

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN**



**THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF CONVERSION FROM  
COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE TO PRIVATE GAME FARMING**

**The case study of Cradock, a small town in the iNxuba Yethemba  
Municipality, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

**VINCENT MDUDUZI ZUNGU  
ZNGVIN001**

**Supervisor: Professor Lungisile Ntsebeza**

**Thesis presented for the fulfilment of the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
in the Department of Sociology**

**March 2017**

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

## DECLARATION

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

Student' Name: Vincent Mduduzi Zungu

Student Number: ZNGVIN001

Signature: 

Signed by candidate
---------------------

## ABSTRACT

This thesis sets out to investigate the socio-economic consequences or implications on the township people in Cradock (a town located in iNxuba Yethemba Municipality, Eastern Cape Province of South Africa) of the recent conversions from commercial agriculture to private game farming (PGF). The study draws primarily on research conducted in the town, the history of which is rooted in the development and expansion of commercial agriculture that took place in the early 1800s. It is specifically concerned with the effects of the conversion of agricultural land to game farming on the socio-economic conditions of black African<sup>1</sup> and coloured<sup>2</sup> township people, who have directly or indirectly depended on commercial agricultural production for many decades past. These people have, over the last 200 years, benefited from commercial agriculture through *employment, material resource supplies* and *off-farm activities*. These three kinds of socio-economic mechanisms played a crucial role in sustaining the socio-economic conditions of the Eastern Cape's semi-arid towns, such as Cradock, in particular, of those citizens who reside in the townships. By using the de-agrarianisation thesis as a theoretical framework, the study argues that the agrarian change in the form of conversion towards private game farming industry is a form of the de-agrarianisation process, not the proliferation of off-farm activities or off-farm employment, as postulated by Bryceson and Jamal (1997).

The study addresses the current debate about the implications of agrarian change emerging in the semi-arid area of the Eastern Cape and in South Africa. At an empirical level, the study seeks to test the proponents of private game farming who argue that game farming in formerly agrarian areas generates national revenue and provides multiple socio-economic benefits to the poor and marginalised people. Part of the context in which the discussion in this study takes place is the role that the development of agricultural land aims to play in improving the socio-economic status or livelihoods of marginalised rural people. Rural people still need to be

---

<sup>1</sup> Black African refers to the South African major ethnic groups which include the Zulu, Xhosa, Basotho (South Sotho), Bapedi (North Sotho), Venda, Tswana, Tsonga, Swazi and Ndebele, all of whose people speak their own indigenous languages.

<sup>2</sup> Coloured people come from a combination of ethnic backgrounds including black, white, Khoi, San, Griqua, Chinese and Malay.

incorporated into the mainstream economic development promised as part of the 'developmental agenda' of the 'new South Africa' (Nel & Hill, 2008).

The study uses the economic history of agrarian economy in the Karoo and its production in relation to black Africans as an approach to analyse the effects of conversion. It critically examines the dynamics related to the contribution of private game farming in Cradock, an area historically known as an agricultural stronghold. The study thus argues that the recent introduction of private game farming in the formerly agrarian areas has established an elitist economy that is virtually inaccessible to the people of the area, especially the poor and previously marginalised people residing in the townships of Cradock.

The study uses qualitative research design and various qualitative data collection methods such as interviews, household interviews, focus group interviews and qualitative observation, to unpack the socio-economic implications of conversions from the perspective of the township residents. The findings of the study indicate that while the introduction of private game farming industry in Cradock has generated employment for some township people, the industry has negatively affected the socio-economic livelihoods of these people. Although they receive a wage higher than what they received in the former commercial agriculture, the study reveals that their livelihoods are severely and negatively affected by the conversion, as they now have restrained access to the material resource supplies they used to access when the land was used for commercial agriculture. This, in turn, has resulted into the decline of off-farm activities such as butcheries, informal trades, and the trade in and selling of agricultural implements that were an integral part of the former agrarian economy of the town.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Initially, it is crucial to mention that the study benefited immensely from the people of Cradock, especially those residing in Lingelihle and Michuasdol townships. They were willing to participate in the research in order to share their experiences and knowledge related to the socio-economic implications of the conversion from commercial land to private game farming in Cradock. In addition, the people from the town, including the owner (Ricky) of the Albert B&B and the owners of Victoria Hotel in Cradock (Michael and Sandra Anthrobus) have also provided valuable information to the study. To all of them, as well as to those I have not mentioned, I extend my sincere gratitude.

During the tenure of my study I was very fortunate to be part of the weekly seminars of the Land Reform and Democracy in South Africa, National Research Foundation (NRF) Research Chair in the University of Cape Town's Sociology Department since 2009 (this was later relocated to the University's Centre for African Studies. My involvement in these research seminars ignited my confidence in my abilities as a researcher. The forum was instrumental in shaping the conceptual aspect of my study. The Research Chair under the leadership of Prof. Lungisile Ntsebeza has certainly made a huge contribution to the development of young black intellectuals or scholars in South Africa. I thank the Chair for offering me financial aid for 2009' year of my Ph.D study. I also thank the Ford Foundation International Scholarship for funding my Ph.D. for the period of three years.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to Prof. Lungisile Ntsebeza for his unreservedly willingness to supervise my Ph.D. research. I was so much touched when he spent almost two days with me in the field to provide guidance and supports during data collection. For all the help he has offered me, including his contribution in terms of shaping my style of writing, I express my deepest thanks.

Of all the members of the research forum, I would specifically like to express my gratitude to the following persons:

Dr Femke Brandt, whose assistance in reviewing my chapters and encouraging me during a difficult time, is highly appreciated with profound gratitude.

Ms Moonde Kabinga, whose encouragement and practical assistance in terms of formatting my thesis for final submission is highly acknowledged with deepest thanks.

Clemence Rusenga, whose moral support and selfless sharing of knowledge and information during the term of my Ph.D. is highly appreciated.

In 7 September 2006, Prof. Shirley Brooks, my supervisor for my Master's degree in Geography and Environmental Sciences, invited me to the research forum. The forum was hosted by Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA) and chaired by Prof. Alan Brimer who was representing the South African Netherlands Partnership on Alternative Development (SANPAD). It was in this forum that Prof. Shirley Brooks persuaded me to pursue Ph.D. research on the effect of game farming in any rural locality of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). I thus extend my gratitude to Prof. Shirley Brooks for her continued moral support. I would also like to thank Prof. Alan Brimer for his selfless efforts in editing this thesis.

My profound expression of gratitude goes to my wife, Mabatho Zungu, for her relentless support in times of difficulties during the journey of this Ph.D. She is the reason why I managed to survive the many challenges I faced during course of my Ph.D. study.

In addition, I also extend my thanks to my two sons, Keagilwe Zungu and Rebaona Zungu, for their continued supports through words of comfort and prayers.

I always feel honoured to have as my mother, Ms Nomusa Zungu, who has always believed in me during the difficult times of my life. The support she gave me from the day I was born to the present will always be in my memory, and for that, I express my sincere gratitude for her continued motherly support during the tenure of my PhD.

I also thank Dr Nompumelelo Zungu for her encouragement and support of me to continue to maintain a high degree of dedication and focus during my Ph.D. experience.

Last, but not least, I would like to extend my deepest thanks to Mr Julius Iren and Dr Bridget Irene for their immense motivation and prayers they offered to ensure I complete my Ph.D.

## **DEDICATION**

For the strength, I gained and the supports I received to pursue this work, I dedicate this thesis to the Almighty God, the Creator of all the seen and unseen things in the universe.

## **ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS**

AFRA	Association for Rural Advancement
ANC	African National Congress
CAE	Certificate of Adequate Enclosure
CAO	Cradock Advisory Office
ECSECC	Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IYM	iNxuba Yethemba Municipality
NGO(s)	Non-Governmental Organisation(s)
NWO – WOTRO	Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research –Science for Global Development
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SANPAD	South Africa Netherlands Research Programme on Alternatives in Development

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION .....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>DEDICATION .....</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS &amp; ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b>VII</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>VIII</b>
<b>LIST OF MAPS .....</b>	<b>XI</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>XI</b>
<b>LIST OF GRAPHS.....</b>	<b>XI</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY .....	1
1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION.....	5
1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	7
1.4 THEORETICAL DEBATES ON AGRARIAN CHANGE .....	9
1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....	11
1.5.1 Choice of case study area .....	13
1.5.2 Access to the study area .....	14
1.5.3 Fieldwork and sampling strategy .....	15
1.5.4 Data collection: the fieldwork experience.....	17
1.5.4.1 Interviews.....	17
1.5.4.2 Focus group interviews and the community mapping technique.....	19
1.5.4.3 Observation as a qualitative method.....	21
1.5.4.4 Archives .....	22
1.5.4.5 Secondary sources —the review and analysis of documents.....	22
1.5.5 Data analysis .....	22
1.6 ETHICS.....	24
Permission or access .....	24
Anonymity .....	24
1.7 THESIS STRUCTURE AND CHAPTER OUTLINE .....	25
PART ONE: HISTORICAL CONTEXT .....	25
PART TWO: CASE STUDY CHAPTERS .....	26
<b>CHAPTER TWO.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>THE AGRARIAN ECONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF SEMI-ARID SMALL TOWNS: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>29</b>
2.1 INTRODUCTION .....	29
2.2 THE ORIGINS OF AGRARIAN PRODUCTION IN THE KAROO AND THE FORMATION OF SMALL TOWNS .....	30
2.3 LINKAGE(S) BETWEEN FARMS AND SMALL TOWNS THROUGH OFF-FARM ACTIVITIES. ....	35
2.3.1 Off-farm employment opportunities in the semi-arid towns: the 1830s to the 1880s .....	39
2.3.2 The semi-arid agrarian economy: changing off-farm activities from the 1880s to the 1940s .....	42
2.3.3 Material resource supplies as a conduit of farms in the Karoo towns: from the 1920s to the 1940s..	46
2.4 MECHANIZATION AND LABOUR DYNAMICS IN THE KAROO: FROM 1950S TO 1980S .....	50
2.5 CONCLUSION .....	53

<b>CHAPTER THREE.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>THE CHANGING NATURE OF WILDLIFE ENCLOSURE AND ITS EFFECTS ON AFRICANS IN THE KAROO.....</b>	<b>55</b>
3.1 INTRODUCTION .....	55
3.2 AFRICANS’ ACCESS TO WILDLIFE AS A SOURCE OF LIVELIHOODS: THE PERIOD PRIOR TO 1886 .....	57
3.3 WILDLIFE ENCLOSURE AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE KAROO.....	60
3.3.1 The formalisation of game enclosure in the Cape Colony: 1883 to 1910 .....	62
3.3.2 Wildlife enclosure and commercialisation, 1910 to the 1950s: the effects on black Africans .....	67
3.3.3 The conversion of farmlands into wildlife enclosures: the 1950s to the 1970s.....	71
3.3.4 A Shift from farms to wildlife production and Karoo small towns: from the 1970s to the 1990s ....	72
3.4 CONCLUSION .....	76
<b>CHAPTER FOUR .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>CRADOCK AND AGRARIAN ECONOMY: TRACING THE AGRARIAN CHANGE IN CRADOCK FROM 1814 TO THE 1940S.....</b>	<b>78</b>
4.1 INTRODUCTION .....	78
4.2 THE AGRARIAN ECONOMY AND THE ORIGINS OF CRADOCK AS AN AGRARIAN TOWN .....	79
4.2.1 The effect of the agrarian economy on Cradock: the 1860s to the 1880s .....	84
4.2.2 Agrarian economic spin-off(s) in Cradock: from the 1860s to 1929.....	87
4.2.3 The effects of the Depression on agriculture in the Cradock district from 1929 to the 1940s .....	93
4.2.4 The farmers’ response to the Depression .....	96
4.3 CONCLUSION .....	105
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF AFRICANS IN CRADOCK: THE PRE-CONVERSION ERA.....</b>	<b>106</b>
5.1 INTRODUCTION .....	106
5.2 THE STATE OF THE AGRARIAN ECONOMY PRIOR TO CONVERSION: FROM THE 1940S TO THE 1990S.....	107
5.3 UNPACKING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MATERIAL RESOURCES FROM THE FARMS .....	109
5.3.1 Farm workers as a conduit of material supplies from the Cradock farms .....	120
5.4 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF OFF-FARM ACTIVITIES AND OFF-FARM EMPLOYMENT .....	127
5.5 CONCLUSION .....	137
<b>CHAPTER SIX.....</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF PRIVATE GAME FARMING IN CRADOCK: THE POST-CONVERSION ERA .....</b>	<b>139</b>
6.1 INTRODUCTION .....	139
6.2 THE CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING UP TO THE CONVERSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE CONVERSIONS IN TERMS OF THE SUPPLY OF MATERIAL RESOURCES .....	140
6.4 THE EFFECTS OF GAME FARMING ON OFF-FARM ACTIVITIES AND THE ASSOCIATED EMPLOYMENT.....	147
6.5 SCRUTINISING THE BENEFITS OF GAME FARMING AND THE ATTENDANT EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS .....	153
6.6 CONCLUSION .....	157
<b>CHAPTER SEVEN .....</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>INVISIBLE CAPITAL ACCUMULATION: ‘TOURISM VENTURE INSIDE THE FENCE’ .....</b>	<b>160</b>
7.1 INTRODUCTION .....	160
7.2 THE STATE OF THE GAME FARMING INDUSTRY IN CRADOCK.....	161
7.2.1 Implications for private game farming: game farming as an ‘invisible capital’ .....	163
7.3 CONCLUSION .....	174

<b>CHAPTER EIGHT.....</b>	<b>176</b>
<b>FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>176</b>
8.1 KEY FINDINGS .....	180
8.2 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS .....	187
Chapter One .....	187
Chapter Two.....	187
Chapter Three.....	189
Chapter Four .....	189
Chapter Five.....	190
Chapter Six.....	191
Chapter Seven .....	191
8.3 THE CONTRIBUTION AND LIMITATION(S) OF THE STUDY AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH .....	192
8.4 CHALLENGES .....	193
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>194</b>
<b>ARCHIVAL SOURCES.....</b>	<b>209</b>
<b>APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>211</b>
APPENDIX A: THE RESPONDENTS FOR THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW AND FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWS .....	211
APPENDIX B: MATTHEW LESTER: ‘AGRIC LAND SWITCHED TO GAME FARMING COMING BACK TO BITE SA’ .	212

## LIST OF MAPS

MAP 1: MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA.....	2
MAP 2: MAP SHOWING THE SELECTED AREA OF THE STUDY IN CRADOCK .....	12
MAP 3: MAP OF THE EARLY CAPE COLONY SHOWING TIME POINTS DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY WHEN SETTLERS REACHED DIFFERENT REGIONS OF THE INTERIOR .....	31
MAP 4: THE MAP SHOWING THE OLD LOCATION AND MAIN STREETS OF CRADOCK IN 1924.....	91
MAP 5: OFF-FARM ACTIVITIES AND INFORMAL TRADERS ASSOCIATED WITH COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE. ....	134
MAP 6: MAP SHOWING OLD AND RECENTLY ESTABLISHED GAME FARMS PAYING RATES IN CRADOCK .....	161

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: CHANGING NUMBER OF BUSINESSES IN THE TOWNS OF THE EASTERN KAROO .....	45
TABLE 2: SHEEP YIELD PER KILOGRAMME.....	94
TABLE 3: THE CATEGORY AND NUMBER OF BLACK AFRICANS IN EMPLOYMENT IN CRADOCK IN 1934 .....	103
TABLE 4: THE CATEGORY AND A NUMBER OF COLOURED IN EMPLOYMENT IN CRADOCK IN 1934.....	103
TABLE 5: MATERIAL SUPPLIES FROM THE FARMS TO THE TOWNSHIPS .....	112
TABLE 6: WHO WOULD YOU TURN TO FOR HELP? .....	125
TABLE 7: A GENERAL PROFILE OF THE OFF-FARM COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN CRADOCK.....	131
TABLE 8: NUMBER OF SPRINGBOKS CROPPED FOR MEAT PRODUCTION IN GRAAFF-REINET AND CRADOCK DISTRICTS .....	145
TABLE 9: THE RECORDS OF RATE PAYMENT BY PRIVATE GAME FARMS IN CRADOCK .....	163

## LIST OF PHOTOS

PHOTO 1: THE ALICEDALE STATION LINKING THE KAROO REGION TO PORT ELIZABETH VIA GRAHAMSTOWN IN 1895. ....	43
PHOTO 2: THE DISTANCE PICTURE OF ALICEDALE STATION WITH ALL SURROUNDING LAND USES IN 1895 .....	44
PHOTO 3: CRADOCK STATION AS IT LOOKED SOON AFTER ITS OPENING IN JUNE 1881 .....	88
PHOTO 4: THE TRACTOR SHOP (PICTURE ONE) AND THE AGRI-IMPLEMENT SHOP (PICTURE TWO) IN CRADOCK	130
PHOTO 5: UNEMPLOYED YOUTHS IN THE TOWN CENTRE .....	149
PHOTO 6: ARTS AND CRAFTS INFORMAL TRADERS IN LINGELIHLE TOWNSHIP, CRADOCK. ....	171
PHOTO 7: TRADITIONAL SKIN PRODUCTS THAT USED TO BE MADE AND SOLD BY THE TOWNSHIP PEOPLE.....	173

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: A PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION OF FARM X BEFORE IT WAS CONVERTED TO .....	150
FIGURE 2: A PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION OF FARM X AFTER IT WAS CONVERTED TO GAME FARMING.....	151

## LIST OF GRAPHS

GRAPH 1: LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION IN CRADOCK.....	110
GRAPH 2: QUANTITIES OF SHEEP PRODUCTION IN CRADOCK FROM 2008 TO 2011.....	111
GRAPH 3: HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS WHO USE LIVESTOCK FROM THE FARMS FOR CULTURAL RITUALS .....	118
GRAPH 4: THE CHANGING NUMBER OF OFF-FARM BUSINESSES IN CRADOCK .....	129
GRAPH 5: CHANGES IN AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT IN CRADOCK FROM 1980 TO 1994.....	148

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1.1 Background to the study

This chapter introduces the study and its overarching research concerns or problems. It provides a detailed background to the study and describes the motivation for the selection of the study area and methodology adopted. The research question(s) and objective(s) of the study are stated and discussed. The chapter also introduces the theoretical debates which inform the interpretation of the data derived from the fieldwork.

Over the past 30 years the South African countryside has experienced the reconfiguration of spatial and socio-economic relations due to the transformation of what was traditionally commercial agricultural land into private wildlife production (Carruthers, 2008b; Homewood et al., 2009:1–2). This thesis investigates the socio-economic consequences of such conversion with specific reference to Cradock; a small Karoo town located in the iNxuba Yethemba Municipality (NYM), Eastern Cape Central Karoo (ECCK) (see Map 1: p. 2). The study draws primarily on research conducted in the town, the history of which is rooted in the development and expansion of commercial agriculture, which took place in the early 1800s. It is concerned specifically with the effects of the conversion of agricultural land to game farming on the socio-economic conditions of black African<sup>3</sup> and coloured township dwellers, who have directly or indirectly depended on commercial agricultural production in the past.

The study draws attention to three kinds of impacts, namely impacts on employment (both informal and formal), on off-farm activities<sup>4</sup> and on a range of material supplies or farm resources<sup>5</sup> which served for many years as the main source of the livelihoods of the people living in the townships (see Chapters Five and Six).

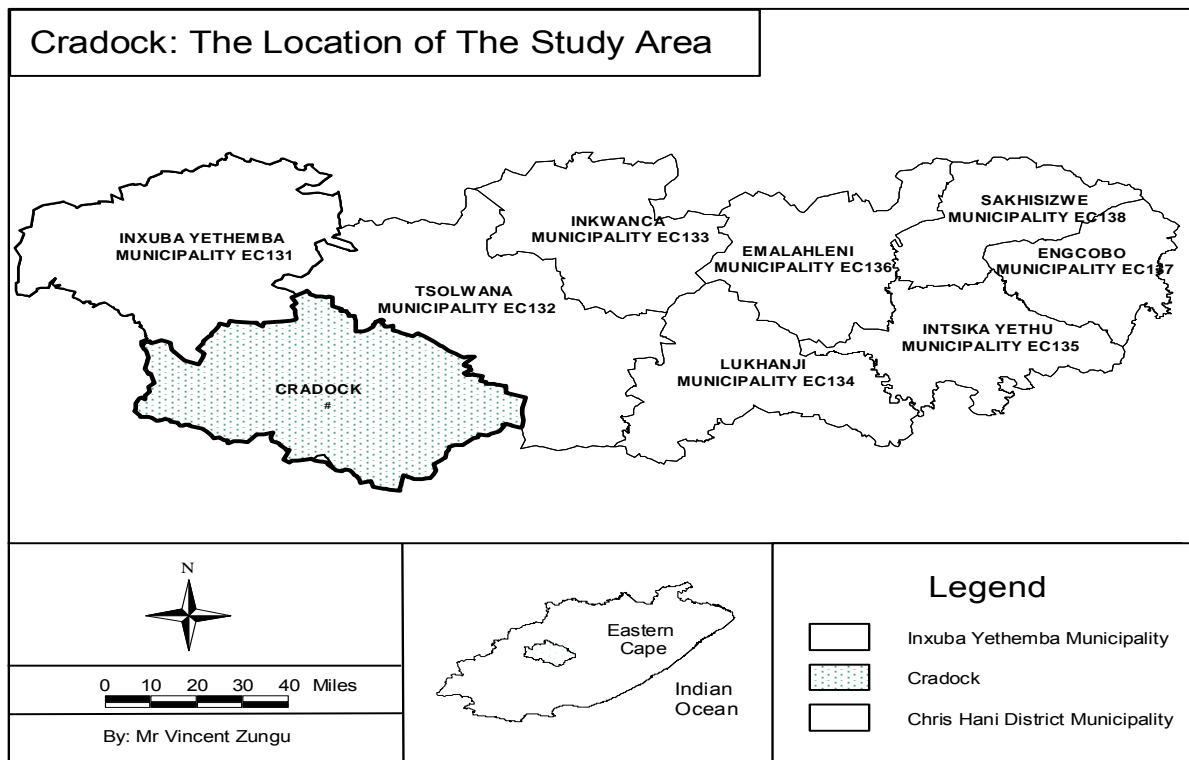
---

<sup>3</sup> Please note that in the context of this study, black Africans refers to all blacks from different ethnic or cultural background as codified in the South Africa' constitution.

<sup>4</sup> Off-farm activities refer to both informal and formal activities that emerged in conjunction with the practice of commercial agriculture. This phenomenon has been extensively explored by Tacoli (1998a, b, c, and d), followed by Kamete (1998) in one of the small towns in Zimbabwe. It refers to all local business activities that are directly or indirectly linked to commercial farms in a specific locality

<sup>5</sup> Material resources and supplies is the phrase used by Kamete (1998) to refer to those agrarian resources that were or are, from time to time, given by farm owners to their farm workers or local people to supplement their small wages. Atkinson (2008) argues that in the Karoo this practice was and is part of a broader paternalistic arrangement between farm owners and their employees.

**Map 1: Map showing the location of the study area**



*(Source: SA-Municipal Demarcation Board, 2013)*

Historically, it was through benefitting from these three socio-economic categories that people living in townships in semi-arid small towns were able to sustain their livelihoods (Tetelman, 1997:21-22, Mkhize, 2012:79; also, refer to Chapters Two and Chapter Four). The thesis explores the consequences of such farm conversions<sup>6</sup> on the township people in a semi-arid Karoo town within the context of the historical role of commercial agriculture as a sector that contributed to the socio-economic well-being of such towns. While the study does not underestimate the exploitative nature of white capitalist agriculture in relation to the black African and coloured people of the region (Helliker, 2013:1), it argues that the recent introduction of private game farming in the formerly agrarian areas has established an elitist economy that is virtually inaccessible to the people of the area, in particular to the poor and previously marginalised. It is for this reason that the study concludes that commercial agriculture, which involved particular employment relationships in its production methods, was of greater benefit to the township people than is the private game farming<sup>7</sup> industry today.

<sup>6</sup> According to Castree (2010a), conversion refers to the change of land use/business activities from enterprises focusing on agricultural production to activities based on wildlife production (see Bothma, 1996:3).

<sup>7</sup> Intensive production of game in small and large fenced camps or ranches on private or communal grounds,

Debates related to the socio-economic dimension of large-scale conversions to game farming have recently resurfaced within the academic world (Luck, 2005; Mkhize, 2012; Rossouw & Cloete, 2014; Brandt, 2013 and 2014; Spierenburg & Brooks, 2014). Luck (2005) sheds light on the nature and implications of the conversion of farms to private game farming (2005:86–87).<sup>8</sup> According to her analysis, conversion is motivated largely by ecotourism and the move towards environmental sustainability as a global agenda, coupled with the phenomenon of deregulation and the liberalisation of agriculture since the 1980s. Luck (2005) identifies and assesses a range of effects of such conversion on farm dwellers, with specific reference to land tenure security. She argues that these conversions have had significant negative effects in terms of land access and security by farm workers and farm dwellers (Luck, 2005:4). While this thesis concurs with Luck (2005) on the point that such conversions have had significant negative effects on farm workers, it moves beyond that rather trite point to argue that the conversions have also had significant, albeit largely unnoticed, negative effects on the socio-economic lives of the generality of the poor living in small Karoo towns. Reporting on the economic impacts of the game farming industry on behalf of the *News-Biz* online business news website, Mathew Lester (2014) says that:

The effect of private game farming industry in areas of RSA is dramatic. For example, the annual mohair clip of the Eastern Cape has declined to below 2 million kilograms per annum, down from 12 million kilograms 20 years ago. And many of those employed in the industry and living in rural areas are now unemployed in the townships waiting for a state-provided home. The increase in poverty in rural towns is tangible. Those over 18 years old displaced by game farming have to wait for an old age grant. No wonder there is pressure on government to implement a basic income grant, at the expense of the taxpayer (see Appendix B).

However, the above view has been challenged by those who support the conversions (see Van der Merwe, Saayman & Krugell., 2004). For instance, some pro-game farm scholars paint a picture of a decline in the number of livestock, particularly on private land, from at least 1.8 million in the 1970s to 0.91 million in 2001 (ABSA, 2003). Van der Merwe, Saayman and Rossouw (2014) have argued that the numbers of huntable or commercialised wildlife areas have sharply increased since the early 1990s and in 2014 they estimated that there were more than 9000 game farms in former potential agricultural areas. Private wildlife enterprises are ‘proliferating in most parts of Southern Africa such that countries like Botswana, Namibia and

---

usually for the production of market products such as meat, skins, etc. (see Bothma, 1996:3).

Zimbabwe are said to have hunting operations on private land that have sizable foreign investment in wildlife' (Barnes & Jones, 2009; Musengezi, Child & Racevskis., 2010; Chomba et al., 2014; Cloete, Van der Merwe & Saayman., 2015; Cousins et al., 2010; Jones, Hulme & Murphee, 2001a; Kamuti, 2014 and 2016; Van der Merwe, Saayman & Roussouw., 2014). In view of these trends, Barnes and Jones conclude that

'game farming on private land serves as a supplementary enterprise alongside livestock, and as such it is the source of income for re-investment in wildlife, which then makes it possible to expand the wildlife industry and then to invest in viable non-consumptive tourism on private land'.

While Barnes and Jones's analysis presented empirical evidence in terms of the growth of game farms against the traditional livestock oriented farming, there is no mention of the impacts of these land use trends on those living in the townships of small towns.

However, Mkhize (2012), Luck (2005), Brandt (2013) and Ngubane and Brooks (2013) challenge this pro-game farming view by asserting that the conversion of land to game farming has not taken place without serious repercussions on farm workers and farm dwellers. Both Brandt (2013) and Mkhize (2012), in their studies of the situation in Cradock, agree that conversion has largely failed to address the issue of access to land, let alone afforded livelihoods in the industry to local people, with or without the prospect of some form of upward mobility (see also Brooks, 2005; Cousins et al., 2010a).

The point to emphasise with regard to Luck (2005), Mkhize (2012) and Brandt (2013) is that their main focus is on the effect of conversion on the lives of farm workers and farm dwellers and that they pay little attention to the effects of conversion on other people who have depended (either directly or indirectly) on commercial agriculture, in particular those who reside in the townships of small Karoo towns. As will be shown in Chapter Two, the agricultural growth or expansion of the early 1800s created networks of consumption and production which generated significant income and numerous employment opportunities for residents in the small towns (Nel & Hill, 2008; Ross, 1999). Likewise, Kamete (1998:1), referring to Banket, a small town located in the north-western part of Zimbabwe, cautions that agricultural production and off-farm activities in towns must not be treated as separate matters, as the possession of an income accruing from commercial agriculture stimulates the growth of non-farm activities in the towns that service the farms, and these activities, in turn generate, employment income for the non-farming rural households.

Given the contention that the socio-economic conditions of the populations of these townships relate dynamically to commercial agricultural production, this study explores the nature of that relationship and the nature and extent of the recent changes in that relationship, while situating the study within a broader debate on the effects of the conversion of local farms from commercial agriculture to game farming on the socio-economic livelihoods of the township people.

## **1.2 Research question**

Initially, the aim of the study was to investigate the impacts on the livelihoods of rural people of conversions to private game farming with specific reference to farm workers and farm dwellers in any rural locality of either KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) or the Eastern Cape Province. The research study was broadly influenced by the collaborative research proposal which was largely funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO-WOTRO)<sup>9</sup> together with the South African Netherlands Research Programme on Alternative Development (SANPAD). Through this collaboration, the research was expected to address the role of the private wildlife industry, under the NWO theme 'Conservation and Rural Development'. The project was first introduced to the researcher in September 2006 by Prof. Shirley Brooks and the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA). The initial proposal was influenced to a large extent by the work of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as AFRA, who often painted a negative picture of the then growth of private game farms in KZN and the Eastern Cape. The study was also exposed to a plethora of economic studies and other articles of game-lobby-funded research painting a positive picture of the game farming industry in the South African countryside (see Langoholz & Kerley, 2006).

After careful consideration of the nature and economic history of Cradock and conducting the initial fieldwork for this project from 11 to 13 February 2011, it became clear that focusing on the negative effects (e.g., the evictions and retrenchments of farm workers) of conversion to game farming would preclude the development of alternative ways of conceptualising the socio-economic consequences of land-use change broadly, and game farming specifically. Therefore, the research question that was subsequently formulated (thus amending the initial research proposal) was:

---

<sup>9</sup> WOTRO is the science division within the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). It supports scientific research on development issues, in particular, poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

*In what manner, if at all and to what extent, does the conversion from commercial agriculture to private game farming contribute to the socio-economic conditions of those residing in the townships of Cradock?*

Unlike the initial research question, this question refrained from assuming that conversion to game farming had already contributed to the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the people living in the townships of Cradock, or was likely to yield benefits to them. More importantly, it also avoided taking the position that the sector had had negative effects on these people. Instead, this version of the question allowed the researcher to conduct fieldwork to find data that would depict the socio-economic conditions descriptively, in an attempt to ensure that the data were not overly tinged by any conscious preconceptions.

The following sub-questions which derived from the chief research question directed the investigation throughout the study:

1. Who is and/or is not benefiting from the conversion of commercial agricultural enterprises to private game farming in Cradock?
2. What are the socio-economic implications of the introduction of private game farms in Cradock with reference to the three relevant categories of socio-economic benefits, namely:
  - a. Off-farm activities in the town or townships;
  - b. Material resources supplied from the farms to the people residing in the townships; and
  - c. Employment opportunities (both formal and informal) arising from the establishment of these private game farms?
3. What are the views and experiences of the township people of the private game farms that have been established on what were previously agrarian lands?

To situate the lives of the people residing in the townships of Cradock in the context of the current conversion, the study first traces the history of the agrarian economy in the Eastern Cape section of the Central Karoo. This history shows how these people and the town were

connected to the agrarian economy that emerged in the early 1800s. This historical angle is central in grounding the understanding of the current socio-economic implications of conversion of agrarian land to private game farming in Cradock.

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

The contribution of the study is twofold in that it contributes at both the conceptual and the empirical levels. At a conceptual level, it seeks to address the current debate about the implications of the agrarian change emerging in the semi-arid area of the Eastern Cape in particular and more broadly in South Africa. With the decline of the commercial agricultural sector in South Africa, the debate now is whether or not the emerging private game farming sector would serve as viable economic sector for the dwindling Karoo economy. At an empirical level, the study seeks to challenge the proponents of private game farming who argue that game farming in formerly agrarian areas generates national revenue and provides multiple socio-economic benefits to the poor and marginalised people (Sims-Castley et al., 2005; Snowball & Antrobus, 2008). However, this pro-game farming narrative says little about how people in marginal areas, such as townships, are being affected by conversion towards game farming.

The economic history of agrarian economy in the Karoo and its production relations to the African people as a basis to fully understand the effects of conversion is not extensively explored. Instead, studies that had been conducted to understand the effects of conversion to private game farming have mainly focused on its effects on farm workers and farm dwellers. The people who are residing in the locations of small towns adjacent to farming areas have been ignored. Thus, questions considered to be pertinent questions in this research study include: What happened to the township people after the conversions had taken place and how are they surviving in Karoo towns' economy beset by a dwindling sheep farming economy? Unlike other studies conducted thus far on the socio-economic dimension of the game farming industry, this research locates Cradock's local economy within its regional setting precisely because the town itself 'emerged within a settler agrarian economy whose expansion and existence was premised on the opportunities and constraints presented by the inherent ecological conditions of the semi-arid areas' (Nel & Hill, 2008:1, and refer to Chapter Two). The study critically examines, not only the dynamics related to the contribution of private game farming in this area (historically known as an agricultural stronghold) and also, but also the nature of the changes that have occurred in the socio-economy of the area adjacent to the town.

In so doing, it attempts to establish whether or not benefits from private game farming do, in fact, trickle down to ameliorate the socio-economic conditions of the people residing in the Cradock townships.

Part of the context in which the discussion in this study takes place is the role that the development of agricultural land is meant to play in improving the socio-economic status or livelihoods of marginalised rural people (i.e., people who still need to be incorporated into the mainstream economic development promised as part of the ‘developmental agenda’ of the ‘new South Africa’) (Nel & Hill, 2008; Cousins et al., 2008). These marginalised people are grappling to survive in the townships under precarious socio-economic conditions. Has private game farming industry in fact contributed to the economic development of small countryside towns for the benefit of the Xhosa people and coloured residing in townships — groups which were marginalised during the apartheid era? Brooks et al. (2011) state that it is in the nature of private wildlife production, as a form of agrarian change in the contemporary South African countryside, to develop strategies to exclude the farm workers or farm dwellers who previously worked on the land (Bond, Hulme & Murphee, 2001; Brooks, 2006). Brooks et al. argue (2011:2) that ‘the creation of such wilderness landscapes requires not only physical changes to the land-use on farms, but also their discursive recreation as wilderness spaces’. These areas, they argue, are essentially manufactured or reshaped for luxurious consumption (2011:2; Castree, 2003:274). Their critique of private game farming focuses on farm workers and farm dwellers in the countryside, which is why their discussion of the negative effects of game farming on small Karoo towns and their populations could be described as being somewhat inadequate. Similarly, Mkhize (2012) and Brandt (2013) focus on the exclusion of farm workers and farm dwellers in relation to land tenure security and their social well-being without reference to what is happening to the local townfolk. Cognisant of the history of these towns and their reliance on an agrarian economy, this study argues that people in the townships of small Karoo towns, such as Cradock, are negatively affected by conversion to private game farming.

The fieldwork performed in this study shows that even if such people are employed on these private game farms at wages higher than those they were formerly paid, their livelihoods are severely negatively affected by the conversion, as they now have restrained access to the material resource supplies they used to enjoy when the land was used for commercial agriculture (livestock, sheep farming and lucerne).

#### 1.4 Theoretical debates on agrarian change

This section presents a discussion on the theory that informs the study and the debates within which the study is located. Mafeje (1981) draws attention to two philosophical traditions (i.e., ‘idiographic’ and ‘nomothetic’ enquiries) regarding the construction of ‘scientific knowledge’. In his article ‘On the articulation of modes of production’, Mafeje (1981) clarifies the distinction or relationship in terms of approaching the specific via the general or vice versa. He argues that contemporary social scientific enquiry has increasingly suffered a tendency to analyse ‘social reality’ via the general (the nomothetic). It is for this reason that the ‘voice’ of the poor and the oppressed has systematically been lost. For Mafeje, ‘to avoid being lost in abstraction’ one should approach ‘the general via the specific’ (the idiographic) (1981:134; also see Ntsebeza, 2016:8).<sup>10</sup> In attempting to understand the socio-economic implications of conversion for the poor and the oppressed, the study has, as far as possible, adopted the latter (the idiographic) approach rather than the former (the nomothetic). Thus, the analytical approach adopted in the study emphasises the context (specific) rather than the theory (general) to address the question(s) raised in the research study.

Therefore, the study used the empirical insight gained in the study area to engage the theoretical assumptions about the nature and implications of agrarian change in the Karoo of South Africa. The theorisation of the link between commercial agriculture and small Karoo towns, particularly with reference to the contribution of commercial agriculture to the economies of such small towns, clearly presents a serious conceptual dilemma to the *de-agrarianisation thesis* espoused by Bryceson since the late 1990s. The de-agrarianisation theory provides a particular view of agrarian change, that there has been a shift in the land use practices of rural people (or agrarian societies) away from agrarian livelihoods to non-agricultural activities (see Mwamfube, 1998; Chukwuezi, 1999; Manona, 1999; Bryceson, 1999). In essence, Bryceson and Jamal (1997:2) regard de-agrarianisation as ‘a specific form of spatial economic change in which agrarian communities, whether in rural areas or small agrarian towns, lose their economic capacity and social coherence and, in the process, the agrarian labour decline in size’. De-agrarianisation is ‘a long-term process whereby a specific locality moves away from the economy that is purely based on agriculture’, and according to Bryceson this process is characterised by (1) occupational adjustment (work activity), (2) income-earning reorientation,

---

<sup>10</sup> Note that Ntsebeza’s review article on Mafeje’s scholarship is published in the *Journal of Development and Change* in 2016.

(3) social identification, and (4) the spatial relocation of rural dwellers away from the strictly agrarian or peasant mode of living (Bryceson, 1999:4). Consequently, the escalation of unemployment emanating from the neo-liberal practices such as this, particularly in the agricultural sector, has left many scholars thinking about the nature of agrarian change as well as the future of rural people (Ncapayi, 2013:11). It was in this context that, as scholars strove to find explanations, the theoretical debate about the nature of de-agrarianisation in the countryside emerged.

Consideration of the specific conditions pertaining to small Karoo towns would seem to challenge the theoretical assumptions of de-agrarianisation. For example, the de-agrarianisation theory does not seem to recognize the fact that the non-agricultural activities performed in such towns were either directly or indirectly linked to agriculture. In ‘Interlocking livelihoods: farm and small town in Zimbabwe’ Kamete (1998) propounds the view that in the case of small towns located in or adjacent to farming areas, a range of off-farm activities or non-agricultural activities exists which depend on the performance of agricultural activities in the region. Toerien and Seaman (2010:1) argue accordingly as follows, in a recent article entitled ‘The enterprise ecology of towns in the Karoo’:

Most rural towns in the Cape Colony depended on farmers to generate money that they would then spend in the town and, thus, the *agricultural products and services* sector became very important. In time, some processors started adding value to local primary produce and the *processing* sector developed. Some entrepreneurs also realised that they could add value to materials from outside their regions and thus factories and the *factory* sector began to develop.

While Bryceson (1999:1) argues that the de-agrarianisation phenomenon began in the early 1960s, particularly in Africa, is due to the escalation of non-agricultural activities, the spatial relocation of rural dwellers away from their rural agrarian character, and the reorientation of their income, this study questions Bryceson’s view. It notes that the de-agrarianisation process is a recent phenomenon and argues that the construction of a commodified wilderness (under the private ownership) has contributed to what Borrás et.al. (2012) refer to as ‘green grabbing’ phenomenon. As wilderness areas increasingly becoming scarce and capitalised (see Brockington, Duffy & Igoe, 2008), various forms of tourism and nature extraction are being implemented in most part of the developing world. These conservation interventions are reconfiguring the nature of agrarian relationships and relations of production on a large scale (Brooks et al., 2011). The global drivers necessitating the production of wildlife for profit (as

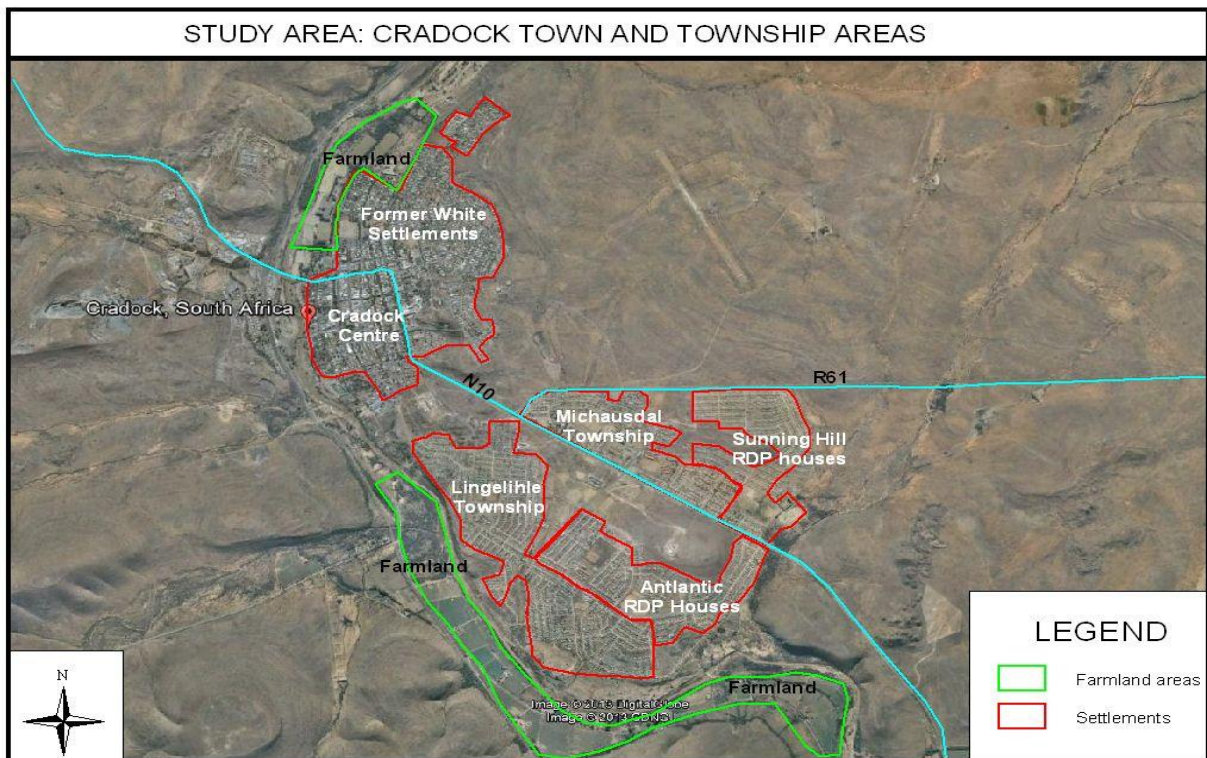
a result of capital speculation) include a growing market for tourism and, more specifically, for wilderness tourism and trophy hunting. This study therefore argues that the conversion of farms to private game farms is a form of de-agrarianisation process.

