ELANDSKLOOF: LAND, LABOUR AND DUTCH REFORMED MISSION ACTIVITY IN THE SOUTHERN CEDARBERG, 1860-1963.

Submitted in partial fulfillment of
BA Honours, Department of History,
Univerisity of Cape Town

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CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEGEMENTS.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Nigel Penn for his unflagging optimism and encouragment. I would also like to thank Fernel Abrahams for his help with Dutch translation, the SPP and LRC for instigating this thesis and making certain material available to me, and the people of Elandksloof for their warm welcome and hospitality.

ABBREVIATIONS.

VOC Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie

DRC Dutch Reformed Church

DRMC Dutch Reformed Mission Church

A.S.K Algemeene Sendingkommissie

B.S.S.K Binnelandse Sending Subkommittee

P.K Plaaslike Kommittee, Elandskloof

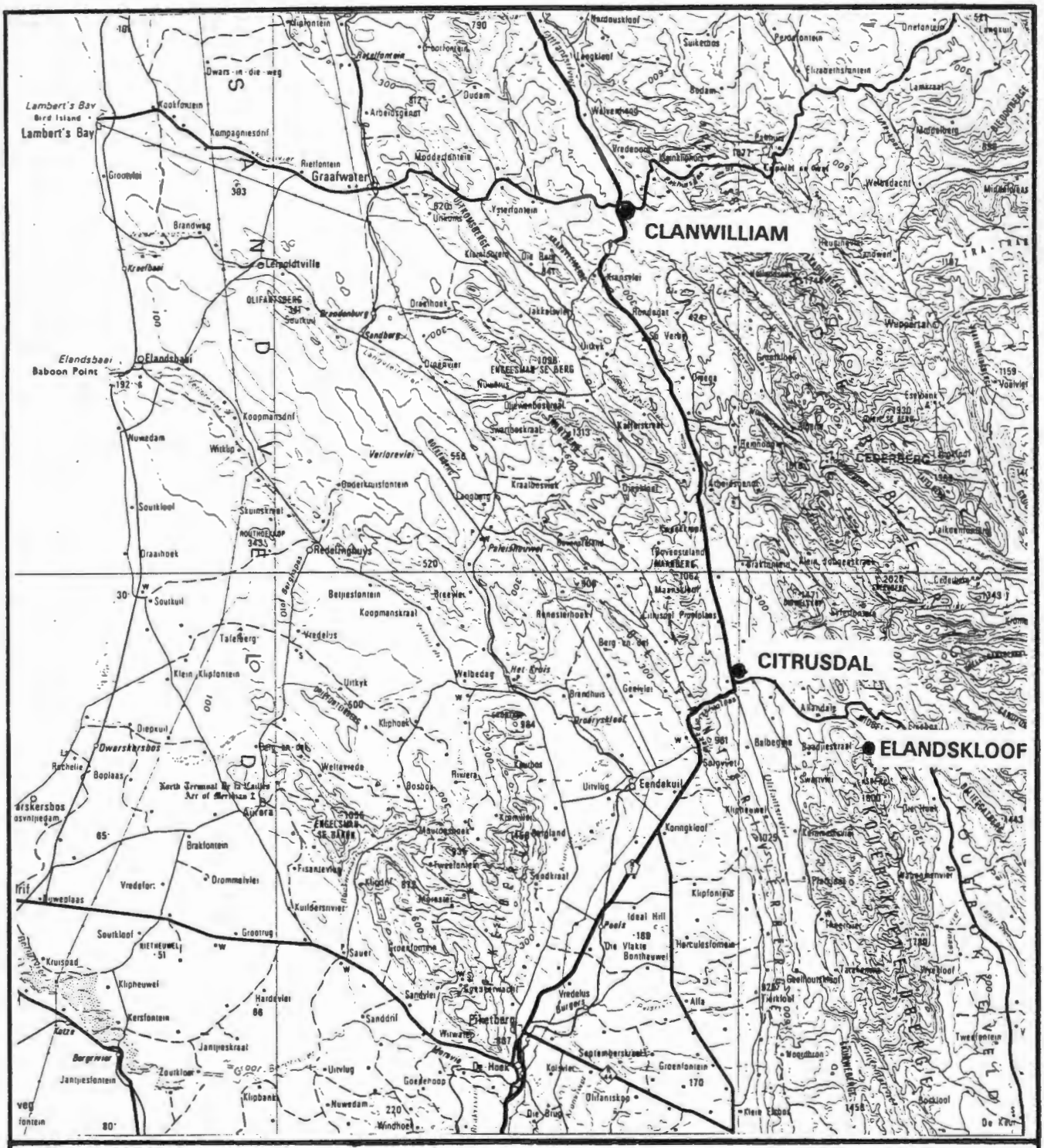

FIGURE 1 : ELANDSKLOOF, CLANWILLIAM DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF THE SOUTHERN CEDARBERG.

Landscape is defined as both an actual piece of inland scenery and a picture representing such scenery. As a subject of investigation, landscape thus incorporates the physical object as well as its existence as a dynamic cultural expression. Hoskins, in his introduction to The Making of The English Landscape, argues that while the geologist may explain the "bones" of the landscape, the fundamental structure that gives form and colour to the scene and produces a certain kind of topography and natural vegetation, it is up to the historian to "show how man has clothed the geological skeleton during the comparatively recent past"[1]. This results in a vital sense of the relationship between history and the physical territory by which it is confined, sustained, and in a way explained, moving beyond a history concerned with the unfolding of time alone.[2] The actual piece of inland scenery - the physical object of the geographers' space - plays a part in the subject of landscape, but the concept further incorporates the notion of landscape as a cultural object - as a picture representing that physical object. Landscape evokes the spatial "forms and fantasies" through which a culture declares its presence.[3] Contextualisation should extend beyond the realms of being merely the mirror of the appearance of natural objects to incorporate the human trace of encountering them.

The geographical area under consideration, the southern end of what was later known as the Cedarberg mountains, lies to the west of the semi-desert area of the Tanqua Karoo, to the north-east

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[1] W. G. Hoskins, **The Making of the English Landscape** (Pelican 1973), p 14.

[2] F. Braudel, **The Identity of France, vol.1:History and Environment** (Fontana Press, 1989), p 31.

[3] Carter, **The Road to Botany Bay** (London, 1989), p xxii.

of the wheat-producing area of the Swartland and east of the sandy coastal belt, characterised by low, scrubby bush. The south-eastern ramparts of this mountain range were known, in the 18th century, as the Zwaarte Ruggens, to the west of which lay the Koue Bokkeveld, an area of "high mountains and secret valleys".[4] This region, in which the valley of Elandskloof is found, was sometimes referred to as the Koue veld or Bergen.[5] Eland's Kloof forms the deepest kloof through the Cedarberg range, its length being approximately thirty to forty miles (55 kms.), and connects the valley of the Upper Olifants River with the Koue Bokkeveld.[6] Penn notes that to the Khoi and "bastaard Hottentots" who knew the region the name "Cedarberg" had a mildness which they rejected as incongruous to the landscape and, further, that the drosters (run away slaves or "bastaard" servants) who had lived in the mountains corrupted the name to the more bitter "Zuurbergen", thus inscribing their own encounter with this landscape.[7] This process reflects a notion of landscape as dynamic and particular, constantly opposing attempts to fix landscape as uniform or universal.

These mountains consist on the upper parts of shaly, ash - coloured sandstone, while the lower parts contain a variety of mineral and fossil substances, particularly marine petrefactions, such as shells and fish.[8] The rocky wilderness of these mountains is captured in Masson's description of the Elandskloof pass, in 1773, as a road "rugged beyond description consisting

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[4] N. Penn, "Droster Gangs of the Bokkeveld and Roggeveld, 1770-1880", **South African Historical Journal** (Dec 1990), p4.

[5] ibid

[6] Cape Colony Publications (hereafter CCP), G1 - 1861: **Reports on Surveys and Inspection of Roads** p 47.

[7] Penn, "Droster Gangs", p4.

[8] Sir J. Alexander, **An Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa** (London, 1838), p 22.

of broken and shattered rocks and rugged precipices...;the sides of which are covered with fragments of rocks that have tumbled down from the sumits at different times".[9] This rockscape of huge masses of old sandstone stained with oxide of iron is broken by the presence of fynbos, including rooibos and buchu[10], and the " broad green leaves encircling the purple flowers of the protea mellifora".[11] Further, the Cedarberg gained its name from the cedar trees found on its slopes.

A number of the mountains of the Koue Bokkeveld rise above 4000 feet (1 220 metres), on which the snow lies long in winter. The drainage of these mountains finds its way northwards, through the valleys, such as Elandskloof, to the Olifantsriver.[12] This river springs out of the Ceres mountains and runs north-westwards. From its source to its mouth at Lamberts Bay the river's length is approximately 200 miles (320 km.). The average annual rise of water above the river bed caused by flooding is from 6 - 10 feet (2.5 m.), resulting in valleys which are rich in decomposed vegetable matter and highly fertile.[13]

The presence of the Cedarberg range in this region gives rise to a large degree of local variation in terms of the physical enviroment and, consequently, the nature of human activity in the area. Winter rainfall occurs throughout the region, but is generally very low. While the surrounding areas are thus extremely arid, precipitation over the Cedarberg is high due to orogenic rainfall events. Winter rains in the Cape are preceeded

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[9] Cited in J. Burman, <u>So High the Road</u> (C.T, 1863), p 125.

[10] The rooibos plant is commonly dried and drunk as a tea; buchu is a fragrant herb known for its medicinal properties.

[11] Alexander, **Expedition**, p 25.

[12] CCP G41 - 1859: **Notes on a journey 1857-8 with a view to determine characteristics and order of the various geological formations.**

[13] CCP G 37 - 1883: **Report of the Hydraulic Engineer**, p 25.

by north - westerly winds associated with cold fronts moving in from across the Atlantic. This process of climatic local variation and its import for those newly (an 19th century phenomonen in this area) involved in the sedentary activity of cultivation, is beautifully captured in the **Report of the Hydraulic Engineer:**

> "When a south - east wind, after blowing for some time, veers round to the North, the people look out anxiously for rain; this wind often brings up dense watery clouds, which roll sluggishly over this thirsty track as if they intended discharging themselves over it, but column after column passes on to dash themselves against the buttresses of the Cedarbergen and Cold Bokkeveld range, to coil over their crests and precipitate themselves in voluminous showers on their Eastern slopes."[14]

The altitude, rain and snowfall made for the extremely cold winters to which the name Koue Bokkeveld referred. In the summer months temperatures were exceedingly high.

This harsh and highly seasonal climate influenced human activity in the area. The early inhabitants of the Cedarberg, the San, relied on hunting and gathering for their subsistence. The **veldkos** and game which supported them were natural and seasonal resources and, as such, enforced a constant mobility on the population. The predominant economic activity of the Khoi who later moved into this region, was subsistence based on pastoralism, rather than cultivation. The Khoi, like their San neighbours, were a nomadic people, moving seasonally in search of new grazing grounds and more mild weather. The European settlers who moved into the region from the first quarter of the 18th century, were, up until the close of the century, stockfarmers who similarly followed this ancient rhythmn of the enviroment. In his **Travels in Europe, Africa and Asia made**

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[14] CCP G 37 -1883, p 27.

between the years 1770 - 1779, Thunberg notes this practise, declaring that "This country...lies very high, and is, in the winter, very cold...Those that inhabited this Bocke-veld sometimes remove across the mountains with their cattle to Carrow, ".[15] Thus the onset of the rainy season was traditionally, a time of heightened mobility in the Western Cape and the stock farmers of the Bokkeveld mountain range followed this ancient rhythmn of the enviroment when they moved their animals down to their **leegplaatzen** on the warmer plains to avoid the freezing rain and snow.[16] For a brief period after the rains the grazing and hunting in the Tanqua Karoo was good.

Transhumance was also a social phenomonen. For the colonists, for example, it was a period of enforced and welcome sociability - a time and place to meet up with friends and relatives.[17] While both settler and servant travelled through the same physical country, this physical overlap was no guarantee of mutual understanding. For the slaves and servants of the trekboer such seasonal upheavals had a meaning distinct from that of the masters. The legitimate mobility, partial anonimity, due to the merging of people from different regions, the abundant resources of livestock or game and the natural hideaway provided by the Cedarberg mountains close by, provided a landscape conducive to escape.[18]

It was not until the late 18th century that this mobility was replaced by a more permanently settled community based, not only on pastoralism, but on the relatively static activity of cultivation. Once again this changing landscape was not uniformly encountered by the inhabitants of the area. For the

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[15] Thunberg quoted in Smuts and Palbert, eds, **The Forgotten Highway** (C.T, 1988), p 15.

[16] Penn, "Droster Gangs", p 3.

[17] ibid, p 3.

[18] ibid, p 3-4.

farmers this meant a year demarcated by seasonal activities, but dominated by the immobile activity of cultivation. Khoisan and "bastaard" dispossessed, who worked as casual labourers, moved, however, from farm to farm following the labour demands with which these seasonal activities were accompanied. For labour therefore, seasonal activities involved a landscape that extended spatially as well as temporally.

Due to the mountainous nature of much of the terrain, it is unlikely that the Western Cape ever had a large indigenous population. Dependent entirely on the bounty of nature for their survival, the San existed in small hunter-gathering bands, living predominantly in the mountains and along the banks of the Olifantsriver - access to protection and water being primary determinants of the pattern of their settlement.[19] The pre-colonial Khoi, predominantly involved in pastoralism, would have confined themselves to the plains around the Piketberg, the vleis of the Sandveld and the valleys of the Olifants and Doorn rivers.[20]

Along with their San neighbours, time would have been measured by the natural elements of sun and moon and years dictated by seasons marked off by different activities. With the practise of transhumance, this seasonal cycle had a spatial, as well as temporall expression. Distance, truly measured as the speed at which people can travel, is similarly a relative notion combining both spatial and temporal dimensions.[21] Travel in the pre-colonial Cedarberg region took place on foot. People thus moved slowly and that distance produced relative isolation.

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[19] Scholtz, "Die Ontwikkeling van die Onder-Olifants Rivier", **Archives Yearbook**, part 2 (1966), p9: cites Jan Danckaert referring to the presence of small groups of "Bushmen" all along the the Olifants River mountains.

[20] Penn, "Land, labour and livestock in the Western Cape during the 18th century", M Simons and James, eds, **The Angry Divide** (C.T, 1989), p 5.

[21] Braudel, **The Identity of France**, p 110.

Notions of "property" as tied to a land value played no part in the pre-colonial Khoisans' articulation of place. Territory existed as a shifting process of access to various resources, such as hunting ground, grazing, watering holes, **heuningneste** [bee hives], **veldkos** and **daggaveld**.[22] Social and political organisation was expressed, therefore, as a power over space, with their world of travelling being dominated by the spatial phenomenon of succession rather than stasis. Travel was the ecologically determined expression of an intention to stay where they were.[23]

The inhabitants of the pre-colonial Cape made little physical impact on the country, expressing their existence rather through a symbolic association with nature, such as the belief in the supernatural sympathy of individuals with particular animals.[24] Their world was essentially "hand-made". Fields were not created out of a wilderness, mines dug or towns laid out. The most forceful impact made on the landscape, and as such indicative of the primary nature of the pattern of human settlement as mobile, was the development of footpaths. Without the wheel, the physical impact of this was slight.

Such tracks, however played a vital role in the process of colonisation. From the journals of the Danckaert and Meerhoff expeditions, it is clear that the first settlers made use of existant tracks in order to penetrate this "unknown" land.[25]

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[22] Scholtz, "Onder-Olifants Rivier", p 4.

[23] Carter, **Botany Bay**, p336, Although Carter refers here to the Aborigines in Australia, I believe the process he describes is applicable to the South African context as well.

[24] E Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity", paper presented at the conference "People, Power and Culture: The History of Christianity in South Africa 1772-1972", University of the Western Cape, (Aug 1992), p 15.

[25] Scholtz, "Onder-Olifants Rivier", p 60; E. Mossop, **Old Cape Highways** (Maskew Millar, undated), p 139.

The Khoisan actively, if unwittingly, collaborated in this process in their occasional role as guide. Without this introduction to the network of travel, colonisation would have been far harder.

The mountain kloof of Elandskloof formed a link between the valley of the Ofifants River and the plateau of the Koue Bokkeveld. The presence of an old mountain pass across this valley indicates its role as a point of access for early travellers in the Clanwilliam district, a dynamic cultural expression on the landscape of the human pattern of transhumance.[26] It is likely that this was a route pre-established by the various Khoi and San groups living in the area at the time of colinisation. The place of Elandskloof (as opposed to neutral and ahistorical space) thus came into existence as a place encountered, possibly a place of rest, along a much travelled path. Carter argues that the cultural place in which spatial history begins is in the act of naming - by the act of naming, space is transformed symbolically into a place, that is, a space with a history.[27] In the naming of the place "Elandskloof" these newcomers inscribed their passage permanently on the world, making a metaphoric world - a place which others may one day inhabit and by which, in the meantime, they asserted their own place in history.[28]

Through this use of the pre-existing network of nodes, such as water sources, linked by tracks, European pattern of land use was based on, and modified, the Khoisan pattern. This helps to explain the surprising degree of continuity in the use of land, human mobility, seasonal activity and notions of time and space between the pre-colonial Khoisan existence in the area and the arrival of the first white settlers. Up until the late 18th century, the trek-boers in the area were essentially pastoralists

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[26] CCP G1 - 1861, p 47.

[27] Carter, Botany Bay, p xxiv.

[28] ibid.

following the traditional patterns of transhumance which this search for grazing ground neccesitated. Despite new modes of transport, the horse, oxen and wagons, paths were not substatially altered and thus distance still remained great and the community isolated.

Difference in perceptions of space and land did, however, occur, and where it did occur was of fundamental importance in the radical alteration to the landscape which white settlement produced. This alteration, and the dispossession it triggered, is captured in **Thunberg's Travels At The Cape Of Good Hope 1772-1775:** "As cold as this country is, still it was formerly much more inhabited by Hottentots than it is at present by the Europeans, who only occupy a few farms in it. All over the country the Hottentots live together, many in a community, sometimes to the amount of several hundreds in a village, feed on roots, and the flesh of wild beast, and of their own herds.. and at the same time are satisfied with a little. On the other hand, every colonist has a farm to himself.."[29] Carter argues that it is important to see "landscape" as a continuous offspring of the traveler's intention.[30] On an imperial project to extend economic and political power, white settlers brought with them European-derived, legalistic notions of "property", which fixed land and granted it an intrinsic monetary based value.

It was this difference in perception of space, especially in the form of land, which underpinned, and was further entrenched through the use of force, the ability of the white settlers to dispossess the Khoisan of their land. Despite the physical overlap of space inhabited, no symbolic exchange, enabling a merging of spatial conception to take place, occurred. Spatial translation was almost wholly one way. Despite their strong notions of territory and complex systems of territorial

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[29] V Forbes, ed, **Thunberg's Travels at the Cape of Good Hope**, Van Riebeeck Society, second series, No. 12 (C.T, 1986),p 196.

[30] Carter, **Botany Bay**, p 349.

demarcation, the Khoisan were seen, through Western eyes, as not classifying the land they inhabited, as not knowing this land as a "place". The logic following this was that they did not understand the notion of possession at all, their grasp on the land was, therefore, tenuous and it was hardly a crime to take posession without consultation. Occupation was made to look natural - here was a country waiting to be occupied.[31]

The pastoralism of the Western Cape required extensive areas of land which could be vacated if grazing deteriorated. European authorities at the Cape thus developed a "loan-farm" system, which, Penn argues, encouraged the rapid despersal of free burghers into the interior.[32] The Khoi lost land and livestock to the colonists and the majority were absorbed into the colonial society as labourers. Carter's description of the process of colonial aquisition of land in Australia is easily transferable to the South African context: "All too quickly the brittle criss-cross of the newcomer's gaze sliced up and fenced off what had formerly been imagined: the result was the collapse of aboriginal space". [33]

The first trekboers began to graze their cattle in the Oliphants river area from 1725.[34] Under the loan-farm system farmers were granted permits from the colonial authorities to graze their cattle on a specified area for a specified time, usually six months to a year, for which a cost of hire was paid. The rate of hire from 1773 -1813 was 24 Rixdollars per loan-farm per year.[35] Elandskloof, described as "over de Oliphants Rivier", was marked out, for the first time, as a fixed and enclosed

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[31] ibid, p 343-344; 64.

[32] Penn, "Land, labour and livestock", p 4.

[33] Carter, **Botany Bay**, p 344.

[34] A P Smit, **Gedenkbook by Goue Jubileum van die NGK, Citrusdal, 1916-1966** (cover title, **Ons Kerk In Bo-Olifantsrivier**) (Citrusdal, 1965), p 7.

