begun to establish a powerful position among the Nama and Damara, close to the livestock-breeding Herero, whom he claimed to have defeated recently near Windhoek.

It is difficult to establish from the sources how this new frontier polity under the leadership of the Afrikaner Oorlams developed. It has already been mentioned that the Afrikaners suffered a defeat against the Bondelswarts after Jager's death in 1823, precipitating the move of a faction under the ambitious Jonker into the interior of Namibia (see 5.2.). Jonker told Alexander that the Kai//khaun called him for help against the Herero at a time of escalating conflicts between Nama and Herero livestock-breeders in the north of Great Namaqualand. (87) This is confirmed by oral evidence collected by Vedder among the Kai//khaun. This tradition claims that //Oasib, chief of the Red

Nation, sent two envoys to Jonker in southern Namibia pleading for military assistance from the Oorlams. Jonker dispersed the Herero beyond the Swakop, and in return he was given settlement rights in central Namibia. (88) In several battles with the Herero Jonker defended his newly-won position of power. When the Kai//khaun realized that the Afrikaner Oorlams had come to stay and were establishing themselves as hegemonic force among the different groups in central Namibia, it was too late. As a result of the Herero's defeat at the hands of the Afrikaners, more Oorlam and Nama groups moved up north to participate in the new raiding network, which also incorporated some Herero. (89)

Discouraged by Jonker Afrikaner's claim that it would be impossible to contact the hostile Herero groups further in the north, Alexander's expedition turned south again.

In his contacts with Namibian groups, Alexander inevitably gave the impression of a powerful envoy of the Cape Government, not hesitating to interfere in their internal quarrels. Incidentally, the government medals he gave to Abraham Christian, Willem Swartbooi, Jonker Afrikaner and Amraal Lambert as a token of political goodwill (90) had been obtained from Andrew Smith, who had distributed some medals on his last journey to the north. (91) Especially Alexander's assertion to provide missionaries for the different Namibian groups was hailed with great expectations. In the wake of his journey, some people travelled from Namibia to Schmelen's station Komaggas in Little Namaqualand to request missionaries. (92)

It seems that the rough British soldier struck the right chord in his dealings with the Nama and Gorlams as the scholar Theophilus Hahn was told some forty years later:

The Namaquas even now speak of him in the highest terms, and praise his social and familiar habits. An old Namaqua said to me of him "/Ava-khoii khemi ko tsá /hób ke", - That man had the flavour of a Redman, - meaning to say that the English traveller knew how to fraternize with them. (93)

On his return from Namibia in 1837, Alexander provided Governor D'Urban with a report titled 'Notes on the North-West Frontier of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope'. (94) Apart from drawing attention to the copper deposits along the Orange, Alexander's report, part of which is included in his book, specifically underlines the need for the development of trade relations with Great Namaqualand. (95) The new focus on the potential cattle trade with Namibian groups reflected the concern of the settler population at the Cape about the escalating emigration of white trekboers beyond the colonial boundaries. The Great Trek had fully begun in 1837, and Alexander had noticed much unrest among white farmers in the district of Clanwilliam, which extended to the northern colonial boundary marked by the Buffalo (Koussie) River. (96) Rumours were spread about a tax-free paradise in Natal, where 'the potatoes are so large that it requires a span of oxen to drag off one of them', and several trekboer families had begun to travel from the Bokkeveld eastward. (97)

A general scarcity of food supplies at the Cape and an increase of prices was seen as being partly the result of the

emigration of frontier farmers away from the colonial market. (98) Against this back-drop of economic depression, Alexander was prepared to allay the fears of the government concerning the security of the north-western frontier. The veteran of numerous campaigns took a liking to Jonker Afrikaner, whom he respected as the hardened warrior that he was. As he had been hospitably received by the Oorlam leader and noticeably impressed by the developing frontier polity in central Namibia, Alexander was full of praise for Jonker Afrikaner's leadership qualities. (99) In a letter to Governor D'Urban, Alexander stressed Jonker's good intentions to host missionaries and to become involved in closer trade relations with the colony:

Abram (chief of the Bondelswarts) blackens the character of the Africaners, as to this I can only say, that I received the greatest possible assistance from Jonker, the chief of the Africaners - found him a very worthy man, he and his people are very anxious to serve the colony and to have a missionary and trader among them. (100)

The fact that the Bondelswarts, despite their reluctant support of the expedition, were the only group favoured with close ties to the colony earned them some scathing remarks from the European traveller. Alexander cites some Nama he met at the Fish River, who were eagerly begging for admission to the mission network with its economic and political benefits:

"Open the door for us" said the Namaquas of the Fish River "and we will come into the colony to trade, but protect us against the Boors and against a tribe of our nation, the Bondlezwaarts of the Warm Bath, who are great rogues as you well know, and who give you no assistance though they get yearly a present from the colony. - We will protect and assist missionaries and traders if they come among us." (101)

As a serious impediment for the envisaged cattle trade between Namibia and the Cape, Alexander condemned the behaviour of the boers in Little Namaqualand, who sought to monopolize the trade by harassing and cheating Namibian herdsmen visiting the colony. (102) He also repeated previous suggestions to extend the colonial boundary beyond Little Namaqualand to the Orange River, because there was already a number of colonists settling on farms beyond the Buffalo River. These farmers had payed taxes for their loan farms for about thirty years and saw themselves entitled to what they understood as protection of their rights. Moreover, as Alexander pointed out, white and Bastard farmers had always trekked with their livestock across the colonial boundaries in times of drought. In order to control the boundary and to safeguard the rights of the African population, a Bastard or Nama police post would have to be installed. (103)

7.4. Missionaries and the development of the Nama/Oorlam-Herero network in the 1840s

Some mission followers continued to prosper in making use of the relatively peaceful conditions which prevailed in the orbit of mission stations in southern Namibia. As Cook was told by one of his African assistants:

On our way my interpreter, who is a wealthy influential man, assured me that their number of sheep and goats has increased since the establishment of the mission about fourfold. Since the introduction of the Gospel all the neighbouring tribes have been peacefully disposed towards them, and the best proportion of their lands, which lay dormant through fear of the enemy, have been occupied, and consequently their flocks have been plentifully fed and watered, producing the large increase as ever

alluded to. (104)

Cook, however, was not as naive as these remarks on the 'power of the Gospel' seem to suggest. He knew that at this time some groups wanted to maintain peaceful relations because missionaries hardly thought it worthwhile to open a station amidst constant warfare. However, in expectation of the missionaries promised by Alexander and anticipating a stricter control of commandos, some Nama and Oorlams raided Herero livestock-breeders on a larger scale, thus demonstrating that the pacifying influence of a mission station evidently was an important feature of European-African interaction. Cook repeatedly warned the Bondelswarts and visiting members of the Khauas people not to trade in stolen Herero cattle:

The reason, which they assigned for the undertaking (commandos) at this present time, is that they knew if the missionary were with them, they should not be permitted to go, and Col. A. (Alexander) having promised to send them a missionary upon his return to the Cape, they took the opportunity to possess themselves of a sufficiency of cattle before his arrival. (105)

Towards the end of 1837, rumours about the developing frontier polity of the Oorlams thriving on the rich resources of Herero cattle abounded in southern Namibia. Participants of Alexander's expedition, for example, praised before the Warmbad community the quality of pasturages and water sites on the borders of Hereroland. (106) It may be safely assumed that the religious agitation Cook observed during this period among the Afrikaner Oorlams at Blydeverwacht and Jerusualem, where the traveller Backhouse noticed during a brief visit in 1840 excessive poverty, was also connected to those reports pouring into the

southern mission communities. (107) Under the impression of those auspicious accounts, David and Titus Afrikaner occasionally demanded from the missionary to travel with them up north. (108) Probably due to Cook's excellent relations with Amraal, David Afrikaner suggested to settle with the Khauas people (109), and Amraal eventually sent envoys with a wagon to the Afrikaner community at Blydeverwacht to fetch the missionary. (110)

Those attempts to incite Cook to come to the northern boundary of Great Namaqualand finally led to his first exploratory journey to the Afrikaner Oorlams and the Khauas people in 1840 when southern Namibia suffered again considerably from drought. (111) Both the missionary and the Oorlams shared a common interest in a renewed missionary expansion into the interior. Like all the other missionaries before him, Cook had soon begun to see the ecological and economic conditions of southern Namibia in a different light. After the first optimism concerning grazing and water had evaporated, a more realistic attitude took over. Some of Cook's letters are noticeably pervaded by an overall attitude of loneliness and even despair, hidden beneath the surface of the indefatigable Christian pioneer. He complained as early as December 1835 of his and his wife's deteriorating health and asked for his removal from Warmbad to a more suitable place like Albany. (112)

Apparently his sagging spirits were not seen in a friendly light by the Wesleyan Methodist Mission Society when he visited Cape Town at the end of 1836. It seems that Cook agreed reluctantly to resume his work at Warmbad. He delayed his return

to southern Namibia by spending several months at the Kamiesberg, leaving his station under the auspices of his colleague Joseph Jackson. (113)

Under the impression of the continuous reports coming from the north, Cook resumed his concept of a future 'mission circuit' including the Khauas people, the Afrikaner Oorlams and the Boois, who could 'alternately be visited in the circuit of operations'. (114)

Since the late 1830s, sections of the Witbooi people also began to cross the Orange River and moved slowly into Namibia. Cook met little groups 'acknowledging the jurisdiction of the Chief Witteboy, who occupies the country south of the Great River' between Warmbad and Blyderverwacht and later north of the Warmbad station. (115) Several members of the Witbooi group were also among the visitors of the Warmbad mission school. (116)

For a time, the plans of an investigatory journey to the north had to be delayed, partly due to an epidemic (perhaps smallpox) taking its toll among Amraal's people and later also at Warmbad. The situation escalated to such an extent that the Cape Government temporarily cut off any communication with Little and Great Namaqualand; messengers were turned back at the Kamiesberg, and Cook could not even send his mail to Cape Town. (117)