### **1.5 Research design and methodology**

The nature of the research question, the overarching aim of the study and the theoretical approach set out above informed the selection of the methodological design for this study. The study uses a qualitative research design to investigate the effects of the conversions on socio-economic condition of the people residing in the Cradock townships. This research design was thought to be appropriate as the primary aim of the study was to collect the data about socio-economic implications of private game farms from the viewpoint of the local people in the townships. This methodology is commonly used for such purposes. Thus, Wisker et.al. (2008:191) claim that ‘this type of research design is suitable when a researcher is interested in capturing the views of people on their feelings and experiences relating to a particular issue’, and Patton (2001 in Nyama, 2008:34; Patton, 2002:129-130) states that this approach allows a researcher to understand a particular group of people, problem or situation in great depth. In this study, the use of qualitative research methods also permitted the researcher to study selected issues in detail to understand, explain and analyse the dynamics of the conversion(s) and the extent to which they have affected the township people (see Judge et al., 2001:140-200).

As indicated earlier in this chapter, the focus of the study is on the people living in the marginal areas of Cradock, which are a product of apartheid spatial planning, where township areas were created as spaces of labour reserves for white farmers (see Map 2 below). Apart from those staying in the townships, they are farm workers who have been accommodated on white farms. The study is also concerned with business people in the town, in particular, businesses that have depended on the existence of commercial agriculture in the district. These businesses are crucial for the study as they emerged out of providing services to the surrounding farming communities, hence they created employment for the township people.

**Map 2: Map showing the selected area of the study in Cradock**



*(Source: Prepared by V. Zungu and source: UCT-Geo-Informatics, 2013)*

The study was conducted chiefly in the areas of Cradock shown in the above map as Lingelihle Township and Michausdal Township. It is there where those disadvantaged by the conversion of the region's agricultural farms to game farms were most likely to be found. It is in these areas that most people relied on surrounding commercial agriculture through employment, access to off-farm activities and material resources from farms.

This being a qualitative study, it employs a combination of methods for data collection. In addition to being a case study it also reviewed secondary materials — academic, government and NGOs' reports or publications and archival research reports; and in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, conversational interviews and focus-group interviews were conducted. With regard to the focus-group interviews, participatory mapping as a qualitative method was used to record the past spatial features associated with commercial agriculture and the current spatial elements that had emerged or disappeared as a result of the introduction of game farms in former commercial farmlands.

### **1.5.1 Choice of case study area**

The selection of this study area was initially criticised by some economic and urban geographers who claimed that game farming and the town are not related to each other (Scott, 2012). My task was thus to present the history of this town and its relation to livestock and sheep farming to challenge their opinions. The study area was selected for illustrative purpose and to allow the performance of deeply detailed socio-economic research. This approach concurs with that of Sarantakos (1998:191), who suggests that a case study of this nature should involve studying individual cases, often in their natural settings. Similarly, Lunenburg and Irby (2008:96) state that case studies 'are specific explorations' of a variety of situations, including individuals and communities. There are at least two main reasons why this geographical area was suitable for the study, as described below.

First, Cradock is known to have had farms which had for the past 200 years produced agricultural products (mainly sheep, wool and mohair), and these products turned the town into an epicentre of the agrarian economy in South Africa (Tetelman, 1997; Butler, 1985). During this period, several spin-off enterprises (off-farm activities) were generated, which include local businesses, such as windmill repairs, butcheries, skin and wool processing outlets, vendors of tractor supplies, shops and outlets for agricultural implements (Smith, 1964; Beinart, 2003; ECSECC, 2000). However, with the change in the nature of agricultural production in Cradock, more precisely since the 1980s, the rate of unemployment amongst the township people has increased in proportion to the decline of these off-farm activities in town (refer to Chapter Six for more details). This area was, therefore, selected for study in an attempt to discover how the off-farm activities in the town are being affected by the conversion of farmlands to private game farming.

Secondly, the study area is in the Karoo, which is an arid, semi-desert area that constitutes 35 per cent of South Africa's land surface, and extends into Namibia (Dean & Milton, 1999). Despite the semi-arid ecology of the study area, Cradock contains one of the biggest farms and one of the longest established private game farms in the province (see Langholz & Kerley, 2006:23). As the liberalisation and deregulation of agriculture gained weight in the 1980s and 1990s, Cradock's farmers converted their sheep and Angora farms into game enterprises offering veld hunting experiences for wealthy international clients. Currently, there are ten major private commercial outfitters in Cradock exclusively offering trophy-hunting experiences to wealthy international clients. While in 2011, as stated by Mkhize (2012:18),

private game farms occupied a combined area of approximately 132 000 hectares (1 320 km<sup>2</sup>), the current land use for private game farms or land use related to the game farming business has escalated to approximately 240 000 hectares (2400 km<sup>2</sup>).<sup>11</sup> This excludes the state conservation areas, namely the Mountain Zebra National Park and the Commando Drift Nature Reserve, which have gradually been encroaching on agrarian lands over the last 20 years (see Map 6).

The three largest private game farms are thus on average 40 000 hectares each, while the small to medium game farms range from 2000 to 18 000 hectares. There are also non-commercial hunting farm-holdings kept by private owners mainly for ‘lifestyle purposes’ (Brandt, 2013 and Brooks et al., 2011). As one drives along the main roads (namely the R61 and the N10), it is common to see mixed farms that combine game with other agricultural activities. Cradock thus provides a unique study site, given the history of its agriculture and the effect it has had on the economy of the town.

### **1.5.2 Access to the study area**

Initially, the researcher gained entry to the study area through established networks created by two Ph.D. candidates (Dr Nomalanga Mkhize and Dr Femke Brandt), who had conducted research in the area. Dr Mkhize’s research interest was focused on private game farms and the land tenure security for farm workers and dwellers in Cradock, while Dr Femke Brandt’s Ph.D. research explored the shifting power relations and notions of belonging of farm workers or farm dwellers on commercial farms in the Eastern Cape Karoo within the context of private game farm conversions. Both researchers selected game farms in Cradock for their case studies. It was thus through their long presence in the study area that this researcher was able to gain access to the Cradock Advisory Office (CAO) situated in the Lingelihle Township. This office was established to assist farm workers with their labour-related issues. It was through the CAO that it was possible to track ex-farm workers who are currently staying in two low-cost housing establishments, namely Atlantic and Sunning Hill (see Map 1 above).

---

<sup>11</sup> The above figures showing the size of the game farms were derived from the property lists of the iNxuba Yethemba Municipality. The lists show all farms (whether game farms or sheep or livestock farms) that are paying property rates to the municipality. NB: the list may increase as more farms are added, particularly those that are being converted. The data collected was verified from the cadastral information systems produced by the Department of Land Affairs and Rural Development, Surveyors and Mapping Unit.

These townships were established to accommodate farm workers and farm dwellers who had nowhere to go after they left the farms. In addition, Dr Mkhize and Dr Brandt also shared with the researcher a list of their respondents with their contacts details. Having these contact details was useful for several reasons. First, this allowed for the location of the farm workers or ex-farm workers directly, which would hardly have been possible had the farms been visited, especially since game farms are often situated in mountainous areas far from the town. Unlike those who work in the sheep or livestock farming sectors, game farm workers are often confined inside the game farms' electrified fences with limited contact with the town and its populace. Both the electrification and fortress nature of these game farms confirm that they were constructed based on the ideology of preservation. This preservation orientation regarding game farming argues that game reserves of this nature are 'pristine' natural spaces devoid of any external human influence. The reason for this is elaborated in Chapters Three, Six and Seven. Secondly, the geographic dispersal and low population densities on veld farms mean that there are not many workers to track down. Thus, most farms workers were met in town on the last Saturday of a month, when they are allowed to visit their families in the townships.

The first visit to Cradock took place from 11 to 16 February 2011, when Dr Nomalanga Mkhize and Dr Femke Brandt presented their findings to the key stakeholders (informants) in Cradock. This visit provided the researcher with an opportunity to gain insight into the study area, the extent of the conversions that had taken place, and some issues related to the effect of game farming in Cradock. Dr Mkhize's and Dr Brandt's research data showing the socio-economic status of the target population was to be utilised for the purpose of analysing the changes in the socio-economic prosperity of Cradock over a period of time.

In addition, it is important to mention that the research was part of a research project of the National Research Foundation (NRF) Research Chair in Land Reform and Democracy in South Africa, under the leadership of Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza, at the University of Cape Town. The Chair had conducted survey research in 2010/12 with farmers and land reform beneficiaries in the Eastern Cape, Chris Hani District Municipality, including Cradock. The contacts and networks established through that survey were also utilized to ease access to the study area.

### **1.5.3 Fieldwork and sampling strategy**

The fieldwork for the study was conducted over a ten-month period from April 2011 to February 2012, while the researcher lived in Cradock and closely interacted with the township

people through the Cradock Advisory Office (CAO). From February to August 2012, the researcher sporadically visited the site on appointment with key stakeholders. The two research assistants (namely Londi Grootboom — from Lingilihle — and Selwin Williams —from Michausdal) were recruited. The researcher also established a rapport with various local business owners who provided a deeper insight into the economy of Cradock in relation to the benefits of game farming. It is critical to mention that the initial intention was to track down people who used to work on the farms that had been either partially or fully converted into game farms. This fieldwork strategy was informed by the assumption that the researcher would be able easily to identify people who had been retrenched as a result of conversion or, if not, at least he would be able to document the contribution of game farming through the off-farm economic activities directly linked to game farming in Cradock.

Thus, a purposive sampling strategy was utilised, whereby respondents were selected based on their having experienced different conversion process and different socio-economic effects, focusing on (a) workers who had been retrenched or evicted or retired from the farms, (b) workers who had recently been employed or had remained on the farm after conversion, and (c) lastly (and more importantly), people who were, or not benefiting from off-farm activities (in the town) because of the conversions. Owing to the nature of conversion in Cradock, it was difficult to identify some of these people as they are confined to the farms and hardly ever visit the town. The researcher went further by involving their family members, neighbours and ordinary people in the town or townships, who were not directly linked to farming by virtue of their being employed or living on a farm. This was done in response to the researcher's contention that the nature of the interaction between commercial agriculture and the town or township people was complex, and necessitated such a move.

Another crucial part of the fieldwork was identifying the off-farm activities which had come to an end as a result of the proliferation of game farming in Cradock. As Dr Mkhize (2012) noted in her research in the area, the game farm landscape in Cradock is located in mountainous areas (with high, electrified fences), which makes it difficult to access farm workers in these areas. It was only on 13 February 2011 during the presentation given by Dr Mkhize and Dr Brandt to the farm owners that the researcher was able to acquire the contact details of some farm owners and other key informants (in particular those informants working for the government, in the Department of Labour and the Department of Agriculture based in Cradock). However, owing perhaps to the fact that the researcher is a black male, the past racial

division clearly played out in the research fieldwork, as the white game farmers were not keen to participate in the research, let alone to provide meaningful information regarding the amount of money they generate and share with farm workers on their farms. Some of the owners questioned the validity of the research by asking: ‘What is unique about the game farming sector in Cradock that you would not learn from other areas?’ This was, in fact, a very challenging question, yet it could be answered in the context of the history of the town and its relations with the surrounding commercial agriculture. Only a few of the farmers were willing to participate in the research. In 2013 the researcher was able to access more farmers through Dr Brandt, perhaps because she is “white” and came from the Netherlands.

#### **1.5.4 Data collection: the fieldwork experience**

The research project used a combination of data collection methods to address the research question raised in this study. The methods used to collect data from respondents were semi-structured interviews, face to face in-depth interviews, informal conversation, and focus group interviews complemented by participatory mapping (i.e., social assets mapping). In addition, the researcher performed archival research, searched for secondary sources for review, and analyses various relevant published and unpublished documents.

##### ***1.5.4.1 Interviews***

The study used a combination of semi-structured interviews and face-to-face in-depth interviews with a wide range of respondents. As mentioned above, the researcher spent ten months in the study area conducting interviews between 2011 and 2012. While the researcher predominantly used both the Xhosa and the English languages to conduct these interviews, the two research assistants (Londiwe Grootboom and Selwin Williams) were particularly helpful in translating interviews with respondents who preferred to be interviewed in Afrikaans. All interviews, including the focus-group discussions, were recorded and transcribed later, after the interview sessions. The recording and transcription occurred at the request of each individual informant who participated in this study. At an initial level, informal conversation was used in order to get information from the participant’s own perspective. Informal conversations are useful in building rapport between a researcher and an interviewee, but Willig (2001) warns that they should not deviate from the central theme of the research. To overcome this potential limitation Willig (2001) suggests that informal interviews should be guided by the researcher’s questions, when the questions would serve as triggers to encourage respondents to talk (Seidman, 2013). The researcher used this method in an open-ended manner

to allow the interviewees to answer the research questions. Four key informants —three from Lingelihle Township (namely, Foreman, Ms Genet Mjoli, and Themba Mqoqi) and one from Michausdal (John Debis)<sup>12</sup> participated in the study. These informants were introduced by my research assistants, and their selection was based on their knowledge of farming in the area. The other four key informants from the town (Nick, Ricky, Andrew and Michael) were used as anchors around which the in-depth interviews and informal conversations were conducted. These informants are business owners and one of them (Ricky) once served as a chairperson of the Chamber of Business in Cradock. All of these informants were selected by means of purposive sampling. In the context of the study, the key informants were people who were knowledgeable about the town's history of commercial agriculture and the formation of the township areas.

The core of the study was based on data collected through interviews with local people from the township, where 40 household semi-structured interviews were conducted in the two townships (Lingelihle and Michausdal). This means 20 individual households from each township were randomly selected to participate in the research. These individual's households were selected randomly, based on the availability of individual members (respondents) who were willing to participate in the interview. All individual households had equal chance of being selected in the interview; hence the total number of respondents (i.e., 40) was not decided before the fieldwork. This means that the availability of respondents and limited resources on the side of the researcher contributed to the selection of this number. In selecting households for interview careful consideration was taken to ensure the gender and age representivity. The elderly respondents were helpful in providing information about past relations of the townships with commercial agriculture. It was also fascinating how they compared the current relations with newly established private game farms. It was from these interviews that the theme: 'Tourism inside the fence: the invisible capital accumulation'<sup>13</sup> was selected as a chapter of this thesis (see Chapter Seven).

---

<sup>12</sup> Please note that the informant's names in the study are pseudonyms used for the sake of protecting anonymity and identity. This was done at the request of each individual informant, who asked that their names be concealed to the public.

<sup>13</sup> This theme directly comes from the narratives of the respondents in the township. They argued that game farming is not visible to them (i.e. *asiyiboni kuthi*) and this statement was contrasted with their experience of traditional commercial agriculture which they consider as very beneficial compared to the later land use.

The purpose here was to gain more information regarding their experiences of commercial farming and the implications of conversions in the area. It was during the household interviews that 11 elderly women and six elderly men (blacks Africans) were recruited (selected) to participate in the focus-group interview. The men were selected because they considered themselves as farmers who had been farming livestock (sheep and pig farming) in the township for many years' past (see section 1.5.4.2 below). The women were selected on the basis of their in-depth knowledge of the township and its relationship with commercial agriculture. Amongst the women who became focus group informant was Ms Genet Mjoli, who narrated her story about how her family had survived through commercial agriculture when her brother was working in the farm (see the details in Chapter Five).

Amongst the informants who were interviewed were business owners operating in Cradock, most of whom had been living in the town for more than twenty years. The local business owners who were interviewed included farm owners who had not converted their farms, bread and breakfast (B&B) operators, a real estate agent and the owner of a butchery, as well as people running businesses not directly linked to farming. Particular attention was paid to these respondents in an attempt to obtain information on whether they had experienced changes in their businesses following the conversion of the surrounding farmland to game farming. Attention was paid to how these changes had affected the town and its populace, as well as the capacity of the businessmen to employ local people from the townships. The assumption was, of course, that these respondents would provide detailed information regarding the benefits of game farming to the town (see the details in Chapters Six and Chapter Seven).

#### ***1.5.4.2 Focus group interviews and the community mapping technique***

As has already been said, the study also collected data by means of focus-group interviews, which were complemented by the use of the community mapping technique. The purpose of performing the focus-group interview was to engage various key participants in order first, to record their past experiences of the township and their relations with white commercial farms in Cradock, and secondly, to engage the participants in the process of mapping the areas where agrarian activities had been prominent. The idea was to track whether the recent land use changes had had any effect on the lives of these people. The eleven elderly women were part of the focus group interview, which was conducted on 13 April 2012, and six elderly men were part of the focus group interview held on 14 April 2012. Amongst the elderly men were people who regarded themselves as farmers, having been involved in subsistence farming for more

than ten years. The men specifically requested to be interviewed separately from the women so that their past social lives would not be revealed to the women. Their main concern was the changing land use from commercial agriculture to game farming, which directly affected their access to agricultural resources from the surrounding farms. It was through this focus group interview that Mr Foreman was identified as a particularly key informant, after which he was further interviewed about his experience as a farm worker and how his employer (farm owner Francis Peterie) had supported him beyond the limits of his job. The details of these interviews formed part of the key findings presented in Chapter Five. They reveal how the conversions have changed the local social-economic relations and how severe the effects on the lives of the township people have been.

Focus-group interviews are crucial in research of this nature. As Powell, Single and Lloyd (1996: 193–194) state, they allow a group of respondents to assemble in order to discuss or comment on the topic that is the subject of the research on the basis of their personal experience. In essence, the focus group interviews allowed the researcher to collect data about the social history as it relates to the contribution of commercial agriculture in the socio-economic lives of these people.

The community mapping was used to collect spatial information on the implications of the conversions to game farming in the Cradock area. Community mapping, or participatory mapping, is an exercise through which tacit knowledge embedded in people's spatial memory is converted into explicit and externally usable knowledge (Brown & Raymond, 2014:4). This process was executed by the researcher with five selected participants who were recruited from among those involved in the focus group interviews. The selection criteria were based on the knowledge demonstrated by these informants about the area, its history, and the present state of the study area in relation to the changes that had taken place over the previous 40 years. The idea was to produce a map representing the social assets of the people and the affected areas, as well as the relationship between these within the game farming areas. The following steps were taken to accomplish this exercise:

- i. First Day: The participants were given two blank A1 pages to draw the map showing how the town looked like in the years before 1950 and onwards. On this map, they had to indicate settlement areas as well as key spots in the town. The first map was to show the historical landscape of Cradock and the socio-economic footprint of commercial

agriculture at that time. This map is presented in Chapter Four as part of the case study chapter on the origin of commercial agriculture and the emergence of Cradock during the early 1800s.

- ii. Second Day: The participants were given the same maps to identify the off-farm activities in the town, ranging from formal trade to informal trade. In these maps, they were requested to indicate the activities associated with commercial agriculture and activities related to game farming, if any.
- iii. Third Day: The researcher took the maps and captured all the recorded areas into the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) software (GIS Arc-view 3.3 version) in order to produce a composite map showing the off-farm activities related to commercial agriculture. These maps are presented in Chapter Six (the case study chapter on employment and off-farm activities in Cradock).

#### ***1.5.4.3 Observation as a qualitative method***

While the study largely utilised interviews as method of data collection, the researcher spent a considerably period to observe day-to-day off-farm activities in relation to the socio-economic conditions of the township residents. It is understood that a deeper understanding of socio-economic implications of game farming's on these people could not be achieved by means of just passive or casual observation, but by adopting a deeper qualitative observation. At a casual level, observation of spatial distribution of off-farm activities was conducted. This type of observation culminated in the production of the map showing the location of off-farm activities in Cradock. A second level of observation was qualitative one in which the research closely lived with township communities to observe their daily socio-economic activities. These include their source of livelihoods, socio-economic challenges and their socio-economic relations with the surrounding commercial farms. In addition, during the first month of fieldwork (orientation period) the research made effort to observe local culture and customs as part of gaining access to the community. For instance, effort was made to become familiar with the staff at the Cradock Advisory Office, tourist operators (hotel and guest house owners in the town) as well as members of the township communities.

#### ***1.5.4.4 Archives***

Though the study seeks to establish the socio-economic implications of conversions by looking at the current state of the people in the township of Cradock, the study also has a crucial historical element, as it traces the origin of the town in the context of its agrarian economy going back to the time of the first colonial contact. This theme is elaborated upon in Chapters Two and Four of the thesis ('The Introduction to the Case Study'). To be able to do this, the researcher had to consult archival materials in the offices of the Department of Agriculture in Cradock and in the Government Publications Section of the University of Cape Town (UCT) library. A plethora of archival records were also collected from the Cradock Municipal Library. These materials provided insight into the nature and significance of commercial agriculture in the area. As Tuchman (1994:321) explains, archives 'help in the process of reconstructing the meaning and history of a particular locality'. In this case the archival material assisted in reconstructing the meaning and history of Cradock in relation to the contribution of commercial agriculture to the socio-economy of the town. Archival maps were collected and used to analyse land use change over time and establish how such developments affected the town and its populace.

#### ***1.5.4.5 Secondary sources —the review and analysis of documents***

Data collection from secondary sources began when first the research project was conceptualized. Government research reports, academic publications, books, journals, and other articles about the history and socio-economic background of small towns of the Karoo region (Cradock, Graaff-Reinet, Albany, Hanover and Somerset East) were reviewed as secondary sources of information. These documents provided insight into the context of the current debate on the implications of the conversions in the Eastern Cape Province in general, and the Cradock area in particular. Some of the information was used to corroborate or supplement the information obtained during the interviews.

#### **1.5.5 Data analysis**

In the context of this study, data analysis entails reviewing interviews, focus group interviews, meetings, written materials and observable features. These were recorded into themes that further allowed the research to address issues related to the implications of conversion to game farming in Cradock. Since the data collected in the study is qualitative in nature, the data

analysis was conducted by means of qualitative methods. From the reviews and recordings of collected data, key issues (themes) for each group of respondents were identified and analysed intensively (Neuman, 2006:468). Furthermore, the data analysis process not only focuses on identifying common issues (the basis of the construction of the themes), but also enables the researcher to continually reflect on the data, thus developing an interpretive understanding of the issues under scrutiny (Creswell et al., 2003:190). For instance, the data collected provided a common theme that suggests that the current socio-economic implications of conversions should be understood by drawing the economic history of commercial agriculture and how it (commercial agriculture) related to the economy of the town. Thus, the thesis dedicated four chapters on the history of small towns and their connection to merino sheep farming in the Karoo region of South Africa. These chapters were organised in accordance with the related themes emerging from the collected data to address the broader theoretical and conceptual debate. This included not just common themes, but also those that contradict dominant theoretical assumption. This was crucial as the purpose of reflecting on the contradiction(s) is ‘not to be selective, but to ensure that the data should be narrated and reported in full’ (Mouton, 1996:177; Neumann, 2006). In the context of this study, narrative analysis was employed to capture and reflect the ‘quality of the lived experience’ of the people living in the townships of Cradock.

This stage of analysis began during the performance of the fieldwork, as the ‘notes taken either whilst still in the field or immediately after’ (Flick, Kvale & Angrosino, 2007:26–7; Flick, 2008) were used during data analysis, and, the notes describing what was observed in the field were used to supplement the information obtained during the interviews. Obviously, the data analysis entailed reading and analysing the primary data (derived from the interviews and archival materials) and the secondary material (derived from policy documents, government reports, NGO’s reports, and published academic work). The process of data analysis assisted in identifying different social groups in Cradock and how their socio-economic livelihoods had been affected by the conversions to private game farming. For example, it was possible to recognise the relationship that these social groups had had with commercial agriculture and how these had been affected once the farm was converted to game farming. Finally, it may be worth noting that when the data collected contained graphs and tables with numeric figures (relevant to the study), and associated datasets were interpreted qualitatively. For instance, the data about the sum (in ZAR) collected by the Cradock municipality from game farms in the form of rates per month was analysed qualitatively (see Chapter Seven).

## **1.6 Ethics**

The study took the following ethical issues and challenges into account.

### **Permission or access**

While a study of this nature had already been conducted by two Ph.D. students in the area, it was also crucial to notify authorities and officials about this additional impending study. As indicated earlier, the introduction of this study took place during a community meeting in the area in February 2011, when the researcher had the opportunity to see the mayor of iNxuba Yethemba Municipality, which is centred on Cradock, about the research and her possible involvement as a participant in the research. In addition, during the interviews a brief explanation was given to each interviewee about the nature of the study, and permission in written format was sought to conduct the interview and use the information gained. Of particular importance was that the intention to use a digital voice recorder was declared prior to the interview and permission was obtained to record the interviews. On no occasion was permission withheld. It is worth noting that the interviewees were informed of their option to withdraw or continue with the interview. The permission to record and transcribed their voice-recorded narratives was requested from them prior to the compilation of the recorded interviews.

### **Anonymity**

Owing to the nature of the study and the fact that farm workers or dwellers would be providing information regarding their experiences and the benefits of farming and game farming in Cradock, the researcher was well aware of the fact that the issue of anonymity or the identity of the respondents and informants should be protected, as this information could negatively affect their working conditions on these farms. To do so, pseudonyms are used for key respondents and the key research sites were also given fictional names, such as various names of game farms, including their owners mentioned or referred to by key respondents. The issue of ethics is also taken into consideration, as it relates to the power dynamics between farm owners and farm workers, thus the researcher did not use the names of farm workers and ex-farm workers in the report. It should be noted, therefore, that the use of false names was done purely to protect their identity. In addition, during the encounters with respondents the

researcher made full disclosure of his intentions and interests in the study. This was done by explaining that the study was being conducted as part of the requirements for the award of a PhD. Respondents were told verbally and in written format that their names and identity would not be used in the analysis of the thesis. Prior to the commencement of the interviews, they were thus encouraged and allowed to not mention their name to ensure the fulfilment of anonymity and concealment of their identity as stated in the ethical protocols that were guiding the research work. Thus, as mentioned above, pseudonyms have been used for key respondents, and the key research sites have been given the fictional names Bontebok Private Nature Reserve, Grootvlei Farm and Bossieskloof Game Ranch.

## **1.7 Thesis structure and chapter outline**

### **Part One: Historical context**

#### **Chapter Two: The agrarian economy in the context of semi-arid small towns: historical context**

This chapter traces the origin of the settlers' agrarian economy and its socio-economic effects on the African people in the semi-arid small towns of the Cape Colony. The point of departure and a particular focus of this chapter is the relationship between commercial agriculture and small Karoo towns. The chapter shows that commercial agriculture was introduced into the Karoo by the colonial settlers during the early 1800s, and that small towns were established to service the growing agriculture industry. As capitalist agrarian production (parallel to the British industrial revolution) developed, the semi-arid small towns increasingly acted as conduits of trade, services and retail, up to the period of the conversions in the mid-twentieth century. Various related livelihoods emerged in the towns and continued to exist until recently, and it was through tapping into these sources of livelihood that Africans in the small towns benefited from commercial agriculture. The chapter further argues that, since the 1970s, the conversion of farmlands to private game farming has disrupted the possibility of gaining access to these socio-economic benefits.

#### **Chapter Three: The changing nature of wildlife enclosure and its effects on black Africans in the Karoo**

This chapter focuses on the origin and evolution of the conversion of land in the Karoo towards game farming as well as its effects on the black African people. It shows that game farming in the Eastern Cape Karoo region manifested itself in various forms beginning in the early 1800s (i.e., the period of wildlife enclosure). Unlike the current conversions, early conversions were

characterised by the enclosure of land that had not formerly been farmed. Game enclosure for market and recreational hunting has emerged more recently, resulting in the effective denial of access to land and wildlife to the indigenous populations of the region. It should be noted that such access formed the basis for the pre-colonial economy of the region (Brown, 2002:76). There is a focus in this part of the chapter on how the colonial state codified game laws, particularly in the mid-nineteenth century, to facilitate wildlife enclosure on private land, and how this affected the social and economic conditions of black African people in the Karoo.

The chapter shows that, unlike the emergence of commercial agriculture in the same locality during the same period (see Chapters Two and Chapter Four), game enclosure significantly undermined and continues to undermine access to wildlife by black African people. Finally, the chapter concludes that the current conversions have more severe socio-economic implications than the earlier wildlife enclosures, as the current conversions have occurred on land that was formerly dedicated to agricultural production.

## **Part Two: Case study chapters**

### **Chapter Four: Cradock and agrarian economy: tracing agrarian change in Cradock from 1814 to 1940s**

This chapter is the first of four chapters devoted to the case study of Cradock. It begins by tracing the historical origin of Cradock and the contribution of commercial agriculture (sheep and livestock farming) to the economy of this town. Empirical data are presented to demonstrate the socio-economic significance of the surrounding farms to the people who used to live in town (during the mid-1800s) and subsequently relocated to the townships (in the 1950s). The chapter shows that while most of the farms surrounding Cradock are spatially isolated from the town itself, they are, by and large, socially and economically connected to the town and its populace.

### **Chapter Five: The socio-economic conditions of black Africans in Cradock: pre-conversion era**

This chapter builds on the previous chapter to discuss the extent to which the people in the township survived on commercial agriculture during the pre-conversion epoch. The chapter shows how township people negotiated their access to material resources supplies (e.g., milk, meat, sheep, used cloths, etc.) from the farms as alternative benefits beyond the inadequate

wages they were paid. It also demonstrates how commercial agriculture contributed to the development of off-farm activities and employment opportunities to sustain the socio-economic conditions of these people. The chapter argues that, in spite of the dwindling state of the agrarian economy in South Africa, black African people in Cradock continued to sustain their livelihoods through commercial agriculture. Like other Karoo small towns, Cradock has always served as a service centre to the surrounding commercial farmers. Thus, the economy of Cradock and its populace has always been connected with the ambient commercial agriculture. The chapter concludes that while commercial agriculture was exploitative in nature, particularly towards the people from the townships, they were able to rely on a range of material resources derived from the farms as a source of livelihood.

### **Chapter Six: Implications of private game farming in Cradock: post-conversion era**

This chapter discusses the effects of conversion on off-farming activities (informal traders, butchery, Salon, Super Market, etc.) and associated employment. The chapter shows that the socio-economic livelihoods of the township people in terms of access to off-farm activities and associated employment and material supplies from farms have been severely affected by the conversion(s) of these farms into private game farms. This spatial reconfiguration has not just led to the reduction of labour, as noted by Brandt (2013) about Cradock and by Luck (2005) about the Karoo more generally, but has also restricted access to material resources for those workers who continue to work on these farms after their conversion. Consequently, the people in the townships report a significant decline in material supplies from the farms. In addition, there has been a disappearance of a number of activities that were largely based on material resources obtained from adjacent commercial farms. This is because the material resources, which were often available as a sort of ‘payment in kind’, have become scarce commodities recently. The chapter shows that these socio-economic trends are interlinked with the ongoing conversion(s) of land from commercial agriculture to private game farming.

### **Chapter Seven: Invisible capital accumulation: ‘tourism venture inside the fence’**

This chapter continues to probe more deeply the state of the wildlife industry as a form of tourism venture, to account for why the people of Cradock and the township people in particular do not see ‘benefits’ from the game farming industry. This issue is critical, given the fact that there had been an increase in the number of game farms established in the area over the last 20 years, and the fact that that game farmers in the area hardly view themselves as being part of

the town or attached to the people living in it. By drawing on the recent trends of conversion towards private game farming in Cradock, the chapter seeks to provide an analytical account of why the game farming industry is rendered invisible to (i.e., does not benefit) the people living in the townships of Cradock. The chapter argues that one of the ways of understanding why the game farming industry is viewed as 'elitist' in nature is by focusing on its emergence in the early 1800s, when the colonial state codified laws to support the creation of private sanctuaries for game in order to satisfy the needs of elite white sports hunters. Based on the literature reviewed in Chapter Three and the data collected, this chapter also argues that this epoch of game protectionism emerged out of 'fortress conservation', and that the system sought to ensure that black Africans were systematically excluded from the conservation of wildlife and from any socio-economic benefits derived from the protection of wildlife.

### **Chapter Eight: Findings and concluding remarks**

This chapter discusses the key arguments raised and debated in the study. It also presents the implications of the findings of the research in the light of the socio-economic implications of game farming in semi-arid small towns and Cradock in particular.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE AGRARIAN ECONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF SEMI-ARID SMALL TOWNS: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter traces the origins of the settler's agrarian economy and its socio-economic effects on the livelihoods of the black African people in the small towns of the former Cape Colony, with specific reference to the Karoo region. The point of departure and a particular focus of this chapter is the relationship between commercial agriculture and small Karoo towns. The chapter shows that commercial agriculture was introduced into the Karoo region by the colonial settlers from the late eighteenth century, and that small towns were established to service the growing commercial agriculture. Therefore, the history of the agrarian economy in this semi-arid region and its connection to these towns is significant to the study, as the history shows how the Karoo towns emerged following the establishment of commercial agriculture and how they continued to rely on agriculture over time. As service centres, the economies of these towns (and therefore the livelihoods of their populations) were always intertwined with the ambient commercial agriculture (Nel & Hill, 2008).

Various related livelihoods emerged in the towns and continued to exist until recently, and it was through tapping into these sources of livelihood that Africans in these small towns benefited from commercial agriculture. An understanding of how African people living in Karoo towns survived for 200 years because of their connection with commercial agriculture is critical, in that it forms the basis upon which to construct an analysis of how the current conversions of these farms to private game farming have affected the economies of these towns and their African populations. This connection manifested itself in the form of the mobility of farm workers or farm dwellers and farm owners, who would frequently come to town. Mkhize (2012:114) argues that 'this form of temp-spatial migration is motivated by farm workers and dwellers' perpetual tenure insecurity and poor working conditions'. However, this chapter argues that it was through farm workers or farm dwellers moving between towns and farms that black African people in the towns could share in a variety of material resources (e.g., milk, meat, livestock, wood) from the adjacent commercial farms. In addition, they participated in a range of off-farm activities (butcheries, railway stations, windmill shops, farm implements shops, etc.), which emerged in the towns following the establishment and expansion of the adjacent farms. The chapter goes on to argue that since the 1970s the conversions of farmlands

to private game farming have disrupted and are still disrupting access to these socio-economic benefits accrued by the people in the townships.

This chapter will cover the period from the time of the first colonial contact, that is, from the late eighteenth century, to the mid-twentieth century — the period of the development of commercial agriculture that led to the formation of small towns in the Karoo. The history will be traced from this colonial moment to the present. The section shows that while the introduction of commercial agriculture coerced Africans, particularly Xhosa people, off their land, there were others who continued to survive on material resource supplies from commercial agriculture as mean of surviving in these small towns. While the mechanisation of the 1950s is said to have contributed to labour shedding in other parts of South Africa (Murray, 1989), the chapter reveals that the agrarian economy in the Karoo continued to rely on labour. The chapter, therefore, ends with a section unpacking the dynamics that led to conversion(s) of land from commercial agriculture to private game farming with specific reference to the Karoo region.

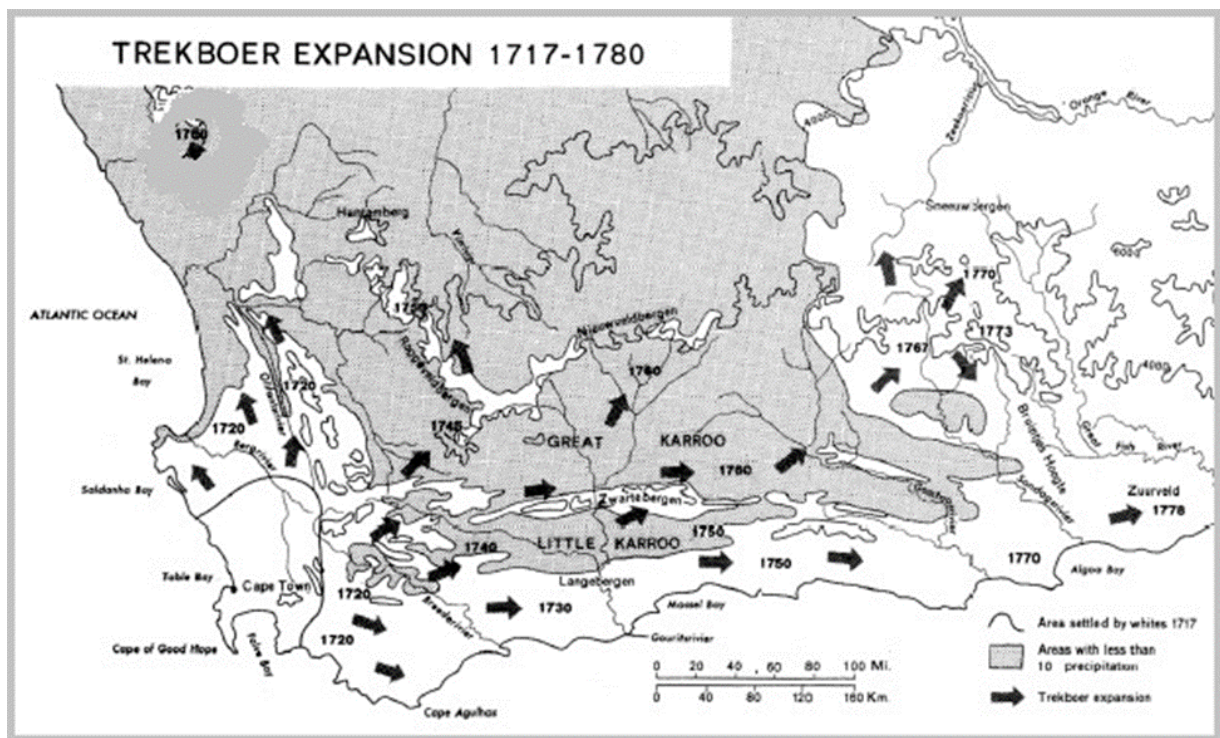
## **2.2 The origins of agrarian production in the Karoo and the formation of small towns**

The agrarian economy in Eastern Cape Karoo was unique, as it was instrumental in the formation and continued existence of small towns in this part of South Africa. It was unique in the sense that — despite the decline of commercial agriculture over the last 75 years — the Karoo small towns and their populace (including Africans) continued to survive on agriculture. The origin of this agrarian economy in the Karoo is dated to the late eighteenth century with the establishment of Graaff-Reinet in the 1780s (Beinart, 2003:10, Hofmeyr, 1985; Smuts, 2012). Beinart (2008:10) argues that Graaff-Reinet, like other small towns in the Karoo, was founded in the heart of the new sheep-rearing economy with less than fifty dwellings. According to Nel and Hill (2008:7), ‘the period prior to the mineral discoveries of the 1860s and 1880s in South Africa was the period in which the South African economy was dominated by an expanding and extensive pastoral farming frontier in what was then called the Cape Colony’ (see also Ross, 1986). As Badenhorst (1970:76) notes

the role of the Cape Midlands Karoo in the wool industry was crucial, and already in the first decade of 1800s, the Karoo and such towns as Cradock and Graaff-Reinet in particular, were regarded by British farmers rather than Dutch farmers as an ideal region to develop their agrarian economic aspirations.

As Beinart argues, their keen interest was to develop agriculture that would fit into the industrialising economy that was taking place in Britain. Indeed, it was through the discovery of merino sheep as a suitable product that British farmers successfully connected the Cape economy with the then international market (Smuts, 2012). The small towns were thus places in which the prosperity of this growing agrarian economy was more prominent particularly when British settlers migrated to the interior (Karoo region) in great numbers (see Map 3 below). For instance, in the nineteenth century they began to purchase land cheaply from departing trekboers, using the land as pasturage for the wool-bearing merino sheep. Robert Jacob Gordon, a Dutchman of Scottish descent and commander of the garrison at the Cape, introduced these into the Cape Colony in 1789 ‘to improve the blood line of the Colony’s flocks’ and thus, ‘to be a source of "survival and welfare for the people" (Cullinan, 1992: 19).

**Map 3: Map of the early Cape Colony showing time points during the eighteenth century when settlers reached different regions of the interior**



(Source: Guelke and Sell, 1992 in Smuts, 2012)

The growing sheep and livestock farming industry in the Karoo as well as the subsequent establishment of small Karoo towns became more apparent in the beginning of the nineteenth century, a period in which the British settler exerted immense influence over the Cape Colony. In fact, for the British settlers, small towns did not only serve as service centres, but places in which to express their economic prosperity from the growing commercial agriculture of this

period. According to Beinart (2003:7), farms were established mostly at water sources while small towns grew up around fountains or along trekking and transport routes to transport to these small towns agrarian commodities (e.g. milk, meat and livestock) produced on the farms. The transportation routes, which increased following the expansion of farms, subsequently allowed white farmers and their workers (black African people) to move between farms and towns. This mobility of farmers and farm workers was crucial for the economic survival of these towns as it was in the town that they spent their cash earned from surrounding farms. The fact that they (farmers and farm workers) spent their money in small towns meant that the money earned from the farms circulated amongst different people who were living in the town. For instance, Tetelman (1997) draws attention to how farm workers spent their money to buy meat, milk, maize and other household items from hawkers that emerged in the townships. On the other side, British settlers (mostly farmers) built churches in the towns' centres not only for worship, but as a symbol of their success.