[35] ibid; Scholtz, "Onder-Olifants Rivier", p 30.

place, to which an inherent monetary value was fixed, when it was granted as a loan-farm to a certain Joachim Scholtz in 1733.[36]

These years witnessed the first enclosure of land in the Cedarberg region of the Western Cape, an act underpinned by the introduction of dramatically different notions of property and ownership to those which has previously been interacting with the environment. European interests demanded land, which in turn required the displacement of the Khoisan spatial command of the country. The landscape was transformed by Europeans into "their place" through boundaries, displacing the fluid process of access to resources practised by the Khoisan of the area, whose integrity was invested in European notions of law and ordering. The concommitant notions of ownership and proprietorship were derivatives of the post-feudal European experience, and the foundations of an insipient capitalism, and, as with enclosure movements elsewhere in the world, necessitated a process of dispossession.

In order to ensure and control property, land had to be brought under the control of the legal system and thus under colonial authority. To this end the colonial government bounded land into magisterial districts. From 1730-1808 the region of the Olifants River and Koue Bokkeveld was incorporated within the district of Stellenbosch.[37] In 1808 this region fell under the auspices of the newly created Worcester district. The obstacles presented by the bad roads and passes in the payment of opgaaf and maintenance of order in this large district resulted in the creation of a sub-district of Tulbagh and a drosdy at Jan Dissels Vallei. The new sub-district of Jan Dissels Vallei included the field-cornetcy of the Olifants River, Onder Roggeveld, Hantam, Onder Bokkeveld and Namaqualand. In 1814 this region aquired the name of Clanwilliam and in 1836 it aquired the status of a full

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[36] Smit, **Bo-Olifantsrivier**, p 8.

[37] Scholtz, "Onder-Olifants Rivier", p 41; 89.

district with I. van Ryneveld as Resident Magistrate.[38] The areas of Hantam and Namaqualand later became themselves full districts. The process of fixing colonial subjects increased their accountablity and ensured the centralisation of the Cape government's authority.

In the period of Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC) rule, however, this process was by no means absolute, but was circumscribed by local particularities. While VOC policy played an important part, both the acceptance of such policies, and the limitations of their enforcement on the ground, were determined by local conditions. The system of loan-farms, despite the common practise of the hire of these being extended indefinitely, was not one of total ownership of the land, illustrated by their non-inheritable quality.[39] This system, while altering the landscape substantially, was not entirely alien to, or uninfluenced by, the earlier, more mobile patterns of human settlement in the area. Furthermore, the easy access to loan-farms in the first half of the 18th century, Scholtz argues, led to a certain laxity that resulted in poorly defined boundaries.[40] The fluid relationship to the land of the pre-colonial inhabitants of the Western Cape was, to some degree, adopted by the trekboers. Due to their isolation from colonial markets, trekboer production in this region was also predominantly based on subsistence. Environment, in the form of climate, the availability of land due to the sparse population and physical isolation, influenced the form that settler habitation of the area was to take.

The years of trekboer expansion witnessed increasing competition over land, grazing and water resources. As the colonists consolidated their hold over these resources (a hold achieved

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[38] CA 2/7: Inventory of the Archives of the Magistrate, Worcester, 1804-

[39] Smit, **Bo-Olifantsrivier**, p 8.

[40] Scholtz, "Onder-Olifants Rivier", p 32.

through force enhanced by superior technology in the form of guns and ammunition and aided by smallpox epidemics and the destructive effects of alcohol), the chances of the Khoisan leading an independent existence deteriorated. Violence and impoverishment, which worsened throughout the century, forced the majority of Khoisan to be incorporated into colonial society as herders, hunters and servants on white farms. Those with still some herds fled to the mountains, such as the Cedarberg, and from the pastures of the Oliphants River to Namaqualand. By the end of the Dutch reign at the Cape, the Khoisan still within the colony had been, almost entirely, reduced to a "landless proletariat".[41]

The system of slave labour which the white settlers brought with them served to exacerbate the position of the subjugated Khoisan in colonial society and mould the nature and form of labour relations in the area. Despite the fact that slaves were found in far fewer numbers on pastoral than on arable farms and were outnumbered in the Clanwilliam district by Khoisan and "bastaard Hottentot" labourers, slavery was the predominant form of labour in the colony under the rule of the VOC and had an important influence on the labour system at the Cape.[42]

The isolation of farms and the daily contact of slaves and owners resulted in an ambivalent relationship between the two parties. Such close contact involved a degree of co-operation which could not be entirely dominated by fear and mistrust. The activities of pastoral slaves, such as herding and driving, ensured a degree of space in which unfree labour could assert some kind of humanity.[43] The proximity, however, also made it neccessary, in a system which was predicated on fear, for owners to emphasise

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[41] J Marais, **The Cape Coloured People 1652-1937** (JHB, 1968), p 109.

[42] Elphick and Giliomee, eds, **The Shaping of South African Society** (C.T, 1989), p 138; Alexander, **Expedition**, p 33.

[43] Elphick and Giliomee, eds, **Shaping**, p 150.

their authority constantly. Underlying this authority was the threat of physical coercion. The slaves' existence was extremely harsh, the labour often backbreaking in the absence of any mechanisation, while any resistance to this was met with severe forms of punishment. Several of the worst cases of maltreatment were realised in the newly and sparsely settled areas of the colony, the Bokkeveld and Roggeveld being especially notorious during the VOC period.[44]

The slave system and its brutalities informed the wider labour system at the Cape. Khoisan labour became, increasingly, merely another element in a general system of unfree labour. Up until Ordinance 50 of 1828, which theoretically placed Khoisan on an equal footing with whites before the law, Khoi and "bastaard-hottentot" labour was tied to white farms through vagrancy legislation and systems of apprenticeship and, alongside the slaves, were forced to suffer severe physical maltreatment with little recourse to the law. The effectual closure of the frontier of expansion in the 1770s and the general military crisis caused by the frontier war of 1774, prompted the colonists to define the status of the colonial Khoisan most unfavourably.[45] A crucial stage in this process, Penn argues, was associated with the creation of a new category of colonial subject, the "Bastaard-Hottentot". This category incorporated those people of mixed Khoi and slave parentage, and these individuals personified the fusion of Khoi and slave identity. From the 1770s onwards the colonists attempted to define their status as labourers.[46] Colonial Khoisan were relegated, both legally and in terms of their lived experience, to the position of unfree labour.

The process of dispossession (of land and livestock) and subjugation was, in many instances, resisted by the Khoisan of

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[44] ibid, p 153.

[45] Penn, "Land, labour and livestock", p 18.

[46] Penn, "Droster Gangs", p 2.

the Western Cape. Increased resistance to colonial penetration, exemplified in the frontier war of 1739, had led to the rise of European commandos, whose twin objectives - the crushing of opposition and the aquisition of labour - made explicit the aims of colonialism and its insipient capitalism. The military post established at Warm Baths during the "Boesman Oorlog" of 1739 imposed a physical expression of these intentions on the landscape.[47]

The particular environment of the Cedarberg was influential in this process of resistance. The mountainous nature of the landscape granted a fortress-like protection from commandos, **veldkos** and game provided the basis for a meagre subsistence, the mountain slopes provided grazing for those who still had some cattle and the Oliphants River ensured some access to water. The small number of whites in the district throughout the 18th century further checked any determined attempt by the colonists to oust this stronghold of independent minded Khoi, or "Bastaard-hottentotte" in the Cedarberg range and area near the Pakhuis pass.[48]

Escape, the most common form of slave resistance, was similarly influenced by the topography of the Western Cape.[49] The mountains, and notably the Cedarberg, provided refuge and good visibility of pursuers. "Droster gangs" and runaway slaves were an important dimension of the Cedarberg landscape.[50] The disruption of the settlers' attempts to impose their own "order", through dispossession, onto the landscape of this area, is

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[47] N. Penn, "The Frontier in the Western Cape, 1700-1740", in J. Parkinson and M. Hall, eds, **Papers in the Prehistory of the Western Cape South Africa** (Oxford: B.A.R, 1987).

[48] Penn, "Land, labour and livestock", p 18.

[49] Elphick and Giliomee, **Shaping**, p 157.

[50] Penn, "Droster Gangs"; Alexander refers to the murder of two "coloured" women at the hands of runaway slaves looking for arms, **Expedition**, p 289.

evident in Scholtz' description of the area as being, throughout the 18th century, "verontrus deur drosterslawe en vyandige hottentotte and Boesmans".[51]

With the second British occupation of the Cape in 1806, the colony was drawn into the dynamic political and economic system of the British Empire. This led to economic growth and increased government intervention, due to greater will and resources, in matters of labour and frontier security.[52] The closure of the Eastern frontier with the sweeping of the Xhosa out of the Zuurveld in 1811, resulted in a shortage of land and labour within the colony. The Cape government consolidated its hold over these scarce resources through the fixing of property with the introduction of **erfpagplase**, in 1813 in the Clanwilliam area, to replace the loan-farm system. Master and servant relations were brought, increasingly, under the authority of government with labour legislation such as the Caledon Code of 1809 to Ordinance 50, in the case of the Khoisan, and the ameliorative slave legislation that culminated in the emancipation of all slaves in 1838.

Economic growth and a strengthened colonial administration, along with new ideologies emmanating from Britain, played an important part in further altering the landscape of the Western Cape in the early 19th century. The village of Clanwilliam was established in 1810. In 1808 and 1836 the growth of the area was perceived as neccessitating the redrawing of boundaries, resulting in the creation of the Clanwilliam district, in order to strengthen government administration and control.

The land was cleared in the process of establishing cultivation, towns were laid out and boundaries rigidified. This changing landscape was, in many ways, the offspring of the imperial intention of the new British authorities. The "space" of the

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[51] Scholtz, "Onder-Olifants Rivier", p 41.

[52] Elphick and Giliomee, eds, **Shaping**, p 152-3.

landscape was reduced to the temporal as the possibility of a European colonial future was coded as resources to be developed or surplusses to be extracted. Through such a systematising of nature, which came in the wake of the European Enlightenment philosophies of "science" and "rationality", a dissociative understanding, a fixing of dynamic matter, overlaid the functional, experiental relationships between people, plants and animals. This attempt to "order" the landscape is most apparent in the creation of such posts as that of official botanist, or hydraulogist, in the colonial office.

An important component of the philosophy of rational ordering of landscape, and its insipient ideology of capitalism, was the notion of property, the flip side of which was the European preoccupation with the issue of vagrancy. The concern with vagrancy represented a deeply rooted, post-enlightenment, European anxiety about the "wanderer". Nations and Empires could only be built on an authority to which all were accountable, and the economies on which this authority rested demanded land and labour. Those who refused to live in one place, and hence to be accountable, were thus seen to be a major obstacle to the process of "civilising". The imperial project thus required the fixing of both "untamed" nature and its wandering inhabitants.

CHAPTER ONE

LAND, LABOUR AND SQUATTING IN THE CLANWILLIAM DISTRICT, 1840-1870.

In the wake of Ordinance 50 of 1828, which theoretically set Khoisan on an equal footing with whites before the law, and the emancipation of slaves in 1838, farmers in the Cape colony were forced to adjust to new labour patterns. What emerged was not a system of permanent wage-labour, as had been envisaged by the liberal supporters of emancipation, but a combination of permanent farm labour and hired seasonal, or casual, labour, only partially paid by wages.[53] Limitations on alternative means of subsistence meant that many freed people were forced to work for farmers in return for the use of land, or, more commonly, for basic provisions. Extensive private land ownership by colonists meant that no land was available for freed servants and the resources to enable an independent freedman peasantry to emerge in the Western Cape were limited primarily to the mission stations. By the mid-1840s these stations were so overcrowded that inhabitants had no option but to work for white farmers for at least part of the year.[54] Mission stations thus formed the most important source of casual labour in the colony. This new pattern of labour demands functioned in the context of a "free market" and the state was prepared, therefore, to provide legislation to support its operation. The Masters and Servants legislation of 1841 and 1856 sanctioned the labour system evolved by farmers in the three years since the ending of apprenticeship.[55]

Worden concludes, therefore, that adjustment by farmers to post

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[53] N Worden, "Adjusting to Emancipation: Freed slaves and farmers in mid-19th century South Western Cape.", Simons and James, **The Angry Divide** (C.T, 1989), p 34.

[54] ibid, p 36.

[55] ibid, p 37.

emancipation patterns of labour demand saw the emergence of a dependent rural work-force by the mid 19th century due to the limited alternatives available to freed slaves. Lack of land and capital resources left freedmen still dependent on farmers for work, despite many having resisted their former owners by leaving the farms, on which they had worked as slaves, in 1838.[56] This process of the emergence of a dependent rural work-force developed somewhat differently in the Clanwilliam district due to the nature of the landscape and the particular history of the district.

The unappropriated land in the Cedarberg mountains had long provided a refuge for Khoisan retreating from the advancing colonial economy and runaway slaves and "bastaard hottentots". At the time of emancipation these mountains still contained a large amount of unappropriated crown land which provided an alternative means of subsistence to permanent farm labour. Furthermore, there existed in these mountains established, functioning "squatting" communities, or kraals, which freedmen and women might join. The fact that the Clanwilliam district was particularly prone to squatting, as some sort of marginal independent economic existence could be sustained, retarded, to some degree, the process of the development of a dependent rural work force in the area.

In the pre-industrial Cape economy, it was mainly independent access to land which gave members of the underclass (including artisans, peasants and rural workers) some freedom from permanent labour on farms.[57] The decades immediately following Ordinance 50 and the emancipation of the slaves, the 1840s and 1850s, witnessed a particularly bitter struggle over access to land within the Western Cape. To the colonists, the monopolisation of land was the key to moulding a cheap, stable and dependent

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[56] ibid, p 38.

[57] P Scully, "The Bouquet of Freedom: Social and economic relations in the Stellenbosch district 1870-1900." (MA thesis, UCT,1987), p 13.

agrarian labouring class. Access to land ensured, on the other hand, the ability of those still independent "bastaard-hottentots" and Khoisan to maintain some modicum of economic independence and therefore resist proletarianisation. On the eve of emancipation independent access to land by the rural underclasses was, however, a highly limited alternative. The majority of Khoisan had been dispossessed by the end of the 18th century and private land ownership by the colonists was extensive. Mission stations and squatting thus provided the only alternatives to permanent farm labour.

The central issue around which the struggle over land and labour was waged, was that of squatting and vagrancy. Scully argues that in the decades after emancipation the question of labour control was perceived by the former master class to be the key to the maintenance of the established social order, which they felt was under threat as a result of the new labour "freedom". The failure of ex-slaves and other members of the rural underclasses to engage in wage-labour was thus identified as idleness, which was, in turn, defined as vagrancy. Vagrancy was then labelled a crime.[58]

Resistance by the rural underclasses to land alienation and proletarianisation was frequently effective, but the balance was tipped from the outset and the rural propertied class, represented by the Divisional councils, remained, despite their "wail of victimization"[59] after emancipation, the dominant force, firmly in control of the structures of authority. Despite the hegemony of the British colonial government, and its distinction from the, predominantly Dutch, master class of Clanwilliam, the Cape land laws throughout the 19th century never ceased in their proletarianising and dispossessing function, upholding the demands for land and labour of the white farmer. In general they facilitated a continuing assault of the rights

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[58] ibid, p 11.

[59] ibid, p 84.

to usage and commonality of the public domain.[60]

At the time of the emancipation of slaves the extent of the Clanwilliam district was 300 miles (480 kms.) from north to south and 250 miles (400 kms.) from east to west, extending from the coastal strip from Lamberts Bay in the north to St Helena Bay in the south and eastwards to the tail-end of the Ceres valley. From the contemporary observations of Alexander the population of the district was given as composing of 1 189 white men; 1 115 white women; 2 566 "Hottentot" men; 2 445 "Hottentot" women; 575 male apprentices and 570 female apprentices.[61] The district was thus relatively sparsely populated and the majority of the work-force had been "free" Khoisan/"bastaard", rather than bonded labour. The white farmers in the area were heavily outnumbered by so-called "Hottentots".

Due to its distance from the markets of Cape Town, a distance reinforced by the absence of roads and natural obstacles to transport, such as the heavy sand tracks and mountain barriers, the economy of the Clanwilliam district, based largely on mixed agriculture, had not advanced equally with other parts of the colony, but remained fairly stagnant.[62] As a result wages in the area tended to be amongst the lowest in the Western Cape, on average ranging between 6s and 9s per month, with provisions.[63] Working and living conditions for labour on farms were bad and corporal punishment was frequently used as a means of coercion

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[60] J Marincowitz, "Rural Production and Labour in the Western Cape, 1835-1888, with special reference to the wheat growing districts" (PhD thesis, University of London, 1985),p 141.

[61] Sir J Alexander, **An Expedition of Discovery Into the Interior of Africa** (London, 1838), p 38.

[62] J Noble, **Descriptive Handbook of the Cape Colony** (C.T, 1875), p 67.

[63] **Master and Servant; Addenda to Documents on the working of the Order in Council of the 21st July, 1846.** (C.T, 1849): gives an overview of the average wages of Western Cape districts; Alexander, **Expedition**, p 33.

by farmers who could not pay adequate wages.[64]

After Ordinance 50 and emancipation, mission stations were virtually the only places where freed servants and slaves could obtain access to land in the Western Cape and thus resist the harsh path to proletarianisation. As a result of the great evangelical revival among protestant Europe in the 1790s, many foreign mission societies began to enter the Cape in the early 19th century. As part of this broad project, two missionaries, Kicherer and Edwards of the London Missionary Society, moved into the interior of the North Western Cape to begin a mission amongst the San in the area. Resistance of the San to the mission led to it being moved down to the Zak River and from 1802 Khoi, "bastaards" and "bastaard Hottentots" became the new focus of their evangelical work.[65] This mission drew Khoi from as far as the Cedarberg area and was also the base of itinerant Khoi and "bastaard" missionaries who would have spread the word of Christianity among the people of the Southern Cedarberg.[66] In 1829 the Rhenish Mission Society arived in Cape Town and bought the farm of Rietmond in the Cedarberg, on which they started the mission station of Wupperthal in 1830. In 1832 one of the two missionaries at Wupperthal, Van Wurmb, moved to Doringkraal, on the Olifants River, then still the site of a Khoisan/bastaard kraal, where a further mission station, Ebenezer, was started on an adjoining farm.[67]

While the dates of the establishment of these mission stations in Clanwilliam indicate that the Rhenish mission society closely associated its work with the potentials opened up by Ordinance

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[64] **Master and Servant**; Resident Magistrate, Clanwilliam district, p 12 and Mr N H Smit, Clanwilliam district, p 178.

[65] N. Penn, "The /Xam and the Colony, 1740-1870", p 15; 17.

[66] personal communication, Nigel Penn.

[67] Scholtz, "Die Ontwikkeling van die Onder-Olifants Rivier" (C.T, 1966), p 121.

50, these missions also played a crucial role in the post emancipation years. In the immediate post-emancipation dislocation, as patterns of labour demands underwent adjustment, many freed slaves resisted their former owners by moving away from the farms on which they had worked as slaves. For the majority of these people, ex-slaves and Khoisan, one of the limited alternatives to permanent farm labour was to enter a mission station.

Many freed men and women did move onto mission stations after they were emancipated, and began to cultivate their own crops. This trend can be seen in the Clanwilliam district with the growth of Wupperthal from 200 inhabitants to 400 in the years 1835-1840.[68] While it is clear that these stations became rapidly overcrowded, a process which obliged inhabitants to work for farmers for at least part of the year, the continued and substantial growth of Wupperthal also indicates that labour continued to find the partial proletarianisation of such mission institutions an attractive alternative to the existence as permanent labourers on white farms, and moved onto stations as a means of effecting their resistance to that system.[69] Between the years 1843 and 1846, the Rhenish society bought two farms adjoining Wupperthal, on which they soon settled 1 200 coloured people.[70] By 1845 the only other mission station in the Clanwilliam district, Ebenezer, consisted of 241 inhabitants.[71] Taking into account the size of the district as a whole, these figures are not insubstantial. It is also probable that many freed people from other districts moved onto the Clanwilliam mission stations.

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[68] J Marais, **The Cape Coloured People 1652-1937** (JHB, 1968), p 191.

[69] Worden, "Emancipation", p 36 and Marais, **Cape Coloured People**, p248; on the inability of mission stations to support their inhabitants.

[70] Marais, **Cape Coloured People**, p 192.

[71] Scholtz, "Onder-Olifants Rivier", p 124.