In 1840 the mission community at Warmbad was reinforced by Joseph Tindall and his wife Sarah. Tindall, born in 1807 in Nottingham, had been a shop-keeper. He had become involved with

the Wesleyan movement at an early age, and his acquaintanceship with the missionary T.L. Hodgson motivated him to go to South Africa. (118) Tindall, his wife and their four-year-old son Henry, who also was later to become a missionary in southern Namibia, arrived in Cape Town in January 1836. (119) Here Tindall took up preaching on the market places. On Cook's request for an assistant, it was decided to send him to Warmbad. (120) The Tindalls met Cook, who was travelling with several followers to Cape Town, at the Kamiesberg in September 1839. At Lilyfontein, the Wesleyan mission station, they waited for his return, and in January 1840 the two missionaries with their families arrived at Warmbad. (121) Tindall immediately commenced his work among the Bondelswarts and Afrikaner Oorlams, and at a later stage among the !Kharakhoen at the Fish River. (122)

A few weeks before the death of seventy-nine-year old LMS missionary Michael Wimmer at Steinkopf, who had worked for almost twenty years among the Witboois and other groups south of the Orange, chief Kido Witbooi made an unsuccessful attempt in May 1840 to fetch Tindall as their missionary to Little Namaqualand. (123) With Tindall looking after the communities of Warmbad, Blyderverwacht and Jerusalem, Cook and his family could finally venture upon the journey to central Namibia in June 1840. The precise route of the expedition is difficult to establish, but the Cooks and their companions travelled up the Fish River, via the Löwen River (Xamop), until they reached Amraal's residence Naosanabis at the Nossob River in July 1840. (124)

The frontier polity established by Amraal consisted of c. 400

Khauas people, and c. 2000 people of a mixed San, Damara and Nama clientele. As Alexander had observed, the relations between the Khauas people and their competing Afrikaner neighbours were not without tensions. (125)

The Khai//khaun (Red Nation) had moved from their previous residences along the Fish River closer to the Afrikaner Oorlams and the Khauas people further north. The region between Naosanabis and Tsebris, the temporary residence of the Afrikaners, constituted a frontier zone between Nama/Oorlams and the Herero. As Cook and later Tindall were informed, Herero groups had only recently been driven away from this area, which they had occupied for some miles south of Naosanabis, while the Damara had been dispersed from the Auas Mountains by the encroachments of the Afrikaner Oorlams and the Kai//khaun. (126) Tindall observed during his journey in 1842 that not all of the Damara had become enslaved under the yoke of other Namibian groups, as later colonial historians would have it:

Many of them are servants to the Namaquas, who overburden them neither with work, food nor wages. Not infrequently they live at the tobacco garden and find their own food. Some have superior treatment and are furnished with a few milch goats. Some are so far civilized as to take charge of sheep and goats. (127)

Cook noticed the obvious impoverishment of some of the Nama, among them those Kai//khaun, who had been followers of Archbell's brief missionary attempts in 1821. (128) An uneasy peace prevailed between the Kai//khaun leader, //Oaseb, and Amraal (129), because the Kai//khaun attempted not very successfully to gain an equally powerful position, although their lack of

firearms put them at a disadvantage concerning their attacks on the Herero herders. (130)

Cook met Jonker Afrikaner at Tsebris where a similar network of political and social relations had evolved, and he visited Rehoboth. Accompanied by Piet Vlermuis and a chief of the Topnaars (#Aonin, !Gomen), the missionary travelled to their traditional residence at Walvis Bay. (131) At this occasion Cook saw about one hundred men, probably Damara, involved in the construction of a road to Walvis Bay - Jonker's famous 'Bay Road'. (132)

Parts of the Afrikaner Oorlams' clientele were formed by groups of Herero paupers. These impoverished livestock-breeders made a living by exchanging honey and 'veldkos' for milk and meat. They also laboured in the gardens of the Nama and were 'sent for when any heavy labour is to be performed'. (133) With another group of Herero near Walvis Bay Jonker Afrikaner had concluded 'formal peace', reaffirmed by the exchange of assegais and cattle. (134)

The Cooks returned to Warmbad on 4 December 1840. The exhausting journey had worsened the missionary's fragile physical and mental health:

At this time I was also much depressed in mind, and using the language of unbelief and despair was ready to say, the wilderness hath shut me in, but the shadow of him in whom we trusted became my comfort. (135)

When Tindall travelled to the Cape in August 1841 to sell some 'subscribed' livestock, he had been noticeably impressed by

Cook's report of central Namibia as a vast field of yet unexplored opportunities for missionary efforts. (136) At meetings in Cape Town he propagated the extension of mission work into the interior of Namibia. (137) On his return to Warmbad in November 1841 he found Cook very ill, which incidentally seemed to encourage the chief of the Bondelswarts to be more rebellious in his everyday dealings with the ailing missionary. (138)

In April 1842 it was Tindall's turn to commence an investigatory trip to Naosanabis and to the Afrikaner Oorlams' new residence (Klein) Windhoek. He travelled up the Fish River, meeting on his way with wandering groups of the Khauas people and some //Khou/gōan (Swartboois) under the chief Willem Swartbooi (!Hulseb), which latter were already in possession of firearms. (139) Tindall also encountered with a group of Kai//khaun who were travelling to the colony for the purpose of trading. (140) Significantly, the nominally most powerful and senior Nama group could at this stage not successfully compete with the Afrikaners or the Khauas people without the support of a missionary as intermediary with the Cape market.

This emerges as the most striking aspect from the accounts of Cook's and Tindall's journeys: how resolutely the Nama and Oorlams aimed at a close co-operation with the missionaries in order to consolidate the newly evolving social and political structures in central Namibia. The missions and the Nama/Oorlam 'voortrekkers' had grown into an historical interdependency which had developed over the decades, and long before the German RMS

missionaries paved the way for the annexation of the territory as a colony. On the ideological and social level, this became conspicuous by the existence of Christian religious patterns pervading the way of life even of those groups, which were not living in the immediate operational range of mission stations.

Thus the first missionaries visiting Jonker Afrikaner at his new residence at Windhoek in 1842, situated further north of Tsebris, were astonished to find a stone church, independently built by the Oorlams. Tindall and later RMS missionary C.H. Hahn described the building as a solid chapel of 54 feet by 12 feet with a flat roof, inside labouriously white washed by hand, and providing space for 500 to 600 people. This size still proved to be too small for the great number of church-goers. (141) Like his father Jager had done about twenty years ago among the Griqua and Tswana (see 5.2.), Jonker Afrikaner conducted the church services in Windhoek. (142) After the RMS missionaries had arrived there in 1842, Jonker Afrikaner's sermons were translated for the attending Herero. (143)

But Jonker's church was not the only church constructed autonomously by Nama and Oorlams. Cook found a wooden chapel at Amraal's place Naosanabis in 1840 (144), and in 1842 Tindall could give a sermon in 'a temporary chapel newly erected' by the !Kharakhoen (Fransman Hottentots), which was 'lighted with a native made candle', at a place near the Fish River c. 70 miles north of Warmbad. (145) Tindall also preached in another chapel 'newly erected but unfinished' at the //Ham River in the vicinity of Blydeverwacht. (146)

This was different from the picture the first missionaries in southern Namibia had described (see 4.4.). What previously had been emotional prayer-meetings and spontaneous agitation, was now assuming the character of a more organized religious structure. The missionaries still had ample opportunity to observe a good deal of ecstatic behaviour at prayer-meetings, but the frontier zone revealed the first signs of its 'closing' under the impending hegemony of the Afrikaner Oorlams at the beginning of the 1840s. (147) The struggle for the control of resources like livestock and a subordinated labour force left specifically Damara, San and some Herero groups with increasingly less political and social autonomy. The sharpening of class differences coincided with the increasing importance of new ideological and political structures as they visibly evolved among Afrikaner Oorlams and Khauas people. More and more sections of the Nama/Oorlam population began to gravitate, at least economically if not geographically, towards the new frontier polity in central Namibia. Significantly, these new religious structures did not exclude Damara and San, who lived as captives, dependants or semi-autonomous servants among the Nama/Oorlams. (148) The de facto independent church organization of the Khauas people at Naosanabis, which was established before a missionary permanently settled there in 1844, also accommodated Herero captives. (149)

These independent preaching and teaching activities had far-reaching effects as they snowballed among neighbouring groups,

anticipating the establishment of mission stations. Tindall describes the following scene among the Nama neighbours of the Oorlams:

Halted with the Rooi Volk (Kai//khaun). Had a numerous attendance at public service and there were complaints at my leaving them, after giving them one taste of God's Word. The singing of a little maid from Ameral's kraal had attracted attention. Many expressed a desire to learn. I passed a temporary school-room in which the girl had taught the children. (150)

When Tindall was living among the Khauas people some years later, he observed one of his servants, probably a Herero:

Pointing to his breast he said he felt there, pointing upward he understood that we worshipped God. After staying many days he called again and said that his book was worn out. I must oblige him with another. Although he cannot read, he is in the habit of inviting his neighbours to assemble for worship, when, with open book, he performs to the best of his ability what he considers to be a duty. (151)

The integration of marginalized Damara and Herero into those new religious structures indicates that the safeguarding of the leadership's political and economic power was a prominent feature of church organization. Those class differentiations, with an elite performing Christian religious functions, were moulded by the social relations which had emerged from the European-African interaction at the early mission stations in southern Namibia. Most of the leaders and 'big men' striving for power in central Namibia in the 1840s once had been so-called native assistants, interpreters or close allies of the Albrechts, Seidenfaden, Schmelen and other missionaries.