While ostrich farming also facilitated the infiltration of capital into the agrarian economy of the Karoo (Marsden, 1986:8), it was the merino sheep that effectively provided the most important stimulus for wool economy and agricultural production in the Eastern Cape during this period. For instance, Nel and Hill (2008) draw attention to the nature and significance of the Karoo pastoral economy and small towns. They argue that the development of the Karoo small towns in the early nineteenth century was intricately interwoven with the conspicuous fortunes of sheep and livestock farming in the Karoo. As sheep and livestock farming grew in response to the growing industrial economy in Britain, the Karoo small towns served as conduit between farm owners and international trade. This began with the British settlers who were gazing for suitable land for farming in the east-western part of the Karoo (Dubow, 1982). With reference to the circumstances that led to the establishment of Cradock, the British troops first established a camp settlement for their troops along the Great Fish River (GFR), an area which later became known as Cradock. However, as times went by, the prosperity of the town increasingly captured the attention of the Cape Colony such that it was named Cradock in recognition of the then Governor General John Cradock of the Cape Colony (Badenhorst, 1970:76). Although the initial intention was to turn the area into an army camp, the subsequent demand for wool and meat from 1814 onwards significantly transformed the town into a centre of agrarian economy (see Chapter Four for more details). Furthermore, as Smuts (2012) notes, 'Victoria West was also established in 1844, which later became the centre around which a wealthy and profitable wool production grew'. As with Cradock and Victoria West, the demand

for commercial wool production subsequently led to the growing economies of such areas as Beaufort West, and in areas around e Middelburg and Graaff-Reinet area.

As Smuts notes, the occupation of the Karoo by European settlers throughout the nineteenth century resulted in considerable change in the type and methods of farming used. Smuts argues that, in the light of the growing agrarian economy in the Karoo, this local economy was divided into two broad periods: that in which meat production for subsistence and the market predominated (before 1850), and that in which wool and meat production predominated (after 1850). It was by the second half of the nineteenth century that the agricultural economy of the Eastern Cape was dominated by wool, to such an extent that 'wool accounted for no less than 73 per cent of the value of all the Cape's export' (Dubow, 1982 in Marsden, 1986). During the same period, starting from 1780s, a number of towns (e.g. Albany, Cradock, Somerset East and Graaff-Reinet) were established to serve the growing farming areas and rural communities (Christopher, 1984a:185). It was for this reason that Nel, Hill and Taylor (2007:10) argue that these centres were:

Strongly dependent upon the prosperity of their agricultural hinterlands and, to an extent, reliant upon the fortunes of these regions to ensure the sustainability of the centres with many of the services and functions provided by these centres being linked to the regions 'economic activity, for example agricultural training centres, and agricultural finances.

This means that each farming community and its small service centre (i.e., its small town) had to be relatively self-sufficient, with each farm providing food, while the town supplied labour and administrative services to the surrounding farms (Nel & Hill, 2008:7). The food that was produced by farms in the Karoo district was invariably being circulated in the town for markets, which further generated economic off-spin opportunities for the people living in these towns. Since then, these towns turned out to be heavily dependent upon the wellbeing of their adjacent farm areas and they (towns) and their populations continued to rely upon the fortunes of these farms for their day-to-day survival as the years went by (Nel & Hill, 2008:7).

The question of the relationship between small towns and their adjacent farming areas has been much debated in the recent past by various scholars. Key to this debate is whether or not farms and small towns have a complementary relationship. For instance, Tacoli (1998 a & c), supported by Kamete (1998), holds the view that these farming areas, or so-called 'hinterland

farming areas' were intimately related to the economies of their immediate towns. For these authors, the existence of the economies of small towns emerged out of the adjacent commercial agriculture. However, Tetelman (1997) has espoused the notion that the formation of small towns was part of the broader consolidation of the political and economic power of the British settlers (i.e. alienating black Africans specifically Xhosa people from their land) and thereby creating certain locations in small towns to accommodate these as suppliers of labour to the surrounding farms (Mkhize, 2012). For instance, Peires (1981) notes that 'the foundation of the semi-arid towns' working class was laid with the expansion of Cape Dutch settlers into the interior east of Cape Province and their brutal subjugation'.

The extent to which isiXhosa speakers in small towns survived out of commercial agriculture is somehow silent in these voices. The fact that they were not just subjects of the expanding commercial agriculture, but sought to accumulate livestock to sustain their agrarian lifestyle in their former rural hinterlands is crucial in an understanding of their interconnectedness with commercial agriculture in small towns and rural hinterlands. As Schoeman (2013:122) has argued, in the early 1800 years a Mfengu man worked in one of the farms in Middelburg, south of Cradock, and accumulated 14 cattle after one year. He argues that these cattle were enough for this man to leave work and concentrate in growing his farms in the rural hinterland of the Eastern Cape.

However, while commercial agriculture led to the creation of the working class in the small towns as postulated by Mkhize (2012) and Brandt (2013), it is necessary to establish how the rural servile class responded to the capitalist formation of an agrarian economy during this period. Was the underclass able to take advantage of the burgeoning commercial agriculture to survive or sustain their rural livelihoods? For Mafeje (1981:127) it was the existence of this kind of mode of production (i.e. capitalist mode of production) that allowed isiXhosa speakers to continue live and accumulate wealth (livestock), even though they had no ownership of land in towns. Mafeje (1981:127) notes, further, that their access to livestock elevated the Xhosa people' status as livestock and their social system formed the basis for their mode of production.

At the same time, these small towns played a potentially positive role in rural transformation through the provision of goods and services that acted as vital inputs into the commercial agricultural processes (Kamete, 1998:24). Furthermore, towns also provided a market for these

commodities by linking commercial farms to the national or international markets (Tacoli, 2004:18-19). Thus, the expansion of commercial agricultural and associated production, particularly in the semi-arid regions, enabled many rural people to access farm-related employment in towns due to the growth and investments that emerged following the commercialisation of agriculture in the Karoo. The following section shows how off-farm activities that emerged in the towns of the Karoo created invisible economic interaction between surrounding farms and small towns.

### **2.3 Linkage(s) between farms and small towns through off-farm activities**

The development of the Karoo commercial agriculture in the early nineteenth century led to the creation of a range of off-farm activities in small towns with an estimated 1350 employment numbers in Graaff-Reinet, Cradock, Somerset East and Middelburg put together (Toerien & Kasimoglu, 2012:140). For instance, by 1819, the demand for agricultural commodities produced in the Eastern Karoo region escalated to such an extent that roads, railway lines and other social infrastructure were constructed (Muller, 2000; Nel & Hill, 2008). These infrastructures were constructed to further enhance the linkage of the Karoo towns with the bigger cities (Port Elizabeth and Cape Town) and other places where the demand for agricultural products was high. As Marsden (1986:18) states, ‘the agricultural expansion of this period created new patterns of social and economic relations’, as more Xhosa people migrated (2030 to 3100 in size)<sup>14</sup> to these towns to participate in economic activities that were directly and indirectly linked to the then expanding commercial agriculture. In the case of Cradock, households from the Old Location<sup>15</sup> earned incomes from the production of agricultural goods for non-local markets (i.e., international demand) and increased their demand for consumer goods in the town. This led to the creation of off-farm jobs and employment diversification ranging from those (who were selling meats and milk in the streets to those town dwellers who worked as blacksmiths and ox-wagon drivers and repairers to service the growing farm communities. These off-farm activities that prevailed in towns further absorbed migrating rural labour, raised the demand for agricultural produce and again boosted agricultural production and rural incomes (see Marsden, 1986:11; Jeffery, 1997).

---

<sup>14</sup> This figure is estimated by Toerien and Seaman (2012:140) in relation to the number of enterprises (i.e. off-farm activities) that emerged in the Karoo small towns from 1814 to 1876.

<sup>15</sup> The Old Location is the name of the location that was predominantly occupied by black Africans in Cradock from the early nineteenth century to the 1950s. According to Tetelman (1997), this location was abolished following the enactment of the Group Areas Act. The location’s inhabitants were removed to the Lingelihle township in the 1960s.

The extent and scale of the effects of agriculture is also articulated by Butler (1981:3) who, when referring to Cradock, states that:

In the 1820s white farmers made highly successful investments in stock farms which came down to the banks of the Great Fish River (GFR) i.e., Cradock, making possible a combination of sheep, ostriches and lucerne based on flood irrigation, and consequently, a nice spreading of markets in the town.

Indeed, as Marsden notes, various markets in towns emerged to service commercial farm communities. These included butcheries to sell meat and milk, agricultural material suppliers for farm's implements and transporters from farms to towns. Furthermore, the development of irrigation as an important capital agricultural input led to the formation of companies in towns that were responsible for the installation and maintenance of irrigation infrastructures. Farmers, such as Collett and Rubidge, realised that without sustained water supply their fortune in farming could be short-lived. For Butler (1981), these constituted major intrusions of capital into these towns, such that an active irrigation department and system of loans to stimulate lucerne was developed. More importantly, the small towns of the Karoo region played a crucial role in supporting commercial agriculture. For instance, industries such as retail shops, engineering companies (to construct fences and erect windmills for farms) and general dealers in towns were major services rendered by these towns to the growing commercial farms. In fact, Xuza (2006) argues that the spatial economy inherent in small towns, particularly in the Karoo, can be traced back to the surrounding commercial agriculture. In this manner, Xuza explains (drawing from the functionalist approach) that both farms and small towns' functions in the Karoo were compatible in nature. In this case, farms absorbed black Africans' labour from towns while towns provided retail and administrative services that further created employment opportunities for those who were staying in towns including Africans.

In the 1920s, the British white commercial farmers were already self-sufficient as they often produced food (sheep, cattle and crops) for themselves. But, as Marsden (1986) notes, 'a large proportion of farmers' food, including those of their workers, was invariably bought from the grocery shops in adjacent towns'. Similarly, Tacoli (1998c & d) and Rondinelli (1991) describe the Karoo towns as centres for marketing, the provision of services, commerce, processing and transportation, all of which were linked to the agrarian economic production. It was for this reason that Rondinelli (1991) argues, that most of these towns were able to further provide rural income diversification opportunities through the provision of non-agricultural or off-farm

employment opportunities (see Nell, 2000:105/4). But these income diversification opportunities and off-farm employment were linked with commercial farms such that the unemployed black Africans in the towns began trading informally through trades or selling clothes, beer, and cooked meats to the farm workers who often come to the towns. In the case of Cradock, Butler (1981) and Tetelman (1997) argue that commercial agriculture inevitably led to such off-farm activities as butcheries, roads, railway station/railway line and other social infrastructure, coupled with local shops that further diversified the economy of the town. In towns such as Graaff-Reinet and Somerset East, these industries created employment opportunities and provided valuable income for the town. The participation of black Africans isiXhosa speakers, Marsden notes, meant that a farm's income was circulated within these towns as both farm owners and farm workers spent their earnings in towns, rather than in larger cities.

For instance, Beinart (2003:54) drew attention to how the number of people during the 1820s escalated because of their participation in the growing sheep and wool economy. Beinart cited one of the most successful farmers, by the name of James Collet, in the Karoo and his success in farming motivated him to invest the town (Cradock and Albany). The success of James Collet is crucial in the sense that it mirrored how farm's prosperity of that time translated into the economic upswing of the town with multiple employment and income opportunities for the town's dwellers. According to Beinart (2003), James Collett arrived at the Cape in 1821 as an employee without any land. However, in 1826, Collett bought a significant land holding in Albany in which he grew fodder and livestock (sheep). But later in 1850s Collett is reported to have accumulated more than 6 000 sheep on his main farms. The merinos amounted to being 150 to 300 (Beinart, 2003:55), generated lucrative income after he decided to sell them. With this income, he subsequently bought 500 oxen, and over 100 people from various towns in the eastern Karoo were trained for wagon transport. With the help of his sons and employees, grain production was so successful that Collett was able to build a mill and negotiate a contract to supply the colonial forces with oat hay, used as fodder for horses. The need for fodder for horses was significant for the town's economy, as more workers (black Africans) were employed in towns to care for the horses which were integral part of the colonial wagon transportation system. Indeed, this shows how the commercial farms owned by Collet led to the development of wagon transport, central in the town's economy.

Furthermore, Beinart states that Collett and his family's agricultural success escalated to the extent that in the 1850s he decided to diversify his business back into commerce by purchasing a shop in Cradock. This shop increased his prominence in the town and at least 25 people (mostly black Africans and coloureds) were employed in his shops and other commercial dealings which were linked to him in the town. As Marsden noted, the introduction of wagons driven by horses was a big business during that time, one which increased following the demand for agrarian commodities from the Karoo. These agricultural products had to be transported from the Eastern Cape Karoo to Cape Town via Port Elizabeth. Indeed, the increased demand for wagons further created demands for various artisanal skills such as blacksmithing, welding, wood artifacts etc., in which many black Africans and coloureds people participated to earn income. As Rosset (1999:11) noted, the growth of agricultural production enabled income to be circulated among local off-farm businesses owned by the British settlers (in town), while those in the locations were owned and operated by black Africans. In the process, job opportunities both on- and off-farms were created, and hence the locations were established to supply labour (as shepherds, Lucerne growers and farmhouse maids) to the booming agrarian economy.

Consequently, the so-called sheep-shearing labour, as a specialised skilled labour force of that period emerged. The sheep-shearing labourers from the black African communities, but predominantly Khoi and San communities, moved from one area to another to earn better wages. As Marsden (1986:12) has argued, sheep shearers tended to live in the town locations out of season and travel from farm to farm at shearing time. This means that it was in towns that these people spent their cash earned from working on surrounding farms. These farm workers enjoyed considerably greater mobility than other farm workers. Apart from that, they were paid a relatively high wage according to the daily number of sheep shorn (Hofmeyr in Marsden, 1986:12).

This signaled the participation of black African people in the growing agrarian economy, many of whom worked not just on farms but in towns as drivers of wagon to transport agricultural products. Apart from that, Beinart (2003) argues that white farmers knew that their success in agriculture, particularly in the Karoo, relied on the environmental knowledge of black Africans, especially Khoi and San people. These people had vast knowledge about the type of livestock and sheep species that could grow well in the arid environment of the Karoo. It was for this reason that the commercial agriculture in the semi-arid areas, particularly livestock and sheep

farming, resonated with African agrarian aspirations (Marsden, 1986:11; Hartwig & Marais, 2005). Although they migrated from the rural hinterlands of the Eastern Cape to live in small towns, black Africans continued to sustain their subsistence agriculture through income from working in railway stations and retail shops as general workers. It is thus not surprising that the linkage between the agricultural sector and off-farm activities in the semi-arid small towns is significant, as it signifies that the agrarian economy was not just to produce raw materials as a primary economic sector, but to produce and distribute value-added agrarian products with direct and indirect economic value to the towns and other larger cities (Pio, 2008:32).

Likewise, as farm workers often visited the towns after work, they spent their wages earned from the surrounding farms in small businesses that were located in towns. This alone generated a number of off-farm economic activities (formal and informal ones) to both farm owners and farm workers. By the 1850s, it is reported that some 3 200 whites, 1 700 coloureds, and 350 Asians lived in the town (Cradock). The statistics for black Africans were not readily available during this period, but it was estimated that more than 3 000 were living and thriving in the economy of Cradock. As farmers continued to increase the production of fodder crops, and dairy farms along the Fish River, the Cradock's mayor boasted that the town would become 'one of the greatest inland cities' (Smith, 1964; see also *The Midland News*, 1929).

### **2.3.1 Off-farm employment opportunities in the semi-arid towns: the 1830s to the 1880s**

One of the key socio-economic impacts of agrarian economy in the Karoo (from the early the 1830s to the 1880s) was the creation of employment opportunities (both on-farm and off-farm employment) for the people living in the small towns (Muller, 2000:20; Rondinelli & Kasarda, 1993). It was through their participation as farm workers or off-farm workers in towns that black African and coloureds enjoyed the growing wool economy during this period. As Nel and Hill (2008) have explained, the employment opportunities for black Africans and coloured people in 1830s can be traced from the growing demand for wool by the British industrial economy which coincided with the intensification of agrarian production in small towns. According to Marsden (1986:31), the creation of off-farm employment in such towns as Graaff-Reinet, Somerset East, and Queenstown came about as a result of the agricultural products that were produced from surrounding farms and transported via the small towns to be exported to the wider market. From the mid-1830s onwards, the Karoo agrarian products gained international appeal, so much so that by the 1840s wool exports escalated to 10 000 tons per annum with direct impacts on the economies of small towns in the upper regions of the Cape

Colony (Christopher, 1982; Christopher, 1984b). It is thus from this background that off-farm employment opportunities in the form of services rendered by the towns to the surrounding farming communities were directly linked to the agrarian economy, particularly in the Karoo. Similar to Muller (2000:20), Nel and Hill (2008) have argued that the increasing demand for agricultural commodities such as sheep and wool in the Karoo led to the high demand for labour supply, land and infrastructure for the transportation of these products.

The commercialisation of the interior, particularly in 1840s, was further expedited by growing numbers of itinerant traders<sup>16</sup> (*smouse*), who offered farmers new outlets for farm products and opportunities to acquire general merchandise (Muller, 2000:23). These itinerant traders were selling farm products from one small town to another to such an extent that one observer (John Campbell) feared that the volume of trade conducted in this manner would affect the growth of commercial life in small towns in the interior at the expense of big commercial cities such as Port Elizabeth (Muller, 2000:23). The growth of off-farm employment from commercial agriculture following a huge demand for wool products emanated from the stimulation of local trades in Graaff-Reinet such that in 1838, 85 houses were already there including three blacksmiths' shops, a wagon-maker's workshop, several retailers of European goods', a butcher, a bakery of bread and retailer of wine and brandy (Muller, 2000:23). For instance, it is reported that between the 1830s and the 1840s, the number of retailers in Graaff-Reinet increased from 57 to 90 and the town became the major regional market-place for the interior of the Eastern Cape (Muller, 2000:23). The commercialisation of agrarian products in the interior (i.e. small towns) coincided with the early Port Elizabeth harbour development schemes (1820s–1855), which further created mobile traders amongst black African and coloured people living between the interior and coastal towns such as Port Elizabeth and East London (Inggs, 1991:41; Muller, 2000:24).

For instance, as early as the 1840s the farming communities built their houses using stones. This alone led to the establishment of quarry works, which further provided some employment particularly during the Depression years (Marsden, 1986:32). There emerged in the 1860s the phenomenon of the black African and coloured entrepreneurs centred primarily on the transportation of agrarian products (wool, meat and livestock) from the interior towns to the

---

<sup>16</sup> Itinerant trader (*smouse*) is concept adopted by Muller (2000) to describe those traders who were selling agrarian products from one town to another as means of sustaining their socio-economic livelihoods.

coastal towns such as Port Elizabeth and later East London (Muller, 2000:24; Marsden, 1986:11). Although wagon transportation is dated as early as the 1820s, Muller (2000) argued that in the 1860s, transport riding increasingly became a popular source of employment for coloured as well as black African entrepreneurs. Muller further drew two aspects of particular interest regarding the resurgence of wagon drivers amongst coloured and black African people in towns. First, transport riders tended to be the products of mission stations, where they had been encouraged to undertake some productive work i.e., transporting agrarian products and farmers from one town to another. Secondly, the financial returns on such enterprises were high enough to attract substantial Khoikhoi (coloured) and black African people 's participation. This means that the conspicuous fortune of transport riders depended on the prosperity of agriculture in the interior (Karoo). For instance, in the mid-1860s Baines (in Muller, 2000:24) encountered six black Africans who owned wagons and who made a good living by transporting goods between Grahamstown, Somerset East and Port Elizabeth (Muller, 2000:26). According to Muller (2000:26), these people were earning £20 to £50 a load on one occasion.

Consequently, the off-farm employment of coloureds and black Africans as transport riders evidently continued to escalate, particularly in the late 1860s. For instance, in the late 1860s, a missionary amongst the Mfengu in the Karoo district stated that 'a huge number of Mfengu were constantly in the habit of conveying goods from one part of the colony to another' (Muller, 2000:24-25). Another observer (Houghton, 1972, quoted in Beinart, 2003:20) also noted that Mfengu, Sotho and Hottentots own wagons and spans of oxen with which they convey merchandise between the various towns of the Cape Colony. He argued that:

The expansion of settlers' agrarian economy I found had been a very considerable advantage to the Hottentots of this situation, by the increase in the frontier trade furnishing them with profitable employment, especially in the conveyance of goods between the Bay (PE) and Grahamstown as well as other interior towns (Karoo). From forty to fifty wagons belonging to the people of Bethelsdorp were now almost constantly on the road, and Africans were invariably employed in this carrying trade, and in the transport of stored goods to the different military posts on the frontier.

However, it was only in 1880s that the economies of these towns in the Karoo were somehow shaped by the establishment of a railway line that connected these towns with Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, precisely to transport agricultural products from surrounding farms to the wider communities. This culminated in the establishment of railway lines and a number of

railway stations and depots which further created employment opportunities particularly for black African men (Marsden, 1986:32; Smith, 1974). On the other side, black women worked in providing domestic services including cleaning and washing for various off-farm related sectors in the town (1986:32). These women were predominantly black Africans and coloureds from the locations. From the early 1880s onwards, various towns in the Karoo including Cradock and Somerset East developed irrigation farming which further led to the establishment of dairy farming. The growth of the dairy farm led to a proliferation of a number of butcheries in towns with sizable employment opportunities for black Africans who were staying in the locations. Indeed, during this period, Karoo small towns increasingly relied on the fortunes of surrounding sheep and livestock farming. As Muller (2000:27) noted, the prosperity of the Karoo small towns began when many of the disillusioned settlers, contributed to a rapid increase in wool production in Graaff-Reinet and elsewhere in the Eastern Cape. This fortune gave rise to such merchants as J.O. Smith and the Mosenthal brothers (in PE) who helped to market the wool products. In the process, they were able to give advances to farmers and to provide better stud animals so that by the 1880s wool constituted 82 per cent of total exports.

### **2.3.2 The semi-arid agrarian economy: changing off-farm activities from the 1880s to the 1940s**

The towns during the 1880s still depended on agriculture, thus the drought that came later affected the economies of these towns immensely (Tetelman, 1997:26). Developments during this period were, however, crucial in the sense that the railway line connecting the Karoo Midlands to Port Elizabeth via the King Fish River was established in 1881. The establishment of railways coincided with the building of train stations for locomotive train, and this further created multiple spin-offs for the Karoo small towns. For instance, more people from adjacent towns were needed to help transporting and filling the coal used in the train. As a result, more agricultural products (in particular wool and ostrich feathers) were transported to the Port Elizabeth and East London by train (see Photo 1 below).

**Photo 1: The Alicedale station linking Karoo region to Port Elizabeth via Grahamstown in 1895**



*(Source: Lewis, 2016)<sup>17</sup>*

The above picture is indeed a relevant illustration depicting how subsequent railway activities were an integral part of the economies of these towns. Although the picture may appear be silenced or perfected in terms of depicting the broader spatial sphere of influence of agrarian economy, there are however key features indicating connection of Alicedale station with the then agrarian economy. According to Lewis's interpretation of the picture, the ladies in the photo seem to be in their Sunday kit, indicating that the photographer was on his way. While the grand station building looks even more imposing from this angle, it is interesting that there were those beer barrels awaiting trans-shipment into a Grahamstown-bound train (Lewis, 2016). On the right side of the picture are a couple of ox-wagons said to have off-loaded the containers of milk also to be transported to Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth.

Similarly, the picture in Map 1 shows that the station was part of the farming communities. Lewis's interpretation of the picture also indicates that station was situated in this part of the

---

<sup>17</sup> Please note that this picture is sourced from the original archives prepared and collected by Lewis to be kept and published in the museum. The archives show the locomotive route from Port Elizabeth to Cradock in the mid-1800s.

Karoo to meet the needs of the farming community. More interestingly, the station is located just next to the Bushmans River out of sight between the photographer and the railway. As Lewis stated, the left-hand corner of the picture is the farmhouse which also served as a pumphouse that provided water for the locomotives and the town. The locomotive shed is beyond the station building, at the entrance to Boesmanspoort which was later relocated at this end of the station to the left of the nearby dead-end roads.

**Photo 2: A 1895 picture of Alicedale Station in the distance with all surrounding land uses.**



*(Source: Lewis, 2016)*

Based on studies conducted recently, there is an emerging view that the economies of these towns, reflected by number of economic activities in these towns, have changed significantly since the year 1888 (Nel et al, 2011:14). For instance, Nel et.al. (2011), based on the study conducted on the 12 most easterly town centres in the Karoo, find that the four larger Karoo towns (i.e., Graaff-Reinet, Cradock, Middelburg and Somerset East) have experienced a significant and generally uninterrupted increase in the number of businesses since 1888. The period from the 1880s to the 1920s was significant in a sense commercial agriculture was, for the first time, experiencing sluggish growth attributed to droughts. While lack of growth in commercial agriculture affected the crop-producing parts of South Africa (such as the Transvaal and Natal), sheep and livestock farming, the Karoo Midland was not severely

affected. However, as indicated in Table 1 below the small towns of the Karoo and their populace continued to depend on business enterprises (off-farm activities) for survival.

**Table 1: Changing number of businesses in the towns of the eastern Karoo**

Town	1888	1904	1921	1935	1951	1970	1990	2006	%
Aberdeen	37	42	51	74	56	30	45	21	-43
Graaff-Reinet	92	128	140	117	135	180	223	303	329
Hofmeyer	17	39	32	20	30	25	19	12	-30
Jansenville	35	19	35	23	27	20	29	22	-38
Middleburg	32	22	81	89	81	95	127	126	393
Pearston	28	44	45	27	21	16	13	10	-65
Somerset East	91	142	114	75	86	111	128	133	146
Steynsburg	41	68	42	49	34	38	27	26	-37
Steytlerville	0	22	20	22	35	32	30	17	-23
Venterstad	9	30	36	30	27	24	20	9	0
Willowmore	55	49	64	37	39	37	49	29	-47

*(Source: Nel et al. (2011) from Dennis Edwards 1888–1921; Cape Times 1935–1951; Braby’s 1970–1990; Telkom 2006)*

As shown in Table 1, above, the most dramatic growth of off-farm business activities has been in Middleburg. The town experienced a 393 per cent increase, followed by Graaff-Reinet and Somerset East since 1888. This was in spite of the fact that commercial agriculture experienced significance decline since 1929 due to the global depression. But with respect to Middleburg and other small towns, Nel and Hill argued that the towns survived the economic turmoil of the 1930s as more black Africans, particularly in the locations (now townships), sought to develop more off-farm activities as main sources of their livelihood (see Marsden, 1986).

Although the number of farmers declined during this period, those who continued with farming, especially Afrikaners, devised the means to secure cheap labour so that they could sell more agricultural products at lower price. Surprisingly, such towns as Graaff-Reinet, Somerset East and Middleburg, in particular, experienced significant population growth with more black Africans from the rural hinterlands of the Cape Colony migrating to these towns (Nel & Hill, 2008). This explained the reason why Middleburg and Graaff-Reinet continued to

experience uninterrupted growth of off-farm businesses, despite the ailing agricultural market following the Great Depression. The major question is how the population of these towns survived on the meagre wages they earned from farms. The following section argues that it was through the supplies of material resources from farms that people in these towns sustained their livelihoods. It seeks to draw attention to the role of material resources from farms as the dominant source of livelihoods for black Africans and coloured communities in the Karoo's small towns.

### **2.3.3 Material resource supplies as a conduit of farms in the Karoo towns: from the 1920s to the 1940s**

Another key factor that contributed to the impact of commercial farms on the economies of small towns in the Karoo was their supply of material resources to these towns. Although the role of material resource supplies in the making of socio-economic conditions of black South Africans in small towns existed since the inception of commercial agriculture, the phenomenon became more prominent in 1920s. Kamete 1997 draws attention to the socio-economic significance of material resources from adjacent farms to the nearby small towns. In this article, he argued that the population that resides in small towns surrounded by commercial farms often survived not only on wage-based incomes, but on material resources (e.g., milk, meat, maize, livestock, sheep, etc.) supplied by these farms. While his article was based on a Zimbabwean town (Banket, there are crucial similarities that could be drawn depicting how people in the Karoo small towns benefited (or survived) from these material resources. Like small towns in the Karoo of South Africa, Banket emerged out of a rich agricultural zone where its lower income population (Africans) survived on maize and livestock from the nearby farms during the period of Structural Adjustment Programme (Kamete, 1997:26). Kamete further argues that:

Banket's socio-economic livelihood is centred on the two marketing depots and associated industries that arose out of the need to service the agricultural sector. This includes the depots and the resultant population as well as material resources supplies. The depots, having established by farmers, provides maize, cotton, wheat and soya beans to the lower income population in the town.

In the case of the Karoo, Marsden (1986:12) argued that since the early 1920s a particular type of labour force emerged in the Karoo. This labour force comprised of farm labour which was dominated by a relatedly small and settled family labour force paid predominantly in "kind"

rather than in cash. It was through the payment-in-kind that allowed farm workers to access a range of material resources from farms. For instance, Africans worked on these farms not just to gain wages but to secure access to a range of material benefits (livestock, sheep, meat, milk and vegetables) which contributed significantly to sustaining their livelihoods in town and their rural hinterlands (reserves). Atkinson (2008:93) states that these material benefits were made available to the farm workers or farm dwellers by means of a paternalistic system.<sup>18</sup> This was in the form of informal relations that farm workers or farm dwellers had with the white farm owners and this relationship went beyond their worker-employer relations on the farms. For Atkinson, the paternalistic relations between farm workers and farm owners created conditions for black Africans to access a range of material benefits from these farms. However, these paternalistic arrangements were not confined between farm workers and farm owners, as articulated by Atkinson, but extended to people who were living in towns, where the poor constantly negotiated for access to certain agrarian material resources to sustain their socio-economic livelihoods. This pattern of access to material resources from farms was prevalent in the Karoo since 1888 and explained the reason why farm workers managed to survive on these farms despite being poorly paid (Atkinson, 2008:93; Nel & Hill, 2008). The fact that in the Karoo many farmers extended their relationship with their employees beyond the employer-labourer relationship makes sense, as many of them regarded the town and its populace as part of their farms (Atkinson, 2008:93).

Atkinson argued that access to material resources, as a form of benefits from commercial agriculture, were more prevalent in the Karoo. While most social historians (see Ross, 1999; Wolpe, 1972) argued that the rise of commercial agriculture effectively alienated black Africans from their way of life, the case of the Karoo present a somewhat unique experience. In this case, black Africans who were working on white farms accumulated material resources that sought to enhance their rurality in their countryside. As Beinart (2003) and Marsden (1986) noted, the period from 1888 was significant for the survival of these towns in that sheep farming experienced a decline which led to the migration of many black Africans from farms to settle in towns. Once again, black Africans continued their relations to farms through access to livestock including sheep sold by farmers to the people in towns in order to survive on the farms which were increasingly devastated by drought (Beinart, 2003; Marsden, 1986).

---

<sup>18</sup>Paternalistic system is a practice on the part of people in authority of restricting the freedom and responsibilities of those subordinate to or otherwise dependent on them in their supposed interest (see Atkinson, 2008).

In the late 1890s the Karoo experienced a significant decline of wool production following the decreasing number of sheep and livestock from 1895 to 1904 (Beinart, 2003:9-10). For instance, the number of merino sheep leapt to about 5 million in 1855 to 10 million in 1875. But in 1895 onwards these agrarian products fell gradually such that in 1905 they were below 6 million. In the 1920s, the price for wool produced and exported primarily from the Karoo fell with the ripple-effects on the profits the farmers were looking to accumulate. The question is how did the decline in wool price affected material resource supplies from farms to the small towns, particularly in the Karoo? In answering this question, Marsden argued that the decline of wool price increased supplies of material resources to the Africans living in such towns as Cradock and Graaff-Reinet. During this time, white farms sought to increase labour force in their farms in order to produce more with more labour without escalating the wages they had to pay to their labour. This was the strategy that was used by white farmers to stabilise their profit in the face of the continued international decline of agrarian commodity's price. The rations as form of payment in kind through material resource supplies to the farm workers increased; hence the supply of these resources increased to the benefits of people living in small towns. It was for this reason that Marsden (1986) noted that in Cradock the selling of meats from surrounding farms became one of the sources of livelihoods for those families who were not employed on farms.

In 1926, the health report revealed that farm wages for black Africans and coloureds in the Karoo districts were between 5/-(17) and 10/- a month. This was contrasted with the case of Janseville where wages were 5/- or nothing in cases where farm workers had stock of their own, the average wage was between 8/- and 10/- per month (Marsden, 1986:15-16). The stock which workers accumulated was said to be part of their wages and one of the farmers argued in *Midlands News and Karoo Farmers of 1926*, that:

We have no hesitation whatsoever in saying that no native worth his sake will consider working for wage of 10/- per month if he did not also receive rations (material resources). The report of the conference makes no mention at all of rations although rations are usually worth 5 or 6 times as much as the actual cash paid.

Indeed, these material resources reached the towns as farm workers constantly move back and forth between the towns and farms not just to visit the towns, but to exchange material resources accumulated from the farms. This is crucial, as Marsden (1986) and Mkhize (2012) argued that farm workers and farm dwellers in the Karoo were not necessarily detached from the town as

they viewed the towns (i.e., locations in towns) as their home. While Mkhize (2012) argued that the mobility of farm workers to towns is part of their means to cope with land tenure insecurity, it is crucial to note that these people went to towns to share and distribute material resources obtained from surrounding farms (see Kamete, 1997; Marsden, 1986). These material resources from farms to towns were crucial in many ways: First, they supplemented poor wages that farm workers received from white farms during the period where agriculture did not do well in the market. Secondly, sheep and livestock received by farm workers as a form of payment found their way to the towns where they were either sold to or shared with people in the locations (see Marsden, 1986). Lastly, but crucial, it was through material resources such as meat, milk and soya milk obtained from surrounding farms that many informal trading by Africans were formed as means of survival. For instance, Smit and Butler in Tetelman (1997:29), referring to Cradock, argued that in period from 1905 to 1930s, Africans in the Old Location invented their small businesses mainly to sell meats and milk as well as sour milk supplied from farms by farm workers. Tetelman (1997), on the other hand, described the Old Location in Cradock (at least by the late 1930s) as a creative space on which Africans negotiated their access to material resources from surrounding farms. During this period (see Marsden, 1986), there emerged a group of Africans who established their informal businesses in the town (Cradock). This was more acute in the 1930s where white farms had more surplus production as their agrarian products were no longer sellable due to the decline of price in the international market (Muller, 2000; Nel and Hill, 2008:20). While the consumption of wool declined, the consumption of meat, livestock and milk in the local market increased as these products were cheaply accessible by Africans.

Indeed, this shows that the relationships that farmers in the Karoo have had with their farm workers was not just confined on farms, but instead went beyond farm's boundaries to affect the lives of the people living in these towns. These prevailing, yet invisible, social relations are not adequately addressed by Atkinson (2007a)'s analysis, nor do they receive due attention by Mkhize (2012) and Brandt (2013) recent analysis of the socio-economic significance of farms to Cradock or small towns in the Karoo. While Mkhize (2012:113) acknowledged that farm workers in the Karoo often move from farms to towns as a mechanism of coping with their land tenure insecurity, her analysis lacks some crucial details regarding the motive behind the connection that farm workers have had with towns in the Karoo. Kamete (1998) and Tacoli (2007) on the other side, went further to argue that the livelihoods of local people in the small towns are often based on interactions resulting from the movement of farm workers or farm

owners from towns to farms and from farms to towns vice-versa. This interaction, Kamete argues, includes flow of material resources from farm to the towns, which are then accessed by low-income population as means of survival. Tetelman (1997) argued that this group of population, particularly in the Karoo small towns, either failed to secure survival niche in the modern urban economy or was out to supplement their income through regular forays onto the farms. Thus, it was through their informal relationships with the ambient commercial agrarian production (although the farms were totally fenced in) that Africans and coloured people in the Karoo towns were able to create informal means of survival for themselves. In a similar vein, Tacoli (2007:90) portrays small towns in agrarian district such as the Karoo as microcosm of commercial farming, with farms serving as sources of material supplies for the poor people living in these towns. It is thus within this context that the chapter argues that farming in the Karoo had immense socio-economic impacts on the lives of the people living the small towns.

#### **2.4 Mechanization and Labour dynamics in the Karoo: From 1950s to 1980s**

In the 1950s South Africa's white capitalist agriculture underwent massive transformation to deal with the repercussions of the Great Depression of the 1930s, which had left many white farmers destitute. As Minnaar (1990) states, this period was signified by state intervention primarily to save white commercial agriculture from the gold revolution (i.e., state supporting gold standard instead of commercial agriculture). The state intervention manifested itself, first, by introducing legal measures to increase the amount of land available to white farmers and secondly by directing various forms of capital investments to the purpose of keeping white farmers on the farmlands as the dominant class in the agrarian economic stratum. For Berry (1993), period marked the beginning of mechanisation in the agricultural sector, with the state making available credit and tax concessions to white farmers, which led to considerable fixed capital investment. The mechanisation of the agrarian sector took the form of the purchasing of machinery, including tractors and automatic irrigation systems.

But, as it will be shown later, the mechanisation of commercial agriculture did not significantly affect the agrarian production pattern in the Karoo. Instead, Bernstein (2003) argues that the vestige of mechanisation was most obvious in the Western Cape wine farming sector, rather than in the sheep farming sector in the Karoo by the late 1950s. As Marcus (1989) notes, the mechanisation of agricultural production had severe effects on the socio-economic lives of black Africans in those towns surrounded by large-scale farming. The effects were so immense on farm workers and black labour tenants, with many of them being retrenched and evicted, as

the machines could do more work with fewer labour inputs. However, this agrarian revolution towards mechanisation is not evident in the Karoo as many of the sheep farms were inherently small. There was thus no urgent need to accommodate highly mechanised agricultural technique (Nel & Hill, 2008; Marsden, 1986).

The debate about the effects of mechanisation on labour demand in South Africa has thus far been tackled by various scholars (see Cousins, 2007a, Marcus, 1989, Minnaar, 1990). For instance, Cousins (2007a) argued, that ‘the resolution of the agrarian question of capital through mechanization created ‘the agrarian question of labour’ which is characterized by unemployment, poverty, food insecurity and land hunger. Indeed, it is not surprising that the mechanisation led to the shedding of labour, as only technically skilled labour was required at the peril of huge numbers of unskilled black labourers (Minnaar, 1990). This necessitated the transition from labour tenancy and share-cropping systems to regimes of coerced labour, both permanent and seasonal (Bernstein, 1996). The recent research by Atkinson (2007b) notes that between 1988 and 1998, the commercial agriculture sector (crop farming areas) shed 140 000 regular jobs, a 20 percent decline, and Hall (2009) notes a decline of 26 percent between 1993 and 2002. In the same agrarian area, it can thus be seen that mechanisation had a negative impact on employment in capitalist agriculture resulting in 1.1 million people being evicted from white commercial farms between 1960 and 1983 (Wegerif, 2005). It was also through mechanisation that the phenomenon of large-scale farming emerged, as it was accompanied by a concentration and consolidation of the ownership of land and capital, a reduction in the number of small farming units, and an increase in farm sizes (Bernstein, 1996) following the dispossession of the rural poor (Cousins & Scoones, 2010). The phenomenon is further articulated by Nel and Hill (2008) followed by Atkinson (2008) on the fact that small towns have received more retrenched farm workers over the last 30 years. These studies, however, draw little attention to the land-use change towards private game farms as one of the major factors leading to the under-employment of the black working class, particularly in the Karoo.

While the mechanisation of agriculture may have some factual basis, it is, however, not the case with the semi-arid agrarian areas (such as Cradock), for several reasons. First, mechanisation occurred intensively in areas where farming activities predominantly focused on crop production rather than livestock or sheep farming. The production cost of crop (e.g., maize) escalated due to high labour costs, hence the introduction of mechanisation contributed to the less labour cost and improved agricultural production (1989:4). This mean that

agriculture in the Karoo was not severely affected, because people in adjacent small towns continued to rely on commercial agriculture despite the nation-wide phenomenon of labour shedding reported to have emanated from the mechanisation of agricultural production. Therefore, there was not substantial linkage between mechanisation and the Karoo agriculture during this period, as the response to mechanisation on the part of farmers' country-wide (i.e., South Africa) was uneven. The evidence is found in Bernstein (2003), who argues that by:

The mid-1970s case studies from different sectors presented a variegated pattern: in the maize and wheat growing regions, for instance, mechanization continued unabated with severe underemployment.

To the contrary, the Karoo regions with their livestock and intensive sheep farming remained unaffected by the wave of mechanisation. Thus, the Karoo was immune from the labour shedding associated with the introduction of machinery and technology in the commercial agricultural sector.

Secondly, mechanisation in the agricultural sector (see Bernstein, 2003; Marcus, 1989) was, to a greater extent, confined to large-scale crop farming occupying large areas of land. This was not the situation in the Karoo, where sheep and livestock farming invariably occurred on relatively small lands. This suggests that even though mechanisation led to the labour shedding in the commercial agricultural sector in general, the same could not be said of the sheep and livestock farming sector in the semi-arid areas. Whilst other farming areas have experienced significant labour shedding over the last 50 years, the labour supply and demand in the Karoo remained intact from the 1950s to the mid-1980s (Nel & Hill, 2008).