Missions, with their objectives of settlement and civilization through industry, their simultaneous ideals of resisting boer oppression of labour[72], while equipping their inhabitants with the habits of industry to render them humble and docile labourers, played an ambiguous role in the shaping of the landscape of the Western Cape. The ideological content of mission work is dealt with in greater detail in Chapter 3. The ambiguity of their position is reflected in the varying perceptions of missions by both the master and under- classes of the area. While many freed people moved onto mission stations as a means of resisting permanent farm labour, many members of the underclasses in Clanwilliam, who were still independent, resisted a move onto a mission station and the curtailment of independence that this would mean. Backhouse, in 1838, speaks of "bastaard" woodcutters in the Cedarberg mountains who "were litte inclined to avail themselves of the advantages offered by a residence here [Wupperthal]".[73] Amongst the former master class, mission stations were viewed by some as 'resevoirs' of labour, composed as they were of households heavily dependent on wage incomes.[74] The majority, however, desired a landless labour force that would be cheap, regular and easily controlled and thus argued that the missions facilitated a drift of labour from the farms by providing a "listless, indolent, pauper sort of independence".[75]

Resistance to mission stations, by former masters, was based primarily on the belief that they were a labour drain and that their disbandonment would ease the paucity of labour on farms of the Clanwilliam district. Dutch speaking settlers in the Western Cape were not culturally committed to the new ideas of "work

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[72] **Master and Servant**, p 47; 48.

[73] J Backhouse, **A Visit To Mauritius and South Africa 1838-1840** (London MDCCCXLIV, 1838), p 598.

[74] Report of the Select Committee on Granting Lands in Freehold to Hottentots, 1854.

[75] Marincowitz, "Rural Production", p 159.

discipline" and a "free-market" which underpinned the ideologies of both the new labour legislation and the foreign missions.[76] In the working documents, collected in the late 1840s, for the **Master and Servant** Ordinance, van Ryneveld, the Resident Magistrate of Clanwilliam stated that he had " reason to disagree in the opinion that the colony is deficient in labourers, when those now leading an idle life are only willing, or can be brought to seek employment. These are found flocked together in hundreds at the several Missionary Institutions, where they live in indolence, with hardly any means of subsistence."[77]

It emerges from the evidence that many farmers in Clanwilliam were too poor to compete for labour on a free market basis.[78] Farmers who were unable to adapt to the new labour patterns which this system provided, were forced to employ their own family members to labour on their farms.[79] In Clanwilliam, the fact that children of farmers, of both sexes, had to assist as domestic servants and field labourers, was seen as leading to a deteriorization of civilization.[80] While alternative means of subsistence were still available, and missions formed a large component of such alternatives, labour was able to maintain some degree of leverage in the capitalist bargaining process. If wages were regarded as too low, labour existing on mission stations could, and did, withdraw, to a certain degree, their

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[76] E Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity", paper presented at conference, University of the Western Cape (Aug, 1992), p 21.

[77] **Master and Servant**, p 12.

[78] **Master and Servant.**

[79] **Master and Servant**, p 13; and in Caledon,p 75.

[80] **Proceedings and Evidence Given before the Committee of the Legislative Council respecting the proposed Ordinance "to prevent the practise of settling or squatting upon Government lands.**, (C.T 1852), p 25.

labour.[81]

Missions therefore posed an, if exaggerated, obstruction to the development of a dependent and cheap, rural work force. The discourse of vagrancy, itself ironically a part of mission discourse on "civilization", came thus to incorporate mission stations. Those who opposed missions depicted them as nests of idleness and indolence: "The missionary institutions have been called "reservoirs of labour", but they are more like stagnant pools, engendering pestilential vapours, and requiring immediate purification."[82]

It was not simply the perceived shortage of labour , but also the altered structure of that labour system, for which mission stations were held, by masters, to be responsible. The paternalism around which the old system of coerced labour had revolved, was still apparent in masters' attitudes in the late 1840s. This was made explicit in such statements as that of Mr N Smit, Field-Cornet of Clanwilliam, that the attitude of farmers to some servants was that those servants were "under obligation by nature to be his servants."[83] The Justice of the Peace, Caledon, argued that "the master should also have the power of inflicting gentle chastisement, such as he would give his own children, if he had any, to boys under fourteen years of age."[84]

In providing an alternative to permanent farm labour, missions certainly helped to undermine the old system of paternalism, but it was largely the intervention of the state which thwarted the paternalistic structures of pre-emancipation labour relations.

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[81] **Master and Servant**, p 12 :Resident Magistrate, Clanwilliam to Governor; p 17: Mr N Smit, Clanwilliam, to Governor; CA G 29 - 1860, Fletcher, p 40.

[82] **Master and Servant**, Justice of the Peace, Caledon, p 74.

[83] ibid, p 17.

[84] ibid, p 111.

In the virulent condemnation of the missionaries, it is possible to discern a process whereby these figures become the repositories of the former masters' new feelings of impotence and anger over having had their authority usurped. In a depiction of missionaries as ruling in an "arbitrary and oppressive manner", an implicit comparison was drawn between this and an ideal of benevolent and "natural" paternalism.[85] Through phrases such as "under the cloak of religion" and "under the mask of gaining religous knowlege", missionaries were portrayed as double agents, the highwaymen of labour relations.[86] It was further asserted that missionaries actually discouraged, and were opposed to, people making contracts with farmers for any length of time.[87]

Another aspect of the changing pattern of labour relations which caused anxiety among white farmers, was the changing sexual division of labour which mission (and squatting) settlement brought about. Where both men and women had been forced to work under the system of coerced labour, the partial subsistence which missions afforded led to a new sexual division of labour. Frequently the men now worked for farmers, while the women and children stayed behind at the mission cultivating their gardens and maintaining the live-stock which supplemented the income gained externally: "I have no females in my service; they will not hire themselves, for they live by the earnings of their husbands, and the produce of their gardens ".[88] Missions were perceived as protecting the female class with the deliberate "political objective" of "attracting the male class every week."[89] Resentment to this further loss of control over labour was also expressed through the deployment of negative

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[85] **Master and Servant**, p 80.

[86] ibid, p142; p 184-5.

[87] ibid, p 115.

[88] ibid, Field-Cornet, Attaquas Kloof, p 135; Justice of the Peace, Zoetendals Valley,p 80.

[89] ibid, p 80.

gender stereotypes, which depicted the coloured woman as surrounded by naked children, the childrens' nakedness illustrating their laziness as a threat to civilization.[90]

Some farmers, usually those living in the vicinity of a mission station and those able to afford relatively good wages and working conditions, benefitted from this close and plentiful source of labour. These farmers often supported mission stations and viewed them as a positive influence within their new, restructured labour demands. Such farmers recognized the growing dependence of mission station inhabitants on an external source of income and realised their potential as sources of casual labour. The advantage of this form of casual labour was that the farmer was not responsible for the maintenance of labour during the months in which they were not producing for the farmer. In regard to the Moravian mission staton of Groenekloof (Mamre) a local farmer declared that he regarded the institution as " a village where labour may be obtained, and also return when they have done working with the proprietors of estates...generally speaking,[as] a labour market".[91]

In the Clanwilliam district the farmer Hendrick van Zyl, of Uitkomst, supplied the inhabitants of Ebenezer with corn, at a low price, during the drought of 1838 and sponsored the building of a new church.[92] Van Zyl was obviously wealthy enough to offer good wages, and living close enough to the mission station to benefit from the casual labour available there. He regarded it, consequently, as worth his while to extend a hand of benevolent paternalism towards the people of Ebenezer and was to become known as the "sendelingsvader".[93] Backhouse notes that

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[90] ibid, p 82; p 75; p 80.

[91] **Report SC on Granting Lands in Freehold to Hottentots**, p 23; 25.

[92] Backhouse, **Visit to South Africa**, p 591; Scholtz, "Onder-Olifants Rivier", p 123.

[93] Scholtz, "Onder-olifats Rivier", p 123.

van Zyl was "a rare instance, among his class, of freedom from prejudice against Missionaries and coloured people".[94] Despite diverse pereptions among members of the dominant class of the role of missions, ranging from antagonistic to benevolent, the view is consistently one which contains no conception of a future for the mission inhabitants other than as regular farm labourers.

Perceptions of missions were intimately bound up with another feature of the landscape of the Western Cape, that of squatting. As a consequence of the economic stagnation and drought the Clanwilliam district grew slowly in these decades. Between 1843 and 1863 no new farms were registered in this district.[95] Much crown land in the district remained unappropriated and the system enforcing land allocation was fairly lax. Alexander, in the 1830s, declared that there were 370 farms in the district which payed taxes, while many more existed, but payed no taxes for want of being surveyed.[96] Other farms were only given out as many as twenty years after having been surveyed.[97] Occupation of crown land by members of the rural underclasses and ex-slaves was illegal by their exclusion from a government sponsored land system.[98] The prevalence of squatting in the Clanwilliam district was thus, along with the resistance to bad labour conditions and abundance of crown land, partly a function of the particularly lax system of land allocation. The mountainous landscape of the Cedarberg also offered refuge to squatters in hidden kloofs and on its unappropriated, rocky slopes. Squatting on government land was a more viable alternative than in many

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[94] ibid.

[95] ibid, p 55.

[96] Alexander, **Expedition**, p 33.

[97] Scholtz, "Onder-Olifants Rivier", p 54.

[98] Scully, "Bouquet", p 14.

other areas of the Western Cape.[99]

The Cedarberg mountains had a long history as a place of refuge from the advancing colonial economy. A number of the squatters' kraals in the Cedarberg had existed for many years. In reference to a substantial kraal, Cypher Fontein in the Cedarberg, the Rev. W Steggman declared that it had been inhabited since "time immemorial" and that even the oldest inhabitant in the district could not remember the time when it was not inhabited.[100] These locations were "the remains of the old quarters of the Hottentots as they retreated before civilization, for this was formerly the Bushmanland."[101] As a result of such lengthy establishment the people of Cypher Fontein had a strong belif that they had a claim to be allowed to remain where they were.[102]

At the time of emancipation squatters were to be found in the ranges of mountains stretching from Piekenierskloof towards Clanwilliam, and also in the Cedarberg.[103] Within this area particular kraals were identified, such as at Cypher Fontein, the Valley of Moetverloren and "no less than ten such kraals in the "Boocho Berg".[104] The Rev. Stegman had the impression that the numbers residing at Cypher Fontein in the early 1850s, were as many as 2-300 and that there were many more squatters in the

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[99] **Proceedings and Evidene Given before the Committee of the Legislative Council respecting the proposed Ordinance "to prevent the practise of settling or squatting on Government lands", (1852).**

[100] ibid, p 37.

[101] Cape Archives [hereafter CA] United Society for the Propogation of the Gospel [hereafter USPG], vol E/9 Clanwilliam, 1861.

[102] **Proposed Ordinance re settling and squatting**, p 11.

[103] ibid, Rev Stegman, p 10; Justice of the Peace, Somerset West,p 19.

[104] ibid, Stegman p 9; quote from CA USPG, E/9, Clanwilliam, 1861.

mountain range to which Cypher Fontein Kloof belonged.[105]

The concerted outcry by farmers in the decades following Ordinance 50 and the emancipation of slaves, against squatting, perceived as vagrancy, was indicative of the fact that freed labour had moved onto Government land and found it a viable means of resisting the system of permanent, landless labour desired by the farmers. A squat of about thirty families on the Zak River, in the Clanwilliam district, came into existence (or at least grew substantially) around about the early 1840s and undoubtedly consisted of, mainly, ex-slaves.[106]

These groups of squatters subsisted in a manner similar to those incorporated within the mission economies. Despite the assertion by farmers that such squatters subsisted only through theft from farms, it is clear that many squatters cultivated gardens and had livestock of their own. As on the mission stations, it was usually the labour of woman and children on the land, and possession of some livestock, which provided an added subsistence to those gained by the men in other forms of employment.[107] A number of men living in the Cedarberg laboured as self-employed woodcutters.[108] Others provided, along with mission inhabitants, another source of casual labour for farmers, providing assistance during the harvest.[109] Harvest labour was paid, generally, in wheat rather than cash and squatters remained

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[105] **Proposed Ordinance re settling and squatting**, p 9; p 19.

[106] ibid, p 19: Justice of the Peace, Hendrich Jencken, Somerset-West.

[107] ibid, p 11.

[108] Backhouse, **Visit to South Africa**, p 598; CA Colonial Office [hereafter CO] 2982, letter from the Resident Magistrate, Clanwilliam, 1859.

[109] **Master and Servant**, p 68.

largely outside of the cash economy.[110]

The general desire amongst the white farmers, during the 1840s and 1850s, for the implementation of a Vagrant Law and a law to prevent the practise of squatting on unappropriated crown lands, revealed the felt need to bring these people within the orbit of official control and fix their status as labourers.[111] The existence of squatters was perceived, in the absence of attractive wages or successful coercive measures to obtain labour, as a drain on the labour supply. Vagrancy was defined by the Resident Magistrate of Clanwilliam as those people "who have no fixed residence of their own and rove about the country unemployed, or are squatters on Government ground, without any honest means of subsistence".[112] This definition implicitly included, through the castigation of all squatters as dishonest bandits, all those who managed to avoid labouring on white farms and becoming a cheap, landless, rural proletariat.

In their independent existence beyond the realms of the white farmers and local authorities, their disregared of the spatial boundaries of colonialism and its sanctity of property, squatters posed a threat to the established social order. For the Resident Magistrate of Clanwilliam, in 1849, a vagrancy law, which was "so much desired by the inhabitants [ie. white, landed inhabitants]", would be beneficial to the district as it would "tend greatly to regulate the labouring classes".[113] A petition from some inhabitants of Clanwilliam reveals that the spirit of antagonism towards the squatters extends beyond their thieving from farmers at night, to include an anxiety about their apparent disregard for bounded notions of property (through which the colonial

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[110] CA CO 2982, 1859, letter from the Resident Magistrate, Clanwilliam; CA USPG E/9, Clanwilliam, 1861.

[111] **Master and Servant; Proposed Ordinance re settling and squatting.**

[112] **Proposed Ordinance re settling and squatting**, p 6.

[113] **Master and Servant**, p 6.

economy was upheld): " ..whilst during the day they boldly and impudently travers petitioners' fields and gardens in every direction".[114] Due to their independent access to land, squatters were able to resist accountability, as evidenced in the fact that the Resident Magistrate of the Clanwilliam district was unable to ascertain the exact numbers of the coloured population in the district on account of "their wandering state", as well as the concerted attempt by white farmers to define their status as a labouring class.[115]

Access to land was thus a focal point of the struggles that occured in post emancipation society in the Cape. The laws that regulated landholding were the product of a continuing interplay of social forces. Resistance by members of the underclasses could influence colonial land policy. A sense of the injustice of the process of colonial land aquisition was certainly apparent in the consiousness of these people. Backhouse reports a conversation with a certain "old Joseph", an ex-slave or "bastaard Hottentot", from the Cedarberg area, who spoke of "the manner in which the Boors were previously getting posession of the country; and either driving the Hottentots back, or compelling them to become their servants."[116] In 1851 a proposal was put forward for a Squatters Bill which called into question the land rights of a large, but unknown, number of people in the Western Cape who occupied government land without exclusive title, including 9 000 who resided at missions held on "tickets of occupation". The unanimous support for this was reversed due to resistance by those at whom the Bill was aimed and the fear of a general uprising.[117]

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[114] **South African Commercial Advertiser**, 7-4-1855: Clanwilliam anti burgher law petition.

[115] **Proposed Ordinance re settling and squatting**, p 12.

[116] Backhouse, **Visit to South Africa**, p 589.

[117] Marincowitz, "Rural Production", p 143; Worden, "Emancipation", notes that the fear of a general uprising in 1851/2 was subsequently found to be unfounded, p 39; see also opinions put forward

Despite such incidences of successful resistance, the struggle between farmers and Khoi/freed slaves remanained an unequal one and official attempts to limit workers and peasants autonomy on public land continued. This was mainly executed through the more subtle process of Public-land policies which provided for the alienation of public land via freeholds, quitrents, leaseholds and licences.[118] In parts of Clanwilliam, farmers simply treated public land as their own private property.[119]

The years 1853-1867 witnessed an expansion and intensification of commercialized property relations in the Western Cape. At the forefront of this process were the Divisional Councils. These, with their property qualification, were the strongholds of the rural propertied class and had substantial local powers and certain control rights over public land.[120] Divisional Councils, or individuals amongst the commercial farmers, by whom these councils were controlled, also blocked attempts by missions to expand mission land-holdings.[121]

Where squatting on public lands was an integral feature of agrarian society, the expansion of commercialized property relations led to increased social differentiation in the rural Western Cape. Squatters were predominantly Khoisan or ex-slaves and Divisional Councils promoted a racially-defined rural work-force, and prohibited the development of an autonomous peasantry, by denying them titles to public land.[122] The promotion of a racially-defined rural work-force in the Clanwilliam district is

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in **Proposed Ordinance re settling and squatting.**

[118] Marincowitz, "Rural Production", p 143-144.

[119] ibid, p 152.

[120] ibid, p 146-147.

[121] CA USPG E/7, Malmesbury, 1860;
S 5 2/42/1: Andriessen - Algemeene Sendingkommissie (A.S.K), 11-02-1861.

[122] Marincowitz, "Rural Production", p 152; 154.

apparent in the report by Backhouse, of 1838, that "a Bastaard, occupying a farm near the road for four pounds and ten shillings a year, complained that the neighbouring boors were very sharp with him...The cattle of a man of colour, even though he might be of Dutch descent, were more readily impounded that those of a white man;..".[123] By 1860 the Resident Magistrate spoke of the Clanwilliam district as consisting of "two classes, white and black".[124]

That few new farms were registered in the Clanwilliam district between the years 1843 and 1863 indicates that the intensification of commercialized property relations in the Western Cape only began to affect this area in the early 1860s.[125] Divisional Councils were only established in the Clanwilliam district in 1856, but once established they quickly began to exert their influence in the process of commercialized property relations.[126] In 1856 and 1860 laws regulating the sale of government land and 'trekvelden' were implemented in the Clanwilliam district and from 1861, at the prompting of the Divisional Council, landsurveyer W de Smit began to measure thousands of morgans of state ground in the area, with the intention that it be sold or hired.[127] With the drought of 1859-1861 and severe depression that set in from 1862, many small farmers were pressed into losing their land and trekked northwards, while large farmers expanded, pushing squatters off

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[123] Backhouse, **Visit to South Africa**, p 606.

[124] CA CO 3004, Letters from Resident Magistrate, Clanwilliam district, 12-03-1860.

[125] Scholtz, "Onder-Olifants Rivier", p 55.

[126] Marincowitz, "Rural Production", p 146.

[127] Scholtz, "Onder-Olifants Rivier", p 55; CA A 46-1860: **Report of the Select Committee concerning Trekvelden in the North Western Districts.**

leased crown lands.[128]

The ability of squatters to maintain a marginal economic independence was severely undermined by intensification of commercialized property relations and hardships of drought and depression. The destitution encountered by many of the members of the underclasses in the Clanwilliam district during these years was graphically conveyed to the public by a correspondent of the South African Commercial Advertiser, in 1862, who reported of a family of six making a meal of boiled pieces of old hide and described an incident in which, seeing a sheep slaughtered nearby, a starving "bastaard" ran forward catching the blood in his felt hat and drinking it down on the spot.[129] While a substantial number of squatters survived the drought, depression and alienation of much public land, living "in the scanty resources of the deep mountain glens", these years witnessed the reversal of their ability to maintain a degree of marginal economic independence.[130] These people, who, through the particularities of the landscape and history of the Clanwilliam district, had been able to withstand the forces of rural proletarianisation from which had emerged a dependent rural work-force in the post-emancipation years, were now being squeezed off their land and having to face the stark alternative - permanent farm labour.

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[128] CA G 29-1860, Fletcher, p 47; Mabin, "The Underdevelopment of the Western Cape, 1850-1900.", Simons and James, **The Angry Divide** (C.T 1989) p 84.

[129] **SACA**, 12 April, 1862.

[130] **SACA**, 12 April, 1862.

CHAPTER TWO

MISSION CHRISTIANITY, THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH AND THE CLANWILLIAM DISTRICT.

> "A Neighbouring Field-Cornet..made some sensible remarks on the prejudices of his country men against them [colourds]. Amongst these he enumerated the notion, that it was not neccessary for the soul of a Hottentot to be instructed in the things pertaining to salvation, he had often contended against these prejudices, and had inquired of such as entertained them, if they thought there were two heavens and two hells, one of each for whites, and one for blacks!"
>
> (Backhouse, 1838, p 593, Clanwilliam district)

As has been asserted in Chapter Two, Dutch speaking settlers were not culturally committed to the notions of "work discipline" and a "free-market" which underpinned the post- Ordinance 50 and emancipation labour relations and formed a central tenet of the ideologies of the foreign mission societies. In a society in which upheld an ethnically-based Christianity which associated religion with race, Khoisan or ex-slave access to Christianity was seen as turning status relationships upside down. Evangelism and political struggle over land and labour thus came together in the 19th century Western Cape in a contestation over the ownership of biblical texts and the social implications of allegiance to Christianity.[131] The emerging Dutch Reformed Church [hereafter DRC] mission ideology was strongly influenced by this contest. The consequent DRC mission activity led to the establishment of the mission station, Elandskloof, in the Cedarberg mountains of the Clanwilliam district.