Significantly, it was at this specific stage that the term 'Oorlam' gained a more explicit class connotation, differing from

the previously more culturally defined usage. At the beginning of the century, Oorlams were merely seen as people having 'formerly served under Christians' (152), or they were considered to be the 'more cultivated Hottentots', distinguished from other Khoisan by a more or less superficial degree of acculturation. (153) With the sharpening of class differences between the Oorlams and their subordinated Nama, Damara and Herero clientage, the self-bestowed label 'Oorlam' began to denote a very prominent consciousness of political power:

Yes, the Hottentots pride themselves on being much superior to the Damaras, for whom they invariably have a term of contempt; especially Amraal's tribe, who call themselves Oorlams, and expect the Damaras to give them this term of superiority, the origin and meaning of which I have never been able to ascertain, and all that they know of is that, when they were in the service of the Dutch farmers, they were sometimes encouraged in their work by being told "Jou vader was een goeie Oerlam geweest". (154)

However, it must be emphasized again that the relative independence of the new religious organization among the Oorlams comprised at the same time elements of ideological dissent and even resistance to the missionary Eurocentric model of Christian religion. Thus a RMS missionary overheard a prayer at an independent 'bush church' of the Witboois near the Fish River in 1854:

Jesus, thank you for giving me your Holy Ghost. But you are only human, Jesus, and if I see any faults on you, I will punish you. (155)

Those basic structures of an independent religious movement were developed further when thirty years later Kido's grandson, Hendrik Witbooi, gained a hitherto unknown political influence among a mixed following of Nama and Oorlams as the leader of the

first fully developed 'prophet movement' in Namibia. (156)

* * *

At least since Cook's visit in 1840 a church class had been established among the Afrikaner Oorlams in central Namibia, which reputedly was regularly attended by Jonker. (157) When Tindall made his first journey to central Namibia in 1842, he was soon presented with donations of large and small stock by Afrikaner Oorlams and Khauas people. (158) Amraal gave a moving speech in his chapel, urging his followers to 'turn from the old way and walk in the new way.' (159) Moreover, after Cook had married Amraal and several of his leading men at Naosanabis in 1840 (160), Tindall could perform the wedding ceremony for 42 couples in Jonker Afrikaner's chapel two years later. (161) When he left Naosanabis in June 1842, he counted 52 registered church members, and 430 adults and children visiting the school under the guidance of Piet Vlermuis. (162)

The missionary also noticed that the Afrikaner Oorlams and their dependants had built another road across the Auas Mountains south of Windhoek. (163) When Jonker Afrikaner was asked a couple of years later why he had built those roads, he referred to his anticipation of an increasing number of missionaries residing in the interior of Namibia. (164) This statement points to the high expectations raised among Nama and Oorlams with regard to the envisaged co-operation with missionaries at the beginning of the 1840s. It also shows how closely the access to a mission station was associated with trade relations which, however, should

intensify decisively with the advent of European traders. The impact on the Nama/Oorlam-Herero network exerted by those European merchants marked an important new phase of the intrusion of merchant capital, because they organized and very soon controlled the large-scale exchange relations with the Cape market. The first statistical figures referring to this massive trade as presented by Lau date from the 1850s. It was at this later stage that the massive export of Herero cattle and of elephant tusks and ostrich feathers linked Namibia closely with the Cape market and produced an increasing dependence on European commodities. (165)

* * *

Since Kienetz drew attention to the historical role of the Oorlams in the 'early Europeanization' of Namibia, their social structures have been described as more European than African, more modern than 'traditional'. (166) But, as has already been shown, the description of the Oorlam groups as some sort of stormtroopers of merchant capital is an historical simplification. Although some Oorlams possessed wagons and firearms and had adopted some European cultural patterns, the various groups still struggled to foster their ties to mission stations and to the colonial market, and their dependence on the Cape economy varied accordingly during the first half of the nineteenth century. The generalizing depiction of Oorlam bands as 'Europeanized' tends to overlook the fact that these groups never entirely lost their roots in what could tentatively be called their African heritage. The traditional picture of Oorlams

as Dutch speakers, Christians, skilled horsemen and excellent shots disregards the fact that those new skills were confined to an elite within those acculturated frontier groups.

This impression of an internal stratification, which restricted not only access to firearms and commodities but also to important new cultural skills is, for instance, corroborated by the few data concerning the acquisition of the Dutch vernacular. Although the ability to speak Dutch was considered by the Oorlams themselves as an essential element of group identity (see 3.2.), this was by no means achieved by the majority of followers and not even among the Afrikaner Oorlams with their long history of close interaction with the colonial society. When LMS missionary Ebner commenced work among the Afrikaner Oorlams in 1815, he noticed that the people only responded with enthusiasm to his sermons when they were translated into the Nama language. (167) On his arrival Ebner found only eight people who were able to read, and apparently they were all members of the chief's family (168) who had visited the mission school of the Albrechts at Warmbad since 1806. (169) Ebner's successor Robert Moffat also needed an interpreter because, as he explicitly stated, there were only 'few understanding the Dutch' among the Afrikaner Oorlams. (170) After more than two decades later, this picture had not changed fundamentally. Wesleyan mission inspector Hodgson visited Blydverwacht in 1841. He found the mission assistant David Afrikaner, brother of Jager, so fervently preaching in Nama to his community that 'a soft still murmur spread among the people'. (171)

RMS missionary Krönlein, who worked among the Berseba people from 1851, noted that these Oorlams who had been in contact with missionaries for almost half a century spoke, amongst themselves, only Nama. (172) This seems to be the more significant considering the complicated history of this group, an off-shoot of Schmelen's community at Bethany. The Berseba people also assumed a Khoikhoi name, /Hai/khauan, after they split from the Bethany people and emerged with a group identity of their own as late as c.1850. Paradoxically, Krönlein claimed that the Berseba people spoke Nama quite badly, because they reputedly had learned it only 'at a later stage'. (173) This claim becomes more intelligible in the light of evidence that the Berseba people, where Krönlein still found the women dressed in traditional garb on his arrival in 1851 (174), originally spoke a Cape Khoikhoi dialect when they immigrated into Namibia. This is at least claimed by the scholar Theophilus Hahn, the son of RMS Nama missionary Samuel Hahn, in regard of the people who accompanied Schmelen to Bethany in 1814. (175)

Other missionary references to some Oorlams as bad Nama speakers imply that their Khoikhoi dialect was interspersed with Dutch words. (176) It has already been mentioned that the leader of the Khauas people, Amraal, reputedly did not speak Nama at all though he was the descendant of a chief's family at the Cape, and his followers spoke the Nama language (see 3.2.). However, as Krönlein emphasized, in contradiction to the common belief of nineteenth-century European observers, the Oorlams did not

'despise' their native tongue at all. (177) It has been shown earlier on that missionaries, who could speak Nama and could thus more effectively interfere with their communities, were looked at with suspicion (see 4.6.)

In addition, it also can be shown that the traditional custom of praise poems glorifying a chief's heroic deeds and achievements lived on among the Oorlams. Theophilus Hahn has pointed out that those praise poems were interspersed with some Dutch influences and Christian connotations, and it is beyond the scope of the present study to analyse the transformations of Khoikhoi praise poems on a linguistic level or within their social context. But it is interesting to note that this feature of indigenous Khoikhoi culture could be observed among Oorlam groups like the Berseba people and the Witboois until the late nineteenth century. (178)

The obvious co-existence of modern and traditional patterns was the hallmark of Oorlam groups. We are looking at a period of transition, when pre-capitalist and capitalist features became articulated with each other. Speaking in functionalist terms, some traditions might have been preserved or even revived because they could be used to forge new alliances among the different groups in central Namibia. Oorlam groups also recruited their followers from other Khoikhoi speaking groups and from the acculturated frontier population. Hence a wider variety of culture traits may have been a prerequisite for the political control exerted by a leading Oorlam family.

Alexander's account of his visit of Jonker in 1837 does not even refer to the Afrikaners as 'Oorlams'. The European traveller described Niais, where Jonker Afrikaner organized the traditional so-called reed and pot dances to honour the visitors (179), as a typical 'town of Namaqua and Hill Damara huts', though impressively big and with social relations prominently marked by class differentiations of a quasi-feudal character. (180) Members of the ruling elite rode on ox-back in the traditional fashion of Khoikhoi warriors, and it is another astonishing facet of Alexander's account that Jonker Afrikaner is exclusively referred to as 'Aramap' (his Nama name /Hoa/aramab). (181)

It is difficult to establish from the fragmentary evidence to what extent political power and the process of surplus extraction within the Oorlam communities was still based on 'traditional' social patterns. On the other hand, their acculturated structures could have experienced some sort of 're-Africanization' in central Namibia during a temporary phase of relative isolation from the colonial nexus.

Among those few documentary references there are, for instance, indications of initiation ceremonies still in use after decades of mission education. In regard of an Oorlam group still dependent on pastoralist production and hunting, we cannot refuse out of hand that those ceremonies still functioned in the context of conferring status to males and females, confirming group solidarity etc. (182) Cook was informed in 1839 that traditional forms of initiation had not been abolished among the Afrikaners

at Blydenverwacht:

I learned from David Afrikaner that it is still the custom to initiate youths and maidens to the position of men and women by a particular course of ceremonies. (183)

Although Cook did not elaborate on the nature of those ceremonies, there is a reference by his colleague Tindall to the 'particular course' of those rites, which indicates that the Oorlams still performed the Khoikhoi ritual of urinating on the initiated young men. The horrified comment of Tindall's daughter-in-law, the transcriber of his journal, reveals that lacking documentary evidence of those 'pagan' customs was more rooted in the Eurocentric attitude of the Christian observer or editor than in an erosion of indigenous culture patterns. (184)

It should also be noted that conversion to Christianity and baptism was not always the indispensable legitimation of the power of Oorlam chiefs, as it has sometimes been claimed. (185) Baptisms within the Oorlam leadership were often achieved at a specific moment in the development of the relations with the missions and the colonial nexus. The old chief of the Witboois, for example, was baptized as late as 1868. Kido (later Cupido) had inherited the chief's office in about 1800, and the Witboois had contacts with a fair number of missionaries throughout the nineteenth century. (186) Jager Afrikaner and his brothers David and Titus were formally converted as late as 1815 after their career as terrors of the Orange River region had peaked conspicuously, and their father, 'old Afrikaner' Klaas, was baptized in c.1816. (187) The conversions of the Afrikaner chiefs may have been less an expression of 'Europeanized' structures

within the Oorlam community than an indication of the growing interdependency of the Oorlam leadership and missionaries as intermediaries with the colonial market. The circumstances under which the Afrikaner Oorlams were eagerly vying for missionary support at this specific stage when they had to fear a complete breakdown of economic and political relations with the colony have been described in a preceding chapter (see 5.1.).