It was, however, only in the 1980s, owing to the liberalisation and deregulation of commercial farming, that the Karoo began to experience a decline in the demand for labour in the farming sector (Nel & Hill, 2008; Atkinson, 2007a). According to Nel & Hill (2008), the decline that has occurred in the Karoo over the last 30 years is not to be attributed to mechanisation, but to the transformation of land-use from commercial agriculture to game farming. Paradoxically, Nel and Hill (2008) state that agricultural production (primarily from extensive rangelands) in the Eastern Cape Karoo has remained constant at 5.24 mn ha for 84 years, declining by only 2.5percent over that time (SA Census Statistics, 1929 and 2002). This is, in itself, suggests that farming in the Karoo is still a dominant sector driving the economies of small towns and leading to the creation of employment.

The situation described above is very different from that in most small towns in countries such as the United States or Australia, where the small towns have shifted towards the manufacturing industry, with massive low-income population participation in the new economy (see Archer, 1990; Nel & Hill, 2008). The participation of the low-income population in the new economic sector is what Bryceson and Jamal (1997) referred to as de-agrarianisation epitomised by occupational shift and spatial adjustment away from an agrarian mode of production. However, regarding the small towns in Southern Africa in general and the Eastern Cape Karoo in particular, the agricultural economy has remained the dominant sector in their economies, as it continues to generate multiple off-farm or non-agricultural activities upon which the livelihoods of the lower-income townfolk depend (Kamete, 1998; Tacoli, 2007; Hirson et al., 1990-1991). Once again, as Nel and Hill (2008:9-8) note, the most crucial issue ignored by the current literature is the reality that in recent past years farmland has been increasingly converted into extensive game farms, thus drastically decreasing the number of farm animals that need to be cared for by the labour (Hobson, 2007b in Nel & Hill, 2008:9). Thus, the land conversion, not mechanisation, provides a logical explanation for the increasing number of unemployed within the agricultural sector, as well as its ripple effects on the economies of adjacent small towns, the Karoo agrarian economy in particular.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

It is within the historical roots of colonial agriculture and their linkage with the Karoo small towns (including their populace) that an understanding of the contemporary socio-economic effects of conversions to private game farming on the lives of the people residing in these towns could be established. As stated in the chapter, the Karoo small towns are a microcosm of the agrarian economy that originated in the early nineteenth century. While this period signalled the emergence of the black servile class, which was denied land ownership and subsequently exploited by white farmers, African people managed to survive on these farms and also to sustain their livelihoods in small towns. On the one hand, the small towns served as mechanisms for the provision of services and commerce to the surrounding farms, while on the other they benefited enormously from the then fortunes of agriculture. Apart from that, it was the presence of commercial agriculture, particularly in the semi-arid regions, that led to the emergence of these towns with a range of non-agricultural activities, linked, either directly or indirectly, to commercial agriculture. Thus, the paternalistic relations between farm owners and farm workers created conditions for Africans to access a range of material benefits from these farms. These paternalistic arrangements were not confined to the farm workers only by

the farm owners, as suggested by Atkinson (2008), but extended to people in the adjacent towns, where the poor constantly negotiated for access to certain agrarian material resources to sustain their socio-economic livelihoods. It is in this manner that the local economies of these towns were inextricably linked to commercial agriculture. This insight would seem to contradict the de-agrarianisation thesis espoused by Bryceson and Jamal (1997:2). This argues that both the proliferation of off-farm activities and the participation of former farm workers in these activities indicate a falling away from the traditional agrarian interest in the countryside. However, as shown in Chapter Five and Chapter Six, conversion of commercial agriculture to private game farming industry is the beginning of de-agrarianisation.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE CHANGING NATURE OF WILDLIFE ENCLOSURE AND ITS EFFECTS ON AFRICANS IN THE KAROO

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the origin and evolution of the conversion of land to game farming in the Karoo and its effects on the local black African people. Game farming in the Eastern Cape Karoo region manifested itself in various forms from the early 1800s (i.e., the period of the decimation of wild animals in the region) to 1886, when the Game Law was passed to permit private land owners to enclose wildlife (Brown, 2002:76). Unlike the current conversions, the early conversions were characterised by the enclosure for game farming of land that had not formerly been agricultural. Game enclosure for market and recreational hunting emerged in the semi-arid areas of the Cape Colony in the late 1800s.<sup>19</sup> Thereafter, the people who lived in the small Karoo towns were neither the beneficiaries nor the custodians of wildlife, as they had been previously. They were effectively denied access to the animals that had, until then, formed the basis of their economy (Brown, 2002:76; see also Gess, 2014:30-31). The main focus here is on how the colonial state codified and sustained the game laws, particularly in the late nineteenth century, to facilitate wildlife enclosure<sup>20</sup> on private land.

The chapter shows that the game enclosure (i.e., game farming) has never benefited black African people in the Karoo. From the late 1880s to the present, access to wildlife by black African people was constrained through game laws and state intervention. The period since 1886 is significant because the game farming enclosures that emerged during this period were specifically designed to benefit the elite class of white sport and recreational hunters and limited access to wildlife resources by black Africans, with severe consequences for their pre-colonial economy, which depended on their access to wildlife (Brown, 2002:2). Gess and Swart (2013:1-2) in their recent article entitled: *Hunting status? Power and buffalo shooting in the Albany and Bathurst district of the Cape Colony*, draw attention to how hunters in the small

---

<sup>19</sup> The area under discussion is currently known as the Eastern Cape Province.

<sup>20</sup> Please note that in this context wildlife enclosure and wildlife protection are essentially the same. Game farming involves the fencing/enclosure of land to protect and reproduce game or wildlife so that wealthy hunters can pay for the privilege of shooting the animals.

towns were systematically excluded from accessing wildlife in favour of the rural gentry<sup>21</sup> (see also Van Sittert, 2002:95; 2005:270).

Two interrelated arguments are presented and elaborated upon in this chapter. First, the chapter argues that from the late nineteenth century to the present, the protection of game for hunting on privately owned land, especially in the Cape Colony, was something that was reserved for the 'elite class' (or the so-called white gentry). It shows that access to wildlife since the 1886 Game Law came into effect was determined by land ownership, and it is for this reason that the game enclosure of this period and the game farming which came later (under the neo-liberal economic logic) negatively affected black African people, as all forms of access to wildlife by them were systematically precluded and criminalised, first by the colonial state and later by the apartheid state through a series of interrelated game laws which sought to allow private land owners (the rural gentry) to enclose wild animals for hunting and trade endowment.

Secondly, the chapter challenges the contemporary scholars who argue that conversion to private game farming presents socio-economic benefits to the local people (black Africans) particularly in the former agrarian areas (Langholz & Kerley, 2006; Loveridge, Reynolds & Milner-Gulland, 2007). The chapter argues that since the inception of wildlife conservation (enclosure), particularly in the Eastern Cape, black African people have always been excluded from accessing wildlife resources. The exclusion had severe socio-economic effects on the lives of black African people, particularly in semi-arid areas such as Cradock, where, as already indicated in Chapter Two, black Africans had relied on commercial agriculture for many decades (Gess, 2014:4).

The first part of the chapter deals with the transition from the pre-colonial period to the colonial contacts in the early nineteenth century to show how black Africans' access to wildlife resources was affected by the introduction of game enclosures. This section illustrates how wildlife protection in this period affected their socio-economic livelihoods. The second part of the chapter will then focus on the conversion of commercial farms to private game farms and the debates around the effects of the conversions on the socio-economic conditions of black

---

<sup>21</sup> 'Landed gentry' originally referred exclusively to members of the upper class who were landlords and commoners in the British sense. The concept also carried the same meaning in the Cape Colony as it referred to the group of elites mostly, whites whom enjoyed social, political, and economic privileges associated with being wealthy.

Africans in the Karoo. While the chapter shows that the current conversion of farmland to game farming looks similar to the earlier enclosure for agricultural purposes, it is in fact rather different as the current conversion is predominantly driven by neo-liberal market forces. The chapter thus concludes that although game farming on private land has manifested itself in different forms over the last 200 years, the effects on African people, particularly in terms of their exclusion from the land and their restrained access to wildlife and other associated benefits, has remained the same. Despite the inherent exclusion of African people from wildlife operation, it is, however, crucial to mention that there is an emerging class of black Africans (political and economically powerful) who are now entering the game industry. The notion that wildlife exclusion from wildlife conservation is increasingly based on class rather than along racial division has created a debate regarding who benefits from private wildlife. For instance, Mr C. Ramaphosa and Mr T. Sexwale are reported to have spent millions of dollars in breeding and growing certain game species for profit<sup>22</sup>. Indeed, this indicates that access to wildlife has always been exclusive preserve for the privileged few in South Africa. The chapter argues that the disparity in terms of access to wildlife and associated benefits is not a new phenomenon, but began in the early 1800s during the colonial epoch.

### **3.2 Africans' access to wildlife as a source of livelihoods: the period prior to 1886**

The historical tale regarding the relationship between Africans and wildlife has been rather neglected by the chief scholars dealing with the environmental historiography of South Africa, particularly in the Eastern Cape Karoo (Gess, 2014: 30-31; Van Sittert, 2005:269). However, as MacKenzie (1995) notes, it is crucial to understand how Africans survived on wild animals during the period prior to the transition towards colonial<sup>23</sup> wildlife enclosure. Unlike the current conversion, the nineteenth century colonial experience with wildlife animals ushered in by the state did not entirely deny black Africans access to wildlife, a process which can be traced from the introduction of the private property regime in 1818 followed by the Fencing Act of 1883 and the Game Law of 1886 (Duly, 1969, and Van Sittert, 2002:95). While wildlife enclosure occurred on land that was privately owned, Gess (2014:61) argues that Africans continued to hunt certain animals as there was no specific game law to restrict access to wildlife by Africans.

---

<sup>22</sup> A full story of Cyril Ramaphosa's involvement in game farming industry can be traced

here:<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/08/cyril-ramaphosa-criticised-profits-game-south-africa>

<sup>23</sup> It is arguably understood that in the period from the early 1800s South Africa was not officially regarded as a British Colony. However, scholars such as MacKenzie (1995) and Brooks (2005) agree that the forces that prevailed during this period were colonial in nature; hence the wildlife enclosure that played out during this period subjugated land for Africans to the benefit of the British colonial elites.

As indicated earlier, wild animals that were outside private property were regarded as threats to the then growing commercial agriculture and were legally accessible to sport hunters from the towns and cities as well as to African people who were moving from one part of the Cape to another (Van Sittert, 2005:270). The social and economic life of African communities is recognized by MacKenzie (1995) as having been intimately connected with wild animals. The major question is how Africans were connected with wild animals before the advent of wildlife enclosure (Neumann, 2002 and 2009). This question is crucial, as the popular wildlife historical narratives of this period are said to have been written from the point of view of the elite imperial hunters and administrators (Van Sittert, 2005:269). This dominant historical narrative systematically elevated these hunters' particular concerns while neglecting the view that Africans' daily lives were once intimately connected with wildlife.

In addressing this question, MacKenzie (1995:2) states that prior to the introduction of conservation practices in the Cape Colony the manner in which Africans accessed wildlife resources was through traditional hunting<sup>24</sup>. As opposed to the recent trophy hunting by white settlers, traditional hunting by Africans was invariably conducted on foot, using traditional weapons such as knobkerries, and assisted by traditional dogs, namely *isiqhe* and *isimaku*<sup>25</sup> (Dlamini, 2005:11; Neumann, 2003). While white trophy hunters were concerned with killing wild animals for sport, traditional hunts by Africans were all to do with the difficulty associated with the chase, as when the *inqina* (the group of African hunters) and their dogs failed to capture the animals, the hunt was not necessarily considered a failure (MacKenzie in Dlamini, 2005; Carruthers, 1989).

The *inqina* had many of the elements of a cultural activity, so that the hunting of animals was significant to the people well beyond the possible material gains (Brooks, 2002). For instance, Dold and Cocks (2012) describe hunting with packs of dogs for small antelopes, hares and herds as being a common pastime in rural villages of Xhosaland and in mountainous areas of the Karoo. It so happened that when these people (black Africans — Xhosa and Khoi) migrated to the Karoo region (e.g., Graaff-Reinet) the hunting of wildlife animals continued to be an aspect of their livelihoods (Roche, 2003:101; Cocks, Dold & Vetter, 2012). Even though this

---

<sup>24</sup> It refers to the most 'natural' form of chasing the game animals using dogs and arrows rather guns which shot and often kill the hunt instantly.

<sup>25</sup> *Isiqhe* and *isimaku* are dog species that used both scent and sight to hunt and were originally used to flush small game into a hunter's nets and to control a village's rodent populations. Read more at <http://dogtime.com/dog-breeds/basenji#yODbLuI5MPL10uwW.99>.

type of hunting or access to wildlife by black Africans was later rendered illegal (in terms of the subsequent promulgation of Game Law of 1886), they considered it to be a cultural activity rather than a commercial venture (Dold & Cocks, 2012:50). Thus, hunting was an important part of the pre-colonial economy and one amongst a range of socio-economic opportunities that were open to Africans, especially in the Eastern Cape and Natal (now called KwaZulu-Natal).

In the case of the Karoo region, Gess (2014) and Van Sittert (2005) both show that prior to the colonial contact, black Africans had access to wildlife through hunting. For the Khoikhoi people, hunting enabled them to secure domestic resources in the form of meat, skins, ornaments and receptacles (Dlamini, 2005; Gess, 2014:57; Duffy, 1997; Duffy, 2006). For instance, their habit of moving from one place to another made them to develop a remarkable tracking skill which allowed them to out-compete British settlers.

The interaction of the Khoi people with wild animals in the Karoo is described by Beinart and McGregor (2003:32) as follows:

Khoisan men had acquired the ability to track not only in finding wildlife but because their techniques of hunting, by arrow or spear, did not immediately kill animals; these had to be followed – sometimes for long distances – once they had been injured. Though firearms (used by British settlers) hastened the death of many hunted animals, texts testify that arduous searches were still sometimes essential.

Although, the history of hunting in the Cape Colony is often associated with the British settlers and the Dutch people, Dlamini (2005) argues that the culture of traditional hunting among the Xhosa-speaking people (Ngunis) did not stop even after their contact with colonial settlers (see Peires, 1985 and 1986). During the period prior to the passing of the Game Law of 1886 isiXhosa speakers, particularly in the Karoo, would be able to hunt with dogs and spears, as there was no law prohibited such hunting in favour of the use of firearms (Roche, 2003). For Africans, particularly for the Nguni people (the Xhosa speakers and the Zulu people), the hunting of wild animals was a defence mechanism to protect their communities or villages, their livestock and growing crops from predators. Gess (2014) draws attention to how hunting also served as an indigenous way of controlling certain diseases such as those brought by the tsetse fly (*unakane*). This fed on wild animals that harboured the blood parasites that caused the wasting disease, and subsequently was transferred to domestic livestock when bitten by the tsetse fly. For instance, when troubled with *unakane*, or when moving livestock into new areas,

the Zulu King Mpande (1840–1872) would authorise large hunting parties to clear the countryside of wild animals (Brooks, 2002). In such areas as Graaff-Reinet and Albany in the Karoo, the Khoikhoi people placed more priority on conserving meat after a kill of wild animals (see Beinart & McGregor, 2003:34). It was for this reason that the Khoikhoi people developed the technique of cutting game meat into strips and hanging it up to dry (into biltong) after salting; and Beinart and McGregor (2003) argue that the practice was valuable to the Boers (Dutch) people.

Gess (2014) notes a number of incidents in the central Karoo in which the skins of wild animals were used to cover the genitals of both black Africans (i.e., the Xhosa) and Khoisan people. This skin concealment was used by both males and females in the locations. The remains of wild animals such as their skins, heads and other organs were used by Xhosa's traditional healers to heal people. Thus, the hunting of wild animals by Africans carried immense ritual significance. For instance, after the death of the head of a household, the month-long period of mourning would end with *ihlambo*, as a ceremonial washing of spears grown rusty through disuse, in the form of a ritual hunt. Apart from the ritual hunt, wild animals were also important to Africans as a source of a supply of meat to feed the entourage during treks, for trading, and for the expression of various cultural rituals (Thomson, 1992 and Castree & Braun, 2001). According to Dold and Cocks (2012:1-8), hunting by black Africans in the Cape was used as a form of training and recreation for young boys, which helped them to understand natural phenomena in the wild. Until the late-nineteenth century the legal situation in the Cape was that a wild animal was regarded as *res nullius* (i.e., a thing which has no owner), as it was a natural resource that was largely available to anyone in the countryside, including black Africans, to meet their livelihood needs. During this time access to wildlife was not determined by the type of land ownership, as wildlife was regarded as common property to be hunted and used by anyone who happened to encounter the game animals in the wilderness. It was through the rise of ideas of conservation and the commercialisation of wild animals that black Africans were increasingly excluded from hunting (Brown, 2002; Els, 1996).

### **3.3 Wildlife enclosure and social exclusion in the Karoo**

The period of the 1880s was crucial as it marked the beginning of the transition towards wildlife enclosure and the private ownership of wildlife animals, and had severe ramifications for black African people and sports hunters in the small towns. The enclosure of wildlife, usually for conservation, emanated from a deep concern by the colonial state about the destruction of

forests and decimation of wild animals (Anderson & Grove, 1989 and Chaminuka, 2013, Zungu, 2003; Zulu, 2016). As Gess and Swart (2013), Van Sittert (2005) and Brown (2002) note, this period was characterised by various efforts instituted by the state to deal with a serious drought and its environmental repercussions, which were thought to have affected a larger part of the Cape Colony. The drought, as Carruthers (1997) argues, stimulated a new kind of perception of the environment, which sought both to relate man-induced vegetation changes to changed rainfall patterns and to assign blame for these changes to black Africans (Zerner, 2000). On the other hand, wild animals particularly in the semi-arid areas of the Cape Colony were also blamed for destroying livestock in settlers' agricultural areas (Beinart & McGregor, 2003:1-2; Adams et al., 2001:2; Agrawal & Gibson, 1999; Duffy, 2006:30-32). Van Sittert (2005:270) explains that:

The impetus for the shift towards wildlife enclosure was provided by their disappearance in the face of subsistence and market hunting and the determination of elite hunters to conserve the surviving remnants of game animal species in reserves exclusively for their own use by criminalizing and suppressing all other forms of hunting.

During the 1880s, commercial agriculture, in particular sheep farming in the Karoo, was regarded as the foundation of the Cape economy (Brown, 2002). It was thus not surprising that the state responded by enclosing wild animals. This was done to protect commercial agriculture (in particular livestock farming) from being encroached upon by wild animals and to protect key wildlife species (e.g., buffalo) for exclusive use by elite hunters in the enclosed private lands.

As Beinart and McGregor (2003) explains, the state intervened by introducing a series of laws in an attempt to protect the then lucrative commercial agriculture in favour of the landed gentry against the sports hunters and Africans who were residing in the small towns (Van Sittert, 2005:269). Thus, there emerged two social interest groups who competed for the ownership of wild animals: those who favoured public ownership of wildlife for the benefit of everyone, and those who opted for private ownership of wildlife for the benefit of elite hunters (Van Sittert, 2005:272). The proponents of public ownership of wildlife in the Cape were middle-class urban sportsmen in the small towns, while the cartel of private ownership comprised mainly of Dutch gentry and Anglo landowners (2005:272). According to Van Sittert (2005) and Gess and Swart (2013) the state opted to privilege agrarian economy by making it legal for the landed gentry

to enclose wild animals and their lands. They were to have full access to wildlife inside their enclosures while others (sports hunters and Africans living in the small towns) were excluded. The government of the Cape Colony passed the Fencing Act in 1883. Van Sittert (2002:95) argues that the sole purpose of the Fencing Act of 1883 was to increase land owners' control over their environment. In this context, it was assumed that the fencing of private property (land enclosure) would inevitably raise the productivity of the commercial small-stock farming sector (Van Sittert, 2002:95). As Van Sittert (2002 in Brandt, 2013:67) notes, 'the introduction of windmills following the fencing of farms improved access to water, while wire fences on the other hand transformed the grazing patterns of domestic stock'. This in turn altered the demand for labour, particularly on the large sheep farms, because

'fences allowed higher stock rates as the farmer could control his stock better compared to the shepherd-and-kraal system where sheep could die or disappear easily when herded to or from grazing areas' (Archer, 2000:675).

But the enclosed camps for sheep, Van Sittert (2002:102) further argues, 'led to the labour surplus as the shepherds and white tenants (called *bywoners*) that often manned the outlying *veeposte* became redundant'. Fencing, as a form of spatial configuration, created a host of problems within the settler pastoral economy of the region. For instance, fencing 1) enabled the control of increasing livestock numbers; 2) had negative consequences on kraaling; 3) controlled livestock diseases; 4) controlled vermin; and 5) controlled stock theft (Van Sittert, 2002:98 in Brandt, 2013:68). In addition, the spatial re-ordering and physical control of landscape expressed through fencing was also central to the settler notion of 'civilizing' the landscape. This civilising landscape, Van Sittert argued, constituted a form of enclosure that heralded the enclosure of wild animals to the exclusion of black Africans and sportsmen hunters who did not own land.

### **3.3.1 The formalisation of game enclosure in the Cape Colony: 1883 to 1910**

The period from 1883 onwards, particularly in the Cape Colony, was characterised by the formalisation by the state of the enclosure of wildlife on private land. This wildlife enclosure movement coincided with the emergence of different hunting cultures that developed in the Cape Colony in the late nineteenth century. As Gess explains, this emerging hunting culture was strongly influenced by the influx and settlement in the Karoo region of British settlers with immense influence in the 1880s (Gess, 2014:34). It was for this reason that the 1886 Game Law was passed, with specific provisions that governed access to listed game animals such as

buffalo and kudu on private land (Van Sittert, 2005:272; Gess & Swart, 2013:3). For instance, 'Section 4 of the Game Law (1883) limited the hunting of listed game animals, including buffalo, to holders of a special permit issued free of charge by the Governor' (Gess, 2013:3). These listed animals were later defined as 'royal game' and the land in which these animals were enclosed was referred to as 'crown land' (Gess & Swart, 2013:3; Van Sittert, 2005).

The exclusionary nature of the Game Law of 1886 was reinforced by such acts as the Forest Act of 1888. This was passed to regulate the hunting of game in crown forests. This Act prohibited the hunting of any game in both demarcated and un-demarcated forests without the consent of the Conservator of Forests. In most cases, the Act would be applied by the issuing of permits in terms of Section 4 of the Game Law of 1886 allowing the rural gentry to hunt. It is for this reason that Van Sittert (2005:273) argues that this period of enclosure signalled the beginning of the privatisation and commercialisation of wild animals; a process of 'bringing in the wild', which, in the case of wild animals, involved their conversion from *res nullius* into private property through the act of capture or enclosure. While the primary aim of the law was to protect the remaining game animals against the perceived slaughter by sportsmen hunters and black Africans, Van Sittert argues that the Act led to an imbalance in favour of the private landowners.

Indeed, the wild animals remained a 'staple of frontier commerce and trans-frontier hunting as an engine of colonial expansion, where private owners were allowed to enclose wild animals for their own benefits at the expense of those who were not permitted (by law) to access wildlife (Brown, 2002). In the Cape Karoo, the balance of power between the townsfolk and the rural gentry 'tilted distinctly in favour of the latter' (Van Sittert, 2005:272). Likewise, Gess and Swart (2013:3) draw attention to the nature of the exclusion inherent in the enclosure of wild animals by stating that:

The identity and background of the officials who processed permit applications in terms of Section 4 provides insight into the control of hunting access to listed game; the identity and motives of the administrators; the struggle between local interest groups and individuals to secure for themselves the right to access animals to the exclusion of others; and the potential for cronyism and favoritism was endemic through the civil servant William John Jorten Warneford.

Permits to hunt wildlife were almost invariably granted to the landowners and those few others who could afford to buy permits, with the consent of the landowners. For instance, the

development of the local kudu hunting culture was confined by the limited number of permits that were granted by the state's Department of Forestry (Gess, 2014:37). But as Gess (2014:34) argues,

only 3 per cent of the sportsmen to whom hunting licences were issued for the eastern part of the Cape Colony were legally permitted to shoot a kudu bull and in some instances, even fewer a buffalo or an elephant.

It is for this reason that such scholars as Brown (2002:89) state that this form of wildlife enclosure emerged as a powerful ideological force that appealed to those sectors of the Dutch and Anglophone landowners who had the property and the financial means to monopolize access to the chase.

The town or urban sportsmen and African traditional hunters, most of whom were living in small towns, were excluded from hunting royal game and instead obliged to focus their attention upon other forms of hunting such as smaller antelope, including springbok (in Graaff-Reinet) and other game species (Gess, 2014:34).

This meant that the game farming operation of this period did not have a symbiotic socio-economic relation with the towns, let alone benefit black Africans who would have desired to have access to these animals on the commonage. Access to wildlife on any land that was accessible to the public was outlawed by the Game Law of 1886 and other related laws (such as the Fencing Act of 1883).

The enclosure movement provided a platform for landowners to present and protect their interests against those who wanted to access the game but were not permitted to do so by law. For instance, the landowners of the Koonap established the Koonap Heights Farmers' Protection Society in 1889, and similar farmers' associations were formed for Upper Albany, Lower Albany and Victoria East (Gess, 2014:35). Apparently, these associations were formed by the elite farmers of the districts, who were considered the leading figures of kudu preservation (through enclosure) and sports hunting (Gess, 2014:35). The elite farmers who were members of the association included George S. Tomlinson of Lanka, William Tomlison, Kemp Knott of Botha's Post, and a member of the Douglas family. On the other hand, Beinart (2003:60) draws attention to the elitist life of Charles Rubidge, who renamed his farm in English ("Well-wood") in support of the British way of life. His family was staunch royalists, and celebrated Queen Victoria's birthday with an annual springbok hunt as a symbol of the link between hunting and empire. The same pattern was adopted by Collette (a rich farmer in

Cradock), who anglicised the name of his Koonap home farm to Elephant's Fountain but continued to use Groenfontein and other Dutch names for his Cradock properties (2003:60).

Dlamini (2005:9) argues that a key feature of the colonial enclosure of wildlife that led to the growing exclusion of Africans from access to wild animals was the increasing definition of African traditional hunting as 'poaching', especially hunting that occurred outside enclosed private property. The Game Law of 1886 supported by the Fencing Act of 1883 precluded the harvesting of game animals on commonage — lands that were mostly found in the small towns. Gess describes the effect of the private ownership of land and the permit system on the restriction of ordinary people's accessing wildlife, in favour of the land gentry. Gess (2014:38-39) says that:

The combination of land ownership and the permit system had the effect of limiting the hunting of kudu for the purpose of sport, and precluded the rest of the population almost entirely from kudu hunting in a similar fashion as the hunting of deer in Britain.

Thus, 'the opportunity to hunt kudu was reserved to the rural elites, while the middle-class townsman and Africans without social or other connections had little, if any, prospect of engaging in such sport (Gess, 2014:38). The evidence for the exclusion of the towns' sportsmen hunters and black Africans is revealed in the records of the Department of Agriculture, which indicate that no permits to hunt kudu were granted to the urban working class, which included the black African population and the rural poor (Gess, 2014:38). For the urban, middle-class sportsmen, the main issue was the hunting tariff that was imposed in terms of the Game Law of 1886 in favour of the private landowners. During this period, the game farmers would impose tariffs on hunting on their farms, and the amount of the tariff was adequate to cover the cost of maintaining the fencing. Thus, a farmer might charge a license fee of £20 for an elephant, £10 for a buffalo or a kudu and 10 shillings per day for small game (Gess, 2014:38-39). Although the game farmers tried to present the game enclosure as viable economic ventures, the trickle-down effects to the small towns, particularly to the African inhabitants, was negligible in comparison with that from commercial sheep or livestock farming.

The implication was that those who were excluded from lawful hunting had to resort to hunting 'unlawfully' or 'poaching'. The problem of poaching was expressed by Tomlinson (one of the landowners), when he complained of the depredation caused by poachers who unlawfully shot

roaming kudu bulls on his farm in the Albany district (Gess, 2014:38). This was first and foremost caused by the exclusion of the towns' sportsmen hunters, as their demand for desirable kudu trophies exceeded the number for which permits were issued by the Department of Agriculture. Consequently, sportsmen were thus prepared to resort to poaching in a search to access wildlife trophies (2014:38). Gess (2014:39) draws attention to the existence of a taxidermist who lived on in the Grahamstown High Street, who was convicted in 1901 of being in possession of 23 kudu trophies without having lawful permits for them (Skead et al., 2007:69). Although all indications are that the offenders were whites, possibly townsmen, black Africans, being the underclass of the urban poor, were also affected, as from time to time they worked with the town's sportsmen hunters to track these animals. Sometimes they would obtain meats after the hunt as the towns' sportsmen were only interested in the trophies and skins and not in the meat (unless the hunt was for springbok). This meant that the sanction of sportsmen from hunting kudu and other game animals (by the Department of Agriculture) directly affected not only the towns' sportsmen but also black Africans, who relied on accessing venison via the sportsmen. According to Gess (2014:80), access to game animals in the Eastern Cape, especially from the 1886 onwards, was exclusionary in nature.

The enclosure of land for game farming did not provide any benefits to the towns, as was the case with sheep and livestock farming. This is because hunting permits were not granted to the urban or rural poor seeking to hunt for subsistence. These hunters (mostly black Africans) did not constitute the kind of hunters for which there was any legal support. In other words, the law did not recognise traditional black African hunting using dogs (Gess, 2014:80). And, of course, they were denied access to the rarer game species, which were reserved for sport hunting by the landowners or gentleman sportsmen resident in the local towns (2014:80). In 1910 the effect of wildlife enclosure in the Cape Colony showed itself in the form of spatial division, with the wildlife being in the rural areas occupied by the landed gentry while the populations of the small towns were systematically denied access to game animals (Van Sittert, 2005). The game laws that were passed from 1883 onwards were grounded in the view that black African hunters, who were perceived to want to access wildlife for food rather than for sport, were primitive. Brown (2002:80) argues that such hunters' perceived lack of concern for female and juvenile animals was considered to be confirmation that they were 'wanton killers'.

### **3.3.2 Wildlife enclosure and commercialisation, 1910 to the 1950s: the effects on black Africans**

It is clear from the above section that the wildlife enclosure on private land began to gain momentum with the enactment of the 1886 Game Law, which empowered the state's Department of Agriculture to restrict access to black Africans and sports hunters in the small Karoo towns. The period from 1910 to the 1950s was when South Africa experienced immense spatial reconfiguration of rural land to game reserves, which left black Africans without land on which to sustain their livelihoods (Van Sittert, 2005). The important feature here was how fences were used, once again, to reconfigure spatial relationships and the establishment of new ownership patterns as the state created these game enclosures. New laws imposed further restrictions on hunting by black Africans in the Cape Province, with severely negative effects on their socio-economic livelihoods. One of the most important limitations upon black African hunting in the Eastern Cape arose from the development of the Peace Preservation Act, 13 of 1878. Although this Act was not initially intended to be militaristic in nature, it was augmented by other game laws in the early part of this period designed to prevent black Africans from hunting game animals with the effect of disarming black Africans as opposed to restricting hunting (Gess, 2014:58). Initially the Act was applicable only to the areas to the east of the Great Fish River, but later its operation was extended by proclamation to the broader Eastern Cape (Gess, 2014). The same Act was effectively used by the state in the 1920s to further prohibit all forms of black African hunting activities except for those with a special permit to be in possession of firearms, bullets, gunpowder and ammunitions. These militaristic measures entrenched the power of the landowners as they continued to have the right — or even to issue permits — to shoot animals on their land.

The middle-class sports hunters in the small towns continued to express their deep concern regarding the privatisation and commercialisation of animals. Their concern was that while the state viewed game farms as an economic asset, access to benefits from these areas was limited to the landed gentry to the exclusion of everyone else (Brown, 2002; Van Sittert, 2005; Gess, 2014).

What was unique in the 1920s and 1930s particularly in the Karoo was the realisation that game farming could provide an alternative route to economic recovery in an era when the traditional agriculture (i.e., sheep and livestock farming) was hard-hit by the Depression (Roche, 2008; Minnaar, 1990:83). Roche (2003:105) draws attention to the way the springbok was perceived

as having an economic value in Graaff-Reinet. The value of game (particularly springbok) on a farm was perceived not only locally but also internationally, according to Somerset Playne's *Cape Colony (Cape Province)* published from 1910 onwards (Roche, 2003:105). The perceived economic upswing linked to the hunting of game animals was evidenced by the increased number of licenses that were issued by the Department of Agriculture in Graaff-Reinet (Roche, 2005:2-3). According to Roche (2005), the number of licences for shooting game animals in this area increased from 1000 in 1864 to above 10 000 in the 1920s. As Roche explains, this enterprise was unique in the sense that for the first time the hunting of game animals was perceived as being part of the town's economy. For instance,

‘the construction of the railway and improved transport had also influenced the Hunt culture as the shooting estates were within easy reach of the townsfolk for at least half a day's shooting’ (Roche, 2005:2-3).

While from 1886 till the 1900s the game enclosures had been isolated from the towns, both Roche and Van Sittert argue that in the 1920s the social and spatial influence of wildlife production began to find resonance with the towns. This interrelationship was started by a hunter by the name of Tom Priest, who is described by Roche as the first person from the town (Graaff-Reinet) who took full advantage of the game by hunting four different kinds of animals on four different properties. Although there was a broad appeal to the springbok hunt as far as the merchant class in small towns such as Graaff-Reinet was concerned, black Africans did not feature prominently as beneficiaries of this new hunting endeavour. According to Roche, it was only the jackal that black Africans could access, a wild animal that was considered to be vermin for extermination. This was in spite of the fact that springbok venison increasingly featured in the Graaff-Reinet advertiser as a game product that was available in the town's markets (Roche, 2005:6). In this context, both the venison and biltong products were viewed as off-game farm products that found their niche in the markets of the small Karoo towns, particularly in the Graaff-Reinet in the early twentieth century (Van Sittert, 2005; Roche, 2003).

Thus, this period signalled the beginning of a process in which benefits from the game enclosures reached some of the people in the towns, something that was never heard of in the late nineteenth century. However, as Roche (2003:101) notes, ‘the colonial underclass in Graaff-Reinet, especially black Africans and Khoi, did not loom large in the perceived game economy of this era’. In most cases, Xhosa and Khoi people would not be seen shooting animals. Instead, they might be found performing the role of driver or *achter ryer*, although in

the open areas of the Karoo landscape and the enclosed camps where springbok hunts were staged, their function as drivers was a largely invisible one (Roche, 2003:101). In fact, Roche described black Africans' role in the hunting of springbok in Graaff-Reinet as that of 'after riders', as their main task would be to collect the spoils of the hunt. The development of venison and biltong as viable products in the town's economy largely excluded black Africans from collecting meat as one of the spoils of hunting expeditions. Thus, if the sports hunters were granted a measure of access to game species such as springbok, this did not change the trend in the ownership of the animals they hunted, which remained private ownership. As Van Sittert (2005) argues, this period saw the transfer of control over wild animals into the hands of the new provincial state which was dominated by the Afrikaans rural gentry. The state had the authority to determine what species should be hunted and when. However, as time went by, particularly in the late 1920s, the farmers effectively manipulated the process of gaining access to game based on patronage and their corrupt relationships with certain key political leaders. Minnaar (1990) argues that the Afrikaans landed gentry in the Karoo gained more influence during the early 1930s. The Great Depression and the ailing agrarian economy provided more leverage for them to increase their control over the land and ultimately over wild animals to the exclusion of Africans (Brown, 2002; Carruthers, 2008a). It is for this reason that Van Sittert argues that the 1930s period saw the dominance of the countryside shift from the English farmers to the Afrikaans farmers, who were then able to decide who might hunt wild animals and for what price. These land owners looked upon wildlife as a source of revenue rather than as common property open to access by anyone (Van Sittert, 2005:284). In the case of the Eastern Cape Province, particularly in the 1930s, the national government felt compelled to permit game species such as springbok, eland and wildebeest to become the basis of the urban economy in such areas as Graaff-Reinet and Cradock to mitigate the economic effects of the then Depression (Van Sittert, 2005; Minnaar, 1990).

This change of attitude extended to the owners of the game farms, as explained by Van Sittert (2005:282):

In addition to supplying game animals to the urban markets, the rural gentry also dispensed game as alms to the poor during crises in the agrarian economy such as droughts, when the protection of small game (hares) and game birds was revoked to reduce their damage to cultivation and to provide subsistence for the rural underclass.

The word 'underclass here does not necessarily suggest that black Africans were among the beneficiaries in the small towns. For Brown (2002), black Africans were unfortunately not included among those that the game farmers sought to benefit during the mid-1930s. While there was a concerted effort on the side of the state to establish wildlife reserves outside private ownership, the landed gentry (now Afrikaans people) pushed for the full recognition of the private ownership of wildlife. For some farmers, enclosure of state land was viewed as a way of dealing with vermin species and would lead to the protection of their cultivated land. It was in this context that, in 1937, the Mountain Zebra National Park was established on land donated by farmers who were unable to use it profitably for farming. For instance, Marsden (1989) views this move (particularly in Cradock) as a response to the declining agrarian economy in the Karoo during the Depression of the 1930s.

However, the establishment of such reserves was of no benefit to black Africans in the surrounding areas. For Brown (2002:94), this form of the game enclosure simply excluded black Africans. The proponents of the establishment of such reserves had conflicting views of their purpose, with the sports hunters wanting the game to be protected for future generations of recreational sportsmen, while the scientists looked for opportunities to develop the scope of their academic fields of enquiry. The connection that black African people always had with game animals as well as the benefits that might accrue to them from the reserves was not taken into consideration. It is for this reason that Brown (2002) argues that the enclosure of game animals (particularly of royal game) went hand in hand with the emergence of racial and social hierarchies which determined who should have the exclusive right to recast the zoological environment, and to the exclusion of whom. Parallels can be drawn with the Transvaal, Natal and the Cape in 1948, where the National Party government, which was to be largely concerned with the protection of a white South African national identity, created national parks which would benefit white South Africans to the exclusion of black Africans (Brown, 2002:94). Likewise, 'in the Cape (in particular the Karoo) itself, individual farmers and politicians from both Anglophone and Afrikaner backgrounds contributed to the rhetoric of wildlife protection to the exclusion of African people' (Brown, 2002:94). Indeed, the game laws that led to the establishment of game reserves in both the Cape Colony and the Cape Province were problematic in the sense that they ensured that their maintenance was largely contingent upon the attitude of wealthy farmers who often sat on the divisional councils (Brown, 2002; Van Sittert, 2005) For Brown (2002), game enclosure in the Cape was always driven by private landowners supported by the state, which imposed laws that illegitimated black Africans'

interactions with wildlife. Thus, this wave of game enclosure in the Cape, whether private or public, has always negatively affected Africans.

### **3.3.3 The conversion of farmlands into wildlife enclosures: the 1950s to the 1970s**

While the period prior to the 1950s was characterised by the establishment of wildlife enclosures largely dominated by the English-speaking rural elite to the exclusion of the urban middle class and black African people, the 1950s onwards saw the emergence of Afrikaners' active involvement in 'wilding' their enclosed land. As Brandt (2016:168) states, the rise of the Afrikaners as the rural elite in the Eastern Cape was an outcome of the political transformation of the state following the election of the National Party into power in 1948. In the Cradock area, Afrikaners increased the size of their farms and effectively took over local governance by replacing the English-speaking administrators (Brandt, 2016:168). However, there were few English-speaking farmers who tried to survive, despite their difficulty in competing with or cooperating with their neighbours (see Brand, 2016:5). Beinart (2003:386) draws attention to one of the remaining wealthy English-speaking farmers in the Karoo who switched from livestock farming to game farming as early as in the 1950s. The motive behind his converting his farms was his early fascination with hunting developed during a trip to Central Africa (2008:386). Carruthers (2003) argues that the establishment of the game enclosures in the 1950s demonstrated the racist cultural values of the Afrikaans game reserve custodians in line with the development of specific wildlife ownership patterns particularly in the Eastern Cape Karoo. In this new spatial configuration, black Africans were, once again, excluded from the ownership of wildlife. By virtue of their sentimental notion of the value of wildlife protection, the white founders of the game farms sought to legitimize private wildlife ownership to the exclusion of rural black Africans, mostly Xhosa people. The wildlife enclosure also effectively enabled white control over black Africans in the Karoo region and this control was cemented by the enactment of the Group Areas Act (GAA) of 1956.

In the case of the small Karoo towns the GAA ensured that white people, especially Afrikaner farmers, had access to cheap labour from dislocated black Africans who were moved out of the towns and into the township locations (Tetelman, 1997). These people were controlled through their employment (as trackers) in the game reserves, or by systematically preventing them from accessing productive farmland or other land-based livelihood options. (Brandt, 2013:69). In this context, private game farms constituted a form of 'cultural landscape, or what Brooks (2002) refers to as a 'discursive landscape' that was socially engineered to celebrate white

settler values entrenched in their attachment to land at the expense of the values of black Africans who wished to utilise game animals to sustain their livelihoods (2002:265). It was in this context that these wildlife enclosures had to be isolated from the town's socio-economic geography, as the Afrikaner rural elite used its control over the nation's wildlife to entrench its economic hegemony. Thus, certain game animals, landscapes and environmental outcomes were privileged, while others (vermin, jackals) were peripheralised to those who were considered as being of a lower class (black African people). Each wildlife enclosure or protected area (either privately or publicly owned) became a project in 'governance': 'in the act of drawing boundaries — conceptual, topographic and normative, and in implementing a landscape regime of rules regulating permissible human conduct' (Roche, 2008:1-22).

This method of organising the nation's wildlife was designed to operate in tandem with the grander schemes of the apartheid system (Hulme & Murphree, 2001). Brown (2002) and Van Sittert (2005) argue that, unlike commercial agriculture, wildlife protection has never been compatible with the socio-economic livelihoods of the black African people in the small Karoo towns (see West, Igoe & Brockington, 2006). In the Graaff-Reinet, for instance, the politics of wildlife protection, expressed through the capture and enclosure of the springbok, further restrained access to wildlife by black Africans and middle-class people in the town. According to Roche (2003), the enclosure of the springbok in Graaff-Reinet was consolidated in this period by the Afrikaner landed gentry with severe socio-economic consequences for the black African people (also see Brandt, 2016:168).