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[131] E Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity", paper presented at the conference "People, Power and Culture: The history of Chrisianity in South Africa 1792-1992", Univ. of the Western Cape, (Aug 1992), p 21.

The first permanent presence of Christianity in Southern Africa was initiated with the establishment of a refreshment station at the Cape by the VOC, in 1652. During the administration of the VOC, from 1652 - 1795, the DRC was organized as a branch of government. Ministers were hired by the Company and acted both as ministers of religion and officials of Company government.[132] For the first quarter of a century after the establishment of the settlement there were attempts to evangelise and Christianise both slaves and Khoisan. This early DRC mission work was largely, however, concerned with the establishment of slave schools and was resisted by both slaves and slave owners. The resistance of slave owners was closely concerned with the issue of the status of baptized slaves. The Calvinist Synod of Dort (1619-1618), in the Netherlands, had decreed that any baptized slave was to be freed. While no such law was in existence at the Cape prior to 1770, slave owners were aware of the precedent which had been established. In 1770 an ordinance prohibiting the buying or selling of baptised slaves was implemented at the Cape and slave owners came to effectively exclude their slaves from Christian conversion in order to retain property rights over them.[133] This anxiety over the social implications of allegiance to Christianity was to underlie the responses of Cape farmers to mission work in the 19th century and influence the development of the missionary endeavour of the DRC.

It was not until the late 18th/early 19th century, following the great evangelical revival in Europe, that missionary activity on any substantial scale was to be found in the Cape colony. 1792 saw the arrival of the Moravian missionaries, closely followed by the London Missionary Society [hereafter LMS] in 1799. The arrival of the LMS marked a new era of Christian mission activity in South Africa.

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[132] D Chiddester, **Religions of South Africa** (Routlege, 1992), p 77.

[133] Chiddester, **Religions**, p 36.

The LMS was founded in England in 1795 and four of its members arrived at the Cape in 1799. The society was an offspring of the 18th century evangelical movements in England, which, Comaroff and Comaroff assert, were both causes and consequences of the rise of European modernity.[134] The motivation behind these early, foreign mission societies was undoubtedly religous, but Christianity was also closely associated in the missionary mind with notions of civilization. In 1814 the LMS acknowleged that its 'great end' was the 'conversion of the heathen and promotion of their civilisation'.[135] Alongside the Christian message, missionaries thus also bore certain class, cultural, commercial and political interests that shaped the character of their mission.

The ideologies and hegemonic world view of the missionaries of the LMS were inseperable from the modernist philosophies of the time. Missionaries showed an unremitting commitment to rational self-improvement and identified the signs of salvation in certain types of moral discipline and productive labour.[136] As bearers of the religion of the book, self-improvement, and reconstruction of the individual, was closely linked to literacy and education and great faith and effort was put into the education of the "heathen".[137]

Despite the importance of the spiritual democracy of Nonconformism, the evangelical message was essentially one of quiesence. This is encapsulated in John Wesley's theological axiom that "The labour relationship [is] an ethical one" in which employee and master have different funtions by divine calling.

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[134] J Comaroff and J Comaroff, **Of Revalation and Revolution** (Chicago, 1991), p 43.

[135] A Dachs, "Missionary History: a conflict of interpretation", in University of York Centre for Southern African Studies. Southern African research in progress. Collected papers, vol 2, p 14.

[136] Chiddester, **Religions**, p 37.

[137] Comaroff and Comaroff, **Revelation**, p 63.

Oppressed servants were to direct their suffering, through diligent toil and virtuous acceptance of their lot in life, towards individual self-realisation.[138] On the other hand, Christianity was by no means uniform and while the state was underpinned by religion and the essential message of mission Christianity was quiescent, opposition to the state was also couched in religous terms.[139]

Radical evangelicisation, through in the establishment of mission stations, further formed a part of the post-enlightenment philosophies acting upon the landscape of the Western Cape. Central to the establishment of these mission stations was the idea that only through settling people and promoting "industry" could Christianty and civilization be achieved. Christianity was linked to civilization and industry, both of which fed into the notion of property. Missions were their own type of "native villages" - "Missionary institutions are native villages located in different parts of the colony"[140]- in which God's law was the law of property fighting the 'barbarism' of vagrancy. Vagrancy was associated with idleness whereas industry seen as the "lever" of Christianity, and, therefore, of civilization.[141] In the wake of industrialisation and the breakdown of the division between the country and city, missionary ideology hoped to resuscitate in the stations the mythic rural domain as a model of the European past.[142] Mission stations were to be idealised self-sufficient peasant communities.

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[138] ibid, p 67.

[139] Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity", p 7.

[140] Cape Archives [hereafter CA] A 38 - 1871: **Message from His Excellency to the House of Assembly Relative to certain Missionary Institutions.**:the Rev.Philips, LMS.

[141] Cape Archives [hereafter CA] G 29-1860: **Report of Surveys of the Olifants River.**, p 40.

[142] Comaroff and Comaroff, **Revelation**, p 117; 75.

The evanagelical revival in Europe was echoed by a similar, if smaller, revival within the Cape colony, the stirrings of which began to be felt in the decade preceeding the establishment of the South African Mission Society [hereafter SAMS] in 1799.[143] Ds M. C. Vos, a born Afikaner who had started work among the slaves and "Hottentots" in Tulbagh in 1794, became the first director of the society.[144] The SAMS was founded shortly after, and was influenced by, the arrival of the LMS in the Cape. The two societies worked in close associtation with one another. In 1805 this relationship between the two missionary societies withered somewhat, due to the accusation by Van der Kemp (a founding missionary of the LMS) that Vos was "not altogether free from the common African prejudices against heathen nations".[145] This was indicative of emerging ideological tensions that were possibly inevitable in a society, such as the 19th century Cape, in which politics and religion were inextricably linked.

The SAMS differed fundamentally from the foreign missionary societies in its determination to minister not exclusively to "heathens", but also to white Christians who were in need of spiritual care. It also aimed to concentrate its efforts within the colony, while many of the foreign mission societies, notably the LMS, preferred to work beyong the colonial boundary.[146] The missions of the SAMS were not church-like in character, but rather aligned themselves with established rural congregations. The relationship of the society with the DRC was thus close, many of whose priests, elders and members contributed time, energy and money to the SAMS. In some cases the SAMS influenced DRC congregations of the outlying districts to start mission work.

Mission activity by the DRC at the end of the 18th and early 19th

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[143] I Van der Walt, **Eiesoortigheid en die Sending** (Potchefstroom, 1963), p 386.

[144] ibid, p 387-388.

[145] cited in Van der Walt, **Eiesoortigheid**, p 389.

[146] Van der Walt, **Eiesoortigheid**, p 388.

century existed on a very small scale and was usually an offshoot of their work amongst white congregations.[147] Local churches were not able to undertake much missionary work as a result of the control exercised by the authorities in Holland and at the Cape, as well as the problem they faced organising sufficient ministers for their own congregations. As there was no established missionary body within the church, Reformed ministers involved in mission work usually worked under the auspices of the South African Missionary Society, in the establishment of which they had played a major role.[148]

This retarded involvement of the DRC in mission work during the 19th century in the Cape was, furthermore, intimately tied up with its position as the Afrikaans-speaking, settler church of the colony. Despite the essentially "quiescent message"[149] of the foreign missionary societies, in a society in which, already by the end of the 18th century, the lines of colour and privilege, with Christianity as a symbol of superior status, had been drawn, colonists percieved in the missionary endeavour a potential threat to the social order. Christianity was strongly identified in the missionary mind with its product - Western civilization. Many colonists shrank from this blurring of the established distinction between "boer" and "hottentot": "It would appear that the colonists were not too anxioius that the Hottentots be allowed the benefits of Christian education, "Christian" and "European" being now more nearly equated

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147 J Du Plessis and Others, **The Dutch Reforme Church and the Native Problem** (Stellenbosch, 1921), p 4.

148 Japha and Japha, **Mission Settlements in South Africa: Pilot Report** (1992), p 11.

149 R Ross, "The Social and Political Theology of Western Cape Missions", paper presented at the conference "People, Power and Culture: The history of Christianity in South Africa, 1792-1992", Univ. of the Western Cape, (Aug 1992).

concepts."[150]

This boer anxiety was exaccerbated by the perceived liberalism of the LMS. To many rural Dutch-speakers the foreign mission ideas of "work discipline" and the "self-made" man, which underpinned the new "free" labour system, were entirely alien and they saw Khoisan/slave access to Christianity as more threatening than helpful. In a hierachichally-organised society it turned status relationships upside down.[151] As asserted in Chapter 2, formal mission stations appeared to many farmers as an interference in the master-servant bond of paternalism and furthermore, in the struggle over land and labour, were perceived as granting members of the rural underclasses an access to land that was contrary to colonists desires for a cheap, dependent rural work-force.[152]

Dr. Thom, a missionary of the LMS (and later of the DRC), stated in a letter of 1814 that the marriages of a few LMS missionaries with "Hottentot" women "has lowered their character in the eyes of the farmers and indeed of the whole colony. It cannot be expected that the manners and sloth of a Hottentot will improve a missionary and he can never take her into any family" and argued that the Moravianss had found the correct middleway between "too much familiarity" and "too much distance".[153] It is interesting that in 1856, a time in which, with the implementation of the second Masters and Servants act, the issue of labour relations was a hotly debated topic, the newspaper Het Volksblad again referred to the "mixed" marriages of the early

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[150] Patterson cited in B Du Toit, "Missionaries, Anthropologists and the Policies of the Dutch Reformed Church", **Journal of Modern African Studies**, 22, vol. (1984),p 619.

[151] Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity", p 21.

[152] **Master and Servant.**

[153] cited in Van der Walt, **Eiesoortigheid**, p 431, footnote 51.

LMS missionaries. It was argued that such people had allowed the idea to take root among the "Hottentots" that they were "een onderscheiden en afzonderlijk ras", who had no obligation to work for the Boer farmers.[154]

Boers were concerned that their own Calvinist doctrines were not taught by the missionaries and rejected the missionary methodology of the LMS which, they felt, stressed literacy above evangelical preaching.[155] Education of the "Hottentots" threatened the status of the boers most particularly in the remote districts where they themselves had little means of receiving an education. From as early as the first missionary work of the Moravians at Genadendal in 1794 this resentment was expressed by local colonists who felt that "as there are many Christians who receive no instruction, it is not proper that the Hottentot should be taught; but they must remain in the same state as they were before."[156] There were, therefore, political reasons for Dutch settlers to feel threatened by Khoisan/freed slaves access to Christianity and mission education and these political concerns were underpinned by a strong theological conviction that Christianity was the religion of Europeans alone.[157]

Prof B P van der Walt, cited in "Hul Herkoms", ascribes the motivation behind the DRC mission activity to a desire to oppose the liberal ideologies of the foreign missionary societies, notably the LMS: "Die sendelinge se liberate beskouings van vryheid, gelykheid en broederskap en hul lewenswyse van sosiale

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[154] cited in Van der Walt, **Eiesoortigheid**, p 385, footnote 149.

[155] Comaroff and Comaroff, **Revelation**, p 233; van der Walt, **Eiesoortigheid**, p 436.

[156] J Holmes, **Historical sketches of the Missions of the United Brethren**, 1818, cited in Van der Walt, **Eiesoortigheid**, p 436.

[157] Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity", p 5.

integrasie (byvoorbeeld huwelike met nie blanke vroue) het spannng gewek by die Afrikaner wat gelykstelling en gemengde huwelike verfoei het".[158] Opposition to the new British government and new foreign missionary societies propounding liberal, philanthropic ideologies prompted the DRC into mission activity in a bid to challenge this interpretation of the biblical texts and the social implications of equality which LMS ideology propounded.[159]

While the status contradictions between colonist and colonised church members were still unresolved, the growth of mission work within the DRC remained slow. The DRC tried to avoid hostile reactions from its own congregations towards its missionary endeavour, which it embarked on in 1824, by ensuring that mission activity was not to interfere with the established (white) congregations, "de Christen gemeenten". The the missionary was also established as subsiduary to the local minister, having to gain permission from the minister and church council to baptize any children of church members, and were not allowed to give the sacrament to existing congretations.[160]

The use of the descriptive term "de Christen gemeenten" illustrates the paradoxical situation in which the DRC, as settler church embarking on mission work, was caught. Mission work threatened the identity of Dutch farmers as "de Christen gemeenten" and in trying to aleviate this anxiety amongst its established congregations the DRC moved towards the development of parallel churches, based on colour. While, in 1834 the 'heathen' converts of any baptisms by missionaries, were still accepted into the DRC as full members, this synod simultaneoulsy

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[158] West Coast Council of Churches, "Hul Herkoms",(1991), p 51.

[159] W. Van der Merwe, **The Development of Missionary Attitudes in the Dutch Reformed Church in SA** (C.T,1936), p 149.

[160] L. M. Kriel, "Die Geskiedenis van die NG Sendingkerk in SA 1881-1956" (PhD thesis, UNISA, 1961), p 45.

made provision for the founding of "coloured" congregations, or "Gemeente der Naturellen".[161]

Despite these initial attempts by the DRC to embark on mission work, growth in this field remained very slow. A church report of 1852 showed that there was little interest amongst existing congregations towards missions and the commission concluded that the church was not ripe for this.[162] For the church to embark fully on its missonary endeavor the colour problem amongst its congregations had still to be more fully resolved.

1829 marked the first moment when the DRC synod was confronted with the issue of racial prejudice, an issue intimately bound up with the political struggle over land and labour, amongst its congregations. The case brought up at the synod for discussion concerned the baptism of a 'bastaard' and the refusal of members of the same congregation to allow 'such persons' to partake of the Lord's Supper with 'born Christians'.[163]

The synod did not actually make a decision on this issue, but at the most there was a tacit agreement with the Kommissaris Politiek, who essentially pre-empted any discussion, declaring that "people ought not to make this proposal an object of deliberation at the Synod".[164] The Kommissaris Politiek believed that it ought to be an accepted and irrefutable principle that there could be no discrimination at Communion. This principle was based on the Bible and on congregational practise, and individual Christians were obliged to "think and behave" accordingly.[165]

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[161] ibid, p 48; 50; 51.

[162] ibid, p 60-61.

[163] C Loff, "The History of a Heresy", J de Gruchy and C Villa-Vicencio, **Apartheid is a Heresy** (C.T, 1983), p11.

[164] ibid, p 16.

[165] ibid.

Both the raising of this issue and its conclusion were possibly closely connected to the recent Ordinance 50 of 1828. The legal equality this granted to the Khoisan facilitated evangelisation among them and also threatened the status of white farmers, who may have turned to the church as the last area through which they could implement a social segregation along "colour" lines. Conversely, the Kommissaris Politiek could not allow racial discrimination in the church as it would have contradicted this recent ordinance. The congregations which practised racial segregation were, however, prevented from expressing their views and the issue remained essentially unresolved in the minds of many congregations. Many of these continued in the practise of segregation, revealing that the political struggles underpinning such incidences of racial prejudices remained unresolved.[166]

With the development of its missions among the coloured peoples, came the possibility of a large coloured membership of the DRC and the church found it now politic to recede from its predecessor's attitude in 1829. The 'colour issue' developing within the church was resolved by Synod of 1857:

> The Synod considers it desirable and according to the Holy Scripture that our heathen members be accepted and initiated into our congregations wherever it is possible; but where this measure, as a result of the weakness of some, would stand in the way of promoting the work of Christ among the heathen people, then congregations set up among the heathen, or still to be set up, should enjoy their Christian privileges in a separate building or institution.[167]

The decision endorsing segregation contained conflicting aspects. It was not based on the Scriptures, which, it was recognized, did not allow for any distinction in the teaching of the Gospel, by race, but on the acceptance of the strong colour prejudice

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[166] ibid, p 20-21; 17; 19.

[167] Translation from Loff,"Heresy",p 19.

amongst the whites. The Zuid Afrikaan declared that the separation was in the interests, at the present momment, of both the white and coloured members the church and would, therefore, not have to be forcefully imposed. The interest of this Dutch speakers' newspaper in this church issue indicates the degree to which religion at the Cape was intimately bound up in broader political issues.[168] Increased mission activity lead to increased racial segregation.[169] Through the encouragement of racial separation in the name of "the question of Christ among the heathen", by people in a position of power, the mission activities of the DRC were deployed to political ends, namely, the creation of a racially defined labouring class.[170]

Without intending to obscure complex religous reactions, it is interesting that the "Great Revival" within the DRC, which began with the Worcester Conference of 1860 and initiated the first major involvment of the DRC in evangelical mission work, followed rapidly after the resolution of the 'colour issue' within the DRC, securing the social and political identities of the colonists.[171] On a more overtly political front, the resolution of struggle over land and labour, by the mid-1840s in the majority of the Western Cape, in favour of the farmers, was further entrenched in 1856 with the implementation of the second Masters and Servants Act. In the years immediately following the "Great Revival" many missions were established, by the DRC, in the Cape, including that of Elandskloof in 1862.[172]

DRC mission work was thus intimately connected to the development

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[168] **Zuid Afrikaan**, 20 August, 1857.

[169] Du Toit, "Policies of the DRC", p 619.

[170] Loff, "Heresy", p 20.

[171] J. Du Plessis, **The Life of Andrew Murray of South Africa** (London, 1919), 282.

[172] Kriel, "Geskiedenis NG Sendingkerk", appendix A: table showing when the DR mission churches were started in the Cape.

of racially segregated worship. Such practices were developed early on: separate congregations where possible, otherwise a separate section of the church for black people, usually at the back of the church. The issue was not simply, as Kriel asserts, one of "colour difference", but rather one of colour prejudice, or racism.[173]

By the time the Dutch Reformed Mission Church [hereafter DRMC], for "Coloureds", was established in 1881, the model had, therefore, already been laid down for the division of church membership on the basis of colour. In the pamphlet "The DRC and the native problem", the DRMC is described as follows: "To this fully organised Mission Church all the native and coloured members of the DRC belong, and they posess and excercise rights and privileges such as appertain to members of the European Church. The Mission Church is not a denomination alongside of the DRC, and only loosely allied to or affiliated with the latter: it is the DRC itself."[174]

The real exclusion and circumscription of the rights and privileges that the establishment of the DRMC represented remain obliquely hidden in the stress on affiliation in this text. The real situation was one of hierachy and control: the DRC retained the right of veto over all Mission Church decisions and all fixed property of the DRMC congregations were to be transferred into the name of the Sendingkommissie of the DRC.

Despite the somewhat late development of formal churches, due to the sparsely settled nature of the area, the Clanwilliam district, through the work of itinerant evangelists, had a long history of evangelical Christianity. The missionary Leopoldt Marquard, of the Nederlandsche Zendelings Society worked in this area from 1816 - 1826 as an itinerant preacher. In 1826 he

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[173] Loff, "Heresy", p 19; Kriel, "Geskiedenis NG Sendingkerk", 69.

[174] Du Plessis and others, **The DRC and the Native Problem** p 6.

became the first missionary of the Dutch Reformed Mission Committee and returned to the district of Clanwilliam where he continued to work for many years.[175] Elbourne asserts that most of the early conversions to Christianity among the Khoisan were actually made more often by Khoi laypeople than by European missionaries and this small, but devoted core of Khoi evangelists would itinerate in many areas of the colony not yet reached by formal evangelical activity.[176] Between 1802 and 1806, when it was abandoned, many Khoi of the Cedarberg area were drawn to the Sak River Mission in the Northern Cape interior (the area known as Bushmanland). Itinerant Khoi missionaries, such as Jan Kok, set forth from this base to evangelise among the people of the Southern Cedarberg.[177] As late as 1861 such laypreaching by Khoi, or "bastaard", evangelists was still taking place amidsts the sqatter kraal of the Cedarberg.[178]

There would appear to be a subtle relationship between social predicament and the degree to which novel signs and ideologies are percieved as potent. Elbourne asserts that there was a much faster acceptance of mission Christianity amongst the battered remnants of the Khoisan community in the late 18th and early 19th century than in the less politically damaged African societies outside the colony.[179] The practise of Christianity amongst squatter groups in the Cedarberg and the large movement of people onto the missions of Wupperthal and Ebenezer, attests to such an

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[175] Kriel, "Geskiedenis NG Sendingkerk", p 48.

[176] Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity", p 7-8.

[177] N. Penn, "The Khoisan and the Colonists, 1740-1870" in P. Skotnes, ed, **Sound From the Thinking Strings** (C.T, 1991); personal communication, Nigel Penn.