Significantly, Titus was still married to more than one woman after he was baptized by Ebner (188), and Moffat's statement in 1820 that Titus 'was the only individual of influence on the station who had two wives' <my emphasis> indicates that the actual number of polygamous marriages was even higher. This was, of course, another 'heathen' custom which was often consciously hidden from the missionary to avoid sanctions. (189)

How effectively the patterns of 'Christianization' penetrated the social structures of Oorlam groups cannot, for instance, be assessed from the adoption of Dutch names, a custom which spread rapidly among Nama and Oorlams alike. But even those Oorlams who were not members of the Christian community carried Dutch names besides their Nama names, as a missionary noticed in the late nineteenth century. (190)

The fluidity of acculturated social structures reflected the irregular patterns of contact with the mission station and the missionary. While the temporary migrations of hunters and herders impeded mission work under the supervision of the European Evangelist, those transhumant patterns promoted at the same time

the development of the above described independent communities and 'bush churches' once selected elements of the new religion had been filtered through the indigenous systems of beliefs and values. The dependence of the Afrikaner Oorlams at Blydeverwacht on the pastoralist branch of production prohibited a regular attendance of the mission school. While the Afrikaner band consisted of about 200-300 people, most of them wandered about with their herds and flocks and certainly ventured upon the occasional raids on other groups, and they did not regularly visit either school or church services. (191) During the best of times there were 100 children at school (192), but this figure could drop down to merely 20 school children. (193) The visits of the Wesleyan missionaries Cook and Hodgson saw 200-300 visitors at Blydeverwacht, including members of neighbouring groups which were under the spiritual guidance of David Afrikaner (194), but during Ebner's three-year stay with the Afrikaner Oorlams he was lucky to have an audience of 50 people at his church services. (195) These disparities are also reflected by the figures referring to baptisms within the Afrikaner group. After his withdrawal from southern Namibia, Ebner claimed to have baptized altogether 52 adults and 100 children (196), but an unknown number of converts were members of other groups in the vicinity like the Bondelswarts. (197) However, as Ebner complained, during his last months among the Afrikaner Oorlams the number of the attendants of his church services shrank to 4-10 people. (198)

* * *

The 1840s marked a new period of Namibian history. The Afrikaner Oorlams established their hegemony in central Namibia, the Rhenish missionaries began to interfere with indigenous politics on an unprecedented scale, and there was the beginning of an increasing involvement of European traders.

New claims were staked. The early 1840s saw a fierce confrontation between the two mission societies, the Rhenish and the Wesleyan mission, competing for influence in Namibia. In 1842 Bethany was re-opened by the Rhenish missionaries. (199) RMS missionary C.H. Hahn gives a lengthy account in his diaries of the negotiations which led to the monopoly of the RMS in southern and central Namibia from the early 1850s. (200) The Warmbad mission, though, was maintained by the Wesleyans until 1867 when the station was eventually transferred to the Rhenish Mission Society.

The first victim of the controversy between the two societies was Edward Cook. When he returned from his journey to central Namibia in 1842, he learned that missionaries of the RMS made an attempt to establish themselves at Windhoek among the Afrikaner Oorlams. Despite his poor health, Cook and his family returned to Amraal's place, Naosanabis. Jonker Afrikaner seems to have been reduced to the role of mere spectator in the ensuing quarrels between RMS and WMMS missionaries. Those confrontations proved too much for the ailing Cook. Escorted by Amraal and Piet Vlermuis until they reached the Fish River, the missionary and his family returned to Warmbad. David Afrikaner reportedly burst into tears when he saw the completely exhausted missionary. Cook

died in March 1843 on the northern bank of the Orange before he could be carried across the river, and he was buried at Warmbad.

(201)

NOTES CHAPTER SEVEN

- 1) BPP, vol.20, Wade to Secretary Stanley, 14 January 1834, p.599.
- 2) BPP, vol.20, Wade to Secretary Stanley, 14 January 1834, p.600.
- 3) BPP, vol.20, Wade to Secretary Stanley, 14 January 1834, p.600.
- 4) Walker, History, p.190.
- 5) Kirby, Sir Andrew Smith, pp.144-151; see also Walker, History, p.185, 193.
- 6) Marais, Cape Coloured, p.41.
- 7) BPP, vol.1, Stockenstrom, 12 February 1836, p.186.
- 8) BPP, vol.1, J. Beecham, WMMS Secretary, and W. Ellis, LMS Secretary, 11 June 1836, pp.536-538.
- 9) BPP, vol.1, John Philip, 4 July 1836, p.608.
- 10) CA, LMS letter, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 24 October 1832; CA, LMS letter, Wimmer, Steinkopf, 20 December 1832.
- 11) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Komaggas, 28 August 1829.
- 12) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 13 September 1834.
- 13) CA, CO, vol.5760, Governor D'Urban to Abraham, chief of the Bondelswarts residing in Great Namaqualand, 26 March 1834, p.114.
- 14) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 11 February 1835.
- 15) Cook, Modern Missionary, p.30.
- 16) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 24 November 1834.
- 17) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 11 February 1835.
- 18) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 20 April 1835.
- 19) Cook, Modern Missionary, p.41.
- 20) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 20 April 1835.
- 21) CA, GH, 19/4, Abraham Christian/Cook to Governor D'Urban, Great Namaqualand, 24 September 1834.
- 22) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 13 September 1834; CA, GH,

- 19/4, Abraham Christian/Cook to Governor D'Urban, Great Namaqualand, 30 September 1837. See also CA, GH, 19/4, two lists of goods like clothing, tools etc. for Abraham Christian, B.Shaw, 4 April 1835; Joseph Tindall, 6 October 1841.
- 23) CA, CO, vol.5760, Governor D'Urban to Abraham, Chief of the Bondelswarts, residing in Great Namaqualand, Cape Town, 25 May 1835, pp.137-138.
- 24) CA, A, 610, Journal of James Morris, 1843, p.16.
- 25) Tindall, Journal, (1843), p.49.
- 26) CA, GH, vol.14/5, Abraham Christian to Secretary of Government, Nisbett Bath, 26 August 1845, pp.37-41. I owe this reference to Brigitte Lau.
- 27) Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, p.148, 161, 199.
- 28) CA, GH, 19/4, J.E. Alexander, 'Memorandum for His Excellency the Governor on the letter of the Rev. Mr. Cook written for Abram, chief of the Bondelzwaart Namaquas', Cape Town, 3 October 1837.
- 29) CA, GH, 19/4, Abraham Christian, Nisbett Bath/Great Namaqualand, 24 September 1834; CA, GH, 19/4, Cook on behalf of Abraham Christian to Governor D'Urban, 30 September 1837.
- 30) CA, GH, 19/4, Governor D'Urban to Abraham Christian, Cape Town, 10 October 1837.
- 31) Cook, Modern Missionary, p.49.
- 32) Cook, Modern Missionary, p.50.
- 33) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 20 April 1835.
- 34) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 23 December 1835.
- 35) Cook, Modern Missionary, p.40, 52.
- 36) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 4 November 1835.
- 37) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 20 April 1835.
- 38) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 13 September 1834; Cook, Modern Missionary, p.30.
- 39) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 4 November 1835; CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 23 December 1835.
- 40) CL, WMMS, Cook, Cape Town, 8 November 1836; CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 24 November 1834.

- 41) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 16 July 1838; Cook, Modern Missionary, p.75.
- 42) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 23 December 1835. Johannes Kaffer died during an epidemic in 1838, CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 2 November 1838.
- 43) Cook, Modern Missionary, p. 54, 58; CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 24 November 1834.
- 44) CL, WMMS, Cook, Cape Town, 8 November 1836.
- 45) Cook, Modern Missionary, p.56, 65; CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 4 November 1835.
- 46) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 23 December 1835; Cook, Modern Missionary, p.64.
- 47) CA, GH, 14/1, Abraham Christian/Cook to Governor Napier, 8 August 1838.
- 48) CA, A 610, Journal of James Morris, 1843, p.17. RMS missionary C.H. Hahn met this trader, Andrew, at Naosanabis (Wesley Vale) in March 1843: Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.1, p.122. Compare with Vedder's list of Europeans in Namibia from 1840 to 1862: Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.342-345, and Edward C. Tabler, Pioneers of South West Africa and Ngamiland, 1738-1880, (Cape Town, 1973).
- 49) CA, A 610, Journal of James Morris, 1843, p.15.
- 50) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 27 November 1838; Cook, Modern Missionary, pp.66, 88, 154.
- 51) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 4 November 1835. For the concept of the Wesleyan mission circuit: J. Whiteside, History, p.14.
- 52) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 4 November 1835.
- 53) See H. Loth, Die christliche Mission in Südwestafrika, Zur destruktiven Rolle der Rheinischen Missionsgesellschaft beim Prozeß der Staatsbildung in Südwestafrika, (East Berlin, 1963).
- 54) CL, WMMS, Jackson, Nisbett Bath, 14 November 1836.
- 55) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 23 December 1835.
- 56) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 30 April 1840.
- 57) CL, WMMS, Jackson, Kamiesberg, 29 June 1837; Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, pp.178-182.
- 58) Backhouse, Narrative, p.561.