#### **3.3.4 A Shift from farms to wildlife production and Karoo small towns: from the 1970s to the 1990s**

From the 1970s onwards, wildlife farming on private land that had previously been commercial farmland became a dominant feature of the rural landscape in the Karoo (Brandt, 2016:6). As Brooks et.al (2012) and Brandt (2014) note, this suggests that the conversions that took place from this period were indeed the beginning of the de-agrarianisation process. The de-agrarianisation of this nature manifested by a process in which former commercial farmers opted to abandoned their farms in favour of wildlife production for capital speculation. Unlike, Bryceson and Jamal (1997), the conceptualisation of the de-agrarianisation process and the introduction of private game farming on former farming areas led to the disappearance of off-farm activities in small towns (see chapters Six and Seven). Bryceson argues that the shift away from an agrarian lifestyle in Southern Africa is often voluntary as more rural people were

attracted to a non-agrarian lifestyle with occupational and spatial adjustment away from an agrarian production lifestyle. But in the 1970s, there emerged a new pattern of agrarian change underpinned by the transformation of land towards wildlife production (see Mkhize, 2012) This change, particularly in the Karoo, was first and foremost motivated by the decline of the wool price beginning in the 1930s and persisting onwards. During the 1970s the agrarian economy in the Karoo became a cause for concern following the global restructuring of the agricultural sector from state-oriented agriculture to liberal capitalist agriculture (Nel & Hill, 2008; Brooks et al., 2014:153). The decline in the wool price coincided with a perceived rise in labour costs and led to the revival of wildlife protectionism in the 1970s amongst the landed classes. These people began to consolidate their farmlands by buying land from their neighbours in order to have enough areas to accommodate wildlife. Conversions to wildlife farming became more frequent in the Karoo in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Some of the larger livestock farms retained several antelopes for hunting purposes as a source of income to keep white farmers on the land (Brandt, 2013:70).

Brandt (2013:70) draws attention to the spatial changes that emerged, in particular along the road from the Rubidge farm to of the farm of a neighbouring farmer, Walter Smith. While Smith started converting his farms to game farming in the 1950s, citing his fascination for hunting as a motivating factor, in the 1970s the same farmer continued to convert his farms to game farming for trophy hunting, but now giving economic reasons for his actions. As Brandt (2013:70) states, the main motivation for converting farmlands to game farming was to invest in wildlife, as this was now perceived as a more efficient and environmentally beneficial land use in the semi-arid Karoo compared to the former agriculture land use (see also Dawn Nell (2000) in Beinart, 2003:386). According to Brandt (2013:70) the emergence of wildlife farming on private land coincided with the intensification of the involvement of capital in South Africa's agrarian economy, and resulted in a decrease in the demand for farm labour. The conversion of the farms created a labour surplus with the result that many farm workers and farm dwellers were compelled to live in the already overcrowded small towns (Atkinson, 2007a:54). Nel and Hill (2008) and Atkinson (2008) all argue that increasingly from the early 1980s to the late 1980s farm workers and farm dwellers were being alienated from the land due to the conversion of agricultural land to other purposes. Having said that, however, they further argue that the relationship between conversion and labour surplus in Karoo small towns still needs further research. According to Mkhize (2012:17), in the 1990s

South Africa experienced the escalation of conversions of land to private game farming following the promulgation of the Game Theft Act 105 of 1991. In terms of this act, game farm owners must receive certificate of adequate enclosure (CAE) which gives them exclusive rights to utilise game animals farmed and reared in their properties. The Act effectively recognized that game should no longer be stolen from its designated owner.

It also provided a greater incentive for private investment in the wildlife industry, such that from the 1960s to 2007 the number of game animals on private lands in South Africa rose from 545 000 to 27 million (Carruthers, 2008:161 in Mkhize, 2012:17; Castree, 2010b; Castree 2008a and 2008b; Colchester, 2004; Mwakiwa,2011).

In the case of the Karoo, it is reported that in the 1980s the former sheep and livestock farmers were either converting their farms to game farming or selling off their land to the game farm owner(s) for further consolidation of the existing game farming areas (Brandt & Spierenburg, 2014). While Brandt (2013) and Mkhize (2012) present several concerns regarding the effects of the conversions on farm workers and farm dwellers, there is little information regarding the effects of the conversions on the socio-economic conditions in the small towns, particularly in the Karoo. Nel and Hill (2008) argue that there is relationship between conversions and the demographic change currently visible in most of the Karoo small towns. For them the increase in the population of the small Karoo towns could be explained in the context of the ongoing conversions of land from commercial agriculture to private game farming. This phenomenon is further explained by Brandt (2016:168) when she says that:

The change in land use, farm size and ownership patterns all generated and accelerated a process that gradually pushed black people off farms. Trophy-hunting farms especially in the Karoo required relatively few laborers considering the enormous sizes of these game farms, and work such as fencing was increasingly outsourced to labour brokers.

While Brandt documents the precarious conditions of black African people in the Karoo and the fact that the hardships they endure are linked to the conversions, her analysis does not go further to highlight the effects of the change in the patterns of land use on living conditions in the adjacent small towns, particularly changes in the lives of black African people in the townships. Brandt was more concerned with the lives of these people on these farms and how the conversion affected their sense of belonging on these farm areas. The fact that these workers (including those who were previously farm dwellers) had for many years in the past shared the material resources they accrued from the farms with their families and friends in the small

towns is a matter of significance in the analysis of the effect of the conversions in the Karoo. Nel and Hill (2008) subtly suggest that there is a relationship between the poor socio-economic conditions in the small towns and the phenomenon of the emerging private wildlife production in the former commercial livestock farming areas but, like Brandt, argued they do not provide clear evidence regarding this relationship.

Further impacts of the conversion to private wildlife farming on the small towns of the Eastern Cape Karoo region are observed by Andrew et al. (2013:119):

Populations in these townships are growing, resulting in severe problems of access to services, businesses, healthcare facilities, roads, transport and space. Without alternative job possibilities, capital or other assets to start up enterprise in town, the livelihoods choices for people coming from the farms are very limited. A similar pattern of movement was found in the Makana Municipality and coastal area. Especially during the earlier wave of conversions to private wildlife production farm dwellers experienced outright evictions and retrenchments (ECARP/SCLC, 2006).

Andrew et al. (2013) also notice that the continued pressure on families living in the small towns, particularly in the Karoo regions, is attributable to the increase in the number of conversions. The precarious conditions of farm dwellers became worse as the conversions to private game farms led to the termination of their jobs. The conversion of farms to private game farms also negatively affected people's access to services such as transport, as new farm fences with digital locks were erected (Andrew et al., 2013:119). As stated later in the thesis, this had direct implications for the farm-related off-farm activities that survived the conversions, as the remaining farm workers found it more difficult to get to the towns (see more details in Chapter Six). Indeed, the depletion of the human element on these farms was part of an attempt to refashion these wilderness landscapes as 'pristine' areas and entailed moving any unwanted farm dwellers off the farms (Brooks et al., 2011). Andrew et al. (2013:119) conclude that the new private game farms are completely incompatible with the socio-economic needs of farm workers and farm dwellers. The hardships for farm dwellers were further compounded by the demolition of their houses on the farms and their fear of wild animals, which together inevitably drove them to leave the farms. Those who remained were sometimes offered small sums of money to leave the farms and stay in the adjacent small towns (2013:119). Nel and Hill (2008) note that the change of the agrarian land uses to game farming coincided with the proliferation of unemployment in the Karoo.

Andrew et al. (2013:119) concur with Nel and Hill (2008) by arguing that there is a strong link between the farm conversions and the growth of the numbers of the unemployed in the towns:

Many farm dwellers interviewed during the research in 2011 had relocated to nearby townships (Paterson, Alicedale, Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown) within a radius of 70 kilometres of the farms on which they had grown up or worked. There they hoped to find a job or share a house with relatives.

It is not surprising to learn that a number of these families relocated to un-serviced or poorly serviced informal semi-rural settlements. Although the socio-economic conditions of these people in the townships is not fully documented, Andrew et al. (2013:119) observe that the retrenched farm dwellers were forced to build shacks for their families and survived on only a part-time wage and a pension. In most cases these people must survive on support from the extended family and other social networks (Andrew et al., 2013:119). This indicates that private game farming from the colonial epoch to apartheid up to the neo-liberal democratic dispensation has predominantly privileged the few elites at the expense of the lower class particularly black Africans (especially, Xhosa people) in the Karoo region.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

It is in this context that the study reports on the socio-economic implications of the conversions with specific reference to the black African people living in the small Karoo towns. While these towns were historically conceived of as centres servicing the adjacent commercial farms, the ongoing wildlife enclosure is posing a serious threat to the socio-economic conditions of the people, particularly people who had in the past directly or indirectly relied on the commercial farms as their main source of livelihood. Due to the exclusionary nature of game farming, the conversion has restrained access to material resources from the farms. In addition, a range of off-farm agriculture-related businesses (e.g., butcheries, shops selling agriculture supplements, etc.) in these towns are disappearing following the conversion of the sheep and livestock farms to private game farms. Van Sittert (2005) and Brown (2002) argue cogently that private wildlife farming in the Karoo Eastern Cape has, since the late 1800s, always benefited the rural elite to the detriment of those who were live in the towns. This chapter concludes that the ongoing wildlife enclosure in the form of the conversion of land use in the Karoo shares similarities with the former wildlife enclosure in that: a) it is occurring on private land with the express purpose of excluding black African labour; and b) it benefits the rural gentry (the land owners) to the detriment of those who do not hold land.

This chapter has discussed the history of game farming in the Cape Colony to show how black Africans were negatively affected by the introduction of such farming in the mid-nineteenth century. The chapter first shows how black Africans benefited from wildlife through the tradition of hunting in the pre-colonial period. By using various historical and contemporary materials, the chapter has argued that wildlife production, as a conservation movement beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, has not benefited black African people. This is because conservation practices, specifically on privately owned land, have always targeted the elite group of white hunters by creating natural areas that exclude black African and the descendants of the Khoisan) communities.

The chapter has argued that game farming, which involves the enclosure of large swathes of land, is by far less beneficial to the Karoo communities than the former commercial agriculture. While the establishment of game reserves in Natal and the Transvaal was driven by the state, the establishment of game farms in the Cape was a private initiative supported by the state. During the colonial period laws and regulations were codified to prevent black Africans and other lower-class people from accessing any benefits from wildlife protection measures, and the process has continued ever since. Black Africans living in the Karoo have been systematically excluded from sharing any forms of socio-economic benefits deriving from the private wildlife protection measures. Thus far, the chapter has provided the basis upon which to understand how the contemporary conversions sought to consolidate and enclose land, with severe negative socio-economic effects on the black African people, particularly those who had depended on the commercial agriculture of the past.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**CRADOCK AND AGRARIAN ECONOMY: TRACING THE AGRARIAN CHANGE**  
**IN CRADOCK FROM 1814 TO THE 1940S**

**4.1 Introduction**

As mentioned in the introduction to this study, the case study of Cradock is presented with a view to grounding the theory of agrarian change in a particular historical context by showing how this town and its populace were interconnected with the agrarian economy over time. The purpose here is to present a case study of Cradock as a good illustration of how commercial agriculture led to the formation of small towns. It also shows that commercial agriculture (especially sheep and livestock farming) continued to sustain the towns through stimulating off-farm activities, which provided employment in the towns, and through the supply of material resources to the towns, a point that is often neglected in the current debates. On a broader level, the preceding chapters (specifically Chapter One and Chapter Two) argued that the Karoo agrarian economy has always been intertwined with the economies of the small towns in the Karoo.

The population of Cradock, particularly the black Africans and coloureds, increasingly took advantage of the then expanding settler agrarian economy. However, this agrarian economy (based on sheep farming and more general livestock farming) has experienced significant changes from the time of the establishment of the town to the present. This chapter seeks to trace such change in Cradock around two critical historical events that shaped agrarian production and the economy of Cradock, which were: 1) the growth and expansion of the sheep and wool farming economy in the 1800s; and 2) the Great Depression which started in the mid-1920s, and continued to affect the agrarian economy until the late 1930s. Another important change was the advent of liberalisation and deregulation of commercial agriculture from the 1970s onwards, leading to many farm owners leaving their farmlands and/or converting these lands into private game farms. This change is given more attention in Chapter Six and Chapter Seven, however, as those chapters deal with the post-conversion era.

The arguments advanced in this chapter are twofold: (a) despite the decline of agriculture since the 1930s, the black African people in this town have always depended on commercial agriculture for their livelihoods, and (b) the agrarian change that occurred over time did not deter people in the town from relying on commercial agriculture as a source of livelihood.

Marsden (1986) argues that the Great Depression of the 1930s led to the slow pace of agrarian growth in the town, which in turn resulted in a high rate of unemployment. But this economic downswing compelled farmers to use cheap labour (predominantly Africans) to produce more agrarian products at a 'lucrative' profit margin (Marsden, 1986:11–14). The payment-in-kind through the exchange of material resources such as milk, meat and livestock became a dominant mode of payment to the Africans who were working on farms.

The chapter is thus structured as follows: It traces initially the emergence of commercial agriculture and its role in the formation of Cradock as an agrarian town.<sup>26</sup> It is in this context that the empirical data (based on the historical records) is provided to highlight the socio-economic significance of the surrounding commercial agriculture for the people who lived in the town and those who relocated from the farms to the townships in the 1950s. The effect of the Great Depression and the deregulation and liberalisation of agriculture on the economy of the town and its people is discussed.

The following section will trace the origin of Cradock and locate the economy of the town within the broader Karoo agrarian economy.

#### **4.2 The agrarian economy and the origins of Cradock as an agrarian town**

The agrarian change in the Karoo region, as broadly discussed in Chapter Two, took centre stage in the early 1800s with the reconfiguration of lands from pastoral agrarian production towards commercial agrarian production. It was through these agrarian forces, ushered in by the British settlers, that Cradock emerged as a centre of the agrarian economy. It is for this reason that Cradock town<sup>27</sup> lies in the rich agricultural zone of the Eastern Cape Central Karoo that has, from the early 1800s to date, arguably been regarded as the 'breadbasket of South Africa'. While there is no clear-cut date for its establishment, archival records indicate that by the year 1818 the town was already in existence. The events leading to the establishment of Cradock are traceable to the second half of 1813, with the establishment of the Drostdy. The site for the Drostdy, the house of the resident deputy landdrost, was selected near the prison,

---

<sup>26</sup> The history of the origin of Cradock as a town was gleaned from a sparse number of archival materials, - particularly from documents in the *Municipal Gazette*, 1814–1837 and 1920–1964. *nineteenth century Port Elizabeth: a guide to restoration*, . , Port Elizabeth

<sup>27</sup> See D Smith, *Cradock 1814 –1964*; 63–64. JD Omer-Cooper, *History of Southern Africa*. Cape Town: David Philip, 1994: 47

and the land surrounding the Drostdy was divided into erven for sale to prospective residents<sup>28</sup>. In early January 1814, these residents (who were mostly white farmers) petitioned Sir John Cradock (then Cape governor) through the landdrost, requesting approval of the naming of the town in his honour in recognition of his role in the town's establishment. As Dubow (1982:3) and Marsden (1986) noted, the governor assented to the petition, and on 21 January 1814 the establishment of the town was officially proclaimed. The area around the town comprised of loan farms settled predominantly by Dutch settlers, who were attempting to farm in livestock and crops (chiefly lucerne). During this period, the land-owners had insufficient money to keep themselves on the land and thus decided to increase production on the farms as a means of supplementing their income (see Tetelman, 1997).

Although the town consisted originally of only two dusty streets, the rise of commercial agrarian production and its connection with British industrial growth placed the town at the centre of the agrarian economy in the Cape Colony (Marsden, 1986:8). As the British settlers in the region sought to gain more control of the economy, the Dutch settlers generally struggled to survive (Smith, 1974). This was because they (the Dutch settlers) found it hard to work with land in the harsh arid conditions<sup>29</sup> of the Karoo. As a result, they sold their lands to the British farmers, who were able to take advantage of the available international market. For Africans, this period signalled a significant shift from a pastoral agrarian economy to a market-oriented agricultural economy. Thus, agrarian economic prosperity was experienced in Cradock particularly in the late 1820s (Tetelman, 1997:21). This upswing in the agrarian economy manifested itself in the town with the proliferation of ox-wagons pulled by horses<sup>30</sup> to transport the wool from Cradock to other areas of the Cape (Smith, 1974; Tetelman, 1997:21).

But how did black Africans come to be in this town? Prior to the establishment of Cradock this unforgiving landscape had witnessed fierce conflict between the European settlers and the African people (amaXhosa). In the first half of the 1700s Dutch settlers entered the Cape midlands, travelling from Cape Town looking for cattle pasturage (Smith, 1974). They had expelled the indigenous Khoikhoi from the western part of the Fish River, and established their farms. As the settlers moved eastward they clashed with Xhosa chiefdoms, engaging in

---

<sup>28</sup> D See Smith, *Cradock 1814–1964*, 1974: 63–64 and the revised history of Cradock compiled by the iNxuba Yethemba Municipality, 14–15.

<sup>29</sup> These conditions render the Karoo harsh due to water scarcity cause by high temperature in summer and extreme cold weather conditions in winter.

<sup>30</sup> J D Omer-Cooper, *History of Southern Africa*; 74.

skirmishes and tit-for-tat cattle raiding. It was only in the 1800s that the European settlers established a firmer foothold in the district. British troops under the then governor of the area (Andries Stockenstrom) drove the Xhosa people from the area in order to establish what would later become Cradock district with the town as its agrarian centre, in line with other towns (e.g., Graaff-Reinet) running north from Uitenhage (Smith, 1974).

As the colonists proceeded to occupy the entire Midland Karoo they were particularly interested in areas with a sufficient water supply to enable the establishment of military camps and to support the then emerging market-oriented agriculture (see Chapter Two). Cradock appeared to be an ideal place to develop commercial agriculture, with the Great Fish River (GFR) traversing the area from the west to the east. While the Dutch continued to farm the far western upper part of the Karoo, the British occupied the area of the GFR and established a formidable irrigation scheme to grow lucerne, which was central to Angora goat and ostrich farming. The colonial government established farms around the military garrisons, and Cradock and Grahamstown became principal economic centres of the Cape Midlands (Tetelman, 1997:16–21). It was thus in this period that the increase in commercial agriculture in the Karoo region and in the Cradock district in particular began to shape the economic fortune of the town. It is recorded that the 1820 British settlers were settled along the GFR and that their economy was based on pastoralism (Smith, 1974:7). As time went by they introduced Merino sheep and Angora goats, as well as new farming technology (Tetelman, 1997:19). Owing to the riverine ecological character of Cradock with the GFR traversing the edge of the town, farmers were further motivated to cultivate and grow lucerne as fodder for ostriches, as it was reputed to produce a high-quality feather. The records tell us, for instance, that in 1836 a grant of land was made to Willem van Heerden in return for the farm Driefontein, which land is now known as Kaalplaats. Ever since then the Van Heerden family has been actively farming this land. Although Spain and Australia were well known as the major exporters of sheep products during the period from 1850 to the mid-1920s, meat and wool from the Cradock region were favourably received in the United Kingdom (Tetelman, 1997:21), and the demand for agricultural commodities from Cradock continued to escalate as the demand from Britain grew.

The question to pose is how the expansion of commercial agriculture in this period influenced the socio-economic conditions of Cradock, particularly those of the black African people who were living in the town at the time. Did they, by any chance, adapt to the market-oriented

agrarian economy of the British settlers? There is no doubt that the economic spin-offs in the town which came about as a result of the expansion of commercial agriculture induced many black African people to settle in the town in order to make a living, but it is also critical to note that people were already moving to the small Karoo towns in this period because they were being forced to leave their lands as the settlers increased their control over the Cape Colony (Hulme, 1972).<sup>31</sup> Wars between the British and the amaXhosa, combined with the amaXhosa Cattle Killing of 1856–57, drove thousands of African migrants into the Cradock district. By 1891 thousands of African migrants and several hundred coloureds, many of whom were descended from Khokhoi, were living in the locations inside the town (see Map 3). However, by the late 1840s there emerged an informally demarcated living area, which later grew into the so-called ‘Old Location’. Marsden (1986) and Tetelman (1997) briefly describe this location as being occupied mainly by black Africans, who had erected huts and other informal dwellings in which to live. As more residents strove to make their livings in the locations, they would supplement their pitiable wages by keeping livestock, which grazed on the adjacent commonage provided by the municipality (Marsden, 1986). This land use practice (by Africans in the town) was halted by the enactment of the 1913 Land Act, which restricted to farming land which was demarcated for their use. As Cradock’s location expanded, its population became predominantly African (see Chapter Two). Five major Nguni groups comprised Cradock’s African population, namely: amaBaca, amaGcaleka, amaMfengu, amaMpondomis and abaThembu (Tetelman, 1997:20-24).

Although the socio-economic conditions of the black African population, as indicated by their poorly built corrugated-iron settlements, were not something to be celebrated, the continued expansion of labour-intensive commercial agriculture in the area is said to have been responsible for at least 80 per cent of the employment in the district (Tetelman, 1997:20–21; Crais, 1991; Crais, 1992). Tetelman (1997), in his historiography of black politics in Cradock, paints a picture of how the amaMfengu and abaThembu took advantage of the booming capitalist agricultural production of the period:

Despite the location’s unsuitability and the segregation legislation, many residents strove to improve their status and gain more influence in both the white and the black world. Cradock black elites were few in numbers but adopted the Cape Liberal ethos. This ethos emerged by the mid-1800s alongside the expansion of the British

---

<sup>31</sup> JJ, Hulme. *South African Military History Journal* 12 (4).

rule, the spread of the market economy (revolving around commercial agriculture), and the provision of missionary education to Africans.

It is not surprising that most of the African people who were prospering, albeit under adverse conditions, from the growth of farming in the area were amaMfengu and abaThembu. Bundy (1979) explains that these people had valuable skills in all types of agriculture, in particular sheep and livestock farming. Livestock farming, owing to the nature of their culture, had from time immemorial been part of their day-to-day social life. When these people migrated to Cradock in great numbers, possibly in the mid-1830s, they received missionary education and, in most cases, acquired artisanal skills in addition to their existing skills as farmers. In fact, according to various archival records, the success of the amaMfengu could be attributed to a clergyman, Rev. R.B. Taylor of the London Missionary Society. Taylor is described in some records, by such people as a Mr Gilfillan, as having converted the Fingos (the British name for the amaMfengu) into what they called a 'better class of natives'. In the 1840s, following the Cattle Killing and the continued growth of agriculture in Cradock, the number of African people in the town increased significantly. This necessitated a change in the spatial character of the town, and in 1842 the Cradock commonage was surveyed for the first time. The census of the same year showed a population of nearly three thousand inhabitants. While the number of black residents at this stage is unknown, the unconstrained availability of black labour contributed to an increase in production in the various agricultural sectors. The district annually produced nearly 30 000 bushels of wheat, 3 600 bushels of barley, 1 900 bushels of corn, 26 600 gallons of wine and 19 640 gallons of brandy (Marsden, 1986:11–14). Most of these commodities were produced and consumed locally, transport at that time being difficult and slow.

From the early 1800s to the 1840s Cradock was undoubtedly shaped by the agricultural revolution which was already underway in the entire Eastern Cape region. True prosperity deriving from this was first witnessed when the British settlers introduced the first merino sheep into the Eastern Cape in the early 1830s. It was soon discovered that the Eastern Cape, especially the Karoo region, was ideal for sheep farming and produced wool of excellent quality. Angora goats were introduced in 1837 as a viable commercial commodity. The wool from the sheep and goats, and the related products, meant that for the first time the agrarian produce of the Eastern Cape began to be exported. During this period, there was a significant increase in the amount of wool being produced and exported. For instance, in 1837, 52 988

kilograms of Cradock wool were exported from Port Elizabeth. By 1844 this amount had risen to 58 853 kilograms. In 1853, 70 9833 kilograms were shipped out of Port Elizabeth, while in 1859 this amount had risen yet further to 280 416 kilograms (Marsden, 1986). During this time, Port Elizabeth was a busier harbour than Cape Town, and for the first time the entire Cape of Good Hope was showing a financial surplus (Muller, 2000:24).

The next major question to ask is: does this growth in agricultural exports have any effect on the economy of Cradock town? The following section deals with this issue from the 1860s to the 1880s— the period prior to the Great Depression of the 1930s, an event which had severely negative effects on the agrarian economy of the Karoo region and of Cradock.

#### **4.2.1 The effect of the agrarian economy on Cradock: the 1860s to the 1880s**

The effect of the export-oriented agrarian economy and possibly the new-found income manifested itself in the form of the generation of off-farm activities in Cradock. The proliferation of these off-farm activities was one outcome of the then expansion of the agrarian economy. One of the spin-offs was the erection of the splendid Dutch Reformed churches across the Karoo regions, arguably the most attractive being that of Cradock, which was built in 1818 (Marsden, 1986; Tetelman, 1997; Du Plessis & Du Plessis, 2012). The church structures were arguably symbols of the wealth and prosperity for these towns, a success which was attributed directly to the growth of commercial agriculture (Tetelman, 1997). The other noticeable effect of the boom in wool was the increasing need for labour. The eastern areas of the Cape Colony had always been short of labour, which was needed to care for and to shear the increasing numbers of herds of sheep and goats (Smith, 1974; Du Toit & Ewert, 2002; Dooling, 1999). At shearing time, this need reached its peak, and many Khoi people became quick and expert shearers (Marsden, 1986:14). Many of these used this skill to work independently and would travel from one farm to another, often covering vast distances. Some of these people used wagons led by horses to transport agricultural produce from Cradock to Grahamstown and, in some instances, to Port Elizabeth. The transportation of agrarian produce by horse-wagons became a substantive economic occupation on its own, particularly in Cradock. In 1860, the Grahamstown newspaper proprietor and politician Robert Godlonton

visited Cradock, and his description of life in the district and the town shows the benefits of the wool and Angora revolution.<sup>32</sup> This is how he described the town:

Many of the inhabitants are in opulent circumstances, possessing large herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep, and have a breed of hardy, valuable horses. Some of their farm houses are extensive premises, and, together with their wine stores, and other buildings, have more of the appearance of a village than the residence of a family. It should be remarked, however, that some of these families comprise several married branches, it not being uncommon to find two, and even three generations, living in detached habitations on the same place.

The same impression of the town was echoed by the Scottish traveller Gordon Cummings, who visited Cradock in 1859/60 and described it as being, ‘a pretty little village situated on the eastern bank of the Great Fish River, by which it is supplied with water and the gardens irrigated’ (also see KBP, 2009:23). It was inhabited by Dutch and English with a goodly sprinkling of “natives”, apparently “Hottentots” and “Fingoes”, as he called them (Tetelman, 1997:20–22). He continued to describe the spatial manifestation of the prosperity of the town as follows:

The principal street is wide and is adorned by shady trees on every side among which I observed lots of peach-trees covered with green fruit. The houses are large and well built, generally of brick, some in the Old Dutch and some in the English style. Each house has got a considerable garden attached to it: these are tastefully laid out and contain all the vegetables most used in an English kitchen. Apples, pears, orange, quinces, nectarines and grapes abound. The vision is bounded on every side by barren, arid rocky hills and mountains.

Business in Cradock was dominated by the British settlers, as the English speakers and people of British descent made up the largest and most dominant portion of the town. Most of these people were shopkeepers who owned butcheries, groceries, windmill shops, and tractor repair service companies. Butcheries, in particular, became major conduits connecting the town’s economy with commercial agriculture. The meat from the surrounding farms could be sent to the butcheries and be accessed by the townsfolk cheaply. Apart from that, black Africans who were working on farms also accumulated a number of stock. About half of the commonage in town was used by them to rear their sheep or livestock. The amaMfengu, especially, were actively involved in sheep farming, while coloureds or Khoisan worked as blacksmiths, supplying iron implements to the farming community (Tetelman, 1997; KBP, 2009:41). By the

---

<sup>32</sup> Karel Schoeman, *Olive Schreiner: ‘n lewe in Suid-Afrika 1855–1881*: 159. Note that this archive material was traced through the *Kyle Business Project report on the history of Cradock*. The report was published in 2009.

1850s, 360 Africans were already employed as shopkeepers, traders, drivers and blacksmiths all of which provided services to the growing commercial farmers (Tetelman, 1997). While the local British businessmen often used their profits to build stylish houses and buy more lands in the town, the black Africans frequently invested their money in livestock. Their women remained in the rural areas, where they acted as the heads of their families and continued to cultivate the land as they had always done. Thus, this period did not mark the disappearance of the African peasants, but instead allowed those who were successful in securing more land for agriculture, which was invariably cultivated by the women in the countryside. As Bundy (1979:27) says, these people were ‘advanced in wealth and material prosperity, they were better clothed, better fed and better housed’. Like other black elites in the Cape Colony, Cradock’s black petty bourgeoisie adopted western, particularly English, values and cultural norms, including mission Christianity and a desire for upward mobility (Tetelman, 1997).

In the mid-1800s, Cradock was undoubtedly thought to be the major agricultural district town in the Cape Colony. The amaMfengu were prosperous because of the agricultural boom. There are records which indicate that some of the 6000 amaMfengu family heads owned 182 000 sheep and 37 000 cattle (Tetelman, 1997:20-24). They were also involved in running the district’s transport, and sold wool worth 60 000 pounds in 1870, as well as hides and grain. While these records reflect the extent of the amaMfengu<sup>33</sup> success in the region as a whole, there is no doubt that this success was the reflection of their strong presence in the district towns, in particular in towns like Cradock (Marsden, 1986; Tetelman, 1997:24; Smith, 1974).

However, their prosperity was not without countervailing forces from the white colonial farmers, whose interest was to undo all forms of black African land ownership and independent farming practices. As white settler farmers aggressively sought to secure the ‘Crown lands’ to be sold and incorporated into the private farms, black African workers who had accumulated adequate livestock were likely to leave the Colony for independent African polities where there was virtually no colonial contact (Collet, 1990:125). This practice was typical, in particularly in the years following the Cattle Killing, when black Africans arrived in the Colony to find work on one-year contracts and rebuild their herds. This phenomenon is recognised by Dubow (1982:67 in Mkhize (2012:78):

---

<sup>33</sup> The ‘Fingoes’ is the word often used by the British settlers, including writers, when referring to the amaMfengu.

The Khoi had suffered serious dislocation from their pre-colonial social relations. Thus, their existence was largely determined by a fierce desire to maintain their social and economic independence – a desire which was frustrated by their lack of social cohesion. By contrast, African squatters retained substantial aspects of their kinship relations and were thus able to effectively accumulate and remove large numbers of stock beyond the borders of the Cape.

For instance, in Cradock, James Collet, one of the wealthier progressive farmers, recorded that in the 1860s one of his workers who had arrived with 14 sheep left after two years with 116 sheep, 12 cattle and 4 horses (Collett, 1990:148 in Beinart, 2003:55). However, it is important to note that although this worker had managed to accumulate stock he had received remuneration of only five pounds annually. Apart from that, farm workers were first and foremost servants whose lives were controlled and determined by the farm owners. The question, then, is how they managed to accumulate stock under these conditions. The answer is that their low wages were offset to an extent by the system of ration payments. Their land-based livelihoods were not entrenched; rather, they were used as bonuses supplied by the owners as a privilege (Antrobus, 1984).

#### **4.2.2 Agrarian economic spin-off(s) in Cradock: from the 1860s to 1929**

Following the boom in sheep farming, coupled with the ever-increasing sale of mohair and wool produced directly in Cradock, the town's spatial character grew gradually to accommodate more immigrants, particularly black Africans who were working as domestic servants (Tetelman, 1997). Apart from these, there were a number of people engaged in the off-farm business enterprises that emerged following the expansion of the merino sheep farming economy, which created further employment opportunities for the black African and coloureds people in the town (see Graph 3 page 128). Indeed, Cradock town became the breadbasket of the Midlands Karoo, as described by Smit (1964). But as the escalation of agricultural production continued, there was a recurring transport problem, especially during peak seasons. Improvement of the transport system was imperative, owing to the British's industrial revolution making itself felt in the Cape Colony. Transport in South Africa was revolutionised by the advent of the railway, which was first operational in Durban in 1860 and then in Cape Town in 1862. By the early 1880s the railway line had reached Cradock. The coming of the railway changed the transportation system in the hinterland of South Africa. In particular, it shaped socio-economic relations in the town, as the arrival of so many railway workers in Cradock caused an immense boom to the shopkeepers in the town. Apart from this, one of the

unforeseen consequences of the arrival of the railways in Cradock was that Port Elizabeth began to lose its comparative advantage in terms of shipping, as more wool and other agrarian products were being railed to Cape Town to stow on ships taking a more direct route to the markets in Europe (Muller, 2000:24).

The coming of the railway, together with the ever-increasing agricultural production, further increased the demand for labour, which had already been on an upward trajectory since the introduction of wool-bearing sheep, and never was the need as acute as at sheep-shearing time. Activity increased because of the establishment of the Cradock train station in 1881, which made it easy to transport wool products to Port Elizabeth and Cape Town (see Photo 3, below). As depicted in the picture below the station was established not far from the town in order to conveniently allow horse-drawn wagons to off-load agrarian products from the surrounding farms. The town is out of sight to the right, but it is nevertheless astonishing that the station precinct was so Spartan. On the far left can be seen a sporadic settlement constructed to accommodate railway labour. According to Tetelman (1997: 20-24), the sheep camp and the Old Location suddenly grew, following the opening of the station in Cradock.

**Photo 3: Cradock station as it looked soon after its opening in June 1881**



*(Source: Lewis, 2016)*

Murray (1924), quoted in Marsden, 1986) reported that of approximately 350 working-class coloured men, about half worked as town labourers or railway men, while about 75 were tradesmen. Women, both black African and coloureds, laboured as domestic servants, either in

the farms or in townhouses, doing the cooking and the washing or working as nursemaids. Unlike the members of the amaMfengu and abaThembu tribes, these blacks were of the lower class in the town and earned meagre wages. 'How the urban African working class continued to support their existence is a mystery no one has been able to resolve (or explain)', is a remark made in a report that was later reproduced in the 1929/30 municipal report (also see Marsden, 1986; Tetelman, 1997).

While were not compelled to live in the Old Location, there were few economic opportunities that enabled them to live in the main areas of the town. Some of them carried on informal trade centred on the meat obtained from the adjacent livestock farms. Such opportunities were related to the growth of commercial agriculture in the region and the fact that from the 1890s many farmers opted to pay their workers in kind (meat, milk or livestock), rather than in cash. As Smith (1864) noted, by 1892 the white population of Cradock had reached 2 985, and the town had already become largely self-sufficient in agricultural goods and products. These products found their way to the Old Location through farm workers and enhanced the chances of survival of those who lived there. Consequently, the period saw the emergence of a number of informal businesses and small shops owned by Africans who were selling meats in various areas of the town (1986:33). Employment was provided in a natural cycle. For instance, in the early 1920s the railway station of Cradock, which serviced the farms, was affording employment to the residents of the railway camp (see Map 4, page 90), who in turn provided employment to the location residents (Marsden, 1986:32). Women and men from the Old Location would often go to the railway camp to sell their meat to the residents. The meat that they sold came from the adjacent farms, and was easily accessible from the farm workers who were living in the Old Location.

Indeed, Marsden (1986:11–15) states that as the agrarian economy of the town continued to grow. An additional 120 men were employed on a temporary basis in irrigation-and construction-related projects, as more farmers were constructing houses for themselves, building paddocks for horses, and erecting fences to prevent jackals from encroaching on their fields. The introduction of windmill technology created further employment opportunities as more shops selling agricultural implements were located in towns. While these off-farm activities were spatially situated far away from the farms, their continued existence depended largely on the well-being of the surrounding farms. More black African people sought to herd their livestock on the commonage, but there was little effort to increase the land available to

them in order that they might cope with their poverty. Although they were accommodated inside the town together with white people, the infrastructure in their locations was dilapidated, thereby matching the impoverished state of their residents (Tetelman, 1997:20). One of the health officials in the town labelled the location as a ‘depressing and unsuitable place’. While most location residents were subject to poor housing, some residential areas were better than others.

Both the Boers (Afrikaners) and the black Africans lived on milk and meat, which were supplemented by corn if rains had been good. Apart from that, in the early years of the agricultural boom in Cradock, the relationship between the two groups was relatively good, as they traded livestock with one another. Both the Boers and the black Africans (especially in the Red Camp — see Map 4 below) lived in huts made of a mixture of cow dung and mud, plastered over a skeleton of branches and bush, and both invariably placed the cattle-yard immediately before the front door. Although for the amaXhosa people the town was somewhat of a place of diaspora,

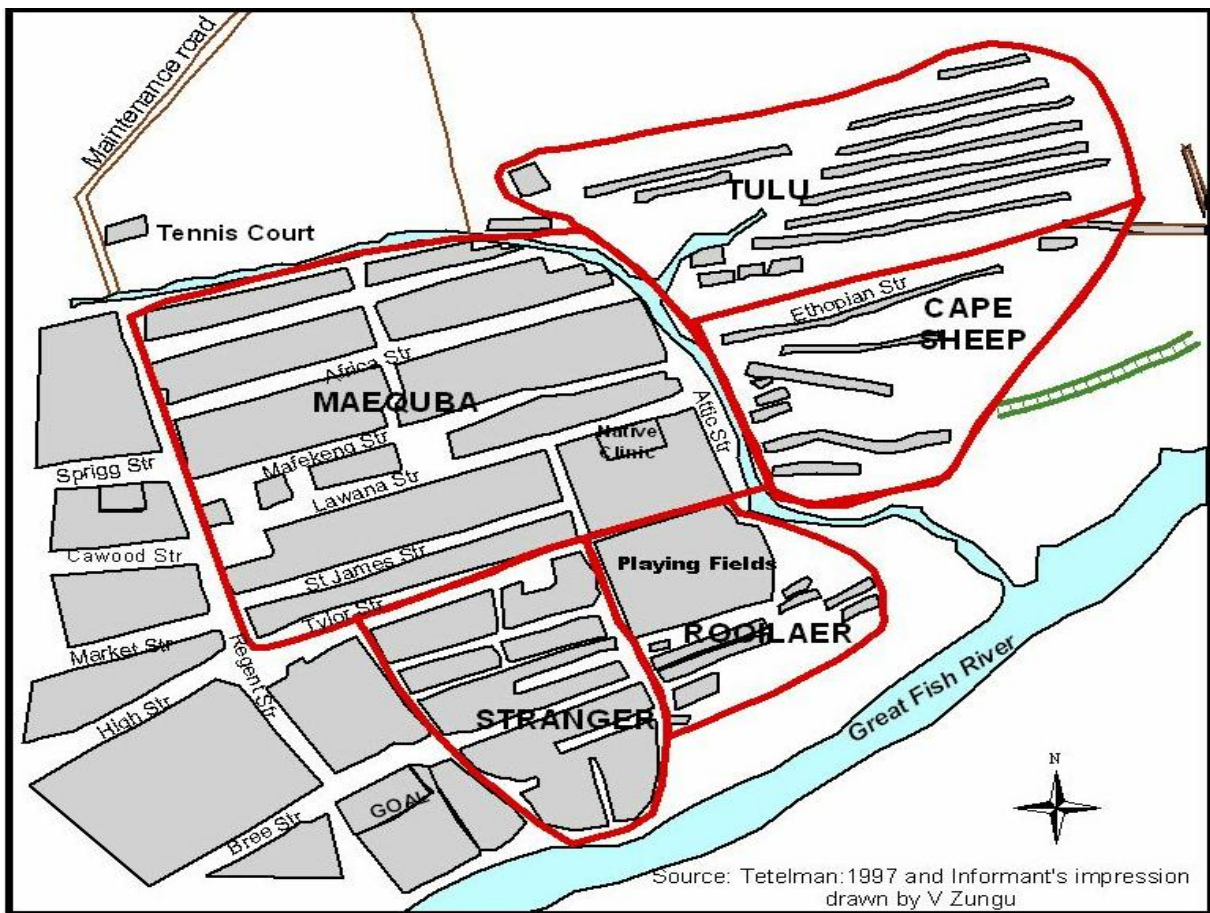
there were a number of cultural rituals performed in their locations which revolved around cattle or livestock slaughtering. In these cultural events, often conducted during weekends, cattle would be slaughtered and cooked to be shared and eaten by more than 50 to 100 neighbours living in the locations.

Various traditional songs and dances would be performed to remind the people of their lost countryside social experience (Marsden, 1986; Tetelman, 1997). As one of the archival records indicates, ‘the African locations in Cradock town were spaces in which the Xhosa people sought to regain their social cultural values amid the modern capitalistic agrarian exploitation by white farmers’ (Marsden, 1986).

During the 1920s the phenomenon that much of the white population was poverty stricken and had nothing to do in the town emerged as one of the major socio-economic challenges facing the town’s administration. As has already been said in Chapter Two, during the early 1920s the Karoo agrarian economy was affected by the prevalence of drought and widespread animal diseases. This section of the white population (particularly of Dutch descent) suffered immensely. Bundy (1979) argues that ‘they were backward and therefore not been able to survive in the town, like the Black Africans’. During this period, the town administrators divided the location into wards (see Map 4 below).

For instance, adjacent to the river stood “Rooilaer” (Red Camp), or in Xhosa, ‘*Esidikeni*’. This ward comprised of Africans who often wore traditional clothing and red ochre paint — hence the name. The area was populated by less-educated black Africans (predominantly Xhosa people) who worked on the farms and had much in common with white, Afrikaans-speaking people. Owing to their vast ‘traditional’ knowledge about cattle and livestock, these two tribes developed a special connection centred on the rearing and use of cattle. The amaXhosa people, for their part, had twenty-five different names to describe the different colours and skin patterns of their cattle, and seven different names for the shapes of their animals’ horns. Apart from that, they could articulate how they used livestock to sustain and maintain their cultural and social lifestyle.