[178] CA United Society for the Propogation of the Gospel [hereafter USPG] vol E/9, Clanwilliam, 12 Nov, 1861.

[179] Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Chrisitianity", p 1; Comaroff and Comaroff, **Revelation**, p 238-240.

acceptance.[180]

Converts did not receive the the gospel in exactly the way European missionaries intended, but "heard" the message in accordance with their own needs and existing situations. Most conversions appear to have been made more often by Khoi/"bastaard Hottentots" than by formal missionaries.[181] Amongst the squatters in the Moet Verloren valley in the Cedarberg religous services were held weekly on Sundays with people attending from as far as 40 or 50 miles away. These services were taken by an "Hottentot" by the name of "old Gordon", who would "relate part of the Scripture to them from memory as he had been instructed in them by a missionary many years ago."[182] The central role of memory and oral transmission in this process would certainly promote a creative appropriation of mission Christianity by such receiving communities, a possibility backed by the response of an English missionary that it "appears to me to be that they come together not so much for services as for gossip and drinking honey beer."[183]

After the return of Marquad to Cape Town, no DRC mission activity took place in the Clanwilliam district until 1860 when the church had begun again with mission work in the area of the upper Olifants River. This area was possibly considered fruitful ground for evangelication because of the groundwork already laid by the pioneering missionary, Marquard. It was also an area free of LMS activity, due to their general preference for working beyond the colonial boundaries.[184] In early 1860 the newly ordained Rev. Andriessen was sent as a missionary to work in

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[180] CA USPG E/9, Clanwilliam, 12 Nov, 1861; **Proposed Ordinance re settling and squatting**, p 9; 38.

[181] Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity", p 7.

[182] CA USPG E/9, Clanwilliam, 12 Nov, 1861.

[183] CA USPG E/9, Clanwilliam, 12 Nov, 1861.

[184] Comaroff and Comaroff, **Revelation**, p 78-79.

Namaqualand. The extent of the area under his labour included the Bokkeveld and Koue Bokkeveld.[185] It was in response to the large number of squatters - "In de kloven dier zware gebergten, leven buiten het bereik der genademiddelen, en helaas, maar te zeer verzonken in zonden, vele, volgens schatting van sommigen wel een 9 honderd gekleurden, meestal Hottentotten en bastaards" - that Andriessen came to suggest the establishment of a mission station in the Cedarberg area.[186]

This move to establish a mission station met with a typically mixed response from within the white community. Many people within the congregation of Clanwilliam, notably a Mr. Piet Sas, were behind the idea and offered financial support in the form of donations. Some farmers remained virulently opposed to the concept of missions. They desired that all public land should be in private hands in order to ensure the dependence of labour and thereby reduce its cost, and saw mission stations as threatening the power of masters. Paul van Zyl, the owner of a farm in the vicinity of Elandksloof, was prepared to offer the owners of Elandskloof 500 pounds in order that they did not sell it to be used as a mission station.[187]

It is possible that the benevolence of Piet Sas was due to the fact that he was a town dweller and less concerned with the desire for landless rural work-force. The amenities of education and religous worship were available to him, while van Zyl, out of reach of such amenities himself, may have felt threatened by the access of mission converts to religous instruction and education. As a member of the DRC congregation of Clanwilliam, it is likely that Piet Sas was influenced by the evangelical revival within the church at this time.

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[185] Vrey "Die Geskiedenis van die NG Sendinggemeente, Elandskloof 1860-1925", (Lisensiaat in die Teologie, University of Stellenbosch, 1976), p 3.

[186] "De Kerkebode", 1862, p 359.

[187] S 5 2/42/1 : Andriessen - ASK, 11/02/1861.

The attempt to block the establishment of a mission was not successful, yet the fact that, in general by this time, land only became available to mission societies when they actually purchased farms, was to have enormous consequences for the future of Elandskloof.[188] Elandskloof, 848 morgan and 30sq. rood in extent, was bought by the Mission Committee of the DRC in May 1862 for the sum of 875 pounds. [189] The availability of land for purchase by the DRC mission committee in 1861 may well have been due to the debilitating drought in the Western Cape at this time, and the onset of depression, which forced many middling and small white farmers off the land.[190] This possibility is reinforced by the fact that one of the joint owners of the farm remained on 100 morgans of his original land, until 1873.[191]

This same depression, on top of the land enclosures of the Western Cape in the preceeding decades, eroded the marginal independence of the Cedarberg squatters. According to oral evidence the people who were to become the original inhabitants of the mission station were still eking out an indpendent existence as pastoralists, living with their herds in the mountains surrounding Elandskloof.[192] While Andriessen claims that one problem with the choice of Elandskloof as station would be that it was quite far from the 'coloured community', the implication is that a large community of squatters did exist and it was towards this community that the mission efforts were to be directed.[193]

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[188] Marincowitz, "Rural Production", p 157; see Chapter 4 on issue of privately owned mission stations not falling under Mission Stations Act of 1909.

[189] S 5 2/42/4: "Koop Acte", 1862.

[190] Marincowitz, "Rural Production", p 157-159.

[191] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - A.S.K, 21/01/1873.

[192] Personal communication 25/4/1992.

[193] S 5 2/42/1: Andriessen-A.S.K., 11/2/1861.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ELANDSKLOOF MISSION STATION.

The space of the DRC mission station, Elandksloof, was never neutral or ahistorical, but emerged from a complex interaction between religous change and the political struggle in the 19th century Western Cape. A major force behind the involvement of the DRC in mission activity on any substantial scale was the desire to oppose the liberal ideas of the foreign mission societies - the ideas of "work discipline" and "civilization" which underpinned the new "free-market" labour system. The movement of people onto the mission of Elandskloof was similarly a consequence of the outcome of the struggle over land and labour. The expansion of commercialized property relations had reversed the ability of squatters in the Cedarberg to maintain a degree of economic independence and they were increasingly forced off the land they had inhabited for many years. In this context it is vital to examine the mission as an economic, social and cultural locality. The extent to which inhabitants were able to survive economically and perpetuate their previous lifestyles was bound up with the economy of the mission, the ideology of the DRC in its mission endeavour and the reception of mission Christianity and culture by inhabitants.

In the context of the 19th century struggle over land and labour, in the Western Cape, and the 20th century process of national proletarianisation, the physical property of Elandskloof, and the access to land and an alternative means of subsistence which this represents, has played a central and controversial role. In 1861, on the advice of Andriessen and ds Neethling, the Mission Committee of the DRC bought the farm of Elandskloof with the intention of starting a mission station on the land. The precise details of the aquisition remain somewhat obscure. The minutes of the A.S.K state that the "geheele plaats" was bought from the joint owners Stefanus du Pleses and Andries Janse van Rensburg,

for the sum of 875 pounds in May 1861.[194] It is clear from the "Koop Acte" that the farm was sold in two parts, the DRC aquiring the largest part in 1861 for the sum of 437 pounds and first option to the second part whenever it should be sold.[195]

While Vrey concludes that this second piece of land was bought the same year, there is evidence that the sale of the land was only 'completed' in 1873, with this last piece being bought with money from the mission station's own funds. "De Kerkebode" of 1873 states that "...die Onze Zendeling reeds jaren voor het meerderdeel [die plaats], maar sinds korten tijd geheel bezit. De som tot den aankoop van het laatste deel vereischt werd door den zendeling Abraham le Roux, uit de opbrengst der plaats betaald."[196] This piece, consisting of 100 morgen, had remained in the hands of the "Heer Jansen" until this time.[197]

The valley of Elandskloof was 848 morgen and 30 sq. rood in extent and, in comparison to the mountainous surrounds, came to be known as "die magie" by the inhabitants. In naming this space thus, the mission inhabitants inscribed their passage on the world, transforming into a place. The choice of the name "Die Magie", directly translated as "the stomach" and used as a metaphor of centrality, conveys a sense of physical security felt by the inhabitants on the mission. The security to which this metaphoric return to the mothers' womb refers, is indicative of a perception of the part of the mission inhabitants that they were embarking on a relationship of trust and mutual co-operation with the DRC.

Due to the growth of the mission in the 1880s, increased pressure on the land made it neccessary for the station to expand. In

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[194] S 4 1/1/1: Notule Algemeene Sendingkommittee, p 24.

[195] S 5 2/42/4, Koop Acte, 1861.

[196] "De Kerkebode", 18/10/1873, p 340.

[197] S 5 2/42/1 : Le Roux - A.S.K, 21/01/1873.

1892 and again in 1898, an application was made to the colonial government for a grant of crown land. The additional land in question was the mountainous crown land surrounding Elandskloof, 2 826 morgen and 195 sq. rood in extent. The request and subsequent grant was persistently based on the grounds that the land was to be used in connection with mission work. The Rev. A Alheit, for the DRC, requested of the Agricultural secretary that "the valuation be as low as possible, the grant of the land in question being for a good cause and the land of little value if not belonging to the mission station of Elandskloof."[198] In response the Surveyor General recommended a reduced valuation, from 200 to 50 pounds, on the grounds that the land was intended to be granted for mission purposes and when the grant was finally passed in parliament it contained the condition that the land should be used for mission purposes only.[199]

Of the total amount paid for this piece of land, including the purchase price, survey cost and office fee, a total of 118-7.5 pounds/shillings, the inhabitants of Elandksloof bore half.[200] Oral tradition maintains that the request for land was made through the DRC, but at request of the mission inhabitants and thus on their behalf. A degree of popular mythology has grown up around these events. The people of Elandskloof assert that the land was granted to them by Queen Victoria and that the only costs involved, the survey costs, were paid by the Elandsklowers with money raised through the sale of their cattle and produce.[201] While the details of this orally transmitted history may not be absolutely precise it captures the belief of the Elandsklowers at the time the request was made, that they

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[198] Cape Archives [hereafter CA] Land (LND) 1/623:L5436: 24/10/1898.

[199] CA LND 1/623:L5436: 15 May 1898.

[200] SK-G11 1/1-1/4: Notule kerkraad, Elandskloof, 1881-1933, 8/1/1890: minutes of Elandskloof kerkraad meeting.

[201] Personal communication.

were appealing directly to the crown, albeit through the DRC, for land which was to be their own. It also incorporates the fact that the Elandsklowers had made a substantial financial contribution to the aquisition of the land. While the looming presence of Queen Victoria in this popular account may appear to obscure the events, the sense of ownership in it is strongly strongly grounded in fact. Despite a very real claim to the land, the land was, however, registered in the name of the DRC. While the mission inhabitants felt that they had secured this land through their own endeavour and trusted the DRC to uphold this, the DRC, it would appear, regarded the inhabitants' contribution more in the line of dues owed by tennants to a landlord.

Mission regulations stipulated that each family head would have to pay an annual rent for the hire of the land. This fee was set at between 12/ and one pound. Along with the right to grazing for "een zeker getal vee van zijn eigene", each household was granted a piece of land 18 by 170 feet (5.5 by 5 metres) in size, on which a house or hut could be erected and garden established. The upkeep of these was the responsibility of that household.[202]

Those entering the mission station during the first few decades generally brought livestock of their own with them. In 1865 Le Roux described how with each new arrival at the station, the number of livestock grew.[203] Grazing was provided for livestock on the surrounding veld and each household had garden space to cultivate. The surrounding veld also provided another form of income in the form of buchu (also wood from the cedar trees, but this was later prohibited for ecological reasons). Access to land for cultivation and grazing provided an additional subsitence which enabled mission inhabitants to perpetuate their former "squatting" lifestyle, which was one of "part-time"

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[202] S 5 1/1/1, 1 May 1863, "Reglemente Elandkloof".

[203] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - A.S.K, 29/07/1865.

proletariat. As the rental for a mission plot was to be paid in cash, however, residents were drawn, possibly further than before, into a cash economy.

Scully asserts that ideas about family, gender relations, and a belief in the existence of discrete private and public realms were, along with the more overt views of class hierachy, a fundamental component of the ideology of emancipation in the British Empire.[204] Freed people to some extent saw, therefore, the independence of their families from farm labour as one of the meanings of freedom. The assertion of such self-sufficiency was apparent amongst the squatter groups of the Cedarberg in the post-emancipation years and mission residents on Elandskloof were able to perpetuate this gendered pattern of subsistence existence. Many women retreated from farm labour, possibly because of the long history of sexual abuse from masters which had been a persistent feature of slavery. In addition, freed men might have wanted to keep their wives free from abuse by employers, and might also have seen, in the distinction between slavery and freedom, a right to exert power over their wives.[205] The home cultivation at the mission was predominantly left in the hands of the women while men left the station to work on white farms.[206] Low wages paid to men and general poverty meant however, that many women did have to work on white farms, often whole families would be away from the station working on farms.[207]

A contest over access to the labour of children was also a

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[204] P Scully, "Emancipation and the Family in the Rural Western Cape", paper presented at staff seminar, UCT,(1992), p 2.

[205] Scully, "Emancipation and Family", p 13-14.

[206] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - A.S.K, 30/09/1874.

[207] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - Binnelandse Sending Subkommittee [hereafter B.S.S.K], 05/04/1873.

feature of post-emancipation Cape society.[208] Many children, especially boys, were absent from the mission school for a large part of the year, though particularly during the time of harvest.[209] This is indicative of the importance of child labour, to supplement wages, to the maintenance of the mission economy. Mission residents were thus able, through control over the labour of their own children, to resist the farmers perceived right, stemming from the days of slavery and the "inboek" system, in which Khoisan and "bastaard" labour were often forced to apprentice their children to farmers, to the labour of children. The remnants of farmers resistance to such transformations in power, and the persistence of the perception that they had a right to the labour of children, can be seen, however, in their demand, as late as 1924, that the school terms on Elandskloof be changed to ease the labour shortage during harvest.[210]

It was thus generally the men, but often women too and at times whole families, who were driven by poverty to earn an income labouring on neighbouring farms. This did not neccessarily mean a movement into a cash income. On his arrival in 1863 le Roux declared that it appeared that the mission inhabitants had never worked for the farmers for cash, but only for buckets of corn.[211] Seven years later this appeared still to be the case. Le Roux found it difficult to collect rent payments as inhabitants were only paid in grain for their labour on farms.[212] Mission residents recieved the largest part of their cash income from the sale of their livestock and other domestic products at the bazaars held on Elandskloof and from the sale of

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[208] Scully, "Emancipation and Family", p 7-8.

[209] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 30/09/1874.

[210] G Vrey, "Die Geskiedenis van die NG Sendinggemeente, Elandskloof 1860-1925", (Lisensiaat in die Teologie, Univ. of Stellenbosch, 1976), p 54.

[211] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - A.S.K, 09/06/1863.

[212] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 11/09/1870.

buchu tea at the village of Modderfontein.[213]

In 1865 a mill was built for the grinding of corn grown on the land and in 1882 a new and larger mill was erected.[214] The mill not only provided the community with their own flour, but created also the job of miller in the community. Alongside the miller, Elandskloof of 1883 had a total of 10 skilled labourers: 3 masons; 5 brickmakers and 2 sewing mistresses. Another means of livlihood, as subsistence possibilities were reduced, was transport riding. Labouring on the white farms in the neighbourhood remained, however, the predominant means of earning a livelihood.[215] With its church, school, mill and regular bazaars, Elandskloof became the hub of economic activity in the area.

While Le Roux was appalled by the conditions of labour on white farms, he had no intention of opposing such farmers, many of whom formed part of his congregation: "Ik heb ook altyd getracht de boeren met de statie te bevrienden."[216] The mission teachings of the DRC, so strongly influenced by the political struggle over land and labour,in no way encouraged inhabitants to view themselves in the future as anything other than a labouring population. By returning to the station after the harvest and maintaining a home here, mission inhabitants were able to resist full proletarianisation, but, as the station grew in numbers, this added subsistence became increasingly difficult to maintain and more and more of the mission residents were forced to seek employment outside of the station.

The clear intention behind the establishment of Elandkloof was

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[213] West Coast Council of Churches,"Hul Herkoms",(1991), p 7.

[214] Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandskloof", p 30.

[215] S 5 2/42/4: Schedule issued by Committee of the Missionary Conference, 1882.

[216] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 30/09/1874.

to establish a missionary station

"om in Zending-Instituut daar tot stand te bring".[217] The spiritual and cultural dimensions of Elandskloof were also fundamental components of what conversion and a move onto the station entailed. Despite the stipulation in the regulations drawn up by le Roux in 1863 that only applications from members of the DRC and their dependents, to enter the mission, would be accepted, it would appear that many of the initial applicants to the mission were not neccessarily members of the DRC.[218] In 1868 the station had grown in number to 250, of which only 10 were confirmed members of the DRC.[219] While this figure does not reflect the numbers who would have been church goers, the distinction drawn throughout the correspondence of Le Roux between the congregation of Elandskloof, with wider geographical bounds than the station, and the inhabitants of the station, who were not neccessarily members of the congregation, highlights the fact that DRC membership was not an absolute prerequisite for admission onto the station, at least prior to 1930.

In the earliest days of the station, while there were still more erven laid out than inhabitants desiring them, admission onto the station was a relatively easy process.[220] In later years as numbers grew and space consequently diminished, acceptance became more difficult and, in 1882, there is mention of a service period of two years at the station before full acceptance into the community.[221]

In the first year of its establishment only thirteen households moved onto the thirty erven that had newly been marked out. The missionary Groenewoud declared that the reasons why these

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[217] SK-G 111/1: Notule kerkraak Elandskloof, p 1.

[218] In the updated regulation of 1930 applicants would only be considered if they were members or "aanhangers" of the DRMC. S 5 1/1/1.

[219] S5 2/42/1 Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 16/01/1869.

[220] S 5 2/42/1: Groenewoud - A.S.K, 17/5/1863.

[221] SK-G 11 1/1, 2/10/1882.

remained unoccupied, or such a date when they would become occupied, were unknown to him.[222] There is a sense in this comment of the distance between the two worlds, DRC and local "Bastaard" squatters, on the eve of their coming together in the mutual venture of the mission staion.

It has been asserted in Chapter 3 that the acceptance of mission Christianity was faster amongst the remnants of the Khoisan communities of the Western Cape in the late 18th and early 19th century, than in the less politically damaged African societies outside of the colony. The primary reason for this is that societies in a state of profound crisis are more prone to seek new explanations and meaning systems than stable, well-functioning communities.[223] The ideas and beliefs of mission Christianity, with the long history of itinerant preachers and the two Rhenish mission stations in the area of the Clanwilliam district, would not have been new to the people moving onto the mission station of Elandskloof. Conversion to mission Christianity was further influenced by unique local factors which made mission institutions or beliefs attractive to individuals.

Oral evidence maintains that the early inhabitants of the station came, with their cattle and livestock, from the mountains around the station. That they had livestock of their own implies a degree of independence that would have been uncommon amongst labourers of the area. The absence of an outcry from farmers of the district over loss of labour and the missionary's own desire not to antagonise these farmers further lends credibility to the claim that those moving onto the station, at least in the first decade of its having been established, came from amongst the squatter groups of the Cedarberg.[224] There is mention of this

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[222] S 5 2/42/1: Groenewoud - A.S.K, 17/05/18.63

[223] Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Chrisitianity",p 1.

[224] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 30/09/1874.

community of "gekleurdes in die berge" in the missionary's letters as late as 1873.[225]

The growth of the station, from 80 inhabitants in 1863 to 400 by 1876, can be seen as, to a large degree, a reflection of the erosion of the economic viability of the marginal squatting communities of the Cedarberg. Drought, depression and the expansion of commercialized property relations witnessed the appropriation of large tracts of crown land by the wealthier farmers of the Clanwilliam district during the late 1850s and early 1860s.[226] The second large increase in numbers took place between 1883 and 1894 (from 400 to 900) and was possibly also a consequence of the recession which hit the Western Cape in 1882, described as "the greatest depression for many years", following the collapse of the share market in Kimberly, in 1881.[227]

Growth was thus a reflection of the relative patterns of dispossession in the area. Movement onto the mission station provided, under these circumstances, the only alternative to becoming a permanent labourer on a white farm. The mission existence could be used as a form of resisting the relentless forces of proletarianisation. The promise, alongside that of access to land, of education, meant that mission stations had long-term attractions as a means to improve social as well as economic status.[228]

The later dispossession of the squatter groups of the Cedarberg region between the 1950s and 1970s, would have presented these

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[225] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 05/04/1873.

[226] S 5 2/42/1 :Le Roux - A.S.K, 09/06/1863; Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 14/08/1876.

[227] Mabin, "The Underdevelopment of the Western Cape, 1850-1900", Simons and James, **The Angry Divide** (C.T, 1989), p 85; 87.