- 59) CA, LMS letter, Moffat, Great Namaqualand, 22 June 1818.
- 60) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 12 September 1837.
- 61) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 16 July 1838; see also Cook, Modern Missionary, p.85.
- 62) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 27 November 1838.
- 63) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 16 July 1838.
- 64) As Hodgson reported from his visit of the Afrikaner Oorlams in 1841. See Cook, Modern Missionary, p.144.
- 65) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 27 November 1838; Cook, Modern Missionary, p.88.
- 66) Cook, Modern Missionary, pp.103-104.
- 67) Cook, Modern Missionary, pp.104-105.
- 68) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 16 July 1838.
- 69) Cook, Modern Missionary, pp.102-103.
- 70) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 30 April 1840; Cook, Modern Missionary, p.102.
- 71) See also Tindall, Journal, (1841), p.25.
- 72) Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, p.89.
- 73) WMN, 20, 3rd series, 1841, p.962; see also Cook, Modern Missionary, p.146.
- 74) Cook, Modern Missionary, p.155.
- 75) See Tindall, Journal, pp.51-53.
- 76) Tindall, Journal, p.50.
- 77) Tindall, Journal, p.42.
- 78) Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.202-207.
- 79) See Alexander, Expedition.
- 80) For Smith's expedition, see Lye, Journal.
- 81) Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, p.viii.
- 82) Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, p.xi.
- 83) Alexander, Expedition, vol.1.

- 84) Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, p.52. Captain Kido Witbooi could apparently not be contacted.
- 85) Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, p.10.
- 86) Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, p.48. In his published account, Alexander refers to the chief of the Swartboois only as 'Kuisip' (Nama name !Huisib), but in a letter to D'Urban he uses his Dutch name: CA, A 519, vol.6, Alexander to Sir Benjamin D'Urban, 'Banks of the Kamop, a branch of the Gr. Fish R.-3 days E. of it, Gr. Namaqualand', 12 February 1837.
- 87) Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, p.151.
- 88) 'Quellen', vol.2, 'Mitteilungen von Traugott Dausab in Hoachanas über die Rooi Nasie', (1928), pp.120-121; 'Quellen', vol.30b, 'Wie Jonker Afrikaner mit den Damaras zusammengekommen ist', (1873), pp.64-65.
- 89) See Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, pp.28-31.
- 90) Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, pp.125, 231; vol.2, pp.156, 208.
- 91) Kirby, Sir Andrew Smith, p.226.
- 92) CA, LMS letter, Schmelen, Komaggas, 25 August 1837.
- 93) T. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, p.52.
- 94) CA, A 519, vol.7, J.E. Alexander, 2 October 1837, pp.134-141.
- 95) CA, A 519, vol.7, 'Notes on the North-West Frontier', Alexander, 2 October 1837, p.136; Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, pp.118-119.
- 96) For the history of the Great Trek: see Davenport, South Africa. A Modern History, (London, 1977), pp.38-40; De Kiewiet, History, pp.52-63; Walker, History, pp.202-241.
- 97) CA, A 519, vol.7, 'Notes on the North-West Frontier', Alexander, 2 October 1837, p.138.
- 98) Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, p.282.
- 99) Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, pp.152-162.
- 100) CA, GH, 19/4, 'Memorandum', Alexander, Cape Town, 3 October 1837.
- 101) CA, A 519, vol.7, 'Notes on the North-West Frontier', Alexander, 2 October 1837, p.137.

- 102) Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, p.102; CA, A 519, vol.7, 'Notes on the North-West Frontier', Alexander, 2 October 1837, p.136.
- 103) Alexander, Expedition, vol.1, pp.35-36.
- 104) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 30 April 1840.
- 105) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 12 September 1837.
- 106) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 12 September 1837.
- 107) Backhouse, Narrative, p.235.
- 108) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 12 September 1837.
- 109) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 16 July 1838.
- 110) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 27 November 1838.
- 111) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 30 April 1840.
- 112) CL, WMMS, Cook, Great Namaqualand, 22 December 1835.
- 113) CL, WMMS, Cook, Kamiesberg, 1 February 1837.
- 114) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 27 November 1838.
- 115) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 16 July 1838; CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 30 April 1840.
- 116) Cook, Modern Missionary, p.92.
- 117) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 27 November 1838.
- 118) Tindall, Journal, p.5.
- 119) See Henry Tindall, Two Lectures on Great Namaqualand and its Inhabitants, (Cape Town, 1856).
- 120) Tindall, Journal, pp.6-11.
- 121) Tindall, Journal, pp.14-16.
- 122) Tindall, Journal, pp.22, 24.
- 123) Tindall, Journal, p.18. Wimmer died in June 1840; CA, LMS, Schmelen, Komaggas, 12 August 1840.
- 124) See CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Siberis - Jonker Afrikaaner's Residence', 24 August 1840; CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit from Nisbett Bath to Ameral's Residence, and a Journey from hence to Jonker Afrikaaner's Residence and Wal Visch Bay', 1840; Cook, Modern Missionary, pp.119-139; WMN, 1

(March 1841).

- 125) Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, p.207.
- 126) CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit', entry of 9 August; Tindall, Journal, p.40.
- 127) Tindall, Journal, p.32.
- 128) CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit', entry of 13 August.
- 129) Tindall, Journal, p.32.
- 130) CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit', entry of 13 August.
- 131) CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit', entry of 5 November; Cook refers to the Topnaar leader as 'Kneecap', being 'together with Arog-ap guardian of the minor chief Tzeeb': CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit', entry of 25 September.
- 132) CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit', entries of 27, 31 August. See also the RMS missionary C.H. Hahn's enthusiastic praise of the road's technical standard. Hahn, however, claimed in 1844 that work had only commenced some months previously: Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.1, p.144.
- 133) CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit', entry of 1 September.
- 134) CL, WMMS, Cook, Siberis - Jonker Afrikaner's Residence, 24 August 1840.
- 135) CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit', entry of 11 October.
- 136) Tindall, Journal, p.25.
- 137) Tindall, Journal, p.26.
- 138) Tindall, Journal, pp. 26, 29.
- 139) Tindall, Journal, pp.29-30.
- 140) Tindall, Journal, p.31.
- 141) See Tindall, Journal, p.36; Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.1, (1842), p.95. See also Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, p.243; Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, p.33.
- 142) Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.1, (1843), p.129; see also Lau, 'The Emergence', pp. 188-203.
- 143) Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.1, (1843), p.102.
- 144) CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit', entry of 10 July 1840.
- 145) Tindall, Journal, p.42.

- 146) Tindall, Journal, p.22.
- 147) See, for instance, Tindall, Journal, pp. 20, 23, 27, 33, 37. Knudsen noted in the 1840s at Bethany that his church eldest, Christoph Tibot, who later became one of the leaders of the Berseba people, had been previously involved in the building of ten 'bush chapels': Knudsen, Groß-Namaqualand, p.48.
- 148) Tindall, Journal, p.53.
- 149) Tindall, Journal, pp.34, 60.
- 150) Tindall, Journal, (1842), p.35.
- 151) Tindall, Journal, (1850), p.138.
- 152) CA, LMS letter, Abraham Albrecht, March 1807.
- 153) TLMS, 3, C. Albrecht, (1808), p.247.
- 154) Tindall, Journal, (1846), p.91.
- 155) 'Quellen', vol.10b, G. Krönlein, Berseba, May-September 1856, p.29. See also Jod, 'Das Witbooi-Volk', p.86.
- 156) See T. Dederling ' "Mein Arm ist nicht gelähmt, solange der Herrgott ihn als Zuchtrute gebrauchen will." Zur Geschichte der religiös-politischen Bewegung von Hendrik Witbooi in Südwestafrika/Namibia.' (unpub. M.A. thesis, Free University Berlin, 1984).
- 157) Tindall, Journal, p.36.
- 158) Tindall received 17 head of cattle, 98 sheep and a few sjamboks from the Afrikaners, and 2 cows, 25 sheep, 2 goats, 1 kudu skin, 1 elephant's tusk and 8 sjamboks from Amraal's people: Tindall, Journal, pp.33, 36.
- 159) Tindall, Journal, p.32.
- 160) CL, WMMS, Cook, 'Journal of a Visit', 27 July 1840.
- 161) Tindall, Journal, p.31. The achievements of the Wesleyans were at a later stage heavily criticized by the RMS missionaries as premature and superficial conversions, for instance: Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.1 (1843), pp.104, 125.
- 162) Tindall, Journal, p.38.
- 163) Tindall, Journal, p.36; see also Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.251-252.

- 164) Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.1 (1844), p.144.
- 165) See Lau, 'The Emergence', pp.248-266; Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, pp.87-95.
- 166) See Kienetz, 'Key Role'.
- 167) Ebner, Reise, pp.201, 202.
- 168) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, Orangerivier, 28 August 1816.
- 169) CL, LMS journal, A. Albrecht, 5 March 1806-March 1807, entry of 16 June 1806; CA, LMS journal, C. Albrecht, 1810, entry of December <no day>.
- 170) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, journal, entries of 20 February, 23 March 1818.
- 171) WMN, 20, (1841), p.960.
- 172) 'Quellen', vol.10a, Krönlein, Berseba, 9 January 1854, p.82.
- 173) 'Quellen', vol.10 a, Krönlein, Berseba, 17/18 June 1854, p.98.
- 174) 'Quellen', vol. 10a, Krönlein, Berseba, September 1854-January 1855, p. 109.
- 175) T. Hahn, Tsuni-//Goam, pp. 55, 102. This claim is repeated by W. Hoernlé, who conducted her research among the /Hai/khauan in 1913: 'Certain Rites of Transition and the Conception of !Nau among the Hottentots', in Carstens, (ed.), Social Organization, p.57. See also the statement of a Berseba chief indicating that the /Hai/khauan did not unequivocally consider themselves as Oorlams (see 3.2.).
- 176) 'Quellen', vol.5, Vollmer, Hoachanas, 21 May 1860, p.125.
- 177) 'Quellen', vol.13, Krönlein, Stellenbosch, 1 March 1880, p.116.
- 178) T. Hahn, 'Beiträge zur Kunde der Hottentotten', Jahresbericht des Vereins für Erdkunde, (Dresden, 1868/69), pp.49-56. See also Budack, 'Khoe-Khoen', p.197.
- 179) Alexander, vol.2, pp.163, 183, see also Lau, 'The Emergence', p.123.
- 180) Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, p.152.
- 181) Alexander, Expedition, vol.2, pp.152-185.
- 182) Hoernlé noted during her fieldwork in 1913 among Nama and Oorlams that the puberty ceremonies of boys apparently ceased to exist, as opposed to the girls' ceremonies.