**Map 4: The map showing the Old Location and main streets of Cradock in 1924**



As shown in the map, the ward nearest to Rooilaer, which accommodated coloureds and Africans, was named ‘Stranger’. These two wards were characterised by bee huts of wattle and daub, many with petrol tin annexes. Stranger and Rooilaer were poorer wards, whose dark and unventilated houses epitomised the location’s dilapidation. In the ‘Cape Sheep’ (*Eskapu*)

or in the Zulu 'Eziklabhini' and 'Tulu' (*Thula*) wards, working-class Africans predominated. Their houses were made of rough stone and mud, and had zinc roofs and no gardens or yards. The area, as described in the archival records, was eclectic and hybrid in a social and cultural sense. It was in this ward that the exchange of meat and vegetables often took place as the means of survival. According to the Old Location Resident Report of 1929, 'there were a number of butcheries and an estimation of more than 10 fruit and vegetables local market outlets in the area'. These residents could herd sheep obtained from the adjacent farms and sell these to people in the town, particularly migrant workers, such as those who were working in the railway sector, or metal workers and shop keepers. It is noteworthy that the conspicuous fortunes derived from commercial agriculture in Cradock did not produce homogenous social groups with equal social status. For instance, there were people of Ngunis descent in town who had no work and contrived to survive by preparing home-made alcohol (*mqombothi* or *mfulamfula*) to sell to the farm workers, railway workers and domestic servants in the locations. In the midst of these poor residential areas, situated to the west was the ward 'New Brighton', which featured typical municipal houses. Officials often referred to it as the wealthiest ward, 'Amagqula' (*Magqubeni*). It housed both and coloureds and stood in the centre of the location.

Like other black elites in the Cape Colony, the Cradock black petty bourgeoisie adopted western, particularly English, values of upward mobility, mission Christianity, and the related cultural norms. European furniture, kitchenware, clothing, pictures and musical instruments appeared with increasing frequency in location homes, marking the elite off from the poorer, 'less educated' Africans. As Tetelman (1997:32) notes, Cradock's elite had begun to develop "common experiences, values, and awareness of an identity of their interests as against those of other socio-economic classes. It was through their shared values or common experience that the black elites began to influence the black community to acquire formal education, possibly in the mission school. In the 1930s almost 600 African students were attending the two location schools, and another 70 were in a local night school. Coloured pupils attended their own school in town (1997:24-28). In view of the growing number of blacks entering formal education, it has been argued that this phenomenon signified a shift away from agrarian land practices. However, despite the influence of education on the black people in the town, Tetelman (1997:28) has argued that land-based livelihood practices persisted and that land remained important in the lives of black African people, particularly those who were residing in locations such as the Cape Sheep area of Cradock's townscape.

### **4.2.3 The effects of the Depression on agriculture in the Cradock district from 1929 to the 1940s**

This section on the effects of the Great Depression on the economy of Cradock is crucial to this study. First, it had a direct effect on agriculture, which in turn affected the employment of black Africans on farms. Secondly, it forced white farmers to employ more cheap labour in order to sell more agricultural products at a cheaper price while pay-in-kind (the supply of material resources) was used as the dominant mode of payment to black Africans who worked on farms during this period (see Marsden, 1986:11-15). Although this type of payment was not new during this period (1930), the scale of its usage by white farmers escalated.

In the years prior to the 1930s the Cradock economy had thrived, despite the various challenges which affected agricultural production in the late nineteenth century. As early as in the last decade of the nineteenth century, agricultural production was already being faced with difficulties such as droughts, and a widespread rinderpest epidemic was recorded first in 1897 (Bundy, 1972:381). The agricultural production crisis was further exacerbated by labour migration to the Rand mines, following the discovery of minerals on the Reef (Southall, 1983:73–75). However, this shortage was short lived, as the production and export of agricultural commodities continued to grow (Minnaar, 1990). Despite the difficulties referred to above, agricultural production in areas adjacent to small Karoo towns such as Cradock was not much affected, as sheep production and exports continued to escalate, driven by the increase in international and local demand. The reason why South Africa (especially Cradock and other such towns) survived this storm was because the weakness of South Africa's currency made it profitable for Britain to continue buying wool products from South African farmers (Minnaar, 1990). For instance, Skota (quoted in Tetelman, 1997:27) observes that in this period 'there were at least 320 black and coloured sheep shearers who were still working in different farms in the district'. More importantly, improved farming methods (i.e., improved feeding and breeding, and the erection of jackal-proof fencing, irrigation and anti-erosion devices) and as well as the specialisation in particular breeds of sheep resulted in an increase in the average yield per sheep, as shown in the table below:

**Table 2: Sheep yield per kilogramme**

Years	Yield of sheep per kg
1927	3.6
1928	4.1
1929	4.5
1930	4.5

*(Source: Badenhorst quoted in Marsden, 1986:14)*

But in the 1930s, during the Great Depression, the Cradock economy was affected to such a severe extent that the town was almost bankrupt. The crisis started when farmers were left with a huge surplus of agricultural produce which they could no longer sell in the international markets. As Marsden (1986:11) observes, during the 1930s Cradock, like other small Karoo towns, experienced a tremendous increase in population. Both black African and white farm workers experienced the devastating effects of the Depression. Surprisingly, the increase in the rate of the movement of farm workers to the town was due to the Karoo wool farmers' response to the declining importance of wool on the world market during this period (Marsden, 1986:11; see 4.1.4 below for a discussion of the response).

Minnaar (1990:83) explains that the agrarian economy of Cradock (like that of other small Karoo towns) was largely dependent upon an increase in worldwide demand for its export products. Thus, a significant economic return for agriculture proved difficult to achieve, especially in a decade conspicuous for its over-production of primary products. The farmers undoubtedly suffered one of the heaviest burdens of all sectors and certainly for the longest period.

The agriculture commodity report (in Marsden, 1986:11) for the year 1931 stated that:

income from agricultural and pastoral exports was £5 million less in 1929 than in 1928. In the following years, this reduction continued unchecked, and between 1929 and 1932 the gross value of agricultural production in South Africa fell by almost 70 per cent.

Indeed, the white farmers found themselves in such a massive pool of debt that they had to sell their land. Their financial difficulties were even more acute in 1931 due to the adverse exchange rate, which had a particularly harsh effect on the wool farmers in the Cape Colony:

‘This problem started when Australia abandoned the gold standard at the beginning of 1931, and the position was complicated by the devaluation of the Australian pound by 20 per cent. (Minnaar, 1990:90).

British wool buyers in Australia began to pay more in Australian currency for wool sold in the Commonwealth, but this situation also made Australian wool cheaper in sterling in London.

It was thus apparent that the depreciated Australian currency adversely affected the purchase of wool from South Africa, as the higher nominal price in Australia involved a comparatively lower price when measured against European currencies. Throughout 1931 the Australian market remained relatively firm, to the enormous advantage of the Australian wool growers, and as such it thus accounted for the bulk of the buying orders going to Australia rather than to South Africa (Minnaar, 1990:90).

The effects of the Depression on agriculture also shaped relations between white and African farmers. The latter were already under pressure in Cradock, following the enactment of the 1913 Land Act. Those who were living in the location and were engaged in commercial agriculture found it difficult to stay on the land as the state laws forced them out to work as farm labourers on farms controlled by whites. While the white farmers were still enjoying the fruits of black African land and labour, black African (isiXhosa speakers) were forced to live in conditions characterised by abject poverty. The Cradock Municipal Health Report produced during the late 1920s stated that the town's black locations were plagued by disease, hunger, and unemployment (see Marsden, 1986:11). The conditions in the locations were described by the report as follows:

The location's sanitation system and water provision were wretched. In 1938, the location had fifty-seven public pail latrines and twenty-five private latrines, amounting to one latrine per ninety-eight residents. As a result, most public latrines were without pails and were thus reduced to dug outs or cesspools. Residents could not open doors or windows during high winds due to the stench of exposed faeces.

As Tetelmam (1997:21-23) notes, Cradock's location residents remained poverty-stricken as many farm areas were unable to retain their farm workers. Only a tiny minority of Africans were members of the petty bourgeoisie, a group that included prosperous teachers, clergymen and clerks. In the mid-1930s four per cent of black African adult males were considered 'professional' and 'clerical', while six per cent of these were 'tradesmen'. Coloured elites generally lived in town, so the location statistics do not include them. Approximately forty African men worked as tradesmen, and about one hundred worked on the farms as temporary workers, especially during the sheep-shearing season. Some three hundred African men also worked as 'town labourers' for the municipality, or as gardeners, or for the railways. Some archival records indicate that several hundred black African men migrated to the sugar

plantations in Natal and to the gold mines in Johannesburg owing to the scarcity of work in Cradock.

However, the report from Roberts (1959:19) also indicates that the number of unemployed, elderly and sick residents was high. The impact of the low wages earned took on more importance, given the high proportion of black residents who were out of work. In 1935 to 1939 Africans working on the mines constituted almost one half of the location's African population, while coloured minors made up about forty per cent of the coloured residents. As the income from wages declined, African location residents supplemented their pitiable wages by keeping livestock, which grazed on a nearby commonage provided by the municipality (see Map 4: page 89 above) (Tetelman, 1997:28; Marsden, 1986:15). Some white farmers sold their surplus livestock cheaply to these residents, who kept the animals on their commonage (Tetelman, 1997). These were, in turn, traded by Africans in the location, or sometimes in the countryside of the Eastern Cape.

#### **4.2.4 The farmers' response to the Depression**

The repercussions of the Great Depression on the economy of Cradock and its populace subsequently led the white farmers to adopt urgent mitigation measures to save the town. Indeed, it is not surprising that the lack of cash following the decline of commercial agricultural production in the mid-1930s affected the municipality, as it failed to secure the income needed to maintain the town. One of the councillors complained that the town was rapidly dilapidating as the municipal council had failed to secure its usual taxes due to the collapse of sheep farming in the district. The number of poor whites in the towns increased, particularly amongst the Afrikaners (Tetelman, 1997:28; also see KBP, 2009:53). The failure of agriculture to stimulate the economy, not only in Cradock but in the entire country, provided an opportunity for Afrikaners to gain influence in governmental politics. For instance, a group of organised white farmers laid the blame on the Jan Smuts government for the retention of the gold standard at the expense of agriculture (Minnaar, 1990). Cradock alone experienced more than a 40 per cent decline in agricultural exports to the international market. The campaign against the government's retention of the gold standard cited Cradock as an example of how commercial agriculture had sustained an economy which had supported thousands of black African farm workers and white farmers in the small towns (Minnaar, 1990; Tetelman, 1997).

However, those white farmers who remained on their farms responded in various ways to the global economic crisis. First, Afrikaans-and- English-speaking peoples united to convince the state to intervene in order to save their ailing agriculture (Minnaar, 1990). As Minnaar notes, Cradock had a strong constituency of white farmers who tried to influence the government by all means. Minnaar (1990:84) adds further that most sections of agriculture demanded even more legislative control over the economy and the imposition of additional import restrictions. They also demanded that the government should do away with the gold standard in order to be able to devalue the currency as a means to attract international demand for South African agricultural products.

Secondly, the white farmers had no option but to continue increasing production and this led to conflict with their labour force (Marsden, 1986:14). While the farmers, on the one hand, launched an onslaught on the size and wages of their labour force, on the other hand, the low prices received for wool in the international market necessitated an increase in the amount of wool produced, and hence more intense labour activity. Therefore, Cradock experienced an influx of labourers (in particular, black Africans), although the district's agrarian economy was already in distress (1986:14). In addition, the farmers' relations with their (black) labour tenants changed significantly. In the Transvaal, the initial move made by the farmers was to expel those families who were occupying the largest portion of land and had the largest amount of stock, but in the Eastern Cape the farmers instead reduced the size of tenants' plots of land to an insubstantial amount. It was only in a few instances that herds could be held or substantial crops could be grown by tenant families. With reference to Cradock, Van der Horst's study of farm labour states that: 'The amount of land allotted to African labourers for growing crops appears to be least in the Karoo, where it is often less than 1 morgen' (Van der Horst in Marsden, 1986:14).

While the white farmers were grateful for the initial attempts of the government (such as the establishment of export subsidies) to place them in a more favourable position to compete on an equal footing with other countries in the overseas markets, from January 1932 to 1935 the state of affairs was so serious that a number of white farmers decided to embark on a protest against the government. Minnaar (1990) observes that mass protest meetings took place in rural areas and small towns (mostly in the sheep-farming areas of the Cape) during this period. The white farmers expressed the opinion that unless some further relief was given, most South African farmers would be reduced to a state of 'abject poverty'. These formations were

predominantly driven by Afrikaans speakers, as the prosperity of the mid 1800s had already enriched English speakers to the extent that they had formed political and economic elites, especially in Cradock (Tetelman, 1997:20). The Afrikaans-speaking farmers were able eventually to exert sufficient pressure on government to persuade it to do away with the gold standard, as a mechanism to rehabilitate South African agriculture. The most important associations which signed the petition for the relinquishing of the gold standard were those from Cradock, De Aar, Calvinia, Kenhardt, Cathcart, Queenstown, Aliwal North, East London Districts, Bedford, Burgersdorp, Dordrecht, Stutterheim, Richmond, King William's Town, Heilbron and Bethlehem, which were all major wool-producing areas (Minnaar, 1990:94). Minnaar (1990:94) argues that of all the farmers in the protest, those from Cradock formed the most powerful and influential group. It was thus clear that the wool growers, especially in small towns like Cradock, were more vocal than the farmers from other agricultural sectors. This is expressed by Minnaar (1990:95) in this manner:

Accordingly, opposition from farmers to the government continued to grow and was fuelled by wool agents telling the farmers that 4d per lb for wool was the most they could expect under the gold standard but if it was abandoned they could expect to receive at least 8d per lb.

In calling for protective measures to resuscitate agriculture, the farmers pointed to the importance of agriculture to the general welfare of the populace of South Africa, especially in the small Karoo towns. The substance of their petition was based upon the fact that there were approximately 165 000 white farmers and white agricultural workers on 97 000 farms or small holdings, on whom 530 000 black workers depended for their livelihood, while the gold mines in contrast employed only 20 600 whites and 220 000 black miners (Minnaar, 1990:96). The farmers conceded that the gold mines stimulated the growth of many ancillary industries on the Rand and supported many people, but they maintained that they (the agricultural sector) also contributed to the welfare of the nation, since there were almost 200 towns and villages, ranging in size from only 200 inhabitants to 8 000 to 10 000, all of whom depended almost entirely on the farmers in one way or another (Minnaar, 1990:96).

It is noteworthy that agriculture was not only affected by the international prices. The impact on prices was felt locally as well, as the fall in agricultural prices led to a fall in wholesale prices and retail prices in general. Members of the farming community experienced the greatest

difficulty in adjusting their input costs to the lower revenue they were receiving. In January 1938, agricultural price levels reached the lowest point recorded since 1925.

This fall in price was particularly severe for those products grown largely for export, namely wool, mohair, hides and skins, maize, deciduous and citrus fruits, wattle bark, wattle extract and sugar, which normally constituted 90 per cent of the total South African exports of farm produce. (Minnaar, 1990:88).

With the decline in prices the farmers tried to respond to their reduced buying power by increasing production, which did not help the situation when the demand for their products was falling.

By 1939, Cradock town had been severely affected by the poor economic conditions, and the small enterprises in town were reduced to a state of desperation (Toerien & Kasimoglu, 2012). The farmers resorted to hiring even more labour at even lower wages in order to be able to sell even more products at even lower prices, and some reverted to the practice of paying their labourers in kind as an alternative to paying them in cash. As Marsden (1986:14) observes, where this form of payment was employed, the

farmers would probably have attempted to depend on the larger families to provide the necessary labour, and thus [to] reduce the number of smaller families living on the farms. Indeed, for farmers, payment of this form was all that they could afford as farmers in the district placed more emphasis on rations to make up for what they considered to be a reasonable wage.

Marsden (1986:15) added that the rations used as payment in kind normally included coffee, sugar, tobacco, mealies, mealie meal and sometimes meat. Schoeman in his recent book (2013) makes mention of the Mfengu man who worked as a shepherd on the farm of a Middelburg man for two years after its establishment in the 1860s. Like Mfengu farm workers in Cradock, this man accumulated livestock (14 head of cattle, in his case), which allowed him to be independent; i.e., he no longer needed to work for anyone else. Although these farm workers were paid little by the standards of that time, Marsden (1986) argues that they were satisfied with the payment in kind, as they would often accumulate livestock, which was more valuable to them than money, as it had significance in a cultural sense. The same sentiment is expressed by a Mrs Genet Mjoli on 12 April 2012, one of the informants in Cradock, who recalled how commercial agriculture contributed to the lives of the township people in a material sense. She said that:

Working on the farm was and is not just to earn wages because white farmers do not want to release money. At most time, this money is not even enough as it will not cover all household monthly expenses. Instead, the white farmer will often give us household necessities (such as, milk, sugar and tea) at the end of the month and these resources were important because we do not have to pay cash for them in these expensive supermarkets. For us livestock was more significance. I remember, when we lost our mother at home [in the rural hinterland], Mr Pieterie donated a goat to my brother [his worker] to be used for ritual cleansing. He did that because my brother was working for him for more than eight years.

In other words, farm-based resources were given to farm workers by their employers (the farm owners) from time to time as a form of payment, and this served as a coping mechanism in the context of the precarious living conditions associated with their land tenure insecurity.

Drawing from Cradock in the early 1940s, Tetelman (1997) argues that livestock from farms (as a form of material resources) played a crucial role in anchoring the traditional Xhosa customs and cultural practices in the Old Location. He argues that, as an area predominantly occupied by the Xhosa people, the Old Location had *iziduko* or clans that underpinned familial relationships and obligations. Cradock's Africans came mainly from the Transkei and Ciskei reserves during the mid-1930s, as well as from surrounding farms (Tetelman, 1997:9). Therefore, livestock from surrounding farms, as a form of cultural capital, was normally slaughtered as part of the important cultural ritual of male initiation. During the initiation ceremony, younger African (Xhosa) males would undergo circumcision, which signalled that they had acquired the generational hierarchy and responsibilities of manhood. Many younger females in the location also practiced *intonjane*, a milder form of initiation for younger women. Tetelman (1997:9) argues that in sustaining their culture, Africans in the Old Location of Cradock would seek to negotiate the cheapest way possible of accessing livestock (either a sheep or a goat) from the surrounding farms via the farm workers who lived in the locations. This was also applicable even in a situation where the ritual would be performed in the reserve (i.e., the Transkei or Ciskei rural hinterland). In this case, the livestock would be collected from the farm and then transported from the town to the rural area where the ritual initiation, wedding ceremony or funeral would be performed or take place. As Tetelman (1997) notes, the performance of these rituals by the residents of the Old Location in Cradock revived and affirmed modes of generational control. The slaughtering for this purpose of goats or sheep obtained from surrounding farms was vital to strengthening their clan's identities, and will have contributed to the fact that their social ties have remained strong to this day. Thus, the Old

Location in the town (i.e., Cradock) served as an extension of the rural countryside in which the continuation of their cultural practices was made possible by negotiating access to livestock (as a form of material resource) from the adjacent farms. This accounts in part for the fact that small Karoo towns in general and Cradock in particular experienced little out-migration, even during the agrarian decline of the 1930s and 1950s (Tetelman, 1997).

The concern, however, is whether or not the socio-economic conditions of the African people who lived in Cradock were severely affected by the global Depression. The Depression led to the downsizing of many of the cohorts of black African farm workers, and a number of these had no choice but to migrate to the bigger cities, while those with fewer skills had to be concentrated in African the reserve areas. Some women remained in the towns as domestic workers, while others went back to the rural areas to carry on with subsistence farming. In Cradock, some African males in such locations as Cape Sheep (*Eskaphu*) and Tulu (*Thula*) could not have earned the money needed to enable them to buy anything from the shops in the town, as their livelihoods relied entirely on subsistence farming on their commonage lands. Those few who were farm workers began to sell livestock and meat, as this was the form of payment they were receiving for their work, the farmers not being able to pay them in cash.

While some white farmers sold their land and remaining livestock and migrated to big cities such as Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth, others remained just to save their land. It is not surprising that the sluggish pace of agricultural production in these areas led to the decline of the adjacent small towns, with negative effects on the livelihoods of rural-based communities. The negative effect on small towns is expressed by Minnaar (1990:88) as follows:

By June 1931 the situation had become serious especially in the smaller towns which were the centres of sheep-rearing districts. These towns, having no wage-earning class, no railway workshops, universities, many civil servants, harbour officials or other professional and commercial personnel, were almost in a state bordering on insolvency since they were entirely dependent upon the prosperity of the farmer.

This was because the declining investment and agricultural output had a direct impact on the viability and status of the rural service centres of the region, which originally had developed to meet the needs of agriculture-based communities (Nel & Hill, 2008:11). Under these adverse conditions,

farmers were compelled to sell their land either because of pressing debts or because their farms were becoming hopelessly overstocked - the result of efforts to increase production by running more stock or because of withholding stock from markets in the hopes of rising prices which never materialised (Minnaar, 1990:89).

These centres were not only directly influenced by the changing fortunes of the farming economy, but also became the receiving, or refuge areas, for displaced nomadic farm workers (especially sheep shearers) and their families, as a result of the negative impacts of the great depression, which affected commercial farmlands (Nel & Hill: 2008, Bryceson & Jamal:1997). But Nel and Hill (2008:1) argue, regarding towns in the semi-arid Karoo, that

Despite long-term decline in agricultural output, the traditional mainstay of the region, and weakening small town economies, the Karoo's population and the economies of its largest service centres are growing.

As pointed out early on,

the downfall of agriculture put an enormous pressure on government and as a result most of the legislative measures passed by the government were concerned with giving assistance and relief to South African farmers, while later legislation was aimed at the rehabilitation of farmers (Minnaar, 1990:89).

It is important to note that these ameliorative measures were applied to white farmers only. Some legislative measures benefited specific agricultural products (e.g. wool, sheep, wheat, etc.), whilst others were of a more general nature to aid the farming community specifically to keep the white farmers on the land (Minnaar, 1990:89). Minnaar (1990:92) informs us that October 1935 the government passed the Export Subsidies Act (49 of 1931) that 'provided for a 10 per cent subsidy on the value of all primary products exported'. The purpose of the Act was to give more protection to export-oriented farmers. There were many criticisms of the effectiveness of this subsidy, especially by wool farmers. These complaints led the government in January 1937 to raise the export subsidy to 25 per cent, but the farmers were still dissatisfied because of the manner in which the 25 per cent subsidy was implemented. The Land Bank, which had been established in 1912, established another branch in Cradock to assist mainly white farmers during the crisis of the 1930s.

As Tetelman (1997:26) notes, the employment pattern in towns such as Cradock was severely affected by the Depression and the protracted droughts in the late 1920s, which crushed many farmers (also see Nel & Hill, 2008:18). During this period, white school children in Cradock came to school hungry and barefoot, and bank clerks were forced to work in the nearby quarry

to supplement their income. As the Depression took its toll on agriculture, employment in various sectors declined significantly. Marsden (1986:32) notes that in Cradock in 1934 about 140 farmworkers were resident in the location, half of them being sheep shearers. Yet, as already said in the previous section, the black labour force continued to grow as farmers sought to produce more at a lower price to accumulate profits based on the availability of cheap labour. However, the rate of unemployment increased as more black Africans migrated to the towns, with Cradock reported as having a greater influx than other comparable towns in 1934. Table 3 and Table 4 below show the breakdown of the rate of employment in the location among and coloureds in 1934.

**Table 3: The category and number of Africans in employment in Cradock in 1934**

<b>Job types for males</b>	<b>No. of employed</b>	<b>Job types for females</b>	<b>No. of employed</b>
Tradesmen	159	Domestic workers	209
Labourer sons <sup>34</sup>	36	Nursemaids	220
Quarry workers	39	Washerwomen	57
Shearers	77	Shop cleaners	46
Labourers in town	319	Labourers in town	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>563</b>

*(Source: Report by G.P. Wilken, Location Superintendent, 1934)*

**Table 4: The category and a number of coloureds in employment in Cradock in 1934**

<b>Job type for males</b>	<b>No of employed</b>	<b>Job types for females</b>	<b>No. of employed</b>
Tradesmen	72	Domestic workers	84
Labourer sons	0	Nursemaids	221
Quarry workers	24	Washerwomen	117
Shearers	25	Shop cleaners	20
Labourers in town	177	Labourers in town	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>482</b>

*(Source: Report by G.P. Wilken, Location Superintendent, 1934)*

---

<sup>34</sup> Labourer sons is a category of employees adopted by Wilken quoted in in Marsden (1986) to describe young males who used to work with their parents under the same employer.

As shown in the above report, with respect to Cradock the ratio of men to women employed indicates that the adult population was predominantly female. The reason for this disparity in employment is that during the Depression there was an influx of women into Cradock, caused by their desire to leave the harsh conditions of reserve life (Marsden, 1986:34). Many of these women had had to eke out a livelihood from the deteriorating land and decreasing herds to supplement the utterly inadequate wages which were being earned in the towns by their men (Marsden, 1986:34). However, there were also some who vehemently opposed entering the town wage-labour force. According to Marsden, this group of Africans was highly politicised, and they thus sought to devise their own means of earning money locally. They were able to avoid the obligations of town and farm employment by engaging in various informal activities in the locations, which were often linked to farming. Others complained that both working on farms or in any other formal employment were not lucrative. For example, the Rev. Calata himself, in correspondence with the Town Council, had to ask for loans on several occasions to travel to African National Congress conferences or to make repairs to his house (1986:37). Many people developed means to subsist in Cradock without employment, or with only temporary or poorly paid jobs. The farm workers would often visit the town, and local residents would sell various items to them as a means of generating an income. As the *Joint Committee Report of the Town Council* (1929) states, unemployment led to a high incidence of beer-brewing and stock theft. These were some of the means by which residents resisted giving their labour to others, even when it was solicited (Marsden, 1986:37; Tetelman, 1997).

It not surprising that the period from 1930 to 1939 was characterised by concerted efforts by government to save the ailing agricultural industry, especially sheep farming. The government continued to introduce various measures to ameliorate the situation. In 1935, for the first time since 1922, the price of wool was cheaper in South Africa than in Australia. However, this did not help, as most sheep farmers were quite unable to meet their financial obligations (Minnaar, 1990:93). So, during the course of 1932, although farmers were being assisted by various legislative relief measures — notably through export subsidies —they continued to experience a marked deterioration in their debt situation. Agricultural insolvencies increased by 28 per cent between 1928 and 1929 and by a staggering 62 per cent in 1930 (Minnaar, 1990:93). As the economic downswing gained in momentum, particularly during World War Two, Afrikaner interest groups, led by the most influential white farmers in Cradock, vowed to vote for the National Party in the hope that it would be able to restore the ailing agrarian economy. As Tetelman (1995) argues, this period was a turning point in the reconfiguration of the agrarian

economy in Cradock and had wider political ramifications that led to the triumph and institutionalisation of Afrikaner nationalism.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

It is within a historical context that the contribution of commercial agriculture to the economy of Cradock and the socio-economic conditions of the people residing in the townships must be understood. This understanding will form the basis from which to discern whether today's conversion of private farmlands to game farming is having similar effects.

This chapter has traced the origin and evolution of commercial agriculture in Cradock with reference to how it influenced the economy of the town over time. It has also provided evidence that suggests that the commercial agricultural production of the early 1800s created a range of socio-economic opportunities for the people living in the town. While articulating the role played by commercial agriculture in sustaining the economy of Cradock, it is critical to state that the aim here is not to undermine or diminish the appalling conditions and hardships that the poor people in the townships or on the farms experienced as a result of the introduction of capitalist agrarian production.

The next chapter will focus on the socio-economic influence of commercial agriculture from the perspective of the township people in Cradock. The chapter will also highlight the difficulties they are facing because of the conversion from commercial agriculture to game farming.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF AFRICANS IN CRADOCK: THE PRE-CONVERSION ERA**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter (i.e., Chapter Four) it was argued that the agrarian economy has always been intertwined with the socio-economic conditions of black African and coloureds people in Cradock. However, this conspicuous economic prosperity was severely affected by the Great Depression of the early 1930s. Minnaar (1990) argued that Cradock's agrarian products did not find their way to the international markets from 1929 onwards. The price of certain agrarian commodities (such as wool and mohair) experienced a decline that left white farms languishing in the economic struggle for survival (Minnaar, 1990:83). The point of departure for this chapter is to demonstrate that, despite the dwindling state of the agrarian economy in South Africa, black African and coloured people in Cradock continued to sustain their livelihoods through commercial agriculture. Like other small Karoo towns, Cradock continued to function as a service centre to the surrounding commercial farmers.

The chapter argues that while the agricultural sector's contribution to the country's GDP declined from 21 per cent in the 1920s to 4 per cent in the 2000s (see Minnaar, 1990; Nel & Hill, 2008), commercial agriculture remains the major source of livelihoods for black African people in Cradock. This chapter aims at depicting the socio-economic conditions of these people prior to the conversion of land from commercial agriculture to game farming, and addresses the question of how black African people in the townships of Cradock benefited from commercial agriculture before the advent of wildlife production in the district. The chapter will show that black Africans in this town benefited from commercial agriculture through having access to material resources from the farms, participating in both informal and formal off-farm activities, and accessing off-farm employment.

The chapter will first paint a picture of the socio-economic significance of agriculture to the people of Cradock before conversion. To do so it is necessary to step back and show how Cradock continued to survive from agriculture after the Great Depression. The chapter shows that while the commercial farmland areas are spatially isolated from the town, they are by and large socially and economically connected to the socio-economic lives of the people, in

particular of those residing in the townships. To do this, it is necessary first to depict how the people of Cradock people (in particular the township people) drew upon commercial agriculture as the main source of their livelihoods from the 1940s to the 1990s.

## **5.2 The state of the agrarian economy prior to conversion: from the 1940s to the 1990s**

As stated in Chapter Four, the Depression and its effects on white commercial agriculture in the town undoubtedly created the circumstances that led to the quest for a new government (Minnaar, 1990). The demand for state intervention in the already ailing agricultural sector was predominantly ushered in by a lobby group in Cradock comprised mainly of Afrikaners. As Tetelman (1997) notes, there was a great deal of white poverty (especially among Afrikaners) in the district, which started from as early as 1916. However, following the decline of the agrarian economy due to the Depression, the scale of the poverty, particularly amongst Afrikaners, became immense.

The fact that most of the Afrikaners were not comfortable farmers as compared to the British farmers was sufficient for these Afrikaners to push for the National Party to take power in 1948. This new government vowed to provide support specifically to white farmers, and this signaled the beginning of the institutionalisation of racial separation, which marginalised black Africans yet further. The government eventually offered substantial subsidies and protection to white farmers (only). Thus, small towns such as Cradock were the first to entrench Afrikaner nationalism in their political economy, to the exclusion of black African farmers and workers. Like most other towns in the Midlands-Karoo region, however, the dwindling agrarian economy stunted Cradock's development in the 1950s and 1960s (Tetelman, 1995:1-4). Owing to the fact that wool production dominated the economy of the surrounding farms, Cradock's fortunes largely depended on the wool trade for the town's survival. While wool prices boomed after the Second World War, by the late 1950s they had plummeted due to a sequence of droughts and the increasing demand for synthetic fibres (Tetelman, 1995:3). But black Africans, particularly the Xhosa people living in the Old Location of Cradock, were reported to be making a living as independent informal traders selling meat, vegetable and homemade alcohol (Marsden, 1986:11-15). As said earlier in this chapter, this local trade was intimately connected to the surrounding commercial farms.

In the mid-1950s, following the promulgation of the Group Areas Act (GAA), the state ordered the town council of Cradock to remove black Africans from the location situated close to the

town (Tetelman, 1995:3). It was in this period that black African commercial farmers lost access to the land they had been using (the commonage) and some found it necessary to work as farm workers on the white farms under poor conditions. With the implementation of the GAA, the African residents complained about the lack of consultation, the expected increase in living costs, and the inconvenience of living far from the town, their schools and their jobs (Tetelman, 1995:3). Many black Africans (including coloured people) and some prominent white residents lobbied the municipality to improve the conditions in the old locations instead of removing people from the sources of their livelihoods, but the municipality continued to implement the removal policy, particularly when the Verwoerdian policy mandated that a five-hundred-yard buffer strip was to be imposed between the proposed African township and areas designated for other races<sup>35</sup>. This led to workers having to travel excessive distances from the town to the farms and from the farms to the town. Mkhize (2012:79) argues that unlike farm workers or farm dwellers in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), farm workers in Cradock had always had their homes in the township. This is true, as the state did not encourage farmers to keep black farm workers on their farms, but required that after work they should live in the homelands or in the township locations. As Grant and Scott (1996:127) comment, ‘township locations were by and large established to maintain white capitalist control’. The establishment of Lingelihle Township in 1953 after the enactment of the Group Areas Act served this purpose, i.e., to keep blacks far from the white and coloured areas while allowing white farmers to access cheap labour in the township. As Beinart and Murray (1996:9) commented in 1996, with reference to small towns in the eastern Free State:

Improved transport links, largely through the spread of mini-bus taxis, have made it more feasible for households to straddle rural, small town, and urban employment and informal sector activities. Farmers appear to call largely upon local resources, rather than migrant workers, when attempting to meet peak seasonal labour requirements.

Like other white farmers in South Africa, Cradock’s white farmers have survived on state intervention through subsidies, job reservation, and protection against global markets. The period from 1948 to the 1970s was epitomised by great prosperity in Cradock, as the state supported and protected white farmers at all cost. In the mid-1950s the mechanisation of agriculture in Cradock was supported by the introduction of irrigation systems along the KFRV

---

<sup>35</sup> This account of the public reaction to the removals of the mid-1950s has been gleaned from *The Midland News and Karoo Farmer*, in particular an article entitled ‘Buffer strip must be set aside: site- and- service scheme pitfalls discussed’, dated 28 August 1956.

to enable farmers to grow maize and lucerne in this dry landscape. As Atkinson (2009:279) asserts, ‘by the late 1960s, commercial agriculture became focused on a developing rural economy based on land consolidation, mechanization and a reduced but better trained black labour force’. The railway transport was further improved to transport goods and services from adjacent commercial farm areas. This occurred until the 1980s, when deregulation and liberalisation was implemented (Van Zyl et al., 2001:1). But prior to this period, Cradock and the Karoo in general, faced serious drought which left many farmers without any produce to sell. That was when the state embarked on an ambitious project to realign the Orange River to feed the Kingfisher River Valley.

Given the influx control on the farms, as pointed out earlier, black African farm workers were expected to resettle in the homelands or townships, and therefore did not regard the commercial farmlands as their home. However, in Cradock, as could be seen in other Karoo areas as well, many farm workers left the commercial farmlands and moved — illegally — to the small towns and cities. Their movement from the commercial farmlands to the town and from the town to the commercial farmlands constituted a largely invisible social network and established social relations which allowed the township people to continue to benefit from commercial agriculture. While black African farm workers were prevented from living in towns and cities (in terms of the GAA), they encouraged their children to move to the town in order to secure an education and a better-paid job (Schirmer, 1995). This is why farm workers, particularly in Cradock, often see the township locations as their homes, and the town as the place where they spend the money earned on the farms.

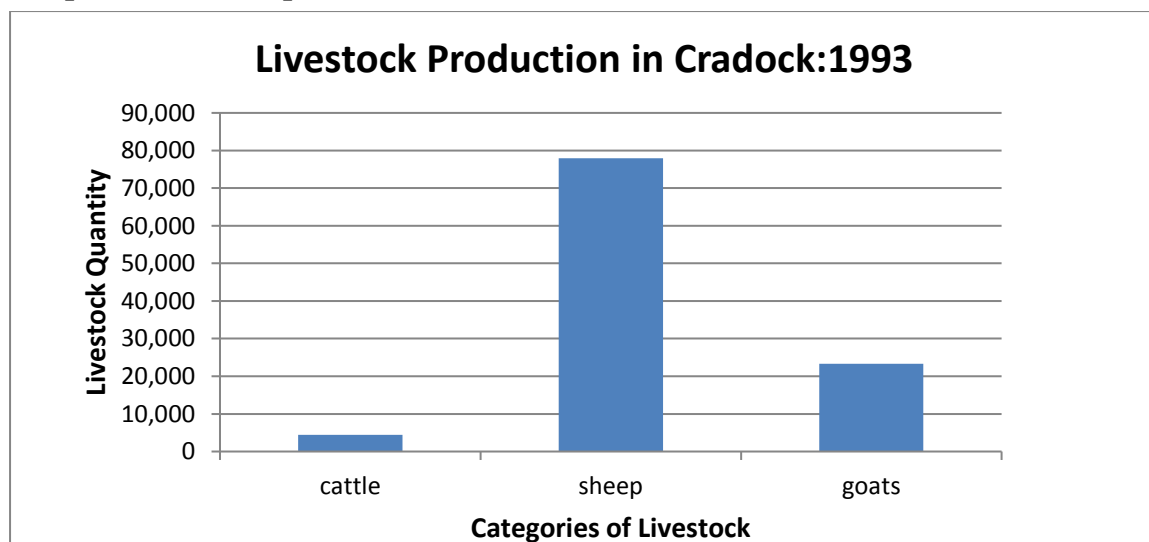
### **5.3 Unpacking the socio-economic significance of the material resources from the farms**

Commercial agriculture in Cradock, particularly sheep and livestock farming, is predominantly viewed by many people as the main source of their livelihoods. This is because most individual household members from the townships of Cradock have over many years benefited from commercial agriculture through having access to material supplies. The townships of Cradock, namely Lingelihle (established in 1960) and Michausdal (established in 1970), are both located on the edge of the town along the Great Fish River (GFR) and buffered from the town by farmlands (see Map 1 in Chapter One). Apart from that, the people in these townships have been directly or indirectly connected with the farmlands since the establishment of the town in 1814. The commercial farmlands located in close proximity to the townships along the GFR amount to 32 500 hectares, with more than 20 farmers drawing their water supply from the

river (iNxuba Yethemba Municipality-IDP, 2012:55). One respondent, Genet Mjoli (born in 1945 in the Old Location in Cradock), recalled how her family and other families in the location survived on material resources obtained from the surrounding commercial farms. These material benefits, she stated, were in the form of meat, livestock, milk, sour milk, maize, and other vegetable products. A large number of the township residents (from both townships) indicates that these resources are either directly or indirectly supplied or made available by the surrounding commercial farms via the farm workers who live in the townships. In many instances, these material supplies serve as the basis upon which the township people sustain their socio-economic livelihoods. The township residents pictured their lives during the pre-conversion era that commercial agriculture does not only provide jobs, but further supplies these material resources which help to sustain their livelihoods.

Although, the proponents of the game farming industry in Cradock argued that commercial agricultural production has taken a downward trajectory since the 1970s, Cradock’s agricultural statistics of this period (i.e., the 1970s to the 1990s) tell a somewhat different story. For instance, the 1993 Eastern Cape Agriculture Statistics reported that at least 77 905 sheep were produced on commercial farms in Cradock in that year (SA-Agriculture Statistics, 1993:79). In the same year, there were 4 454 head of cattle and 23 277 goats (see Graph 1 below).

**Graph 1: Livestock production in Cradock**



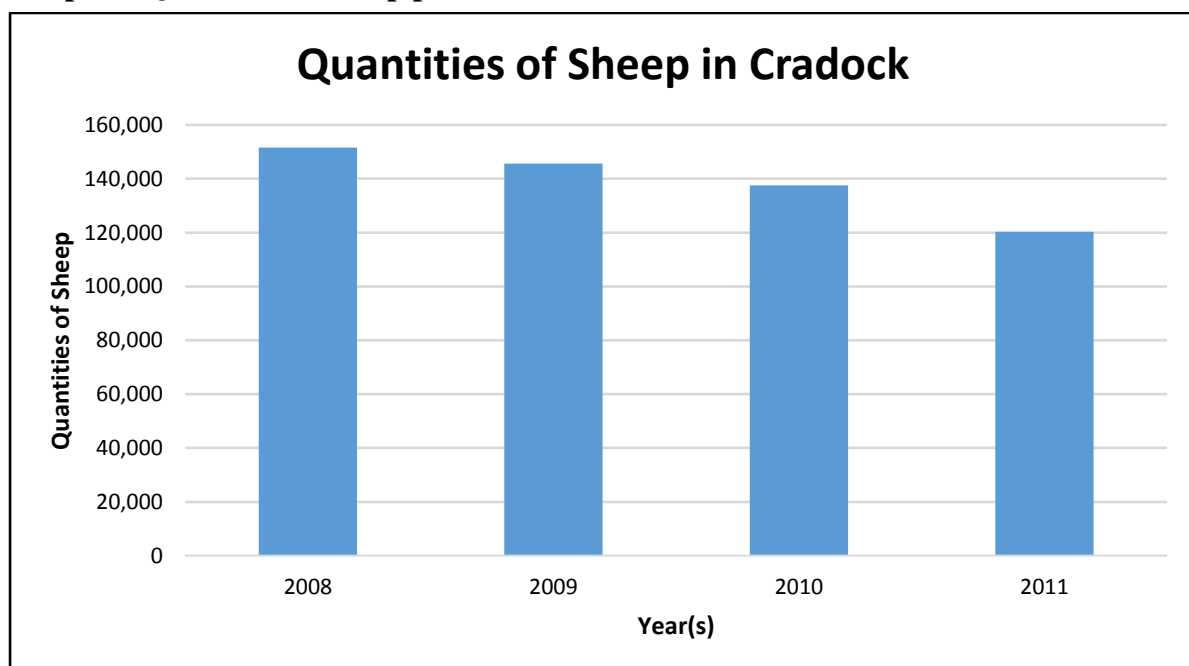
(Source: SA-Agriculture Statistics, 1993:79; SA-Agriculture Statistics, 2003)<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> SA-Agriculture Statistics, 1993 and 2003 SA-Agricultural Statistics reviewed by SA Statistics over a 10-year period. These figures were collected from two sources produced in 1993 and 2003 respectively.