[228] Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity", p 18.

people with a social as well as an economic crisis. Within this state of crisis the signs and ideologies of mission Christianity may have been perceived as particularly potent. In 1852 the squatters of Cypher Fontein had applied twice, to different missionary bodies, for a missionary to come among them.[229] A group of squatters in the valley of Moet Veloren met weekly, in 1861, for a religous service under the guidance of a laypreacher from amongst them.[230]

Le Roux's figures of the number of inhabitants that were confirmed members of the church are, however, remarkably small in comparison to the total number of inhabitants on the station. In 1876 only 50 out of a total population of 400 station inhabitants were confirmed church members.[231] While this is not a reflection of the total church going population, it does indicate that for many inhabitants of the station, the prime motivation behind moving onto the station was material rather than spiritual, and that despite the imposition of certain behavioural conformities, a degree of spiritual independence remained.[232]

An emphasis on the "social crisis" explanation of conversion to mission Christianity or a move onto a mission station runs the risk of occluding agency.[233] Mission Christianity was used creatively by many individuals seeking positively to reconstruct a broken world. For some who had been slaves, Christianity represented a vital spiritual correlation to their physical freedom. Through their acceptance of mission Christianity freed people were able to achieve the status which their former bondage

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[229] **Proposed Ordinance re settling and squatting**, p 9.

[230] Cape Archives (CA) United Society for the Propogation of the Gospel (USPG) E/9, Clanwilliam, 12 Nov, 1861.

[231] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 14/08/1876.

[232] S 5 1/1/1: 1 May 1863.

[233] Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity", p 2.

had denied them.[234] As late as 1888, Le Roux mentions an old lady being prepared for confirmation, who viewed this event as the fulfillment of a desire harboured since her days in slavery: "Hier is 'n vrou wat ek daagliks in die katkisassie oplei - sy wil graag 'n lidmaat word, en aangesien haar kinders reeds lidmate is, wil sy haar begeerte wat bestaan vanaf haar slawetyd af, vervul."[235]

Despite the more formal evangelism which the movement onto a mission station entailed, this did not neccessarily imply a total break with the form of religous worship practised prior to the move. The missionary at Elandskloof was not always at the centre of the process of conversion and worship. Le Roux referred, in a letter, to an incident in which a woman on the station had undergone some sort of religous "crisis" without his knowing about it at the time: "'n ou gekleurde vrou..'n groot geloofsworsteling gehad het sonder dat ek daarvan geweet het. Toe ek van haar toestand hoor, het ek haar gou onder 'n ander indruk gebring..".[236] To aid her spiritual recovery le Roux gave her some "traktaatjies", which then quickly spread around the mission. This incident reveals the degree to which earlier patterns of conversion, which were more often made by Khoi laypreachers than by missionaries themselves, continued even on the mission where a large amount of religous discussion and conversion took place amongst the community, rather than simply from the pulpit of the missionary.[237]

Whatever the motivation behind arrival, or conversion, a move

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234 R Ross, "The Social and Political Theology of Western Cape Missions", paper presented at conference "People, Power and Culture: The history of Chrisitianity in South Africa 1792-1992", (Aug 1992), p 20.

235 S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 14/01/1888.

236 S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 4/07/1873.

237 Elbourne, "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity", p 7.

onto the station of Elandskloof, did involve a certain trade off of independence for the material or spiritual goals attained. Acceptance of mission Christianity and movement onto a mission station involved both the overt message transmitted from the pulpit as well as other kinds of cultural exchange, the implicit signs that structure ways of seeing and being. This process, already begun in the approximately 150 years of colonial control over this area of the Western Cape, involved the incalcation of the spatial, ritual and political forms of Christian, European culture - the refashioning of personhood, architecture, clothing, social calenders, structures of kinship, relations of gender.[238]

The property of Elandskloof was held in the name of the DRC and its administration came under the jurisdiction of the Mission Committee. This committee appointed a missionary to the station whose responsibilities included both the spiritual life of the broader Elandskloof presbytery and the material administration of the farm. The first missionary appointed to Elandskloof was W. A Groenewoud, who left the mission and the church in 1863 to join the "Sekte van het Niewe Jeruzalem".[239] [details in back of Murray book] He was followed by Abraham le Roux, who remained at Elandskloof from 1863 until 1904.

While le Roux was aided in his work by his wife and later his daughter, until 1881 he was the only authority on the station. New arrivals to the station were read the regulations of the station, drawn up by le Roux in 1863 and not replaced until 1930, and had to agree to comply to these. These regulations dealt with the practical aspects of entering the station as well as stipulating that inhabitants were to behave in a Christian and orderly fashion, drunkeness and immorality were strictly forbidden.[240] Le Roux had the power to evict those whom he

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[238] Comaroff and Comaroff, **Revelation**, p 199; 258.

[239] Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandskloof", p 7.

[240] S 5 1/1/1: Reglemente Elandskloof, 01/05/1863.

felt had contravened these regulations.

Until 1881 the missionary of Elandskloof had complete authority over the running of the station. In 1881 the new Mission Church of the DRC, for "coloureds", was created and a condition of membership for any congregation wishing to join, was that a church council should be in operation within the congregation seeking acceptance.[241] Although not yet seeking admission to this new church, le Roux set out to fulfill as many of these conditions as possible, and thus organised, for the first time in 1881, a meeting of all members of the station in order to elect two church councilers who would form the basis of a new church council at Elandskloof.[242] This council discussed the running of the station and church and, although the missionary had the ultimate say, made decisions regarding such issues as punishment.[243] From time to time meetings were held with the whole mission, ensuring a small degree of participation by the community in the decisions around the running of the station.[244]

As Elandskloof fell under the broad category of "purchase" institutions, rather than being a mission established through a government grant of land, it operated essentially independently of the state. The government paid 30 pounds of the missionary's 100 pound salary as payment for the teaching work which fell under government jurisdiction and was subject to government inspection.[245] Beyond this, however, the authority of the

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[241] Kriel, "Geskiedenis van die NG Sendingkerk in SA, 1881-1956" (PhD, UNISA, 1961) p 48.

[242] Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandskloof", p 32.

[243] SK-G 11 1/1: Notule Kerkraak Elandskloof, start 25/01/1881.

[244] SK-G 11 1/1.

[245] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 21/01/1873; Erwee,"Die Sending van die N.G.K onder die Inboorlinge van Noordwes-Kaapland", (Lisensiaat in die Teologie,

mission society was supreme. In this regard "purchase" institutions were somewhat easier to control: their land belonged to the mission societies, which therefore posessed the right of ejectment.[246] The regulations of "grant" institution, on the other hand, were not recognized by magistrates courts as legally binding and these institutions struggled to evict "wrongdoers" unless they had broken the law of the land.[247] The nature of "purchase" institutions placed the inhabitants of missions in a position of great dependence on the mission society concerned. This became especially evident when Act 29 of 1909 ensured the land rights of mission inhabitants, if in segregationalist terms, but did not include a single "purchase" institution.[248]

In the post-emancipation Western Cape, both the state and missionaries advocated the nuclear family and Christian marriage as a means of steadying what they perceived as a potentially threatening sector of the underclass.[249]
The structure of authority on Elandskloof, headed by the missionary who was in turn aided by male church councilors, was patriarchal. The basic unit of the community on Elandskloof was the patriarchal household, based on the nuclear family and monogamous marriage. Christian marriage was encouraged with severe punishments being meted out in cases of adultery and illegitimacy.[250]

Univ. of Stellenbosch, 1980), p 180.

[246] An example of this can be found in the 1892 case of incest in which, despite a verdict of not-guilty, the mission station still posessed the right to eject the members involved, Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandksloof", p 36.

[247] J Marais, **The Cape Coloured People 1652-1937** (JHB, 1968), p 250.

[248] ibid, p 254.

[249] Scully, "Emancipation", p 12.

[250] SK-G 11 1/1.

Many mission inhabitants embraced these new notions of "family". For former bonded servants marriage and the nuclear household was seen as a means to make a claim to the private relationships denied them in their bonded days. Claiming a right to exert power over their wives was perceived by many men as an aspect of freedom.[251] That adultery remained the largest "problem" on the station implied, alongside the degree to which the idea of the nuclear family was privileged by the missionary, an element of resistance to new notions of family and new controls over peoples' sexual lives. Migrancy and an apparently high mortality rate further militated against the nuclear family. Children whose mothers had died and whose fathers were away working went to live with other families, households also frequently included single or widowed adult relations.[252] A further example of this more fluid notion of family can be seen in the incest case of Mina Dowries and her father, where the magisterial court was unable to find conclusive evidence that the two were blood father and daughter.[253]

Physically dominant and central in the symbolic configuration of the mission, were the church and school. The church functioned, along with its subsiduary structures, as a social gathering point and a means of organising and regulating the community, through the message of the pulpit, age and gender groupings, such as Sunday school and a womens' group.[254] Church services were held on Sunday mornings and evenings, with Sunday school for children and adults during the afternoon. Confirmation classes took place every Monday evening. On Wednesday nights there was Bible readings and prayers.[255]

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[251] Scully, "Emancipation", p 11-13.

[252] Surplus Peoples Project (SPP), tapes of interviews with members of Elandskloof community, 1991.

[253] Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandksloof", p 36.

[254] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - A.S.K, 09/06/1863.

[255] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.k, 5/04/1873.

A school was established in the very first days of the station to teach the children of inhabitants as well as those from the surrounding district, and grew to include the children of white farmers and local white indigents.[256] Evening classes for adults were held weekly on Tuesdays. A central part of the education was the learning of, and reading and writing from, the Scriptures.

The curricula of church and school together set out to reorganize the flow of seasons and events that configured time and space for these people. The sacred was separated from the secular, work from leisure and public from private. The seven day week, marked by the Sunday services came to regulate the pattern of community life, which, along with the annual feasts of Christmas and Easter introduced a new schedule of activities that encompassed local routines within a "global time-table, a universal geography".[257]

That the mission ideology of the DRC was concerned with Christianising, evangelism in its simplest form as bringing souls from the darkness to the light of God, alone, as distinct from the European enlightenment notion of civilizing, allowed for a degree of cultural continuity amongsts its mission inhabitants that was unknown among many of the more 'liberal' mission stations. In many ways the control of the missionary over the station inhabitants was also related to the control the mission society had over land as a scarce resource in the area. The existence of squatting groups still living in the mountains at least until 1873, and possibly beyond this time, meant that an alternative, if a decreasingly viable one, to both existence on the mission and permanent farm labour, was available and people could resist the ideology and cultural hegemony of the missionary. The authority of the missionary on Elandskloof

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[256] S 5 2/42/1: Groenewoud - A.S.K, 6/04/1862; Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 8/07/1878.

[257] Comaroff and Comaroff, **Revelation**, p 234.

increased with the appropriation, continuing up until the turn of the century, of the mountainous crown land surrounding the station, and consequent erosion of an alternative to farm or mission existence.

On his arrival at the station of Elandskloof, le Roux was confronted by the semi, and sometimes total, nakedness among the inhabitants. While he was certainly somewhat astounded by this, there is no suggestion in his writings that the adoption of European clothes would morally improve these people. It is apparent in the sense of amused toleration discernable in Le Roux's comment that if he were to allow only clothed children to school, there would not be any school, that the mission ideology of the DRC did not encompass a reformation of the individual.[258] The wearing of clothing was never made compulsory on Elandskloof, but did accompany the inhabitants' increased involvement in the cash economy (which gave people the means with which to obtain clothes) and the incalcation of the hegemonic European culture.

The early 'pondokken' established in the days of Groenewoud, were gradually replaced by square houses, with thatched roofs.[259] Elandskloof was, however, unlike the typical Moravian or Rhenish mission villages, such as the nearby village of Wupperthal, no "model village" and by 1883, with the total population nearing 900, only 32 of the structures on the station were square houses (including the church, school and pastory).[260] Although taken in 1935, the pictures presented in plates 1 and 2 are an idication of what an average house on Elandskloof looked like. It is interesting that the 'Schedule of the Committee of the Missionaries Conference to gather statistics', in considering only the number of square houses on a mission as valuable

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[258] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - A.S.K, 09/06/1863.

[259] S 5 2/42/1: Groenewoud - A.S.K, 06/04/1862.

[260] S 5 2/42/4: Schedule issued by the committee of the Missionaries Conference to gather statistics, 1882.

PLATE 1 : ELANDSKLOOF, 1935

PLATE 2 : ELANDSKLOOF, 1935

information, should emphasise this Western spatial form. On the DRC mission station of Elandskloof, despite the large spatial presence of the church, school and pastory, no such imposition of Western spatial forms is discernable.

The reception of "mission ideas" was also shaped by new gender identities and the subsequent migrancy patterns on the station. In general it was the women who remained at the station to carry on the subsistence agriculture, while the men left for periods of time to work on farms.[261] There were always more girls in the school that boys, as boys were sent off at an early age to labour on farms.[262] In 1876 there were 60 girls at the school and only 24 boys, of these 24 only two were above the age of twelve.[263] Women were thus better educated than the men and became the purveyors of missionary culture: "Het is opmerkelyk hoe er meer vrucht op der arbeid is onder de vrouwe dan onder de mannen." [264]

Despite the acculturation which the acceptance of mission Christianity and the move onto the mission station involved, the particular ideology of the DRC meant that inhabitants were able, to a certain degree, perpetuate their livestyles from before. While inhabitants were able to avoid the harsh conditions of permanent rural wage-labour, dire poverty, evident in the prevalence of diseases such as tuberculosis, was a constant factor to be contended with and it forced more and more inhabitants into a dependency on wage-labour offered on neighbouring farms. The people of Elandskloof remained, however, fiercely protective of their marginal independence.

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[261] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 30/09/1874.

[262] ibid.

[263] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 14/08/1876.

[264] S 5 2/42/1: Le Roux - B.S.S.K, 04/04/1874.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DECLINE OF ELANDSKLOOF, 1900-1963.

The rapid succession of missionaries which followed the departure, in 1904, of Le Roux from Elandskloof, alongside the increasing impoverishment of the inhabitants, erroded the stability of the station. This internal decline coincided with a national process of proletarianisation, following the mineral and industrial revolutions, which further undermined the autonomy of the mission. Elandskloof was increasingly perceived as an obstruction in the landscape to the process of racially based capital accumulation.

One of the central complaints by white farmers, throughout the nineteenth century, against mission stations was that these were frequently established in areas where there was no equivalent formal church activity for local white inhabitants. It is evident from the missionaries' letters from Elandskloof that the surrounding white farming community was forced, for lack of any alternative, to attend church services and educate their children, at this station.[265] After the Elandskloof congregation had joined the "coloured" NG Sendingkerk, in 1893, this practise of common worship was no longer possible. Despite no mention by Le Roux of any antagonism on these occasions between the farmers and the Elandsklowers, the motivation behind the establishment of Citrusdal, coming shortly after Elandskloof joined the Sendingkerk, supports the idea that many of these farmers felt that it was not proper that they should have to partake of the activities of a "Hottentot" congregation, while no specific attention was paid to their own spiritual needs.

Citrusdal, lying alongside the Olifants River, approximately 6 miles northwest of Elandskloof, was established in 1916 and

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[265] S 5 2/42/1: Le roux - B.S.S.K, 08/06/1878.

formally declared a village in 1922.[266] The village was brought into existence through the establishment of a DR church here. Early in the 20th century it was decided that the enormity of the Clanwilliam district hindered the work of the DRC in the area. This problem was to be solved through the establishment of a separate congregation alongside the Bo-Olifantsrivier. The proximity to Elandksloof of the selected spot for this new church, bears witness to the practise of racial exclusivity which had been formalised within the body of DRC.

It is arguable that this proximity was not entirely accidental. The land on which the new church was built was that of the farm Middelpost, owned by the Van Zyl brothers. A part of this farm was made available to the church by the owners, with the intention that a church should be built and a village started. To this end the building of the church was followed by the measuring out of plots and laying out of water.[267] That the land offered for the establishment of a church and village should be so near Elandskloof is indicative of a desire of the neighbouring white farming community to set up an economic and spiritual counterpoint to the "coloured" mission station. It was, interestingly, a Van Zyl who had, in 1861, tried to prevent the establishment of the mission station.[268]

Citrusdal rapidly became an alternative economic centre to Elandskloof. As early as 1917 the Citrusdal kerkraad meeting took the decision "om a geschikte plaats voor 'n locatie to bepalen", in which to house the influx of "coloured" workers. The new regulations of Elandskloof, first discussed in 1923,

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266 Erwee, "Die Sending van die NGK onder die Inboorlinge van Noordwes Kaapland", (Lisensiaat in die Teologie, Univ. of Stellenbosch, 1980), p 194.

267 Erwee, "Sending van die NGK", p 194.

268 see Chapter 2.

though only implemented in the early 1930s[269], furthermore, included a clause stating that no shop, butchery, bakery or any other profitable business could be started on the station without the consent of the missionary, thus ensuring the interests of Citrusdal as the new economic centre in the region, while reinforcing the increasing marginalisation of Elandskloof.[270]

As the DRC owned a lot of village ground, it came to play a strong role in the early years of the development of Citrusdal. In 1922 it was the kerkraad of the DRC, as self-appointed "guardian" of the "coloureds" in the village, who drew up the regulations for the "coloured" location. These regulations, which included medical testing, a ban on dancing or any large gathering and a nightly curfew, were highly authoritarian and informed by the paternalistic nature of the relationship between master and servant in the region.[271] Again, the close proximity of Elandskloof, as a relatively independent community of "coloureds", may have informed this explicit display of relative power relations.

These developments led to the possibility being raised, in 1924 and in the early 1930s, of the establishment of a mission church in Citrusdal, and of making this an entirely separate congregation from Elandksloof. The various parties involved in the debate were divided in their opinions on this issue. The presbytery of Elandskloof, the mission congregation of

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269 Vrey, "Die Geskiedenis van die NG Sendinggemeente Elandskloof, 1860-1925" (Lisensiaat in die Teologie, Univ. of Stellenbosch, 1976", p 56; S 5 2/42/4: Blake - A.S.K, 15/02/1933.

270 S 5 1/1/1: "Reglemente vir die Bestuur van die NG Sendingstasie, Elandskloof", 1933.

271 Erwee, "Sending NGK", p 195, West Coast Council of Churches, interview with ds Botha, consulent of the Elandskloof congregation, 1960-1964, later moderater of the NGSendingkerk, SA, (22 August, 1992), on the paternalism of the local farmers.

Clanwilliam and the white congregation of Citrusdal were for the establishment of a separate congregation, while the B.S.S.K and the mission kerkraad of Elandskloof were against the idea.[272] The establishment of a mission in Citrusdal would obviously jeopordise the future of Elandskloof, at a time when its future was very uncertain anyway.

By 1942 separate financial books for Citrusdal and Elandskloof and the decision by the congregations of Elandskloof and Citrusdal that a laypreacher should be appointed for Citrusdal meant that a separation of congregations was occurring in pracitise, even while no formal decision had yet been taken.[273] The first lay preacher was appointed in 1944 and in October 1952 Citrusdal was established as a new congregation and succeeded Elandskloof as the centre of the Elandskloof presbytery, now known by the name of Citrusdal-Elandskloof.

As the Motherchurch in Citrusdal paid two thirds of the salary of the preacher for the new church, they had, in accordance with church law, the power to make this appointment and thus excercised a greater degree of control over the Citrusdal mission church than had been possible over the older mission church of Elandskloof. In 1953, with the departure of the last missionary from Elandskloof, the religious marginalisation of the mission station now coincided with its economic marginalisation, and the rationale behind the mission station fell away, opening the way for the rapid decline of the station.

The motivation behind, and development of, Citrusdal was integral to the process of the decline of the mission station of Elandskloof. The decline of the station can also, however, be traced to developments internal to the station, within the DRC church, and to wider political and economic developments within the country as a whole, notably the implementation of the

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[272] ibid, p197.

[273] ibid, p 198.

Nationalist governments apartheid legislation aimed at bolstering the process of racially based capital accumulation. The religion of the DRC was inextricably bound up in the political struggles of Afrikaner nationalism.

The disruption of the Anglo-Boer war of and the departure of the missionary Le Roux, after a lengthy and stable period of service, took their toll on the stability of Elandskloof. In 1906 the station experienced its first serious conflict between the inhabitants and the missionary. In response to an attempt by the new missionary, Grove, to increase the rent, mission inhabitants expressed their resistance through a closure of the school, the stopping of all community work and some inhabitants even left the church altogether.[274] Residents reacted against a decision which bespoke a new stress placed by the Binnelandse Sending Subkommittee (B.S.S.K), of the DRC, on their ownership of the mission land, and a changing relationship between occupants and the church. In 1906 the situation was still one in which the Sending Kommittee of the DRC was prepared to back down, and the rent was reduced to its original level.[275]

By 1909, against a backdrop of conflict and increasing poverty - "De menschen worden al armer"[276] - voices were raised within the church proposing the sale of Elandskloof. The commission of the B.S.S.K which was sent to investigate the situation concluded, however, that they were fully behind the continuation of the station.[277] The only voice of the inhabitants recorded throughout this process was the unanimous exclamation, on hearing the decision to continue with the

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[274] Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandskloof", p 47-48.