Because big game hunting was not longer possible at that time, male status was not longer ritually connected to hunting activities: Hoernlé, 'Social Organization', p.62.

- 183) Cook, Modern Missionary, (19 February 1839), p.92.
- 184) Tindall, Journal, p.28.
- 185) Compare Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, p.20.
- 186) 'Quellen', 16b, Olpp, Gibeon, 1 September 1875, p.232.
- 187) Ebner, Reise, pp.200, 221, 236.
- 188) Ebner, Reise, p.297.
- 189) Moffat, Missionary Labours, p.110. Also quoted by Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, p.49; compare also Lau, 'The Emergence', pp.109-110.
- 190) 'Quellen', 16b, Olpp, Gibeon, 1 September 1875, p.232.
- 191) Moffat, Missionary Labours, pp.145-146.
- 192) See Backhouse's report of the Blydeverwacht community: Backhouse, Narrative, pp.561-566.
- 193) MAD, Robert Moffat Papers, letter to his parents, Afrikaner's Kraal in Great Namaqualand, 8 April 1818.
- 194) CL, WMMS, Cook, Nisbett Bath, 16 July 1838; WMN, 20, (1841), p.939.
- 195) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, Orangerivier, 28 August 1816.
- 196) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, London, 15 February 1820.
- 197) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, Orangerivier, 28 August 1816
- 198) CA, LMS letter, Ebner, London, 15 February 1820.
- 199) H. Drießler, Die Rheinische Mission in Südwestafrika, vol.2 (Gütersloh, 1932), pp. 19-26; Vedder, Das alte Südwestafrika, pp.239-242. The RMS records available in southern Africa contain only little information in respect of the Bethany station in the early 1840s. Some missionary records relating to that period may be found at the Archives of the Vereinigte Evangelische Mission, the former RMS, in Wuppertal, West Germany: see Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.1, p.259.
- 200) Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.1, pp.154-182.
- 201) Cook, Modern Missionary, pp.169-178.

CONCLUSION

In the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century the white and non-white frontier people in the northern Cape largely avoided traversing the dry belt of Little Namaqualand into southern Namibia, preferring instead to search for new hunting and grazing grounds beyond the middle Orange River far to the east. Thus competition between Europeans and Africans in southern Namibia was basically limited to the occasional inroads of the few raiding-trading parties which ventured into the unknown, across the lower Orange River. The history of the advancing frontier into early nineteenth-century southern Namibia, in sharp contrast to the history of the eastern frontier, cannot be written in terms of a struggle between white settlers and Africans for land, labour, and livestock.

The penetration of indigenous structures by the patterns of capitalist-oriented trade and new ideological and social features predominantly took place in the orbit of the early mission stations established by the London Missionary Society and, later, the Wesleyan Methodist Mission Society in southern Namibia. The missionaries, as the sole representatives of European norms, played a crucial role as catalytic forces of social change among the semi-nomadic Khoikhoi pastoralists, performing functions of social innovators, intermediaries with the Cape economy and political agents.

In contrast to previous descriptions, the present study has continuously emphasized the structural similarities of indigenous

and immigrant Khoikhoi groups, and rejects the idea of sharp divisions between 'traditional' Nama and 'Europeanized' Oorlams. Rather, the transformation of dispersed Cape Khoikhoi bands into Oorlam groups and their interaction with the indigenous Khoikhoi in southern Namibia developed in several stages, which reflect the progressive 'closing' of the north-western frontier zone.

This process began with the dispersal of the Khoikhoi from their age-old pastures at the Cape. In response to the increasing loss of their economic resources and their political independence, some dispossessed Khoikhoi migrated northwards and eventually across the lower Orange River. These migrations occurred in successive stages between the 1790s and the 1850s. (1) Some proletarianized Khoikhoi fled from brutal labour relations. There were leaders of formerly independent Khoikhoi groups who could only retain their positions of power by withdrawing with the remaining core of their followers from colonial pressure. Some Oorlams had been members of colonial commandos, and turned to banditry on the frontier after they fell foul of their white masters. Others settled in Little Namaqualand and maintained a pastoralist mode of life, and were pushed only into Namibia in the mid nineteenth century when the northern colonial boundary was extended to the Orange River. The majority of the Oorlams, like the Bastards and Griqua, shared a common origin, the disintegrating Khoikhoi society in the colony. Notwithstanding the inclusion of non-Khoikhoi, the Oorlams in Namibia preserved their Khoikhoi culture and language.

The second stage of the history of the Oorlams and the Nama in

southern Namibia is indissolubly connected to the arrival of the first missionaries on the north-western frontier at the turn of the eighteenth century. In 1806 the first mission stations were established in the arid south-eastern corner of Namibia. The peripheral situation of southern Namibia, both in the socio-political and the geographical sense, reinforced the importance of the missionaries as the first European protagonists of social change. During this early phase of European-African interaction several patterns emerged.

The social, economic and political structures of the Nama social formation offered relatively little resistance to the penetration of capitalist-oriented features as they were introduced by the missionaries. Despite the astonishing readiness of the indigenous and immigrant Khoikhoi to accommodate missionaries, the first European agents of social change failed in their endeavour to transform the migrating pastoralist groups into sedentary agricultural and trading communities. This failure was due to several factors of which the harsh ecological environment was an important one. The pastoralist economy of the semi-nomadic Nama was seriously affected by the unpredictable cycle of droughts and famines in an extremely arid environment (see above, chapter 2). But it exceeded the missionaries' technological and financial capabilities to offer a viable economic alternative to the Nama pastoralists, hunters and gatherers. Instead of drawing the wandering herders to permanent mission settlements, the first missionaries were forced to accompany their followers in search of water and pastures.

Thus the missionaries faced considerable problems in establishing and controlling trade relations between their communities and the colony in the fashion of their colleagues further east among the Griqua. The impoverished indigenous and immigrant Khoikhoi in peripheral southern Namibia did not have access to economic resources needed for the large-scale production of a tradeable surplus, such as livestock or ivory. This was different from the conditions prevailing in Transorangia, where the Bastard-Tswana trade in ivory and cattle assumed fairly stable patterns between 1800 and 1820. (2)

While the interaction of missionaries and Khoikhoi north of the lower Orange reflected the political interests of the Cape Government, as described by Legassick in respect of the LMS and the Griqua on the middle Orange, there were major differences in the intensity of political and economic ties connecting southern Namibia to the colony. Like the Bastards in Transorangia, the Nama and Oorlams in southern Namibia 'invited' the LMS missionaries to foster those ties with the colony. (3) But the establishment of more regular internal and external economic and political relations, between the missionaries and their communities on the one hand and between the Khoikhoi and the colony on the other hand, occurred at a considerably slower pace. The colonial pressure on the Griqua became evident as early as 1814 when the missionary Anderson was ordered by the Cape Government to supply recruits for the Cape Regiment. (4) From this time on, according to Legassick, the government regarded the

Griqua as politically dependent on the Cape Colony and de facto subject to colonial law. (5) This constellation did not only create further divisions among the Griqua but provided the missionaries with a clearly defined role as political intermediaries of colonial authority. Moreover, the missionaries in Transorangia had to deal with much more favourable economic and ecological conditions, which enabled them to tie their followers more efficiently to a permanent residence, Klaarwater, from 1805. (6)

In southern Namibia, the shift to capitalist-oriented structures was impeded by the peculiar internal dynamics of the Khoikhoi social formation. The lack of centralized political power and the constant struggles between the different segments of an acephalous African society made it difficult for the missionaries to consolidate their influence. At the same time, however, the fluidity of the political and social structures of the Khoikhoi social formation facilitated missionary intrusion. The political power of a Nama chief was too limited to control the social and economic relations which evolved under missionary influence. The struggle for the services of the missionaries which ensued among the Nama was intensified by the settlement of the Oorlam immigrants around the mission stations. The missionaries were used by both the Nama and Oorlams to forge trade links with the colonial market, but it was easier for the acculturated Oorlams to gain access to the mission stations and co-operate with the missionaries. Over time a new group identity evolved among the Oorlams, which was to a great extent based on

the new social context of the mission church. Thus selected features of the Christian religion and European culture became part and parcel of the social fabric of Oorlam 'tribes' as they emerged later from the interaction with the missionaries.

This period was marked by occasionally violent competition of the different factions among indigenous and immigrated Khoikhoi for access to the Cape nexus via the mission stations. The strategy of the first missionaries centred on 'bribing' the Khoikhoi into co-operation and conversion through the distribution of European commodities and livestock. At a later stage, so the missionaries hoped, their communities would be self-supporting and able to produce a tradeable surplus, which would bring about a closer economic attachment to the Cape Colony. Initially, however, the missionaries' strategy backfired, because it reinforced the hesitancy of Namibian pastoralists to become involved in exchange relations with the missionaries. The one-way flow of livestock and goods fostered the ties between the missionaries and their communities, but neither resulted in the transformation of the semi-nomadic pastoralists into sedentary agriculturists nor made the indigenous and immigrant Khoikhoi inclined to produce a tradeable surplus.

The impact of mission work on Nama and Oorlams, however, was fundamental because it stimulated new wants and needs outside the traditional redistributive system, which was based on the chief's control of the circulation of women and cattle. Consequently, new avenues opened up for ambitious leaders competing for the accumulation of wealth and followers. The old system of surplus

extraction began to shift to the new context of capitalist market relations. The accumulation of wealth and followers no longer focused exclusively on the control of the circulation of women and cattle, because political and economic power became increasingly dependent on European commodities, especially on firearms and ammunition. Moreover, larger settlements of Nama and Oorlams in the vicinity of the mission stations, even though temporary, contributed to the deterioration of the precarious ecological environment. The rapidity and intensity of the indigenous and immigrant Khoikhoi response to the Christian religion reflected the crisis of values in a period of transition. A new social order was propagated by the mission church and mission school. European norms were not unequivocally accepted by the community members, but nevertheless they began to pervade the social structures of Khoikhoi groups.