These three major livestock products contributed significantly to the economy of the town in general, and each of these produced a significant number of products for the market as well. While the cattle accounted for 5.1 million litres of milk and cream produced for the market in 1993, 1.5 million kg of wool and mohair reached the market in the same year. The above graph shows the quantities of cattle, sheep and goats put together in 1993 with sheep having more numbers than other livestock. The reason for this disparity is due to the fact that goats are found mostly in remote and mountainous areas which are increasingly occupied by game-farming land-use activities (see Chapter Six for more details). This disparity was also confirmed by one of the respondents in the township whereby she argued that ‘goats are no longer available in Cradock because most areas, particularly in mountainous landscapes, are increasing invaded by private game farming land uses’.

However, the sheep production in Cradock continues to escalate as shown in Graph 2 below with the production of sheep in Cradock climbed from 77 905 in 1993 to 151 537 in 2008. The escalation of sheep production, however, experienced a slightly downward trajectory, particularly from 2008 to 2011 (see Graph 2 below). This is a slow trend than anticipated given the extent and magnitude of conversion in the district as indicated in chapter six and chapter seven.

**Graph 2: Quantities of sheep production in Cradock from 2008 to 2011**



*(Source: Cape Wools SA, 2012)*

As indicated in the above graph, production of sheep that directly contributed to the sales of merino wool from 2008 to 2011 show a decline by 251 841 during this period. While there had been a spiral decline of sheep production in Cradock for commercial purposes (i.e., for selling it to the market) from 2008 to 2011, the local communities continued to express a view that their socio-economic livelihood is intertwined with the livestock economy, particularly sheep farming in the Cradock district.

Apart from the fact that some people expressed views regarding the exploitative nature of the commercial agricultural practices inherited from the past, the household interviews conducted in the study also show that out of the 40 townships households (in both township areas) visited during the fieldwork for this study, 39 of them said they invariably received a range of material supplies from the surrounding farmlands. It was then necessary to establish what material supplies they claimed to accrue from the farms and how these contributed to their socio-economic livelihoods.

**Table 5: Material supplies from the farms to the townships**

Material resource supplies from commercial farms to the township residents		
Material resource supplies	Number of respondents	Survival activities
1. Maize	10	Food (subsistence) and selling
2. Meat	35	Food (subsistence) and selling
3.Soya beans	40	Food (subsistence)
4. Milk	39	Food (subsistence)
5.Firewood	6	Energy (household use)
6. Fruits and vegetables	37	Food (subsistence) and selling
7. Used cloths	7	Household use and selling
8. Sourer Milk	30	Food (subsistence)
9 Medicine plants: alou	16	Traditional medicine and selling
10 Cattle or livestock	20	Cultural slaughtering

(Source: Vincent Zungu, April 2012)<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> The table was generated from household interviews in which representatives of individual households recounted their experience of commercial agriculture in Cradock in comparison with the recent private game farming industry.

As shown in Table 5 above, the answer to the question suggests that 30 households accrued milk from the farms, while 10 stated that they received maize from the surrounding farmlands. Out of the 40 households interviewed, 37 said that they received vegetables and fruit, while 16 harvest the aloe plants inside farms, 20 households stated that they often receive cattle and or livestock. The lowest response was from 13 households, which stated that they accrued both firewood and used cloths from the farms as gifts given to them by commercial farmers via their family member(s) or by neighbor(s) who are farm workers from surrounding commercial farms. The material supplies listed in the above table were used for domestic subsistence, to generate income, or for cultural rituals in the case of the livestock. Surprisingly, the aloe plant species was identified as one of the valuable resources collected by the local people (from the farms) for medicinal use.

When asked about their living conditions before and after 1994,<sup>38</sup> the township respondents expressed the opinion that the white farmers around Cradock had always exploited the black Africans and coloured people who worked as farm workers. While they noted this, however, they also expressed a deep sense of disillusion about the post-apartheid democratic system, preferring the former agrarian system where food and other material supplies from the surrounding farmlands were said to be in abundance. Though the township locations are geographically isolated from the town (which is predominantly occupied by whites), observations made during the study also revealed that there is a constant movement of the township people from their location to the town in search of a 'better life'. One of the respondents, Nothando Khawula, explains the nature of the relationship between the town centre and the township locations as follows:

We often go to the town centre to meet our friends and family members working on the farm to collect money and groceries (food) for the month. Every end of the month, farmers drop them (farm workers) on the streets to spend time with their families. During this time, we buy and sell a range of material resources some of which are brought to us by farm owners. For us the town is where we meet to spend money. The wholesale opposite Lewis is often crowded by farm workers to buy food for their families.<sup>39</sup>

The town itself is a place of contact (what urban or social geographers refer to as a 'contact zone') where pensioners, families, commercial farmers, farm workers and township people

---

<sup>38</sup> The year 1994 is significant in South Africa as it marked the departure from the apartheid system to a democratic dispensation and the election into power of a new government led by the African National Congress (ANC).

<sup>39</sup> Interview, Nothando Khawula, 15 July 2012. Cradock (Lingelihle).

meet to exchange money and a range of material supplies from the surrounding farmlands. There is also a resurgence of small shops and other local trade sites owned and operated by predominantly foreign nationals who survive in the town through piggy-backing on the farm workers who visit the town. This social interaction is more visible at the end of the month, when farm workers are transported by their employers (white farmers) to meet their families in town. While the tale of these respondents recounts their lived experience in relationship to the merino sheep economy, they however stated that the interaction between commercial agriculture and their lives has deteriorated over the last 20 years. Despite this trend, the general view across all respondents' categories (i.e., businesses, local people and farmers workers) still believe commercial agriculture occupies a crucial space in the Cradock's economy.

Indeed, it is not surprising, as can be seen in many small Karoo towns, that the spatial pattern of Cradock town has many features which indicate that the town's economic 'sphere of influence' is largely the surrounding commercial agricultural area. Apart from the fact that the town itself is regarded as a 'Gateway' or 'Drop and Go' town traversed by the N10 road (a national road), which connects the town to Port Elizabeth and other big cities, the population in this town, particularly the township people, relies, to a larger extent, on the supply of food from the surrounding farmlands (See Map 5.1). This is necessitated by the fact that the food from the town and big cities such as Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London is said to be relatively expensive compared to the food (mostly unprocessed food products) produced on the surrounding farms, which finds its way to the town's wholesalers, supermarkets, hawkers and other informal shops or trade sites. One of the informal traders, Zola Mathenjwa, stated that his meat, which he sells on the streets, is mostly sourced from the surrounding farms and the nearby butcheries:

I cannot make money [a profit] if I were to buy this meat from Shoprite or Kwik Spar because their meat is expensive. Twenty years ago, meat was easily available in this town, but now I must travel to the butchery (Emadeleni) located towards Middleburg, where farmers sell meat much cheaper than here. But even there, I am competing with the hotels and B&B operators, as they also prefer to buy meats there to cook for their guests.<sup>40</sup>

Zola has been selling meat and soccer T-shirts on the corner of Market and Durban Streets in Cradock for more than ten years. He acknowledged that without commercial agriculture or

---

<sup>40</sup> Interview, Zola Mathenjwa, 15 July 2012. Cradock (Lingelihle).

farm owners who frequently visit the town with their farm workers to buy his items, his family would not have survived the poverty affecting many families in Lingelihle. Like other informants (in particular, Ms Genet Mjoli and Mr Foreman), Zola agrees that being connected to the farm, either as a farm worker, as a relative of the farm worker, or as relative of the farm worker's relative increases his chances of accessing farm-produced food at a cheaper price than buying it directly from the town's supermarkets. While this statement is noted, it is also noteworthy that a number of respondents (in the household interviews) stated that access to food from the surrounding farms is more limited now than in the past. Some attributed this to the changing land-use from commercial agriculture to game farming, while others cited the change of the farmers' attitudes towards the town and the community.

Nevertheless, the household respondents in the township, particularly in the Lingelihle Township, stated that maize meal (from the surrounding farms) was more than 40 per cent cheaper than that obtained in the town's shops. On average, meat is about 20 per cent cheaper, while milk and soya milk are more than 50 per cent cheaper than in the urban supermarkets. Some individual household members of the Lingelihle Township even cited the winter season as the most lucrative season in a year, as most farmers sell their sheep as cheaply as R200 per sheep to make at least some money before the sheep die in the extreme cold weather conditions at that time of the year. Apparently, the normal price for a sheep, especially in places like Port Elizabeth and East London, is more than R1 000. It is thus during this period that most people from the township buy Karoo lamb at a cheaper rate and sell it to people in Port Elizabeth, East London and Queenstown. These material resources supplied from the farms are shared with their families in the rural countryside. Some respondents stated that they sometimes keep meat for their families in the countryside, since their families can hardly afford to buy meat from the shops. One of the participants (Joyce Mangaliso) in the focus group stated that meat from the surrounding farms is a crucial source of livelihood, not only for the township families but also for their extended family members in the countryside. Indeed, this shows that commercial agriculture in Cradock has not only affected the livelihoods of the people in the town or townships but has also contributed immensely to the economy of the countryside. The supply of material resources in the form of meat and other sorts of food from the commercial farms to the township people has created unique socio-economic relations between the townships and the Eastern Cape countryside. The socio-economic dynamics played out as a result of this are clearly described by Joyce Mangaliso when she says:

Not all the material we got from the farms remained in one family or was used by one family, but if the white man [the farmer] give you something you do not necessarily need, we know that there is someone in the family, neighborhoods or in the countryside who will desperately need to use it. Such items as used clothes, food or meat given off by the farmer [the employer] are often shared amongst us [i.e. the community] to support those who are needy in the community.<sup>41</sup>

As pointed out earlier in this chapter, Joyce Mangaliso and other women in the focus group also agreed that another way through which the township people access material supplies from the farms is via farm workers, who often obtain meat from their farm employers (see the next section for details in this respect). These farm workers also sell meat, livestock and milk to their neighbours in the township as a means of supplementing their low wage income from the farms. This is one of the livelihood strategies employed by farm workers in the township to sustain their socio-economic conditions. According to Mr Foreman, a retired farm worker, 'this additional income is even better for the township buyers who often use instant cash to make this offer to the cash-strapped farm workers irresistible'. Because of his good relationship with the former employer (from the farm), and the fact that his son is now working for him, his former employer still supplies meat from the farm for his family at least six times a year. He states that: 'the community of Atlantic and Hillside they call me a 'butchery man', as I often sell meat to the people during the festive season at a price cheaper than in the shops'.

Foreman is an elderly man who appears to be above 65 years of age and is a pensioner who still maintains a relationship with his former employer (the farm owner). Apparently, his former employer even takes him to the hospital when he is ill, and according to him (i.e., Mr Foreman), his relationship with his former employer is intact: 'he is like a 'father' to this family, and I could not imagine our lives without him. He is, indeed, a man of integrity with a good heart'. This type of social interaction between farm owners and farm workers is paramount in demonstrating the extent to which the existence of the farms affects livelihoods in the township. In fact, the interaction between the farm and the Cradock townships involves the constant movement of farm labourers with goods and capital (money, used clothes and meat) from the farm to the townships. Owing to this constant movement or interaction between the farm and the township, it is no surprise that most farm workers (from the township) view both the farm and the township as their 'home'. There is also a sense that traditional farming operation in Cradock is often based on personal interaction (symbiotic in nature) between the farmer and

---

<sup>41</sup> Interview, Joyce Mangaliso, 20 June 2012, Cradock (Lingelihle).

individual worker(s). In this context, ‘the success of the farm depends on farm workers who are happy and trustworthy’ and it is for this reason that most farm workers continue to maintain this relationship even after they have retired from the farm (Atkinson, 2008). This phenomenon is discussed and explained by Atkinson (2008), whose research suggests that farms in the Karoo have survived entirely on the relationship between the owners and the workers, which involves the exchange of material resources from the farms. In this context, the farm owners’ relations with their workers go beyond the scope of their work on the farm.

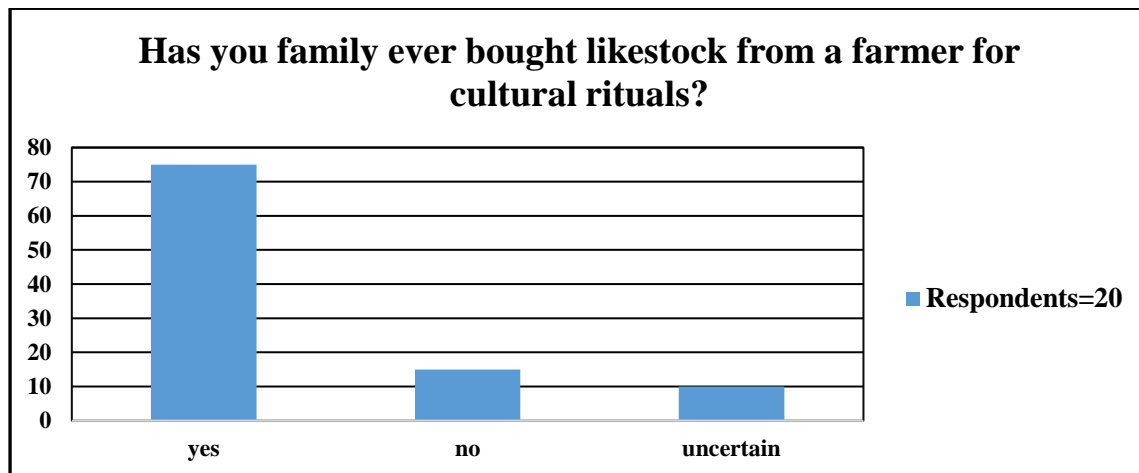
Indeed, the relationship between the farmers and their workers has gone beyond the exchange of goods and capital to a situation in which the farmers sought to participate in the socio-cultural lives of the people in the townships. For instance, an aspect of the supply of livestock by the farmers to the township households, especially to those in Lingelihle, is that the cattle may be used in their cultural rituals. Although black Africans (the Xhosa people in the townships have been living an urbanised lifestyle in the town for centuries, they still slaughter goats and cows or sometimes sheep as part of their sacrifice to their ancestors to fulfill their cultural needs. Foreman and other farm workers in the town state that they often connect township people with their farm employers to negotiate a better price to buy goats or cows to be slaughtered for this purpose.

This brings to the fore a fascinating dynamic regarding the relative social value of the livestock and game animals in the game farm setting. When asked about the benefits of livestock farming compared to those of game farming, Andrew (a farmer and owner of the popular butchery in Cradock) also confirmed that his farm supplies sheep and cows to township people, especially when they have funerals and tombstone unveiling ceremonies. Andrew estimated that he sells

more than 1000 livestock (sheep, goats and cow combined) annually to the township folks, especially during the festive seasons. They buy these farm products at a rate much less than they had to buy them in PE or East London.

Apparently, his butchery sells meat and milk and other farm products to the local people at a reasonable price, and the price induces hawkers, street vendors and other traders who also sell meat to buy it from Andrew’s butchery. The respondents from the Lingelihle households were asked whether they had bought any livestock for use in cultural rituals. The answers are summarised below.

**Graph 3: Household members who use livestock from the farms for cultural rituals**



*(Source: Author's analysis: 2013)*

The above graph is a summary of the answers provided by the Lingelihle households when they were asked whether their families had ever bought livestock from the surrounding farmlands for use in cultural rituals. As depicted above, 75 per cent of the respondents said their families had obtained livestock to slaughter for cultural rituals from the surrounding farms. It is critical to note that this question was asked specifically to the Lingelihle township dwellers, as they normally practice the slaughtering of cattle for cultural rituals. The most popular ritual practice amongst the Xhosa people (or Nguni people) in Lingelihle is the initiation ritual practice that prepares young men into manhood. The 25 per cent who said they did not buy livestock for this purpose or were uncertain are understood to be people who been brought up in another religion or brought up from Michausdal township, a former coloured township located adjacent to the Lingelihle township.

Unlike Lingelihle township, Michausdal township is mainly occupied by coloured people, who do not practice animal slaughtering as a cultural ritual. Those in Lingelihle who said they do not buy livestock from the farms confirmed that they do in fact obtain meat and other produce, through farm workers, from the surrounding farms. At the time when this research was conducted there were at least 10 township households in Lingelihle who owned sheep and goats that they had obtained from the farms in Cradock. According to Andrew, one of the livestock farmers who often sells his cattle to the township people, he has supplied more than 20 head of cattle to the township people, especially in Lingelihle. Andrew is also the owner of the butchery operating in the town's centre. Andrew was born, and raised in Cradock and has been a farmer for many years' past and his butchery in the town has been operating for more than 20 years.

The butchery<sup>42</sup> is popular amongst the township folks because the meat and milk sold in his butchery is cheaper than that in the nearby supermarkets (i.e., the Kwik Spar and Shoprite supermarkets). For instance, a 2 litre of milk costs R6.00 while the same quantity of milk in the normal supermarkets cost R18.00. On his farm, he has a number of game animals mixed with existing livestock farming, but the farmland is entirely focusing on the livestock business not game farming. When asked about his views regarding the conversions to game farming, he stated without hesitation that he cannot imagine himself as a game farmer because his farm is only 400 hectares in size. He also stated the following:

I love and live farming for the entire span of my life and I do not see myself as a “Game Farmer”. Remember that Game farming is for people who have money to meticulously market their game product throughout the world, and I do not see myself capable of starting a game farm in the near future. Apart from that I love connecting with people in this town and therefore I do not believe that game farming operation can allow me to “interact with Cradock’s township people”.<sup>43</sup>

It is crucial to note that Andrew’s assertion places his farm in the context of the broader socio-economic web of relationships with Cradock. Although the farm is privately owned, apparently by him and his family, its production processes and the material resources derived from it allow him to meet some of the needs of the town. His relations with the town and the township people are so firm that the researcher’s contact with him was established through snowball sampling via the township residents. From his farm, he saw the need to establish the butchery in the town to sell meat, sour milk and milk at a cheaper price to the town and township folk. He also sold his livestock and sheep directly to the people of the township. He was also able to employ workers from the township in his butchery, who in turn benefitted by having access to his meat and earning wages for the work they did in the butchery. (See the next section for further discussion). While Mr Andrew noted that many people, especially farm workers, have access to material supplies from the farms, he also indicated that these materials are sometimes obtained illegally and sold to the town-based communities. These illegal activities come in the form of stealing sheep and goats, particularly during winter seasons. The stealing of livestock is sometimes facilitated by those working on the farms. But, as he argued, ‘[there is less] stealing ... if the farmer has good relations with his farm workers’. Some of this produce, especially meat and vegetables, generated a range of informal trading activities in the town (as

---

<sup>42</sup> It is crucial to make it know that Andrew no longer owns the butchery. I came to know this recently and now the butchery is owned by someone else.

<sup>43</sup> Andrew (Owner of the butchery and farmer), 12 April 2012, Cradock.

listed in Table 5 above), because some of these supplies were purchased for resale in the town at more than double the cost price.

While these farm supplies were used mainly as provisions for household consumption, it is clear that the farms also acted as a source of goods to stimulate informal local economic activities in the town, something which is now said to be non-existent with the recent advent of the game farming industry. As shown in the above table, some of these economic activities are not directly linked to commercial agriculture but are yet receive income from farm workers. This became clear when one of the street vendors or hawkers (Zola Mathenjwa), who sells braai meat (*shisa nyama*) on the corner of Market and Durban Streets, said that most of his meat is sourced from the surrounding farms. He either buys it directly from the farm or obtains the stock from the farm workers every month end, particularly on Saturdays. (Refer to the next chapter for more details).

### **5.3.1 Farm workers as a conduit of material supplies from the Cradock farms**

As mentioned in Chapter Two, a flow of benefits from commercial agriculture to the townfolk of Cradock, especially to the township people, was often mediated by the existence of powerful social networks based on family kinship and neighborhood networks. These crucial, but often invisible, networks were established and reinforced by the constant movement of farm workers or farm dwellers from the farms to the town and vice versa. The mobility of the farm workers and the farm dwellers in Cradock is first reported by Mkhize (2012:113), when she argues that the ongoing movement of farm workers was motivated by their ‘perpetual tenure insecurity and poor working conditions’. She argues that the migration of the farm workers and farm dwellers to the towns after the 1980s was because of their desire to find a permanent ‘home’ (i.e., a place where they would have a sense of belonging).

While this was indeed the case, this section goes beyond what Mkhize articulates by arguing that this mobility (the movement from farm to town and vice versa) was primarily motivated by their perpetual need to share the material resources (i.e., the meat, milk, livestock, used clothes, and vegetables) obtained from the surrounding farms with their families and neighbours in the township locations. It is in this manner that commercial agriculture in Cradock shaped the economic lives not only of those who live and work on the farms but also of those living in the townships.

The role of farm workers as the source of the material resources supplied to the township people is explained by Genet Mjoli as follows:

When my brother used to work on the farm, in which he worked for 20 years, he used to bring clothes, shoes, used furniture, meat and other farm-based commodities from the farms. Commercial farm owners knew that their workers have families, even though they paid them a petite wage. These gifts supplemented our income, especially during the festive season. It is unfortunate that things have changed now (Interview with Ms Genet Mjoli, 12 April 2012).

These are the words of Ms Mjoli<sup>44</sup> in which she reminisces about the benefits she and her family used to enjoy when her brother was working on a commercial farm. In this statement, she broadly reveals the nature and pattern of the social relations that the former commercial agriculture in Cradock had with the township people. Ms Mjoli and her family have been living in Cradock for more than 50 years and, like others in the township, she experienced tough years of forced removal from the old location as a result of the enactment of the 1950s Group Areas Act. During those years her life was not easy, especially after she lost her father in 1980. As a result of this loss, her brother was compelled to find temporary farm work in order to support the family. In 1982, she was employed by the same farmer (Pieter) to work as a domestic servant, but this work lasted for only 3 years due to her recurring illness. However, despite the hard times which she had experienced in the past, she continued to maintain that without her brother being employed on the farm her family would not have survived. As she raised her hands she kept on saying that: ‘my brother’s farm has always been the cornerstone of our family survival’. Apparently, her brother initially worked for R150 per month, which was not considered meagre wages in the mid-1980s. When asked about how her family had survived on as little as R150, given the fact that her brother had his own family, she answered by saying:

If I remember very well in our house we have the kitchen units and a Black and White TV, which is now used by my son in his outside room, and these items were given by Mr Pieter [the farmer] when he was changing his house on the farm. I recalled that in 1992 he also donated a goat (*ibhokwe*) to my family which we slaughtered to wash hands [a funeral ritual practice] as we were laying our mother to her last place [i.e., the grave]. These gifts helped us a lot to supplement the little wage we would have used to sustain our living in the township.

The above insert suggests that working on the farm was not just about working to earn wages but also to do with having access to material benefits which were from time to time given by

---

<sup>44</sup> Focus group interview: Ms Genet Mjoli, 12 April 2012, Cradock (Lingelihle). This interview took place in the Lingelihle Library situated in Mizamoyethu Primary School. It is crucial to mention that Mjoli was further interviewed alone to provide a deeper connection that her family had with the farm.

the farmer to his or her employees. Their telling the anecdotes about how commercial agriculture contributed to the socio-economic well-being of the township people invoked a deep sense of nostalgia in them. It reminded them of the social bonds they used to have with the farm owners, even during the era when white and black people in the town were not allowed to maintain a close relationship. It is important to note that when Ms Mjoli and her brother were both working well on the farm, the political situation in the township, with the blacks fighting against the white minority government, was very tense. An elderly woman by the name of Mathabo, a close neighbor of Ms Mjoli in Lingelihle, further explained that ‘working on the farm was not just about earning a salary. But instead, it was to do with maintaining a special relation with the farm owner. This special relationship was developed and sustained over a long period during which the farm owner and the farm worker relied on each other in a ‘particular’ way. In fact, the social relations described by Ms Mjoli and Ms Mathabo reflect their deepest experience regarding the relationship with their farm employers as one that transcended a purely labour relationship (i.e., an employer-employee relationship). It is of significance to note that these women clearly draw on the tradition of paternalism to epitomise the close social bonds that prevailed on the farms in the past. What is revealed here, however, is that the social relationship and the benefits derived from it by farm workers were not confined to the farms but extended beyond the fence<sup>45</sup> to affect the lives of the people in the township. This extension took the form of a flow of goods, material supplies, in particular meat and livestock, etc., often given by the farm owners as gifts to their employees. These gifts reached the populace in the township as benefits accrued from the commercial agricultural sector in the area around the town.

This story further reveals the complex nature of the relationships that farm owners had with their farm workers and their families in order to sustain the agrarian production regime. In essence, the farm worker was regarded as a member of the family that owned the farm, while at the same time the worker did not have the status of ownership of the farm or anything in it. (see also Atkinson, 2007:91-96). The farmer viewed himself as the saviour, provider and employer of his farm workers, as they knew that he would provide them with material supplies (food, meat and used household materials) from time to time. This social relationship was not

---

<sup>45</sup> The notion of a ‘fence’ is significant as it suggests a break away from any external relations with the broader communities. White farmers introduced fences to establish their property rights in relation to outsiders, and this relation was based purely on private ownership (see Van Sittert, 2002:95-100).

codified in a formal sense but was ‘negotiated’ by both the farm owner and his employees. However, its existence does not dispel the fact that the township communities for many years were subjected to various forms of exploitation by farm owners. In particular, they were regarded as members of an underclass, and could work on the farms or in the town only for a low wage and often under poor conditions. How, then, did the township community cope or continue to survive in the face of the well-documented system of exploitation and racial discrimination imposed by the former apartheid regime? While they were regarded as outsiders in relation to the commercial farms, there remained a certain vestige of a relationship with life on the farms.

Ms Mjoli explains the nature of this relationship and how it benefited her brother and ultimately their family members in the township community as follows:

In the time prior to the employment of my brother, we are told by Mr Pieter [the farm owner] that he used to run the farm at a loss as his cattle died of a stomach-related disease particularly in summer. However, when my brother was hired on the farm, he introduced the mixed herbal to allow them to ruminate more. At first the farmer was reluctant, but when he realised that this herbal medicine is helpful, he began to trust my brother. He gave him five sheep and one goat as an expression of thanks. I can’t remember well the medicine, but he used to collect its materials in one of the big forests in Pondoland. It is mixed with white rooted tree materials.

The above commentary reveals the nature of the relationship between the farmer (i.e., Mr Pietier) and Mr Mjoli (Ms Mjoli's brother). The gift of five sheep and a goat by the farmer further strengthened their relationship. Three sheep and the goat were sent to their village in Engcobo (in the hinterland of the Eastern Cape) to support their mother and children, who were living there at that time. The remaining two sheep were slaughtered and shared with their immediate township neighbours. It is apparent from the above that although Mr Mjoli was not earning a living wage, the material supplies he received from his employer created conditions that made it possible for him to accept the low wages. This view is also supported by those of the respondent, Andrew, a Cradock farmer of long standing, who argued that the benefits the townsfolk received from the commercial farms far exceeded those received from private game farms.

Another farmer, Chris Schoeman, a former National Party member of parliament, who was also interviewed in Cradock, also claimed that the farmers had a ‘patron-client relationship’ with their workers. This is how he put it: ‘The relationship we have with our

workers often extends to their families and other members in the township neighbourhood'. While the established general picture painted of the relationship between farms and the township areas in the Karoo is one of conflict, separation and exploitation, it was surprising to learn that in the Cradock area farmworkers were the conduit through which farmers interacted with the township and its populace. There is a sense, at least on the side of the farmers, that their farm operation, from start to finish, largely depended on the surrounding communities. Without the farm workers, who were often recruited from the townships close to their farms, 'their farms could not succeed in producing food for both the town and the country'. To describe the deepest", Chris Schoeman gave an example of a farm in Cradock where the farmer had initiated several improvements for his farm workers:

Firstly, he registered the mothers [of the farm workers] with the Department of Social Development, so they could access social grants. In this process, he had to organize identity documents for them and their children, including those staying in the township. Realising that since 1994 the scourge of HIV/AIDS had been on the rise in townships, his wife organized HIV/AIDS workshops in co-operation with the local hospital and local cultural group. From time to time, the farmers, including myself [Mr Schoeman], would distribute various vegetable seeds to plant a communal vegetable garden together with the farm workers and sometimes with the help of the Department of Agriculture.

Thus, all these social interactions still reveal a paternalistic attitude. During this paternalistic process, Schoeman stated, 'they taught farm workers and their families how to pickle vegetables for use later in the year'.<sup>46</sup> 'It is during the end of the year that farm workers harvest vegetables to feed their families in the townships and sell these to accumulate extra income. These initiatives were organised by farmers out of their 'goodwill' to alleviate poverty amongst their farm workers and their families. These 'selfless efforts', he argued, went beyond paying their farm workers' wages for the work they did on the farms.

It is hardly surprising that this vision of the pattern of social relations was shared by many ex farm workers and their neighbours/friends and family members. Business owners, including those owning guest accommodations in the town, shared similar views regarding the extent to which commercial farms contributed to the lives of their farm workers 'beyond the fence'. The question was asked of representatives of all social categories in Cradock with reference to how commercial farms interacted with the townships through farmworkers. Ex-farmworkers and

---

<sup>46</sup> Interview, Chris Schoeman, 20 April 2012, Cradock.

farm workers in the townships were specifically asked who they would turn to should they need help for their families. Their responses are reflected in Table 6 below:

**Table 6: Who would you turn to for help?**

Total (N)	State agencies	Farmers	Neighbours/ friends/family	Business agencies
10	2	6	2	0

(Source: Author's analysis, 2012)

As depicted in the above table, most farm workers said they would turn to their employers for help if they had a need in the family. The help was not only for their families, but also for their neighbours and friends. During the harvesting and sheep shearing seasons farm owners would approach their farm workers to identify 'honest' and 'hard-working' individuals in the townships to be employed, on a temporary basis, on the farms. Furthermore, farm workers identified a range of assistance they invariably received from their employers (the farm owners). The type of assistance they normal requested here would include transport from the town to the farm, financial help such as small loans, medical assistance, and food such as sugar, and bread, and meat.

Another tale of a farmer's assistance is recalled by Mr Foreman, a retired farm worker, now staying in Atlantis, a low-cost residential area. Atlantis is a newly established low-cost housing settlement that was developed to accommodate ex-farm workers in the late 1990s. He remembered that 'Mr Manqele, the former National Executive Committee (NEC) member of the ANC, wanted to perform the ritual of returning his parents (*ukubuyisa*) at his house in Lingelihle'. Through comrades (*amaqabane*)<sup>47</sup> in the area he was referred to Mr Foreman, who reconnected him with his former employer, a farmer from whom he bought two cows and four goats at a cheap price. He said Mr Manqele would have had to pay at least R30 000 if he were to buy two cows and four goats outside Cradock. That amount would have included the charge for transport, but Mr Foreman's deal resulted in his having to pay only R12 000<sup>48</sup> to secure the

<sup>47</sup> The concept often refers to the politically like-minded friends who belong to the same political party. It is and was popularly used by members of the ANC during the struggle period.

<sup>48</sup>Please note that the amount is concealed to protect the informants' identity and the details of the transaction, given the fact that Mr Manqele was not consulted to confirm his utterances. However, his view on the role he played to secure livestock for Mr Manqele is significant in this research. In essence, it implies that farms do contribute to the socio-economic welfare of the township people in terms of the provision of livestock as a material resource.

animals to perform *ukubuyisa*. Depending on the nature of the ritual, one cow and one goat can be eaten or shared by 150 township neighbours, and Mr Foreman stated that these resources (cows, goats, and sheep) constituted valuable commodities in the township. It was for reasons such as this that most farm workers in the township regarded their employers as paramount and trusted them, despite the acute social inequalities to which they were subjected. Such a pattern of social relations has been observed by Atkinson et al. (2003) in relation to the life of the farm workers in various cases in the Eastern Cape Karoo, the Free State and the Northern Cape.

However, with respect to Cradock, paternalism on farms has extended so far as to affect the socio-economic lives of the people in the township. The lived experiences of Mr Mjoli and Mr Foreman and the manner in which they served as agents of the contact between the commercial farms and the township populace give credence to the claim that a ‘micro-welfare system’ operated around many farms. In this context, the material supplies from the farms to the township served as a spurious justification of the relatively low wages earned by such workers as Mr Mjoli and Mr Foreman, which were partially offset by the private welfare contributions made by the farmers.

As described above, these material contributions often took the form of informal assistance to farm workers. These took a variety of forms such as medical assistance, transport, grazing rights, small loans, meat, clothing, and in some exceptional instances housing. It was fascinating to learn that the farmers also regarded their workers and the community they came from (i.e., the townships) as an integral part of their day-to-day social existence on the farms. This view was expressed by one of the former commercial farmers, De Wet, in Cradock, when he said:

We are one community — when one of my workers is sick or does not have food at home, we all share the plight to help. There is a lot of mutual trust such that when I want additional hands here I approach them to look for someone trustworthy to work on the farm. The township is my home too, as I always drive around to supply meat and other farm produced products to the township families. You see this notebook. It contains the names and addresses of all my black clients who have ordered milk from us to be delivered in the township this coming weekend.<sup>49</sup>

From this statement by Mr De Wet one can judge that a sense of paternalistic and community wholeness characterised the interaction between the commercial farmers and the local

---

<sup>49</sup> Interview, Mr De Wet, 20 July 2012, Cradock (in his house).

communities in the townships of Cradock. The significance of this shared moral commitment should not be underestimated, as it served as the basis upon which many of the employers and workers built their lives.

However, this implicitly raises the question of what was likely to happen when these farms were converted to luxurious trophy hunting-driven game farm operations. Is the game-farming industry generating similar socio-economic interactions with the township people? Do the township people have similar access to the material resources produced on the game farm? What happens to such people as Mr Mjelo, Ms Mjelo, Mr Foreman and their neighbours or family members once their farm on which they have worked and depended on is converted to game farming? The next chapter seeks to answer these questions by drawing from the experience of the township people relative to game farming.

#### **5.4 The socio-economic significance of off-farm activities and off-farm employment**

The section provides an empirical discussion of how the livelihoods of the people in the town (including those in the township), both their off-farm activities and their off-farm employment, were integrated into the region's commercial agriculture. The aim here is to unpack the relationship between the surrounding commercial agriculture and the socio-economic lives of the people, in particular the role that off-farm activities (both formal and informal) played in creating off-farm employment that sustained the livelihoods of the township people in Cradock. Though these off-farm activities may appear not to have been directly related to farming in a traditional sense, it will become clear that in Cradock there was a symbiosis between the lives of those on the farms and those in the town.

For instance, one of the individual household respondents (Mr Salomon of Michausdal township) expressed his views in a nostalgic manner as he said that:

The surrounding commercial agriculture generated a number of jobs inside the town for township people who used to live in the town before 1950. This began with our parents (in the Old Location), who participated in the economy of the town as employees and informal traders, especially when the Cradock station and associated railway and road infrastructure were developed to transport agricultural commodities.

This memory provides insight into what the socio-economic significance of commercial agriculture in Cradock used to be. The point is that the spin-offs from commercial agricultural

were not limited to farmlands, where the owners treated the workers in a paternalistic fashion. Instead, commercial agrarian production gave rise to a range of off-farm activities in the town, such as supermarkets (e.g., Shoprite and Kwik-Spar), wholesale shops, shops that sold agricultural implements, and a range of informal trade stores selling meat, vegetables and clothes in the streets. The interaction between the town and the farms generated a number of work opportunities for the people who lived in Cradock. Mr Adams,<sup>50</sup> the owner of Adams Wholesale, which had operated in Cradock for more than 30 years (it was located just next to the Victoria Hotel) expressed his views regarding the manner in which the sheep and livestock farms supported his business when he said that:

In a town like Cradock, retail business like mine and commercial farmers work supports one another for the sake of the economy of the town. Farmers usually buy food from my store in bulk for their farm workers to collect. This ensures that I am busy at the end of the month. R70 000 or more is made per week from those who buy food items for the farm workers' families who stay in the township.

Currently, the spatial economic pattern of Cradock is largely characterized by extensive sheep- and goat-farming operations which still bear the imprint of the mid-nineteenth century agrarian economy, while the town itself has become an economic backwater since the early 1970s (Nel & Hill, 2008:1–2). But the trouble in the agrarian economy of the town (Cradock) first emerged in the 1930s, as pointed out in Chapter Four (Marsden, 1986:14).

Nevertheless, the spatial features and associated off-farm economic activities which prevail in Cradock's townscape tell an indisputable story that the town's 'sphere of influence' is largely based on its surrounding commercial agriculture. While these off-farm activities are increasingly gaining attention from scholars such as Atkinson (2008), Nel and Hill (2008) and Kamete (1998), the reality is that the formal and informal off-farm activities in town, which often connect commercial agriculture with household livelihoods in the town, have experienced significant change over the last 50 years. These changes have manifested themselves through the number of businesses in the town, a trend which has also been observed in a number of other small Eastern Cape Karoo towns. Atkinson (2008) and Nel and Hill (2008) argue that

---

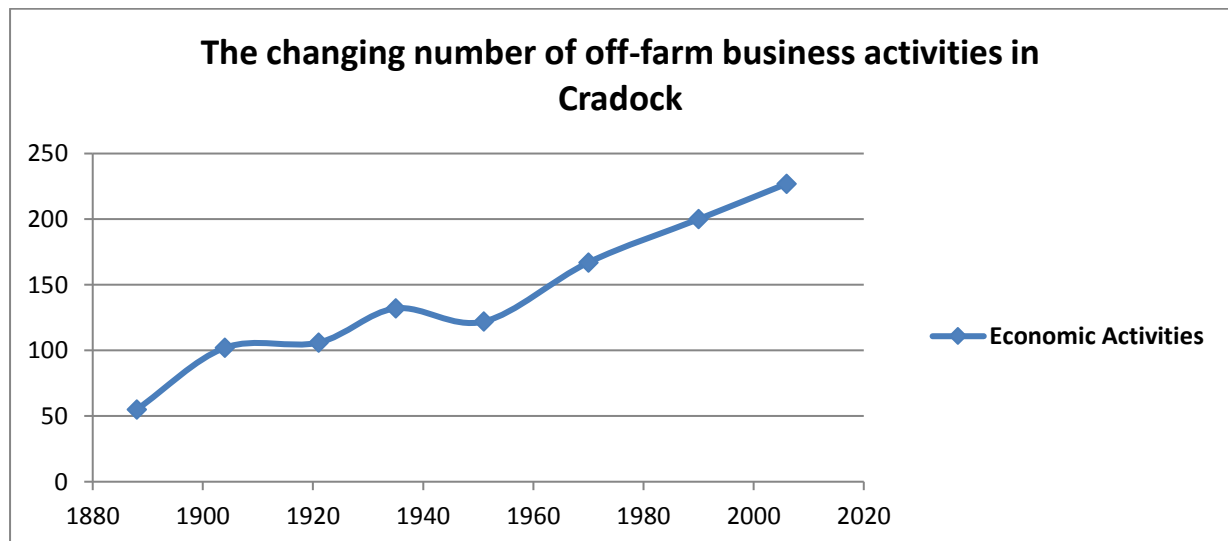
<sup>50</sup> Mr Adams is a prominent and successful businessman, having learnt the skills and acumen necessary to survival in a small town such as Cradock from his father. His family settled in Cradock more than 30 years ago, having come from Lebanon. The interview was conducted in his house on 13 July 2012

these trends in off-farm business activities in the towns must be understood within the context of the changing land-use from commercial agriculture to private game farming.

While other neighbouring towns (e.g., Pearston) have experienced a negative growth of off-farm activities since 1935, the recent data from Nel et al. (2011:406) show that Cradock's off-farm activities increased from 1888 to 2006. As Graph 3 below depicts, the development of commercial agriculture in Cradock was accompanied by the generation of different off-farm activities in the town.

However, in 1935, during the Great Depression, commercial agriculture was severely affected, and it is not surprising that the off-farm activities experienced significant concomitant decline. During this period unemployment, especially among Africans, was rife, as many white farmers decided to migrate to the bigger cities (see Chapter Four). This trend shows directly how commercial agriculture influenced the socio-economic geography of Cradock. As indicated in Graph 3 below, Cradock experienced a resurgence of off-farm business activities in 1951 when the National Party (NP) government sought to support white commercial farmers through the granting of subsidies.

**Graph 4: The changing number of off-farm businesses in Cradock**



*(Source: Dennis Edwards 1888, 1921; Cape Times 1935 1951; Braby's 1970 1990; Telkom 2006.)*

The town thus continued to survive as a major service centre rendering a number of services to the surrounding commercial farms by means of a wide range of off-farm activities. These off-farm activities include super-markets, a blacksmith, agricultural implements shops, car dealers,

butcheries, etc. It was through these off-farm activities that the money generated from commercial agriculture circulated amongst different sectors in the townships as many people participated in various off-farm activities as employees or informal traders.

While a number of the off-farm activities that emerged in Cradock over the period of 200 years may appear to be not directly linked to the surrounding commercial agriculture, there is, in fact, a clear relationship between these activities and the prevailing yet dwindling commercial farms. This linkage is reflected in the continued existence of a range of agriculture-related activities, such as the agricultural implements shop which has been supplying farming materials in the area for many years past (see Photo 4: Picture Two below). This shop specialises in supplying modern crop-farming equipment such as cultipackers, power tillers, rotary tillers and harrows (including spike, drag and disk harrows) to the surrounding farming areas. According to the shopkeeper, in the ‘old days’, the shop used to employ more than 15 people (as labourers) from the township, but now they have only four employees working in the shop. This decline in employment offered by the shop is a result of the decline in demand for such implements by the surrounding farmers. Mr Macheal Anthrobus (the owner of the Victoria Hotel) also attributed the decline of such shops in the area to the change of land-use from agriculture to private game farming. However, this is not the only shop in the town that was established to service the surrounding agriculture, as one can see. Photo 4: Picture One below is of a shop that was established to sell tractors to the surrounding commercial farms. But this shop (like others elsewhere in the town) has, since 2013, ceased to exist due to the low demand for tractors following the reduction in commercial agriculture over the last 30 years in and around Cradock.