[275] Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandskloof", p 47.

[276] S 5 2/42/1:Bastiaan - B.S.S.K: 19/04/1909.

[277] Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandskloof", p 50; Erwee, "Sending NGK", p184; Smit, **Ons Kerk in BO-olifantsrivier**, p 127.

mission, of "Prys den Heer!".[278] This captures the increasing marginalisation of the Elandsklowers, and their perception thereof, in the decision making process around their future.

While the decision of 1909 was in favour of the continuation of the mission, the sense of absolute security of tenure began to decline. The issues of property ownership, authority over the station, and the question of its future, came to the fore. The Sending Kommittee responded by placing an increased emphasis on its ownership of the land and stressed its position as being that of the ultimate authority on the station. This new emphasis on ownership challenged the Elandsklowers' perception of the situation, one in which they believed themselves to be 'mede-einaars'.

After 1893, Elandskloof was in the unusual position of falling under the authority of two separate church bodies. The congregation of Elandskloof belonged to the Mission Church of the DRC (DRMC), while the land still belonged to the Sending Kommittee (B.S.S.K) of the Algemeene Sendingkommissie (A.S.K), of the DRC. The spiritual affairs of the mission were controled by the DRMC and its presbytery of Elandskloof, and executed through the Elandskloof church council, while the secular affairs were administered by a 'Plaaslike kommittee'(P.K), first established in 1912, controled by the B.S.S.K.[279] During the 1920s these two bodies clashed in the execution of their duties, resulting in a great deal of internal confusion as well as conflict between the various parties of the DRC and DRMC who were in any way involved with the station.

In 1923, due to the conflict between the community of Elandksloof, the kerkraad and the P.K, the B.S.S.K began to discuss the implementation of a new set of regulations for the station. The regulations decided upon, and later implemented

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[278] cited in Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandskloof", p 51.

[279] ibid, p 62.

through new contracts, stressed that Elandskloof was the property of the A.S.K and the P.K (which included white members of the Citrusdal congregation) would, therefore, have the greatest control on the station. As owners of the land, all income derived from the sale of boegoe belonged, therefore, to the A.S.K.[280] In many instances the struggle waged over the issue of boegoe collection served as a mimetic image of the broader struggle over land ownership.

The land on which boegoe was collected was the mountainous surrounds of the farm which the station had recieved from the government in 1899, for the nominal price of 50 pounds. As already described in Chapter 4, the perception of the Elandsklowers was that the land had been granted to them by Queen Victoria, and they felt a strong sense of proprietorship over it. Before 1922, while a certain fee was paid for the collection of boegoe by the inhabitants, this went towards the payment of the missionary's salary by the kerkraad, and the Elandsklowers' perception of ownership was in no way threatened.[281]

After 1922 this money was to go directly to the B.S.S.K.[282] The situation reverted back, however, to the original practise, in 1924. The reversal of the initial decision flew in the face of a deputation by the church council of Citrusdal, who felt that the B.S.S.K should be getting more money from every pound of boegoe sold, and it is possible to conject that the B.S.S.K was reacting to resistance from the Elandslowers.[283] While no explicit mention of this is made in the sources, the fact that, in 1924, only 21 of the 70 households on Elandskloof paid their annual rent, can possibly be seen, while taking into account the biting poverty of which this was also indicative, as an act of

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[280] S 5 1/1/1: Regulations, 1933.

[281] Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandskloof", p 58.

[282] ibid, p 58.

[283] ibid, p 54.

resistance against the attempted assertion of land ownership by the B.S.S.K. and assault on their economic independence by the surrounding farmers.[284]

Further conflict between the P.K and the church council of Elandskloof resulted in two deputations, by the Organiseerde Sending Sekretaris, to Elandskloof, in 1924 and 1926.[285] These deputations met with the community, the church council, the P.K and a deputation from the white church council of Citrusdal. It was acknowleged by the deputations that, apart from a few exceptions, Elandsklowers could no longer subsist on the station for a whole year without getting work on surrounding farms and that this situation was aggravated by the expectation of labour by the farmers, and their definite desire to oppose any possible self-sufficiency of the "coloureds".[286] The conflict surrounding Elandskloof was thus of a political nature, a struggle over land and labour, and the DRC supported, on the whole, the farmers demands for the creation of a landless rural proletariat. The deputations of the B.S.S.K, in 1924 and 1926, decided to begin working towards making Citrusdal a religious centre.[287] In response to complaints by about the shortage of child labour during harvest, the school terms of the Elandskloof school were to be accordingly adjusted to appease this.[288]

The deputation of 1926 could envisage only two alternatives for the future of the mission station; that it should continue as a mission station, or that it should be sold. In the case of the former, the station would require radical changes and improvements, which would be costly to the B.S.S.K. The

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[284] ibid, p 59.

[285] Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandskloof", p54; 70; Erwee, "Sending NGK", p 187; 188; Smit, **Ons kerk in Bo-olifantsrivier**, p 128.

[286] Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandskloof", p 70.

[287] S 5 1/2/3: B.S.S.K, 07/02/1924, p 245-256.

[288] Vrey, "Geskiedenis Elandskloof", p 54.

arguement in favour of selling the station was that it had made little "progress" over the last 60 years. Furthermore, many of the surrounding farmers would support this decision as they sought to curb the independence of the inhabitants, which they saw as anomolous to the paternalistic structure of their society, and wished to aquire the labour of the Elandsklowers who they considered to be "vertrouwbaar en sober".[289]

Against this proposal was the fact that the Minister of Land would have to alter the clause in the deed of sale of the second piece of land, which stated that it was to be used "for missionary purposes only". Furthermore the question of what would happen to those on the station remained unresolved and it was felt that such a removal would be harmful to the community.[290] In light of these problems the B.S.S.K decided that they would not sell immediately, but grant the mission a two year trial period during which they would have to prove the viability of the station. At the request of konsulent Bastiaanse, the DRMC minister on Elandskloof, in the name of the inhabitants, this period was extended to five years.[291] Vrey concludes that from this time on the future of the mission was beset by an uncertainty "wat soos 'n swaard oor Elandskloof gehang het".[292]

During the years 1929-1930, years of economic depression, the uncertainty surrounding Elandskloof intensified. At the centre of the problem lay the questions of who the church buildings belonged to, mission community or Sending Kommittee of the DRC; what was to become of the mission and was a new mission congregation to be established in Citrusdal. In 1930 the Sending Kom. and the presbytery of Elandskloof decided that all buildings

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[289] ibid, p 71.

[290] ibid, p 72.

[291] ibid, p 73.

[292] ibid, p 74.

on Elandskloof belonged to the A.S.K of the DRC and not to the community; that Elandskloof would certainly be sold at some stage in the future and that a mission congregation would be started in Citrusdal.[293]

With the implementation of the new contracts in 1933 this renewed stress on ownership of the land by the B.S.S.K was stated explicitly, while also enacted through the restrictions on boegoe and wood collection. A clause safeguarding the option of selling the station stated that the contracts could be terminated at any time after a three month notice had been given. The B.S.S.K adopted an increasingly authoritarian stance, reminiscent of, and possibly influenced by, the location regulations drawn up by the white church council of Citrusdal. The new regulations declared that applications by DRC members alone would be considered, church attendance on Sundays was compulsory and no strangers could visit, or gatherings be held, without the consent of the missionary.[294] In the relief expressed by the resident missionary of the time, Blake, over the relatively unproblematic implementation of the new contracts, it is possible to discern a vague unease within the church regarding their new stress on authority and proprietorship.[295]

This emphasis, by the missionary, on successful implementation, masks the fact of resistance. Eleven households had held out, until the last minute, against signing the new contracts. Considering the only alternative available to the residents, was to leave the station, the "mate van sukses" for which Blake was so thankful, the absence of any serious resistance by the Elandsklowers against this assault on their position on the mission, can only be seen as a measure of their disempowerment over the preceeding decades and an indication of their

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[293] Erwee, "Sending NGK", p 189.

[294] S 5 1/1/1: Regulations, 1933.

[295] S 5 2/42/4: Blake - A.S.K.: 15/02/1933.

perceptions of what life as permanent labourer entailed.[296] Life on the mission station, under an increasingly authoritarian church rule and ever more precarious circumstances, was still preferable to the harsh conditions and insecurity of dependency on permanent farm labour.

The final and rapid dismantling of Elandsloof took place, notably, after 1948 and must be seen within the wider context of the victory of the Nationalist Party, their implementation of apartheid structures and the relationship of the DRC church and surrounding farmers to these processes. By the early 1950s the Nationalist Party was already instituting apartheid. A central aspect of this policy, vital to the process of racially based capital accumulation, was to clear the land of "black spots" through forced removals, lawful or not. Elandskloof was one of the only farms in the area of Citrusdal that was not in the lived on and owned by whites, and the farmers surrounding Citrusdal, a Nationalist Party constituency, were eager to get the mission into their own hands. The DRC had also publically proclaimed its support of the Nationalists' policy of "seperate development".

The racial discrimination, domination and exclusion of the Christian Afrikaner nationalism of the Nationalist Party was invested with an aggressive religous legitimation by both the state and the DRC.[297] While the separate church organisation for "coloureds" established by the DRC in 1881 had been explained as an organisational expedient, with the establishment of the DR Indian church in 1951, racial separation had become a matter of theological principle.[298] From its inception, the policy of "separate development" drew support from the DRC. At a church conference in Bloemfontein, in 1950, the DRC resolved that "total separation" and "separate economic development" could only be

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[296] S 5 2/42/4: Blake - A.S.K: 15/02/1933.

[297] D Chidester, **Religions of South Africa**, (Routlege, 1992), p xv.

[298] ibid, p 82.

achieved by the "gradual movement towards total territorial separation between whites and Bantu".[299] The religion of the DRC was thus inextricably bound up in the political struggles of the apartheid era and it lent its moral and religous support to the development of racial capital and its handmaiden of "separate development".

Against this background the pleas of the white church council of Citrusdal were finally heard, and in 1952 the congregation of Elandksloof was moved to Citrusdal, where it was firmly under the control of the white congregation of the DRC of Citrudsal. When the missionary, Dippenaar, left Elandskloof the following year, the Citrusdal church council requested that the station should not get a new missionary immediately and the B.S.S.K of the DRC was willing to comply.[300] The desire of the DRC of Citrusdal, representing the local, white farmers and supported by the DRC and DRMC, to dismantle the independent,"coloured" community of Elandskloof, began to take effect. The process of the dispossession of the Elandsklowers took place in a situation of semi-colonialism in which the "coloured" community of Elandskloof had no access to formal political power.

Elandskloof church council member Mr Dawid Adams described the situation as follows: "die lokasie [Citrusdal] se mense het eers Elandskloof toe gekom vir kerk, nagmaal, katkisasie en aaneming. Toe verskuif hulle dit mos - amper ons word die kind en Citrusdal is die moeder".[301] This loss of status as a congregation had serious consequences for Elandksloof. No longer considered by the A.S.K as a mission station the farm was hired out to a manager, with whom the community came into serious conflict over

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[299] ibid, pp 205-206.

[300] West Coast Council of Churches,"Hul Herkoms", (1991), pp 12-13.

[301] cited in "Hul Herkoms", p 13.

the subsequent 5 years.[302] That Elandksloof was no longer a mission station, but only an outlying district of the Elandksloof-Citrussdal mission congregation, after 1952, was used by the A.S.K as one of the reasons for the sale of the farm in 1961.[303]

By 1958 the community of Elandskloof were protesting against their position in relationship to the manager on the farm. Having gained no response from the church the community addressed their complaints to the Department of Coloured Affairs. In a memo of this department, labelled "Die nie-blanke huurders van die Sendingstasie Elandksloof doen aansoek om Apartheid", the situation was described by a deputation of Elandsklowers as "Een blanke man met sy huisgesin huur oor ons as oudhuurders en met gevolg daarvan is ons voorregte afgesny".[304] This statement reflects the process of capital accumulation and dispossession which was occuring, not only around Elandksloof, but nation-wide.

In response to the escalating conflict on the mission, the pressure from the white Citrusdal farming community to sell the farm and the policy of "separate development" championed by the DRC itself, the B.S.S.K of the DRC considered, in 1958, four possible solutions to the "problem" of Elandksloof:

1. That Elandksloof be handed over to the Department of Coloured Affairs.
2. To sell Elandklsoof, for a small amount, to the DR Mission Church.
3. To sell the farm to a private owner, while ensuring the protection of the occupants' rights.
4. To further hire out the farm and place the

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302 S 5 1/2/14: B.S.S.K, 25/02/1956, p 18; "Hul Herkoms", p 13.

303 SK - G 11 3/1: Els, Binnelandse Sending Sek., 11/09/ 1962, "Elandksloof".

304 S 5 1/2/14: B.S.S.K, Notule van vergaderings Besoekkommissie aan Elandskloof Sendingstasie, 14 May,1958.

administration thereof under a board of trustees.[305] At the same meeting it was decided that the moral and legal aspects of a potential sale of both the heart of the farm and the surrounding piece of land would be carefully investigated.[306] Thus the fact that the B.S.S.K declared that the farm would not be sold, at this stage, as the rights of the inhabitants could not be sufficiently protected, might be seen as a cautionary move while the DRC waited to ensure their own legal position regarding the sale of the land.[307]

Other pressures on the Sending Kom. to sell the farm came from the DRC and Boeregemeenskap of Citrusdal. At a meeting in the pastory of Citrusdal towards the end of 1958, the minutes of which were kept in a folder marked "confidential", the views of these parties were put forward. The district doctor stated that unless a drastic change was made regarding the station, the incidence of T.B was so high that the people would die out. While this stands as a shocking reflection of the dire poverty on this DRC mission station, the discourse is interestingly reminiscent of the Sanitation Bills which were deployed in the first forced removals from Cape Town in the early 19th century.[308]

The Boeregemeenskap announced that it would welcome the dismantling of Elandskloof. Their complaints against the station centred on their desire to harness the labour potential within Elandskloof through the removal of its inhabitants independent access to land. The community was portrayed, in the typical language of the master, as idle, their farming methods unscientific and uneconomical, and, in the Verwoedian language of the new Apartheid era, as anti-white and under the unhealthy

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[305] S 5 1/2/14: B.S.S.K, 1956-1980, 18 April, 1958.

[306] S 5 1/2/14: B.S.S.K, 18 April 1958, p 52.

[307] Erwee, "Sending NGK", p 192.

[308] see E van Heyningen, "Public Health and Society in Cape Town, 1880-1910" (PhD, UCT, 1989).

influence of external agitators.[309] Where only a few years previously the community of Elandksloof had been in demand as labourers for their sober and trustworthy natures, they were now described as "die swakste deel van die gemeente", drunk and morally flagging. This new emphasis on the 'degeneration' of the Elandkslowers revealed clearly the intentions of the farmers of the area and was used to justify the conclusion of the meeting, that "daar 'n dure plig op ons rus om 'n end te maak aan die posisie op Elandskloof"; "Elanskloof is heeltemaal ongesond vir die omgewing en kan nie voort bly bestaan nie."[310]

In 1960, with the pressures against Elandskloof mounting, the A.S.K began to seriously investigate the potential solutions it had enumerated in 1958. On the 11 May 1960 a request was made to the Department of Coloured Affairs asking if they would take over Elandksloof. This department had been started in 1948 as a sub-department, but in 1960 had just in 1960 become a full department under the ministership of P.W Botha.[311] Central to the activities of the department was, naturally, the creation of "Coloured Reservations". As a young department eager to prove themselves, however, they turned down the offer of Elandksloof on the grounds that it was too small for them to make a success of:"Dit sal ekonomies nie 'n gesonde proposisie wees vir die Departement nie..".[312]

The A.S.K simultaneously offered the station to the DRMC, but, at this point, decided against this outcome.[313] Influential in the debate was the fact that the boeregemeenskap of Citrusdal, as well as the inhabitants of Elandskloof, were against this

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[309] S 5 1/2/14: B.S.S.K, 18 Nov, 1958, p 75.

[310] S 5 1/2/14: B.S.S.K, 18 Nov, 1858, p 76.

[311] West Coast Council of Churches: Interview with ds Botha, 1990.

[312] SK - G 11 3/1: Els, "Elanskloof", 11 Sept, 1962, p 2.

[313] ibid.

move. Placing the farm in the hands of the DRMC would obviously not answer the farmers demands for cheap, dependant labour. The Elandkslowers, on the other hand, were of the opinion, derived from stories they had heard about the DRMC station of Steinthal, that "die Sendingkerk sal vir hulle grootliks halters en towe aansit en hulle sal nou nie die vryheid van beweeging he wat hulle nou meen hulle sal onder die Sendingkerk he nie".[314] The possiblity that the Group Areas Board might object was also taken into account.[315] In a meeting of 30 March, 1960, the F.S.S.K of the DRC, decided it would be preferable to sell the land to a private person, rather than to the A.S.K on the grounds that "Daar kan dan sekere serwitite in verband met die ou inwoners by die verkoosvoorwaardes gevoeg word. Indien die plaas aan die Sendingkerk verkoop word, sal dit mettertyd deur kleurlinge beheer word en 'n kleurlingbuurt, onder beheer van kleurlinge, binne 'n blanke gebied vorm."[316]

The third possible solution was that the farm should be hired out, or a farm manager appointed. The B.S.S.K regarded the former option as uneconomical as they did not have the capital required to make the farm viable again, and were aware that the latter solution would result in a clash of interests between the manager and the community. In both cases it was felt that the occupants rights would be difficult to ensure.[317] By mid-1960 the B.S.S.K had, therefore, decided to sell the farm of Elandksloof to a private owner.

By the time this decision was announced to the community of Elandksloof, the B.S.S.K had already ensured their legal position through their successful request to the Department of Land that the clause "for mission purposes only", from the grant of crown

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[314] WCCC: Interview with ds Botha, (1990).

[315] SK - g 11 3/1: Els, "Elandksloof", 11 Sept, 1962, p 2.

[316] S 5 1/2/14: B.S.S.K, 30 March, 1960, p 105.

[317] SK - G 11 3/1: Els, "Elandksloof", 11 Sept,1962, p 2.

land, be scrapped.[318] The fact that the proceeds from the sale of this land would go towards further mission work, was felt, by the DRC, to be sufficient justification for this decision.[319] A government involved in the process of forced removals, legal or not, countrywide, had understandably few qualms about granting the scrapping of this clause from the title deeds to the land. In this respect it is interesting to note that during this time, 1960-1961, a governmental enquiry was being undertaken which, among other things, was investigating, in terms of the Group Areas Acts (of 1913;1936 and 1950), the position of Mission stations in white areas, and arguing for their removal.[320] While this report applied specifically to "Bantus", it nonetheless illuminates the policies and attitudes of the time, which decidedly influenced the decisions of the DRC church and state in regard to Elandskloof.

At a meeting with the inhabitants of Elandskloof, on the 12 September, 1960, the Financial Subcommittee, representing the A.S.K, announed their decision that the farm was to be sold. The inhabitants were told that they would be given three months notice, from the 1st October till the 31st of December, 1960, to leave the station. The "good intentions" of the A.S.K towards the Elandkslowers, extended to the offer of 200 rands compensation money to each registered occupant, to help with their resettlement. Occupants were also to receive the building cost of their houses, minus depreciation.[321]

The inhabitants of Elandksloof responded by organising a "waaksaamheids" [vigilance] committee and refusing to leave the

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[318] SK - G 11 3/1: Els, "Elandksloof", 11 Sept, 1962, p 1.

[319] SK - G 11 3/1: Els, "Elandksloof", 1962, p 1.

[320] **Report of the Inter-Depaartmental Committee of Enquiry in Connection with the Labour Tenant System and Matters Related there to.** (Nel Committee), 1960-1961, pp 29-30.

[321] SK - G 11 3/1: Els, "Elandksloof", (1962), p 2.

farm: "Wanneer ons trek, moet ons ons goed eers oppak en dan die honderd pond vir elke huisgesin gaan kry. Toe se ons as dit aanvaar word dan verkoop ons ons regte".[322] On 24 November eleven occupants were charged by the A.S.K for illegal squatting. This resistance was successful, however, when, through the mediation of the Kleurling-volksbond, the A.S.K repealed their letters notifying occupants that they must depart and dropped all charges which they had brought against the eleven "protestors".[323]

This small 'victory' for the Elandsklowers' was highly temporary. In May 1961, with no other options available, but intent on ridding themselves of the station, the A.S.K put the farm of Elandskloof up for tender. A number of tenders were recieved, including one of fifty thousand rand from the brothers Smit of Citrusdal, but the A.S.K refused these offers on the basis that they still felt unhappy about how to ensure the occupants' rights.[324] When the farm was finally sold to the Smit brothers by tender, in July, it was made explicit that the sale included the rights of the community so that the DRC "teen enige regstuppe gevrywaar sou word".[325] In light of this condition, the tender offered by the Smits, on the second occassion, was sixteen thousand rands less than previously offered - a cynical expression of the "liability" which the people of Elandskloof represented to a local farmer, and forwarning of treatment to come.[326]

In the months following the sale of the farm, the community of Elandskloof, through their lawyer Mr B.Pienaar, tried address

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[322] Jan Januarie cited in "Hul Herkoms", (1991), p 15.