However, during this phase the frontier zone in southern Namibia remained 'open' in the sense of a sustained indecisive balance of the different social, economic and political forces. Both Nama and Oorlams were basically pastoralists, the producers were not separated from the means of production, and natural resources were still freely available despite the increasing competition for the limited ecological and economic capacities of southern Namibia.

On the other hand, the internal dynamics of the Khoikhoi social formation had been increasingly disturbed by the rival economic and political influence of the mission stations. The

chiefs found it more difficult to assemble and control followers, because the missionaries offered an at least temporary alternative to ambitious clan heads, impoverished individuals, and women looking for a more prestigious social position. European and African actors became locked in a network of social change, where a centralizing political agency had not yet emerged. At this stage, neither the Nama chiefs, nor the Oorlams, nor the missionaries could control the social and economic relations which developed around the mission stations. The result was a stalemate of old and new forces. Tensions between the missionaries and the Nama/Oorlams escalated, and by the late 1820s mission work in southern Namibia came to a temporary halt.

The 1830s, however, saw the establishment of closer political ties between southern Namibia and the Cape, anticipated by the secret mission of Andrew Smith to Little and Great Namaqualand in 1828. Alarmed by the continuous clashes between the settlers and the Xhosa in the east, the colonial government's new frontier policy was an attempt of 'closing' the political frontier by entering into alliances with African chiefs on the borders of the colony. The re-opening of the former LMS station at Warmbad by the Wesleyan mission in 1834 marked the increasing influence of the missionaries as intermediaries with the Cape Colony. The new missionary at Warmbad not only reinforced economic relations between his followers and the colonial market; he also performed functions of a political agent, which were based on a treaty concluded between the Bondelswart Nama and the Cape Government in 1830.

However, there was a more important factor which accelerated the advancing frontier further into Namibia. A faction of the Afrikaner Oorlams migrated into the interior in the 1820s, and began to establish semi-feudal relations of dependence among the cattle-rich Herero, the Damara and Khoisan of central Namibia. A new frontier zone opened up under the leadership of the Afrikaner Oorlams, for a time without the involvement of European agents of social change. It was at this stage that the Nama and Oorlams gained access to vast economic resources, which were to become the basis for the intensifying trade in European commodities, firearms and ammunition. With the increasing political power of the Afrikaner Oorlams in central Namibia and with the resumption of relations with the missionaries in the early 1840s, the internal trade with stolen Herero cattle developed into external trade relations with the colonial market.

At this stage the role of the missionaries as intermediaries with the Cape market became more important than ever. The Nama and Oorlams in southern Namibia, who had heretofore persistently refused to provide the missionaries with livestock, made donations of cattle, sheep and goats to the mission. The developing Nama/Oorlam-Herero network in central Namibia had raised enormous expectations among the southern groups, who previously had been only marginally involved in the trade with stolen Herero cattle and now hoped to stabilize trade relations with the capitalist market via the mission stations. The Herero herds became the target of an increasing number of Nama and Oorlam raiders, who moved closer to the new frontier polity in

central Namibia. The involvement of itinerant European traders in the Nama/Oorlam-Herero network from the 1840s contributed decisively to the economic 'closure' of a frontier zone which had just been opened up by the advancing Oorlams.

In the 1850s new Oorlam groups emerged, like the Berseba people, or immigrated into Namibia, like the Witboois. The increasing penetration of merchant capital exacerbated the vicious circle of raiding and trading, which resulted in the accelerated reduction of economic and ecological resources. Class differences emerged more prominently between those who controlled the access to capitalist exchange relations and those who were exploited as servants and herders. This period of unprecedentedly close economic ties with the Cape nexus saw an increasing number of Herero, Damara and Khoisan left with dwindling economic and political alternatives outside the new network controlled by the Afrikaner Oorlams. This was the third stage of the advancing far north-western frontier: the frontier was 'closing' for the people of southern and central Namibia.

* * *

The internal political structures of indigenous and immigrant Khoikhoi groups became more rigid with the increasing importance of market-related raiding and trading activities. K.F. Budack has described the political hierarchy of the captain, undercaptain, commandant, fieldcornet etc., which developed in the second half of the nineteenth century. (7)

In this context, it is hardly convincing, as suggested by Lau, to conceptualize an increasing erosion of the political power of the Khoikhoi chiefs as a result of capitalist penetration of kinship structures. (8) The term 'erosion', with respect to the transformations of political and kinship structures, suggests a stability of the former and a rigidity of the latter that does not correspond to the reality of the traditionally weak power of Nama leaders. Seniority rights of chiefs over other Nama groups and political control over their followers were not exerted by nominal rights within a genealogical system. A leader with the legitimate title of a 'chief', i.e. invested with this office by inheritance in the senior !hao!nati (lineage) of the !haos ('tribe'), could not exert political power in reference to his legal authority alone. While we do not know precisely how political authority was performed within the kinship-oriented Nama social formation, the present study has attempted to show that the corporate descent-group, i.e. the lineage, was not a political group. Political power also depended on other factors than descent ideology. Without versatility in manipulating genealogical connections or without convincing offers of enrichment to his followers, a chief was not in the position to mobilize his men. Far from being a characteristic trait of commando structures, the instability of the chief's office was connected with the fragility of economic and social structures of nomadic pastoralist society. Descent ideology is not identical with political authority, it is the language of political authority. Descent-ideology remained a powerful political code as long as political authority in Nama and Oorlam groups was not

rigidly centralized. In the absence of strong centralizing institutions, both ruling groups and subordinate groups could justify their actions along the lines of kinship ideology. (9) Neither can the coexistence of genealogically unrelated groups and individuals at centres of population be related monocausally to processes of commoditisation. (10)

Lau cites relevant sections of the 'Rehoboth constitution' (11), a code of laws, established by the missionary Kleinschmidt among the Swartboois in 1849, which demonstrates the intrusion of missionary politics. This Eurocentric constitutional model attempted to enforce a hierarchy which was decisively based on economic differentiation. However, ideas of the 'importance of private ownership of cattle' were not completely alien to the Khoikhoi and were not merely a result of merchant capitalist penetration. (12) They have been based on the economic inequalities within the pre-capitalist Nama social formation. Unlike land, livestock was not owned communally but by the basic productive unit, consisting of a man, his wife and their children, the man's brothers etc (see 2.2.). We do not know what property relations prevailed within the basic productive unit of the early Nama social formation. But it is clear that the redistributive cycle within the Nama social formation was not based on egalitarian reciprocity. The constant struggle for economic and political power between the different segments of the pre-capitalist Nama social formation was the background against which the more rigid class stratifications developed from the 1840s under the influence of merchant capitalist

penetration.

In addition, the Rehoboth code did not establish 'patriarchy', nor was the establishment of the chief's council an innovation in Nama social formation. (13) Both patrilineal inheritance of the chief's office and the existence of a council comprising other clan heads were common features of Khoikhoi groups. (14)

It is problematic to assume a collapse of social structures whose previous configurations are hidden from the historian. The crucial task is to understand that social and political institutions became transformed within an historical process which cannot be solely described as a process of erosion. The process of merchant capitalist penetration was partly blocked by the internal dynamics of Nama society. The ability of social patterns to adapt to new conditions by assuming modified functions is a significant feature of social change.

Thus the argument concerning the weakening of traditional chiefly power should be reversed. Compared to the extremely ineffective authority of an early Nama chief, the power of Oorlam captains like Jonker Afrikaner and Hendrik Witbooi was of previously unequalled proportions. The militarised social structures of Oorlam groups created a political centralization of chiefly power which both Afrikaner Oorlams and Witboois expressed eventually in the new context of an independent Christian church. In the long run, the increase of centralized power was developed at the expense of an economic dependence on the Cape nexus. These economic ties with merchant capital

prepared the way for political subordination to German colonial power, as has been convincingly described by Lau.

To the Marxist historian Loth the enormous increase of centralized power in Nama/Oorlam groups has to be seen in the context of processes of class relations which eventually might have led to the construction of a feudal state under the leadership of the Afrikaner Oorlams. (15) Loth's idea that a missionary conspiracy undermined this incipient state formation has been widely rejected. But his description of the growing political influence of Namaland captains contradicts an argument which denies the at-least-temporary intensification of the power of indigenous structures affected by capitalist penetration.

* * *

It has been a major concern of historians analysing social change on the frontier in southern Africa to understand the complex interrelations of race and class. While the most influential proponent of the 'frontier thesis', Martin Legassick, has emphasized the overall importance of class relations as opposed to fixed categories of race, Hermann Giliomee has recently argued that the interrelation of race and class is not a hierarchical one, and that race is not merely a function of class. (16) It remains important to look at the class context in which racial categories and behavioural patterns develop, but race, like gender, is increasingly seen by historians as a category cutting

across class stratifications. (17)

With regard to the advancing frontier in early nineteenth-century Namibia, the impact of racial categories on social relations between white and black was not as operative as in the colony or on the eastern frontier. As a result of the peripheral situation of southern Namibia, the impact of the few white residents as protagonists of racist ideas was limited, and categories of class were more important.

The early LMS and WMMS missionaries, though paternalistic and Eurocentric in their approach to Khoikhoi culture, did not explicitly propagate a social hierarchy in racial terms. Interracial marriages of missionaries and Africans on the north-western frontier were not common but possible, and the frequent references of the early missionaries at Warmbad and Bethany to their African 'brethren' and 'sisters' betray an attitude which was considered outrageous by the white settlers in the colony.