[323] SK - G 11 3/1: Els, "Elandskloof", (1962), p 2.

[324] SK - G 11 3/1: Els, "Elandskloof", (1962), p 2.

[325] "Hul Herkoms", (1991), p 16.

[326] Ds D P Botha, "Verslag oor Elandskloof", vir gebruik by die Sinode NG Sendingkerk, p 3.

their grievances over what they consedered to have been an illegal sale of the land, to the DRC. The response of the A.S.K was simply that the sale had been subject to an assurance of the rights of the occupants and that as they were no longer the legal owners of the land they were not in a position to help the inhabitants, and not prepared to enter any discussions over this issue. The community would have to address their grievances to the new owners.[327]

The "volle vertroue" which the A.S.K had placed in the Smits' upholding the rights of the community of Elandskloof was, in the event, entirely disregarded. From the moment of their occupancy of the land, the Smits' made it very clear that their objective was either the complete subjection of the Elandsklowers as permanent labourers for them, or their removal. The Smits first act of subjection was through an appropriation of the spatial dimension of the community. Old fences marking out the space created by the Elandsklowers were pulled out and replaced by new fences which, significantly, cut through many occupants' gardens and cut houses off from the water supply and road. Trees planted by the community were uprooted and the land ploughed without regard of peoples' gardens or the crops already planted here.[328] Two of the inhabitants had their houses burnt down when the burning of a fire break got out of hand and Smit, although nearby refused to help.[329]

Smits acts of destruction were not in fact arbitrary, but can be seen to have been aimed at the objects and spaces which most obviously symbolised the economic independence of the Elandkslowers. In one incident which virtually amounted to a symbolic ritual act of dispossession, Smit impounded livestock, amounting to 579 head of cattle, sheep and goats, belonging to the Elandsklowers, which he then sold for a nominal fee to the

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[327] Ds Botha, "Verslaag oor Elandskloof", p 3.

[328] Ds Botha, "Verslag oor Elandskloof", p 3-4.

[329] Ds Botha, "Verslag oor Elandskloof", p 4.

surrounding farmers.[330] A week later Smit offered a proposal to the Elandsklowers that, on the condition that they forfeited all their traditional rights to the land and offered him first option on their labour, they could remain on the land. The offer was refused and the entire community of Elandskloof faced eviction.[331]

Throughout the process of the sale of Elandksloof, the pleas of the community against this event went entirely unheeded. According to ds Botha of the Sendingkerk (pastor of a Clanwilliam congregation and a supporter of the Elandsklowers' cause), "hulle was nie deel nie [in the discussions about the future of Elandskloof], in die sin dat hulle mede besluiterners was nie. Kyk, dit was nie die styl destyds om dit so te doen nie. Die styl destyds was gewees die Sending Kom. was die besitters..".[332] The community, with no access to formal political power, was simply told of decisions already made and not consulted at any stage in the process of discussing their own future.[333]

Despite this attempted silencing of the Elandsklowers, by the DRC as well as the Apartheid legislation and practises of the time, the community refused to passively comply with this dismantling of their community. With the help of their lawyer and the Kleurling-volksbond, the community fought, throughout 1961 and 1962, to retain their rights to the occupancy of the land and thereby resist the process of proletarianisation.[334] The Department of Coloured Affairs, in response to a number of pleas for help by the Elandkslowers, refused to help. Their argument against providing the community with another piece of land, was

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[330] Ds Botha, "Verslag oor Elandskloof", p 4.

[331] Ds Botha, "Verslag oor Elandskloof", p 4.

[332] WCCC, interview ds Botha, (1990).

[333] Ds Botha, "Verslag oor Elandskloof", p 2.

[334] Ds Botha, "Verslag oor Elandksloof", p 5.

that it would be to the disadvantage of the Elandsklowers and, importantly, to the detriment of the farming in the area.[335]

By September 1962, when all other channels of redress had proved fruitless, the community ~~community~~ was forced to accept the fact that in they tried to remain on Elandskloof they would be forcefully removed (by Smit operating through the law). The community thus left Elandksloof on 12 September 1962 and as a last ditch attempt to draw attention to their removal they were to march in protest to Cape Town. In response to this challenge, by the community, of a fundamental tenet of apartheid in an era of political repression and mass removals of black communities across the country, PW Botha responded that "the government would under no cicumstances be deterred or intimidated by this sort of behaviour, which amounted to a political demonstration aimed at creating race friction.".[336] The march was halted by police action, shortly after they had left Elandskloof, and PW Botha maintained the stance that this was a naked act of political demonstration, inspired by outside agitators.[337]

The community of Elandksloof is today, thirty years later, scattered widely across the Western Cape. Some have moved to the towns of Citrusdal, Atlantis and Cape Town, while others are working as permanent labourers on farms in the surrounding areas. Twenty-six families, amounting to one hundred people, of the original mission community have remained at the place where their march was halted, squatting on the farm Allandale, adjacent to Elandksloof. This community has lived on Allandale for thirty years. In their struggle to resist being evicted from this land too, the community has recently been granted a four year

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[335] Ds Botha, "Verslag oor Elandskloof", p 5.

[336] **Cape Argus**,11 Sept, 1962.

[337] Ds Botha, "Verslag oor Elandskloof", p 1; 6.

reprieve.[338] The people of Elandskloof have been barred, through the "No Trespassing" signs which Smit has erected, from ever entering the land they once inhabited, they may not even visit the graveyard in which their members of their families are buried.[339]

When Jan Januarie, community leader of Elandskloof, appeared in court, on Feb 1961, on charges of tresspassing, the Judge, despite finding him guilty on the above charge, concluded his verdict with the statement:

> "Ek moet melding maak van die feit dat ons hier te doen het met 'n gemeenskap van kleurlinge wat vir 'n geruime tyd - dit is nie duidelik hoe lank nie - vreedsaam gewoon het in hierdie geweste, klaarblyklik gerusgestel dat hulle vir 'n onbepaalde tyd altans 'n tuiste sou he, en dat hulle nou gevra word om hierdie plek te verlaat. Ek kan nie nalaat om die hoop uit te spreek dat die huidige eienaars sover moontlik tegemoetkomend sal wees teenoor hierdie kleurlinge."[340]

In the oral tradition of the Elandkslowers the Judge's words were translated as "Advocate, there is a case pending with regards to the ownership of Elandskloof. But that is not the case before this court."[341] It is clear from the evidence that the reasons for wanting to sell Elandskloof had little to do with uneconomical, unscientific and inefficient farming practices which the church gave as its justification. The minutes of the debates around the sale of Elandskloof reveal the desire of the neighbouring white farming community and of the church to enforce a racially-based, dependent and cheap rural work-force. This decade was marked by the formalisation "grand apartheid", and in

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[338] **The Cape Times**, 23 January, 1993.

[339] Personal communication, 1992.

[340] **In the Supreme Court:Appeal in criminal case, Jan Jonas Januarie versus the State, 8th Feb, 1962, p 4.**

[341] WCCC, "Hul Herkoms", p 4.

terms of this ideology, Elandskloof was considered a brown spot which had to be obliterated.[342] While it is possible to conclude, as in the words of Ds Botha, that the removal of the people of Elandskloof "... was 'n miscarriage of justice soos hulle in Engels se.", it is important that these events not be removed from the historical context of a national process of proletarianisation.[343]

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[342] Surplus Peoples Project and Legal Resource Centre: Introduction to draft copy of Submission to Advisory Commission on Land Allocations, (1992), p 5.

[343] WCCC: interview, ds Botha, (1990).

CONCLUSION

> "An abandoned village at the foot of a deserted pass. Soon there will be nothing left of either, for history has passed by Elandskloof."
>
> (Burman, **So High The Road**,p 126)

> "Most conspicuosly, they [the Elandsklowers] are a people who have aquired and articulate a history."
>
> (Theron, "Farm Labour in the Citrusdal Valley", p 16)

Of the original Elandskloof community who have remained in the area, "squatting" on the farm of Allendale, many now work as permanent wage-labourers on the surrounding farms, some work in the canning factories of Citrusdal and a few are migrant workers further afield. Their land and economic product has been appropriated and in this regard the distinction between them and the other workers in the Citrusdal valley has collapsed. A glaring contrast nonetheless remains. This contrast is possibly best symbolised in the difference between the imaginatively designed, built and decorated homes of the Elandsklowers, furnished with a plethora of objects that signify value, and the average house of the rest of the farm-labouring population of Citrudsal, spaces decoid of value.[344] The distinction of the Elandsklowers from the rest of the farm-working community is to be found in the process of "community" destruction and formation - a process rooted in the historical act of removal and shaped by the particular history of the people of Elandskloof - and consequent historical consciousness.

The above quotes render explicit the fact that it is not only the land of Elandskloof that is under contention, but also the "history". The historical amnesia of the Citrusdal farm-workers, whose "antecedents hace left no traces; [whose] homes are modern

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[344] J Theron, "Farm Workers in the Citrusdal Valley", SALDRU Farm Labour Conference, Paper No. 2, (1976), p 4-5.

constructions, bleached shells cast up against the foothills", is not only a product of rural proletarianisation, but an accomplice to this process, rendering these people dependent within the semi-feudal labour relations of the area, politically impotent.[345] Burman, if unwittingly, is participating in the attempt by those in power, to render void the "history" of Elandskloof, and timeless the deeply historical act of removal.[346] As a means of self-defence and reconstruction, in resistance to the dispossession of their land and its historical association, the Elandsklowers remaining in the area have formed a strong community, a cornerstone of which is their articulation of a deep historical nostalgia.

The original dispossession of the labouring population of the Citrusdal valley occurred against a backdrop of colonial appropriation of land, labour and livestock. It was in the wake of this process that the original inhabitants of Elandskloof moved onto the mission station. The more modern redispossession of the people of Elandskloof must be seen against the background of the large-scale processess of capital accumulation and class formation, in this region specifically the capitalisation of agriculture, which followed the industrial revolution in the Southern African region as a whole.[347] The process of capital accumulation, on the one hand, and large-scale dispossession on the other, does not lead in a straight path to proletarianisation, but is shaped by a multitude of local, historical, economic and ideological factors and, Bozzoli concludes, "it is within the resulting maelstrom of human suffering that "communities" are born, survive and die in ways peculiar to the past, the beliefs and habits, the experiences and

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[345] Theron, "Farm Labour", p 5.

[346] It is interesting that the preface to Burman's **So High The Road** was written by C.R Swart, Governor General of the Cape at the time of publication, shortly after the time of the Elandskloof removal, (C.T,1963).

[347] Bozzoli, **Class, Community and Conflict** (JHB,1987), p 14.

struggles, of the people themselves."[348]

The particularities of the Clanwilliam landscape influenced the pattern of human development in this region. The distance of this district from the colonial centre and the nature of its environment enabled the landscape to resist, for some time, the imposition of colonial hegemony. The practise of transhumance, an ancient rhythmn of the environment in the area, continued in the district until well into the 19th century. The presence of the Cedarberg mountains formed a partial barrier against the appropriation of land and labour by the advancing settler colonists. A number of retreating Khoisan and runaway slaves and "bastaard Hottentots" were able to take refuge in these fortress-like mountains and set up a marginal existence largely independent of the colonial economy and society. Such an existence was often precarious and an expression of this human encounter with an unyeilding enviroment is found in the renaming of these mountains, by droster gangs, from Cedarberg to Zuurbergen.

Dispossessioin of land, labour and livestock, and the appropriation thereby of the economic and social product of the colonised population, was thus not a uniform process within the Clanwilliam district. The majority of the colonised population had been dispossessed of their land by the early 1800s and by the mid 1840s, with the implementation of the first Masters and Servants Act, had become permanent farm labourers, rendered immobile by their dependence on white farmers for a living place and provisions. This pattern of semi-feudal labour relations prevented the process of community formation and was accompanied by a disintegration of historical consciousness.

Some members of the Clanwilliam underclasses were able to move onto the Rhenish mission properties of Ebenezer and Wupperthal, founded in the late 1820s, others managed to eke out a marginal

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[348] ibid, p 14.

economic independence in the interstices of white property and deep mountain kloofs. Due to the landscape and particular history of this region, the Clanwilliam district was particularly prone to "squatting". As a subversive element within the colonial order "squatters" were castigated as bandits and vagrants. Unlike the majority of the Western Cape, it was not until the 1860s, as a consequence of the effects of the enclosure movement, with its increasingly commercialized property relations and racially-defined work-force, drought and depression, that these people lost their independent access to land. It was partly in response to this large movement of people off the land that the DRC established a mission station in the Cedarberg valley of Elandskloof, in 1862.

By the last quarter of the 19th century mission stations formed virtually the only remaining access to land for members of the Clanwilliam underclasses. Mission inhabitant of Elandskloof, due to crowding, were dependent on casual labour to supplement their incomes, but the continued growth of the station over the years revealed the preference of many for this position as part-time proletariat as opposed to permanent farm-labourer. This choice was not without its own costs, however. Conversion and aquiesence to mission regulations involved a certain loss of independence and destruction of culture.

It is important that religion be allowed to appear within a history of the relations of dominance, resistance and recovery that have made being human in this world meaningful.[349] Notions of Christianity and conversion were hotly debated amongst the various religous denominations operating within the missionary field and, in turn, between them and the state. These debates occurred within the political relations of domination and resistance and were wrapped up in issues concerning the status of white settlers and the subject groups of the colony. Until the status of the labouring population had been secured, many

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[349] D Chidester, **Religions of South Africa** (Routlege, 1992), p xi.

rural Dutch speakers, not themselves culturally committed to ideas of "work discipline", saw Khoisan/"bastaard" access to Christianity as more threatening, than helpful.[350] The missionary endeavour of the DRC was, consequently, slow in starting and its mission ideology was closely informed by the political struggle over land and labour, its opposition to the liberal, "civilising" ideologies of the foreign missionary societies, notably the LMS, and an increasing belief in the saliency of segregation as a political and theological principle.

Within the specific mission Christianity of the DRC converts were not merely faceless victims, but able ,if "rule bound", to use religion creatively in the process of resistance and recovery. The emphasis of the DRC on segregation, rather than the reformation of the individual in the pursuit of "civilization", allowed for a certain cultural "space" which was not appropriated by hegemonic European culture. Christianity played a strong role in the Elandsklowers consciousness and ideology of resistance. Even today community meetings of the Elandskloof community squatting on the Allendale farm are begun and concluded with prayer. This religion has also played a strong part in the Elandsklowers conviction of the morality of their struggle and right to the land they once inhabited, and in their critique of the DRC and its support of Apartheid.

Bozzoli asserts that a particular group of people with similar societal and cultural experiences will tend to adhere to an identifiable set of motifs of thought and action. Such popular motifs tend to come to the fore in times of resistance.[351] Despite the particularities of the experience of dispossession by the Elandsklowers, a number of such popular motifs are discernable in the way in which this "community" has

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[350] E Elbourne, "Early Khiosan Uses of Mission Christianity", paper presented at conference "People, Power and Culture", Univ. of the Western Cape, (1992), p 21.

[351] Bozzoli, **Class, Community and Conflict**, p 12.

conceptualised the trauma of their removal. The Elandsklowers tend to attribute the large social forces of dispossession and impoverishment to the betrayal of them by the DRC in selling the land granted to the people of Elandskloof by Queen Victoria, and to the "evil" destruction of Smit. In this it is possible to identify the common tendency towards the individualisation of historical explanation.[352] A further popular motif visible in the inherent ideology of the Elandsklowers is the strong sense of "justice" and "injustice" with which they interpret the past. In a delegation to the DRC which took place in 1990, the Elandsklowers asked the church to "correct what you have wronged."[353] In an interesting use of imagery Daniel Dirks depicts the perceived injustice of the day of their departure from Elandskloof by referring back to a past and more brutal social and economic "dispossession" that still forms part of the consciousness of many Elandsklowers: "The Boere-vereeniging came with lorries to buy us, as if we were slaves. They even said that they did not want old people, they wanted young people especially."[354]

The nature and agency of the dispossession itself neccessarily affects the emerging consciousness of the group.[355] The absence of political power of the "coloured" Elandsklowers brings home the particular character of proletarianisation in a semi-colonial situation. The removal of the people of Elandskloof witnessed the destruction of their "mission" community, the resultant proletarianisation was partial in that the penetration of capitalist relations amongst farm labour in the area remains incomplete, and the role of the state in the removal, through its henchmen, the DRC and local white farmers, was overt. These

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[352] ibid, p 12.

[353] Surplus Peoples Project and Legal Resource Centre: introduction to draft of Submission to Advisory Commission on Land Allocations, (1992), p 10.

[354] SPP and LRC: introduction, p 9.

[355] Bozzoli, **Class, Community and Conflict**, p 18.

factors have all influenced the consciousness of the surviving Elandskloof "community".

The destruction of the mission community of Elandskloof has led the surviving "community" to seek meaning in their past through the development of an inherent consciousness which contains a strong nostalgic sense of an idyllic past that is contrasted to a stark present of death and suffering. This nostalgia is implicit in the statement that the elder members of the community "talk about Elandskloof almost everyday."[356] In an interesting deployment of Christian imagery, the people of Elandskloof have invested the story of their removal with characteristics of the Exodus. Fleeing from the destruction, fire and poison, of Smit the people of Elandskloof entered a "desert" of suffering and death, "People got sick, older people died from sheer heartache..".[357] This suffering of the present is juxtaposed to a "Golden Age" of the past and sense of "promised land" in the hope of a return to Elandskloof: "I could have built a wonderful future for my children, had we stayed at Elandskloof. Today I cannot even plant a tree, this house is not even my own." and "We must get back to Elandskloof for the sake of our children, I don't want to live in this shack when I die. I want to leave them a proper house and some land the way my parents did."[358]

The inherent tradition of nostalgia among the community alongside the overt role of the state in the removal and the incomplete proletarianisation, lends itself to co-option by nationalist rhetoric, rather than socialist or class-based forms of ideology.[359] The Elandsklowers have not aligned themselves with the other farm-workers in the valley, but actually appeal,

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[356] SPP and LRC: introduction, p 13.

[357] SPP and LRC: Willem Titus cited in introduction, p 9.

[358] SPP and LRC: Jacobus Visagie cited in introduction, p 9; Aletta Titus cited in introduction, p 12.

[359] Bozzoli, **Class, Community and Conflict**, p 19.

in the creation of their "community" identity, to a status distinction which serves to divide these two groups of rural farm workers. Their perception of their struggle is in nationalist terms, and they consider themselves to be ANC supporters.[360]

The modern "community" of Elandskloof, though frequently expressed as a timeless entity, was formed, in an act of self-defence against the forces of the state, church and white farmers of the district at the time of removal.[361] The community is materially grounded in their ability to generate an internal income, through farm and other forms of labour, and thus be economically viable. The community is also spatially bounded, living in close proximity to each other on the Allendale farm. The thirty years of post-removal establishment has given the Elandsklowers the time to develop a set of traditions through which they have established their identity. Mercia Titus, who was born after the removal from Elandskloof, is thus able to say "I also regard myself as an Elandsklower."[362]

Burman's comment that history has passed by Elandskloof must be seen as politically motivated. Such writings serve to abstract the people away from the landscape under contention and from the history that is being made, with the intention of reinstating them as a labour pool. The "historical consiousness" to which Theron refers is also, however, not entirely unproblematic. Since the removal the important oral histories which gave meaning to life on Elandskloof are rapidly dying away. This is in part due to the fragmentation of the old "community" and the need to cultivate new social and cultural responses to cope with the daily existence of the enviroment. Part of this process has

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[360] personal communication, (1992).

[361] Personal communication: Elandsklowers, and many of the people supporting their land claim, use this timeless notion of "community" in their representation of themselves.

[362] SPP and LRC: introduction, p 13.

entailed the formation of a new "community" integral to which is a tradition of historical nostalgia, rather than "historical consciousness". Through dispossession and removal the historical consciousness and culture of rural communities disintegrates. This thesis, from the sources available, has attempted to reconstruct, to a degree, the history of the people who passed through the rural community of Elandskloof, a people whose passage remains enscribed on the landscape in such names as Pastoriekloof in the Eland's Kloof valley.

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