However, with the hardening of class distinctions on the frontier and the increasing political influence of missionaries the social hierarchy within the mission community became more rigid. From the 1840s the Wesleyan and Rhenish missionaries sometimes adopted crude methods to exert control over their followers, which involved risks the early missionaries were not prepared to take. For example, Tindall whole-heartedly instigated the whipping of unruly community members at Gobabis (18), and RMS missionary Knudsen seems to have been ousted from Bethany in 1851 because he physically assaulted his assistant. (19) Tindall

insisted in 1845 that his Nama/Oorlam followers erect their huts in an appropriate distance from the mission building. (20)

There are indications that this new type of social behaviour coincided with a more rigid race consciousness of the European residents in southern Namibia. Significantly, the records of the first missionaries of the beginning of the nineteenth century contain practically no references to race. Even the most desperate letters of the LMS missionaries merely complain about the lack of cultural or religious sophistication of their followers. By comparison, RMS missionary C.H. Hahn's 'retrospective' of mission work in 1853 is biased by strong racist overtones. (21)

In respect of the social relations developing among the different Namibian groups from the 1840s, it is difficult to conceive - despite the assertions of colonial historians like Vedder - the hardening class relations among Nama, Oorlams, Damara and San in racial categories.

The positions in the upper echelons of the raiding-trading network in southern and central Namibia were predominantly assumed by Oorlams, or acculturated Nama in possession of European commodities and firearms, and the exploited servants and herders were predominantly to be found among the Damara, San and Herero. With the emergence of more rigid social inequalities, the term 'Oorlam', until then mainly denoting a higher degree of 'civilization', came to signify superior class status. One of Tindall's Oorlam followers arrogantly complained of his severe

handicap of being born 'in a Hottentot country'. (22) But class relations cut across the different ethnic groups in Namibia and were not defined in exclusive racial categories. There were intermarriages of San and Herero (23), and some Oorlams adopted Herero or Damara individuals. (24)

* * *

From the 1850s Namibian economic and social structures increasingly deteriorated. The trade in stolen Herero livestock and European firearms via Walvis Bay and across the Orange River increasingly fell into the hands of European traders. The hegemonic position of the missionaries as economic intermediaries with the capitalist market at the Cape came to an end. But both European factions, traders and missionaries, collaborated to restructure the internal balance of power in southern and central Namibia, which eventually led to the downfall of the Afrikaner hegemony by 1870. Territorial boundaries were more rigidly defined, and a complex network of conflicts and alliances interconnected Nama, Oorlams, Herero, Damara and San.

In the 1860s, the Cape Government became aware of the impoverishment and exploitation of the Herero cattle herders. Increasing numbers of destitute Hereros crossed the lower Orange River looking for work in the colony. Some of those impoverished Namibians were distributed by the colonial authorities on farms as far south as the Stellenbosch area. (25)

The Cape Government remained content to observe the north-western boundary - which from 1848 ran along the lower Orange

River - to prevent any violent conflicts in southern and central Namibia from spilling over into the colony. (26) The Bondelswarts at Warmbad, who at least nominally collaborated with the Cape Government from 1838, still performed functions as a border police, though their half-hearted co-operation continued to arouse the suspicion of Cape Government officials. (27)

Although politically still on the periphery of Cape colonial politics, southern and central Namibia became ever more closely connected to the capitalist market in the colony. After the German colonizers annexed 'German South West Africa' in 1884, they had to deal with indigenous social and economic structures which were the product of the continuous interaction of Namibian Khoikhoi with the Cape.

NOTES CONCLUSION

- 1) There were of course migrations of Khoikhoi, who assimilated with the indigenous Nama, across the lower Orange River before that time. However, these immigrants, like the so-called 'Goedonse' (see 3.1), were not regarded by the indigenous Nama as Oorlams.
- 2) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.371.
- 3) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', p.377.
- 4) Legassick, 'Northern Frontier', pp.384-386.
- 5) Legassick, 'The Griqua', p.164.
- 6) Legassick, 'The Griqua', p.175.
- 7) Budack, 'Khoe-Khoen', pp.140-187, 272-313.
- 8) See Lau, 'The Emergence', pp.160-168.
- 9) The concept of the lineage with regard to an analysis of pre-colonial African societies has been heavily criticised by historians and anthropologists who argue that the context of political authority and descent ideology is more obfuscated than elucidated by theoretical models focusing on lineage structures. Some critics would even like to see the concept of the lineage 'finished off': see John Wright, 'Doing the lineage in: Some grumbles from the sidelines', (unpub. paper for the workshop on pre-colonial history, University of Cape Town, 1986, p.20.) The main thrust of this critique seems to be levelled against a description of kinship systems as static structures existing outside the historical realm. The present study's emphasis - though not replacing the term 'lineage' by the vague term 'group', as suggested by Wright - is on the situational context in which descent ideology operates. This approach both implies that kinship structures are subject to variation over time and that political authority is not merely a function of descent ideology.
- 10) Lau, 'The Emergence', pp.160-168.
- 11) Lau, 'The Emergence', pp.154-157.
- 12) Lau, Jonker Afrikaner's Time, p.49.
- 13) Lau, 'The Emergence', pp.154.
- 14) Elphick, Khoikhoi, pp.46-47.
- 15) Heinrich Loth, Die christliche Mission.

- 16) See Hermann Giliomee, 'Eighteenth Century Cape Society and its Historiography: Culture, Race and Class', Social Dynamics, 9 (1) (1983).
- 17) See also Christopher Saunders, The Making of the African Past. Major historians on race and class, (Cape Town and Johannesburg, 1988), pp.190, 196.
- 18) Tindall, Journal, pp.66-67.
- 19) Drießler, Die Rheinische Mission, pp.25-26.
- 20) Tindall, Journal, p.87.
- 21) Lau (ed.), Hahn Diaries, vol.3, pp.659-672.
- 22) Tindall, Journal, p.137.
- 23) Tindall, Journal, p.129.
- 24) 'Quellen', vol.12, Krönlein, Berseba, February 1869, p.121; 'Quellen', vol.7a, Eggert, Gobabis, 27 November 1856, p.37.
- 25) CA, 1/SBK, Magistrate Springbok to Civil Commissioner of Stellenbosch, 31 May 1860. See also CA, 1/SBK, vol.5/1/2, Magistrate Springbok to Colonial Secretary, 24 April 1862; CA, 1/SBK, vol.5/1/2, Civil Commissioner of Namaqualand to Colonial Secretary, 22 September 1862.
- 26) CA, 1/SBK, vol.5/1/3, Civil Commissioner of Namaqualand to Colonial Secretary, 10 June 1864.
- 27) See for example CA, 1/SBK, vol.5/1/1, Civil Commissioner of Namaqualand to Colonial Secretary, 12 July 1860; CA, 1/SBK, vol. 5/1/2, Civil Commissioner of Namaqualand to Auditor General, 4 July 1862; CA, 1/SBK, vol.5/1/3, Civil Commissioner of Namaqualand to Rev Priesley at Nisbett Bath, 11 July 1864.

A note on primary sources

The principal sources for this study have been missionary records. Before the arrival of European traders and the German Rhenish missionaries in the 1840s, the missionaries of the London Missionary Society and the Wesleyan Methodist Mission Society were the only European residents in nineteenth-century southern Namibia. Their letters and journals, which describe their activities among the different Khoikhoi and Oorlam groups on the north-western frontier, were reports to their superiors in Cape Town and London. Only Robert Moffat, during his brief stay in southern Namibia in 1818, seems to have written more personal letters, to his family in England. Abridged and crudely edited versions of some of those missionary accounts have been published in contemporary mission periodicals. The records of the LMS are available on microfilm in the Cape Archives in Cape Town, (the originals are housed at the University of London). Several letters of the Albrechts and Seidenfaden to the LMS directors are also kept on microfilm by the Cory Library in Grahamstown. The Cape Archives contain very few original letters from the LMS missionaries to government officials. (Two letters by the Albrechts, asking for support against the Afrikaner Oorlams in 1811, are an exception.) The Wesleyan records, also on microfilm, are kept by the Cory Library, Rhodes University, in Grahamstown, (the originals are kept in the Methodist Missionary Archives in London). Robert Moffat's Namibian journal and his private letters are available on microfilm in the Manuscripts and Archives Department at the University of Cape Town; the originals are kept

by the National Archives of Zimbabwe. An important part of the correspondence of the Albrecht brothers, Seidenfaden and Tromp, the first missionaries to settle in southern Namibia, are housed in the Archives of the Dutch Reformed Church in Cape Town. Those letters are written in Dutch, because they were directed to the Zuid Africaansche Sendelings Genootschap (South African Missionary Society), which co-operated closely with the LMS.

In the absence of documented government investigations into conditions in southern Namibia during the period under consideration - J.E. Alexander's journey to Namibia in 1837 resulted in the first 'scientific' and detailed account of Great Namaqualand in the nineteenth century - the present study has made extensive use of those few reports of landdrosts, fieldcornets etc., who communicated with the missionaries and the different African groups on the north-western frontier. These files are to be found in the Colonial Office and Government House sections in the Cape Archives. An additional relevant government source is the records of the Magistrate of Worcester, which are also kept by the Cape Archives. In this category, of border officials and agents, may be placed as well the WMMS missionary Shaw, who founded the mission station at the Kamiesberg in 1816, on the northern boundary of the Cape Colony. He was often visited by Namibian Khoikhoi and other frontier people providing him with information - and rumours! - on the state of affairs in southern Namibia. His diaries are kept by the South African Library in Cape Town. Since the historical background of Andrew Smith's secret mission to southern Namibia in 1829 and his 'Northern

'Frontier Report' has been discussed in detail in the present study (see 6.3.), it may suffice to say that though his papers, housed by the South African Museum in Cape Town, consist to a great extent of excerpts from documents in the Cape Archives and contemporary published sources, such as travel accounts, they include notes concerning his visit to the different Nama and Oorlam groups on the north-western frontier.

Last but not least, mention must be made of the 'Quellen zur Geschichte Südwestafrikas', which are housed in the National Archives in Windhoek. This is a compilation by Vedder of extracts from the original accounts of the Rhenish missionaries in Namibia. The originals, which are housed at the archives of the Vereinigte Evangelische Mission in Wuppertal in West Germany, were not consulted because they refer predominantly to the activities of the Rhenish Mission in the second half of the nineteenth century, and contain relatively little data in respect of the early nineteenth-century history of the Nama and Oorlams in Namibia.

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