**Photo 4: The tractor shop (Picture One) and the agri-implement Shop (Picture Two) in Cradock**



*(Source: V Zungu, April 2012)*

Currently, Cradock is said to have 101 commercially-oriented off-farm activities in a range of sectors, some of which are linked to businesses and others of which are government services (see Table 7 below). As the rate of unemployment has grown, specifically in the agricultural sector, there has been a significant growth in the number of informal traders in the town, most of whom are black African and coloured people from the townships. More importantly, the informal street traders invariably said that their businesses survived by selling items to the workers from the surrounding farms.

**Table 7: A general profile of the off-farm commercial establishments in Cradock**

No.	Type	Quantity
1	Grocers	12
2	Car Dealers	3
3	Supermarkets	4
4	Wholesalers	3
5	Agricultural inputs and suppliers	3
6	Engineering companies	5
7	Marketing depots	2
8	Mining sector	1
9	Tourism and hospitality	30
10	Factory sector	5
11	Car maintenance	6
12	Fruit and vegetables market	14
13	Restaurant services	8
14	Financial sector	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>

(Source: Telkom, 2012)<sup>51</sup>

While the above table provides clarity on the quantity of off-farm activities in the town, the extent to which the informal off-farm activities depends on farming is not shown in the table. It is critical to mention, especially in the context of Cradock, that it is through these off-farm activities that commercial agriculture has a strong influence on the socio-economic conditions of the poor people in the town. The data that was collected through observation, interviews and focus group interviews suggests that Cradock town is a market for farm produce or for selling goods to the surrounding farms as well as to the people who reside in the town. This has resulted

<sup>51</sup> This table was created based on data about businesses in Cradock derived directly from the Telkom Yellow Pages telephone book. Please note that information about the informal activities was collected through observation during the course of the fieldwork performed in April 2012.

in fierce competition in the town due to the growth in the number of informal and formal traders who find alternative markets from farm workers who work in the surrounding commercial agricultural areas. These informal traders sell their items to the farm workers who often visit the town over weekends, especially at the end of the month. Indeed, it is not surprising that when one approaches the entrance to the town along the R61 from Graaff-Reinet, especially on week days, it is hard to spot these informal economic activities, as they usually operate most actively at the end of the month, when farm workers and farmers from the surrounding farmlands visit the town to spend their monthly salaries. What is fascinating, indeed, is that these off-farm market opportunities are often harnessed by economically embattled township people who source their merchandise from the farms. There is a plethora of informal networks through which the poor people from the township make money on payday, when farm workers come to the town to visit their families and spend some of their pay. During this time the town centre is crowded with township people related to the farmworkers, who come to town to buy food and other items such as food, alcohol, meat and clothes. One of the informal traders, Sokhulu,<sup>52</sup> who trades on the corner of Market Street and Victoria Street, commented about the manner in which their business is boosted by the farm workers spending their wages. She said:

Ever since I started selling my items on the streets, I can safely say that most of my clients are working in these farms. During the course of the month my stuff is not selling well, but by the end of the month I make good money when the farm workers are here with their families to spend money. Their children buy sweets, toys, watches and sleeping shoes in my small trading. At times, I give them items on credits, and only get paid on those items month-end. I do not work and, therefore my life depends entirely on this business. I hope the police and municipality will not disturb us here because we are making a living. There is no work anymore under this government and that's why so many of us are selling here.

Indeed, this statement reflects the general socio-economic conditions under which ordinary people from the townships negotiate their circumstances as they seek to take advantage of the movement of the farm workers between the commercial farms and the town. Apparently, the farmers (mostly whites) bring their employees to town to meet their families from the township, and in the process, they buy various items on the streets or from the shops. There is also the growing phenomenon of local taxi drivers using their private cars to transport farm workers from the town to the townships or farms. For instance, Mr Sondela,<sup>53</sup> one of the drivers who retired from his work as a farm worker, bought a pre-owned car (a Nissan Skyline) to transport

---

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Mrs Sokhulu, 30 June 2012, Cradock.

<sup>53</sup> Interview with Mr Sondela, 30 June 2012, Cradock. He was identified as a possible respondent when he was dropping off farm workers in the town.

farm workers at the end of the month. When asked about the benefits of commercial agriculture to the town he said:

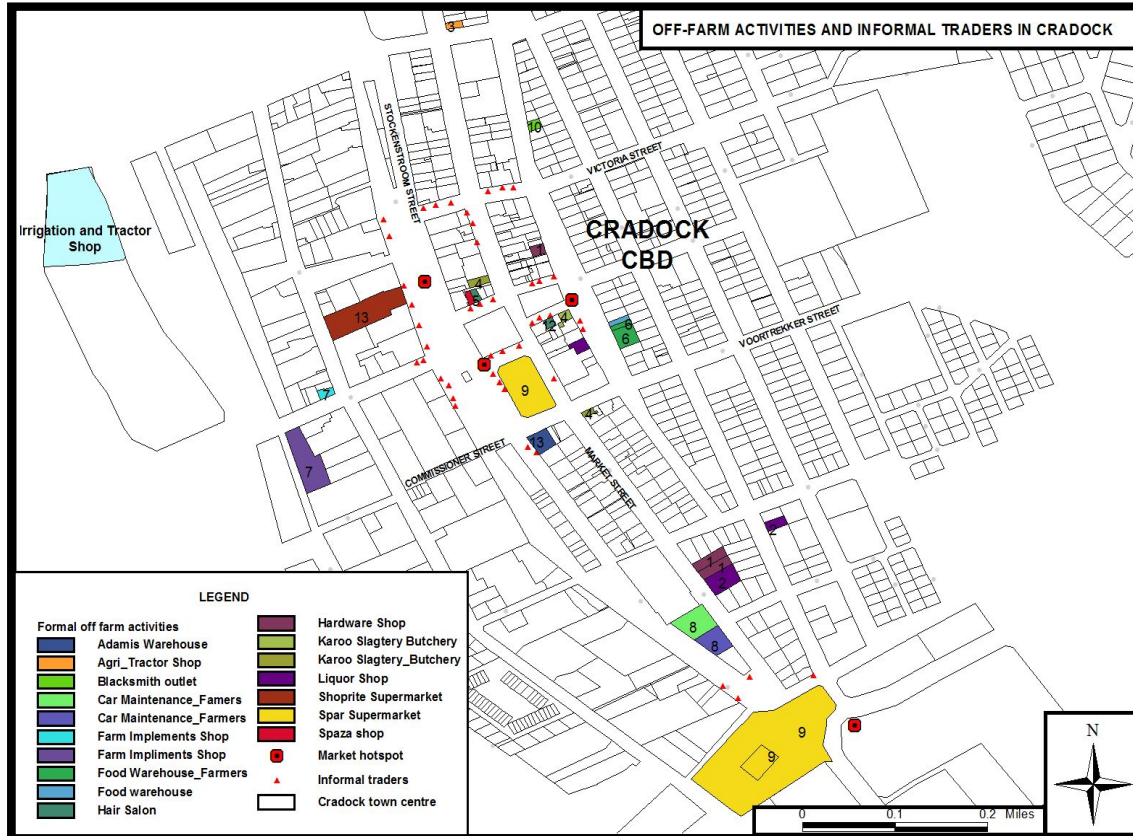
You see all these people who are selling in this town, their businesses survive because of commercial agriculture. Farm workers visit the town daily to buy various items and others to have free time to drink. This is how we make money as they make sure they have to spend all the money since they do not have a chance to drink inside those farms. I was once a farm worker for 10 years but after I was diagnosed with TB, I decided to leave and bought a car from my brother to transport farm workers. My car is busy on weekends and sometimes week days during the harvest or shearing seasons. So, that is when I make a lot of money because these farm workers they drink a lot, so I am there to offer them “easy walking” wherever they want to go to, especially from the town to the farms.

The above statement indicates that the nature of agrarian production prevailing in Cradock has indeed shaped the socio-economic relations in the town in which township people negotiate access to the socio-economic space made by commercial agriculture. It is through engaging in such social interactions that the people of the townships survive, providing certain services to members of the surrounding farming community while making money for themselves. These off-farm activities, which are the basis of the socio-economic survival of the township people, occur as a result of the constant movement of the farm workers and farm dwellers to and from the town. As indicated in Chapter Five, the traditional commercial agriculture generally depends on a labour force often recruited from the town. Apart from labouring on the farms, there is a range of off-farm economic activities (formal and informal) which relies entirely on the commercial agriculture that surrounds the town (refer to Table 7 above). For instance, the companies that sell agro-irrigation equipment and tractors are crucial for the town’s economy in the sense that these off-farm activities are located in the town but supply agricultural equipment to the adjacent farms (see the location of these activities on Map 5 below). The managers of these two companies stated in the interviews conducted with them that they employed at least 20 people from the townships as semi-skilled labour to prepare and transport their goods to the surrounding farms. In particular, the irrigation company conducts one of the booming industries in Cradock, given the fact that the dairy and sheep farming industry is stable and growing over time (ECSECC, 2000).

Though the sheep farming sector has experienced difficulties over the last 40 years, merino wool produced in Cradock is considered the best in the world in terms of its quality. According

to a recent socio-economic survey (iNxuba Yethemba Municipality-IDP, 2012), at least 100 people from the township participate in the activities related to the irrigation sector.

**Map 5: Off-farm activities and informal traders associated with commercial agriculture.**



(Source: Geo-data from SA Surveyors General, 2009)<sup>54</sup>

The off-farm activities depicted in the map exclude service contractors who have found their niche in supplying and servicing irrigation infrastructure in the town. In addition, informal off-farm-related services such as hairdressing, the sale of used clothes and vegetables, liquor spaza shops, and small wholesalers are popular businesses. They provide services to both the farm owners and the farm workers, especially at the end of the month. While formal employment in the agricultural sector has stagnated since 1995, the town has experienced growth in the informal sector since the late 1990s as a result of commercial agriculture's capacity to accommodate an unskilled labour force comprised of people from the townships. One of the farmers (name withheld) interviewed during the research further unpacks the socio-economic dynamics of the role of informal trades in the town by saying:

<sup>54</sup> The locations of informal traders were identified and some were interviewed. Their locations were collected through participatory mapping with the communities in the township (Lingelihle). The GPS was used to read their locations, which were later converted into GIS mapping.

Unlike the game farming industry commercial agriculture has a strong presence in this town whereby township people exchange resources with farm owners and farm workers. For instance, I know that from time to time farm workers are normally transported by us to at least three strategic market depots in the town where they meet their families and buy food for the month. Once again, they usually go to shops that sell food packages at the cheapest prices, and very often they pay their credits for goods that they would have collected, on credits, during the course of the month. For instance, in my case my employees would collect food parcels very cheap at ABAC and sometimes ADAMIs wholesale shops. In these shops farm workers can take some stuff, only food not alcohol, on credits.

It is fascinating to find a farmer drawing a comparison between commercial agriculture and the growing game farming industry in Cradock. In this context, the adjustment of these off-farm businesses to accommodate the daily socio-economic circumstances of farm workers and their families in the townships may be part of the reason why farm workers continue to work on the farms despite the prevailing poor conditions. One of the things that makes such employment attractive to the farm workers is the favourable terms that hawkers and wholesalers offer. For instance, it was discovered from the traders that payments for their products are often spread over three months, usually without charging any interest. For the cash-strapped farm workers, this is one of the few opportunities that they have of getting the commodities or services that they need from the town's hawkers. There is what one could call a symbiotic relationship between these off-farm activities in town and the pattern of agrarian production in Cradock district. Tacoli (1997:158) also reflects on this relationship by arguing that:

The development of off-farm economic activities in many agrarian small towns is directly related to the state of people's relationship to farmland and other services which are necessary for making a living within the agricultural production sector. When these factors combine to render survival unsustainable in the agricultural sector, people are likely to adjust by seeking alternatives both within and outside, depending on the situation of the individuals and households.

This suggests why conducting informal off-farm activities tends to appeal to the poor people in the small towns. As Adams and Mortimore (1997:155) note:

The informal off-farm activities in small towns can serve as an engine of pro-poor growth especially in periods of economic crisis in rural small towns and as such they can generate more positive linkages with agriculture and local industry than the neo-liberal economic sector.

Given the fact that these informal activities serve as the basis upon which some poor people sustain their livelihoods, it is surprising that the socio-economic analyses of game farms and

their economic contexts have paid limited attention to this issue (see Chapter Three). It is clear that the conversion of commercial agriculture to game farming may have significant negative effects on the pattern and nature of the off-farm activities and social relations of the poor in the townships. Already there is a significant decline in off-farm activities in the town that coincides with the ongoing conversion of land from commercial agriculture to game farming. In Cradock, for example, there are informal lenders (from the township) who offer loans to farm workers and often keep their identity documents as security. Once a farm worker has borrowed money, the informal arrangement is that he or she will get his or her identity document returned once the debt is settled. These informal lenders have long been in existence in the townships. Some of them are involved in the so-called 'stokvel', a cooperative arrangement in which a group of people save a portion of their monthly salary and share it out, usually at the end of the year. Mr Sonke (one of the informal lenders) stated that the interest from this money is now generated by means of lending it to those who want it. This interest is charged when the money borrowed is settled at the agreed time. Currently, these informal lenders are walking the streets of Cradock to collect the money borrowed from them, mostly by farm workers, but the trend is now shifting toward pensioners as the major clients of this informal business. As one of them stated:

Our small business [they call it "Mashonisa"] has been existing for 10 years now and it first started after we realised that our people sometimes need money to build, upgrade their houses or buy furniture. These people earn peanuts in these white farms and worst of it; they spend all of their money from alcohol without buying food for their families. However, over the last 5 years we have noticed that there are not many farm workers any more coming to borrow money from us. As you can see on the streets many of them are unemployed now and life is hard out there. Those who still come to borrow money from us, we charged them 20 per cent interests depending on the amount borrowed. In most cases, we now survive on the pensioners who borrow and pay during their pay dates.

While this informal lending has been a normal practice for many years, two of these lenders stated that their business had gone down following the decline in the number of farm workers in the town. As Mr Sonke states in the above insert, their business depended on farm workers who would come to town to spend their meagre wages, so the decline in the number of farm workers as a result of the change from agrarian production to game farming has had a huge effect on the survival of their businesses. When the Director of the Department of Economic Development for the iNxuba Yethemba Municipality in Cradock, Mr Jojiyasi, was asked about the impact of commercial agriculture on livelihoods in the area in relation to off-farm activities, he said the town and its people, especially the township folks, depend on the income they

generate from selling various items to the farmers and farm workers. The same view was echoed by the hairdressers in the pavement salons, which are mostly operated by African foreign nationals. They too believed that their business would not survive if the farm workers did not visit the town, especially at the end of the month (refer to Map 5). Apparently, like many small towns elsewhere in South Africa, Cradock has experienced an increase in the number of small businesses, mostly shops and hairdressing salons, over the last 20 years. One of the hairdressers stated:

Farm workers come very often to cut their hair in our salons. Their women in particular consult with us to improve their hair style and this happens during the pay day when farm workers are in town to meet their family. We sometimes make a profit of about R2000 on a busy day, when the town is almost crowded by farm workers and their families from the township.

It is evident, given the above discussion, that the town is a social space containing multiple off-farm activities which constantly shape or reshape the socio-economic conditions of the people from the townships. However, the situation now is that the level of formal employment in the agricultural sector in Cradock is declining, and the decline is having severely detrimental effects on the lives of the people who reside in the townships.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

The chapter has discussed the socio-economic significance of commercial agriculture in Cradock in terms of access to material resources and access to off-farm activities and off-farm employment. Thus, far, the chapter has discussed how the material supplies from commercial agriculture have affected the socio-economic conditions of the people living in the Cradock townships. Furthermore, the evidence provided in the chapter indicates that supply of material resources to the township people and the mobility of farm workers are reasons why the township people are closely related to and connected with the commercial agriculture in the district. The chapter has also considered the role that off-farm activities and off-farm employment play in sustaining the socio-economic lives of the township people. This is because the off-farm businesses (such as butcheries, panel beaters, retail shops, etc.) often provide off-farm employment to the township people.

The major question to be addressed in Chapter Six — is to what extent, if at all, the conversions to game farming affect the socio-economic situation of the people who have depended on

commercial agriculture in Cradock. Who is affected by these conversions and how? There is a sense that the ongoing transformation of agrarian production to private wildlife production is perhaps the main source of the worsening socio-economic ills currently affecting a number of poor people in the township. The next chapter seeks to unpack these questions in relation to the recent conversions to game farming in the Cradock district.

**CHAPTER SIX**  
**THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF PRIVATE GAME FARMING IN**  
**CRADOCK: THE POST-CONVERSION ERA**

**6.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, it was argued that the material resource supplies from commercial agriculture (especially from sheep and wool farming) and the related off-farm activities were instrumental in defining the socio-economic conditions of the people in small Karoo towns such as Cradock, especially of those living in the townships. As stated in Chapter Four, historically it was having access to these material resources supplied by the farmers on the adjacent farms that people in the townships of Cradock and other small towns in the Karoo developed livelihoods connected with commercial agriculture. This means that the income derived from agriculture-related businesses such as butcheries, supermarkets, and blacksmith(s) and material resource supplies from the farms such as milk, meat, wood and medicinal plants were crucial in sustaining the livelihoods of the people of the town, in particular, those residing in the Lingelihle and Michausdal townships. This chapter explores the socio-economic implications of breaking that link between the town and the surrounding farms by converting the commercial agriculture farms to private game farms.

The chapter argues that the livelihoods of the township people have been detrimentally affected by the conversions. This spatial reconfiguration has not just led to a reduction of the demand for labour, as noted by Brandt (2013) about Cradock and by Luck (2005) about the Karoo more generally, but has also restricted access to material resources for those workers who continue to work on these farms after their conversion. Consequently, the people in the townships report of a significant decline in the extent of the flow of material resources from the farms. In addition, a large number of the off-farm agrarian-related activities that took place in the town have become moribund or have ceased to exist altogether. Given the fact that their existence depended on the continuous flow of material resources from the farms, their disappearance is not surprising.

The chapter will first briefly discuss the circumstances that led to the introduction of private game farming in Cradock. Secondly, the chapter will move on to demonstrate how the flow of material resources to the town and off-farm activities as well as off-farm employment have

significantly diminished since the conversions took place. The chapter further highlights a crucial point, which is that while both commercial agriculture and private game farming occur on private land, the earlier land-use (i.e., commercial agriculture) appeared to connect with the day-to-day lives of the township people better than the later one (i.e., private game farming), thus showing that the conversion of the commercial farmlands to private game farming has had seemingly significant effects on the socio-economic lives of the township people.

## **6.2 The circumstances leading up to the conversions and implications of the conversions in terms of the supply of material resources**

To fully understand the socio-economic implications of the conversions, it is necessary first to provide a brief picture of the circumstances that led to the introduction of private game farming in Cradock.

The period from the 1970s onwards was an era that was epitomised by a transition from state-led commercial agriculture to unsubsidised commercial agriculture. The withdrawal of the state subsidies informed by the liberalisation of agriculture meant that farmers had to sustain production by themselves, while trying to cope with global competitiveness. Describing the impact of the deregulation and liberalisation of agriculture, Mather and Greenberg (2003:398) argue that wage employment in the agricultural sector has been declining for many years. While this trend is evident in various agricultural areas, Nel and Hill (2008:2268) contend that many people in small towns like Cradock still regard agriculture as the main source of their livelihoods. Atkinson (2009:272), on the other hand, argues that a significant number of agriculture-related enterprises have experienced a decline in the semi-arid small towns. The decline has been observed in agriculture-related businesses such as butcheries, produce buyers, dairies, windmill repairers, and hide and skin sellers (Atkinson, 2009:276). While Atkinson's analysis indicates a decline in off-farm activities as the main cause of the decline in the economic growth of small towns, it is yet to be determined whether this trend is related to the growing conversion of land to game farming.

Over the past 30 years the Cradock district has experienced the conversion of land from commercial agriculture to private game farming. Whilst the recent report produced by iNxuba Yethemba Municipality indicates that private game farming is more profitable than the former land-use, the data collected during the performance of this research suggests that the chain of supply from the game farms to the local people, particularly to the township people in Cradock, is limited in comparison with the material supplies that previously reached the township people

from the traditional commercial farms. It is estimated that in Cradock alone game farms occupy more than 200 000<sup>55</sup> hectares of land, and that significant profits have been gained over the last 10 to 20 years (ECAS:2008; IYM, 2012/13). According to the Sectoral Determination set out by the Department of Labour, game farm workers earn twice the wages of those working for the commercial farms (per. comm. from the Department of Labour Cradock, 2013). But whereas there used to be a close social proximity between the traditional farmers and the township populace, wildlife production in Cradock is closely restricted, and in most cases the farms are distanced socially and economically from the daily life of the town, let alone the township.

For instance, as against the previous situation, the operational nature and production pattern of the newly established wildlife sector does not depend entirely on the services of farm workers and interaction with the town. In game farming, the farmer spends more time on marketing his or her business internationally than in interacting with the town or the surrounding communities. As a result, the conversion from commercial farmland to game farmland has created new patterns of social relations between the game farm owners and the town. For instance, one of the respondents in this study, by the name of Themba,<sup>56</sup> said that his interaction with the farm owner changed drastically after the farm was converted to game farming. This new pattern of social relations has had far-reaching effects on the extent to which the township people interact with the farm owners and are able to access material resources from the game farms.

Owing to the total lack of socio-economic interaction between the town and the game farming industry in Cradock, virtually no material resources are accrued to the township dwellers from the local farms. The position regarding the lack of or the reduction of flow of material supplies from the farms to the township is vividly described by Themba,<sup>57</sup> who has had practical experience of working on both commercial farms and game farms. He most recently worked on one of recently established biggest safari farm. Like many middle-aged township men in

---

<sup>55</sup> A determination of the size of the game farms in Cradock was derived from the property lists of the iNxuba Yethemba Municipality (in 2013). The lists show all farms (whether game farms or sheep or livestock farms) that are paying property rates to the municipality. The list may increase as more farms are being added, particularly those that are being converted. The data collected was verified from the cadastral information systems produced and maintained by the Department of Land Reform and Rural Development, Surveyors General and Mapping Unit.

<sup>56</sup> Themba is a pseudonym given to this respondent to protect his identity as part of the commitment to abide by the ethical tenets adopted in this research.

<sup>57</sup> Interview, Themba (12 April 2012). Cradock.

Cradock, Themba is now living from hand to mouth, not having a regular job to provide a reliable income to sustain his basic needs. Though his home is in the township, he nevertheless spends almost 10 hours every day queuing on the streets of the town centre waiting for any possible employer to give him a temporary job for a day or two. Like most of the informants in this research project (ex-farm workers in particular) in the Lingelihle and Michausdal townships, Themba stated that his life was better off prior to the farms being converted to game farming, and this is despite the fact that Themba's monthly salary was raised by R500 after the conversion.

When asked to compare commercial agriculture with game framing he said: 'the surrounding commercial agriculture is more part of our day-to-day livelihood experience than the recently established wildlife industry' (in isiXhosa: *'Imeko yamaPulazi okanye amaFamu amagusha nokutshwayo kunxumelene nobomi bethu ekuhlaleni'*). Another informant, Stanley January, articulated the same idea: *'Skaap boerdery is nou verbind met die lewens van die mense in the townships.'* (April 2012) Prior to the land's being declared as a game farm, Themba used to work and get a number of remittances which he shared with his family members in the township and the countryside. As the farm grew, he was sent by his employer to one of the colleges in Graaff-Reinet to acquire more skills through training in construction, so as to be able to help in constructing various buildings on the farm. This was in 2003, but prior to that year Themba recalls that his 14-year-old daughter was about to start at one of the Model C High Schools in Port Elizabeth, and the challenge for him was to get the sum of R3 000 to pay for her school fees. When he approached his employer (the farmer – Richards) about his need, the employer assisted him by giving him bulk monthly groceries for four consecutive months (i.e. from September to November). Instead of using his monthly wages (R1 100) to buy foods for his family, Themba managed to save his wages for four months to the tune of R4 400. At the end of 2003 he was given his bonus and additional food, including meat for the festive season, as a present. With these gifts, he was able to pay the school fees for his daughter in 2004.

Although he could not identify the definite date on which the farm underwent conversion to a game farm, he remembered that it was in 2005/6 that the farm owner hired him to look after the game animals. The farm was converted to game farming to accommodate the 'Big Five' game species for trophy hunting. The surrounding farms were later consolidated into the farm to constitute about 60 000 acres of land dedicated to game farming. Initially he (Themba) welcomed the move, as his monthly salary increased from R1 000 to R1 500, which was a 50

per cent increase, but this amount did not include any fringe benefits such as medical aid, despite the risky nature of his work. During the same year two or three lions were introduced onto the farm, and his task was to feed them with meat. Previously, while working on the agricultural farm, he had been able to get meat for himself from time to time. Now, on a game farm with these carnivorous animals, there was no longer meat to be given to him anymore. Apart from that, his relations with the farmer changed, as the farmer now spent more time marketing the game farm throughout the world.

This farm specialises in trophy hunting, which takes place during certain seasons of the year, and thus the farmer spends two to three months on marketing the business, mostly from January to April. While the farm continued to grow and to house a wide variety of species of game, Themba realised that the game meat was not to be shared with him. In fact, the animals were kept for the wealthy tourists to shoot and the meat for them to enjoy, while the remaining meat was thrown to the lions to eat. He also realised that his health was at risk as he experienced (and survived) attacks by lions on three occasions while he was feeding them inside their enclosed area. Though his salary had been increased by 50 per cent, he missed the material supplies he used to enjoy when the farm was still a livestock farm, and his working conditions on the game farm could not be compared with his working conditions (and benefits) in the agricultural farm setting. For instance, he could not bring any remittances or “loyal gifts” to the township folks or share these with his family and neighbours. The conversion of the farm shaped his relations not only with his employer but with the members of the broader community too, in particular, his ability to support his family. Themba was thus no longer receiving any material resource to supplement his livelihood and share with his family in the township as he had done in the past, as the farmer now focused entirely on the business of wildlife farming, which is driven by trophy hunting. Previously the farms had operated within the broader socio-economic context of the town, but this now changed as huge electrified fences were erected to re-create the farm as a pristine wilderness destination. While the conversion of the farm to game farming brought significant improvement in terms of infrastructure and returns on capital to the farm owner, Themba and others in the townships argue that the farm is no longer socially and economically connected to the town or the township.

Indeed, Themba’s tale regarding his experience as a farm worker in commercial agriculture reflects the general experience of many people in the township. For instance, in a focus group

discussion held with elderly women in Lingelihle township as a part of the data collection for this study, one of the respondents expressed similar sentiments by saying that:

It is very hard to dispute the fact that the surrounding commercial agriculture has played a significant role in sustaining our lives for the last 100 years, especially in Lingelihle and Michausdal townships. Though we were discriminated by *amabhunu basemaplazini* (white Afrikaners on their farms), even to date, there is a lot that I can identify in my house which was as a result of commercial agriculture. In the commercial farm we often get meat given to us by the white farmers. When my son was working on the farm, he often brought milk, soya milk and meat every month. But with game farming we have never heard someone bringing game meat as gifts to the families of those working in the game farms. There is nothing, absolutely nothing *nyana wami* (my child) (April 2012).

When asked about the importance of livestock meat compared to game meat (i.e., venison), the township people argued that meat from the commercial farms was more valuable than meat produced on the game farms. First, the meat from the commercial farmlands was more accessible than that from the game farms because of the inherent nature of commercial farm production. In this context, the township people, as indicated above, had access to meat from the farm workers, who had had it given to them by the farm owners as a gift. Secondly, they estimated that one sheep or goat could be shared by 50 people in the township, which was not true of game meat. Unlike game meat, sheep and goats are related to the cultural rituals which they perform whenever they have funerals, weddings and other social activities. Indeed, it is surprising to learn that since 1996 meat production from wild animals and hunting has experienced a significant increase, as more farms have either been converted into game farming or incorporated wildlife ranching into their farmlands (ABSA, 2003; Carruthers, 2008a). In the Eastern Cape Province, particularly in areas such as Cradock and Graaff-Reinet, springbok meat production has been fluctuating with a rise from 20 975 animals in 1996 to 31 563 animals in 2001 and a slight decline in 2009 to 24 814 springbok animals, as shown in Table 8 (Agriculture Statistics, 1993, 2002/3, and 2008). The number of exclusive commercial springbok abattoirs has increased from one in the mid-1990s to three in 2009. The value of game farming as a source of material supply in the Karoo districts is highlighted in the study conducted by Dr Dlamini from Rhodes University. He argues that game meat, especially meat from springbok and kudu, is likely to curb food insecurity in the Eastern Cape Karoo. This is consistent with the report from the National Department of Agriculture (NDA) which states that the conversion rate from commercial livestock farming to game farming in the Eastern

Cape Province (ECP) alone is between 25 to 30 per cent (NDA, 2009; Dlamini, Fraser & Grové, 2012).

**Table 8: Number of Springbok cropped for meat production in Graaff-Reinet and Cradock Districts**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Quantity (animal units)</b>	<b>Average dressed weight (kg)</b>	<b>Price/Kilo (yearly average) (R)</b>
1996	20 975	19.20	8.00
2001	31 563	15.50	11.00
2009	24 814	14.60	20.00

(Source: NDA, 2009 in Dlamini, Fraser & Grové., 2012)

The ABSA report (2003:7) maintains that the escalation in game production is due to several ecological reasons. For instance, wildlife is better adapted than cattle to the African environment, especially in semi-arid areas such as the Cradock district. The interview conducted with Mr Neethling, the Managing Director of Camdeboo Meat Processors, which is located in Graaff-Reinet, 130 km from Cradock, elicited from him the statement that ‘the game industry’s role in food security is relatively limited’. When asked about the contribution of the game industry to the local economy, he said:

There are very little game resources that goes to our local townships, yet South Africa exports about 75 000 head of game a year, primarily to the EU countries. The springbok is the primary venison export and earns SA only around R60 million–R70 million annually.

Indeed, it is not surprising, as shown above, that game farming contributes little to sustaining the socio-economic conditions of the local people. For instance, at a domestic level there are still few restaurants offering game meat and only a small retail market for venison products (Cooper & Van der Merwe, 2014; Langholz & Lassoie, 2001:1079-1085). Apart from that, hunters also take a lot of meat home and Mr Neethling estimated that ‘if these figures are combined it would mean that the total value of SA’s venison market is around R300m to R400m annually’. It is within this context that the game farming industry is still regarded by many as an elite sector and a wealth-oriented venture which accumulates wealth for the game operators while ignoring the poor people living adjacent to the wildlife areas.

It is crucial to revisit Graph 1 (page 110) presented in Chapter Five and compare it with the above table presenting the trends in the farming of game animal species in the District from

1993 to 2002. In the same period (i.e., from 1993 to 2002) it was reported that game stocks in Cradock, including kudu, springbok, and other game species, put together accounted for 2 184 stocks from the local farms (Agricultural Statistics SA, 2003). These game products were said to be occupying about 70 000 hectares of land, including those farms which accommodated both game and livestock on the same land.

While the report shows that both livestock (sheep) and game stock have escalated over the past 20 years, the material benefits of game farming to the township people have not yet been realised. The contrasting evidence with regard to access to these resources from commercial farms vs private game farming by the local people in the township is apparent. For instance, Mr Stanley January (a coloured township resident) gave his impression of the contrast between agricultural farming and game farming. His opinion was informed from experience, as he worked on a farm both prior to and after its conversion. He stated that:

Unlike game farms, former commercial farms had so many benefits to us in the townships. They would, most of the time, sell milk and sour milk very cheap here in the township. Their meats would be available whenever a white man [a farmer] comes with his car to the township next to the main road (N10). And we would buy meat and sometime collect and pay later. However, this is not the case with these new game farms. People who are working there, they always borrow money from us.<sup>58</sup>

A concern was raised, however, that the aloe plant is no longer easily available to the local people, due to the fact that most mountainous areas are now occupied by game farms and must be fenced off as part of the new farming practice. The concern was articulated particularly by Mr January from Michuasdol Township, when he said:

I use the aloe plant to clean my blood and prevent fatal diseases such as cancer and diabetes. The plant is used by many families in the townships, including traditional healers, to heal their patients or improve their wellbeing. We heard that the municipality is planning to start a project aimed to develop the selling of these plants in order to create jobs. But now these plants are no longer available because most mountainous areas are fenced to keep game animals and these game farmers do not want anyone next to the fence.<sup>59</sup>

The above statement describes a direct impact of game enclosure on the lives of the local people in the township. When commercial farming was the common practice, the farmers did not have

---

<sup>58</sup> Interview, Stanley January, 11 July 2012. Cradock.

<sup>59</sup> Interview, Stanley January, 11 July 2012. Cradock.

a major issue with people accessing these areas to harvest aloes, and sometimes the aloes would be harvested by the farm workers to bring to the township folks. However, now that the commercial farmlands have been converted to game farms the local people's access to these areas in order to harvest aloes for medicinal purposes has been severely restricted. Traditionally the significant socio-economic benefits that accrue from the harvesting of aloes in the Eastern Cape Karoo include benefits to poor individuals who derive an income from selling the aloes to large pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries (SANBI, 2010).

The issue of access to the aloes that grow wild in the area is also mentioned in the Tourism Sectorial Report (TSR) produced by the iNxuba Yethemba Municipality. The report states that while Cradock has witnessed a growth in game farming, which is said to have contributed to the development of tourism in the area, local people are no longer enjoying access to aloes to fulfil their traditional medicinal needs (iNxuba Yethemba Municipality-IDP, 2012).

While these figures indicate that game production is increasing in relation to the escalation in the number of game farms as against traditional commercial farms, little attention has been paid to whether people with a lower income, or township people, do in fact accrue any benefit from the wildlife industry. Who is benefiting from the material supplies available as a result of the conversion to game farming? Are there any benefits to the local population other than employment and the income accrued from that employment? The next section presents a discussion based on empirical evidence which suggests that while game farming is said to generate billions of dollars per year as against traditional commercial agriculture (see Saayman et al, 2011), in fact very little benefit goes to the poor people in the townships.

#### **6.4 The effects of game farming on off-farm activities and the associated employment**

The least frequent source of the livelihoods of the residents of Lingelihle and Michausdal townships currently is direct employment on the adjacent farms. The debate regarding the socio-economic effects of the conversion to game farming has to do with job creation. The pro-game farming sector argues that conversion has improved employment conditions on the farms, and there is an article which makes the seemingly exaggerated claim that the industry employs more than 100 000 people, mostly in marginal agricultural areas (Anon, 2012). This article suggests that the game farming industry is likely to replace the former commercial agriculture in terms of employment creation. The major question to ask is what effect the establishment of the game farming industry has had or is having on the employment of the people residing in

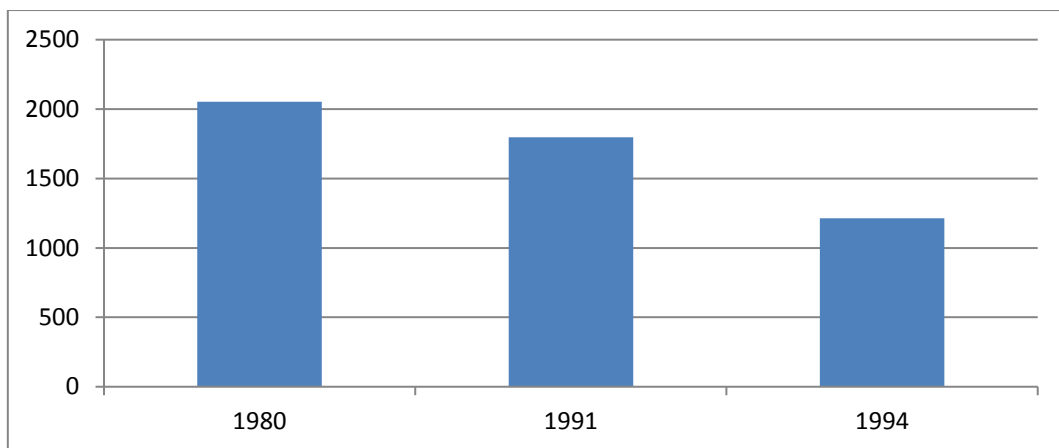
the townships. Will the conversions lead to the loss of rather than the creation of employment opportunities in this town? The data that was collected for the study reveals that there are three categories in which the local people access employment related to commercial agriculture: as casual general labourers; as permanent workers; and as contractors (iNxuba Yethemba Municipality-IDP, 2012). Of these three types of farm employment, the most common is casual general labour. These farm labourers force earns wages for the work they do on farms and, in most cases spent the bulk of their earned money, in the town (i.e., Cradock).

However, it is worth mentioning that there is a crisis in the rate of employment in the local agricultural sector, which the chairperson of the Cradock Business Forum describes as follows:

In recent times land speculation around game farms in Cradock through which many farms have been bought up and merged into larger game farms has also had consequences for the redundancy of some farm workers. We have seen this since the early 1990s with the eruption of informal settlements from the people who used to work and stay in farm areas. The result now is that these people compete for already scarce resources in the town centre.

Graph 4 below provides an idea of the extent to which employment in commercial agriculture has declined.

**Graph 5: Changes in agricultural employment in Cradock from 1980 to 1994**



*(Source: ECSECC, 2000)*

There are also currently very few stable employment opportunities in the town. As a result of the escalating unemployment rate in the town from 1999 onwards, the poverty level for the black African population in the town has been registered as being as high as 71 per cent for black Africans and 40.28 per cent for coloureds. By contrast, the poverty level for whites is only 2.23 per cent (ECSECC, 2000:11). This is because in real terms, as the report states, the

agricultural sector declined by 27 per cent between 1995 and 2003 (IYM, 2007:39). Despite this ongoing decline, unemployed people with little skill were still relied on in commercial agriculture. For instance, during peak seasons (such as harvest time) farmers usually pick up lorry-loads of unemployed town-dwellers (mostly men from the townships) to work on the farms, and drop them off at the end of the day. During the average day, Cradock's town centre is occupied by a pool of unemployed labourers on every street corner (see Photo 5 below).

**Photo 5: Unemployed youths in the town centre**



*(Source: V. Zungu, April 2012)*

When asked about what they earn as casual labourers on the farms, they said that most farmers pay them R100 per day, while others (especially sheep and Angora farmers) are willing to pay no more than R85. Apparently, as one of the labour inspectors from the Department of Labour in Cradock argued, this amount does not comply with that stipulated in terms of the recent Sectorial Determination. Farmers, on the other hand, maintain that they cannot afford to pay more than R100 per day. There is a general complaint expressed by commercial farmers in South Africa that 'they are compelled to pay a salary that is not market related' (May 2012). Thus, some of them have taken recourse to reducing labour costs by retrenching their farm workers in order to reduce labour costs. Many of the farmers in Cradock state that they are moving towards private game farming in order to reduce labour costs while continuing to make a profits (May 2012).<sup>60</sup> In the face of the escalating rate of unemployment amongst the township people in Cradock, two farmers were asked specifically about the effect of the conversions on the socio-economic conditions of the townsfolk in terms of employment.

Andrew said:

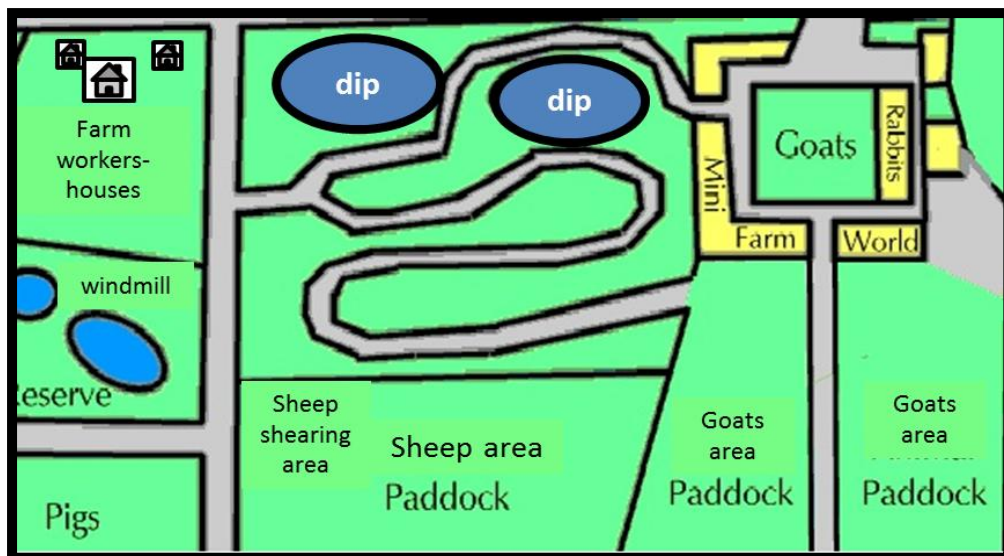
---

<sup>60</sup> The relationship between the declining farm employment and rise of game farming industry is well articulated by Andrew (the owner of Cradock Butchery). This statement is taken from his narration during the interview.

The best way to describe the socio-economic effects of game farming in this town is to provide a pictorial example of what happened to one of the farms that underwent conversion from the year 2000 to 2003. Before conversion, the spatial pattern of the farm resembled a typical traditional commercial agriculture which looks like this [drawing a picture]. As you can see the picture I am drawing - this farm was mainly focusing on cattle farming and sheep farming which required a lot of things for it to work. Inside there was massive infrastructure such as a fence, two small dams – for livestock, a windmill, houses for workers, store rooms, dip areas for livestock, packaged grass, etc. As you can see this farm also had a place where they cut and sorted the sheep hair before it was sent to the market and there is also place where they do sheep rearing. These multiple activities on the farm required labour to work and earn money, and on this farm about 15 to 20 regular labourers were working in either one or two of these on-farm activities.

Andrew (the farmer) provided a pictorial representation of the farm to illustrate how a typical traditional commercial farm generates multiple employment opportunities for the unskilled labour in the town. As can be seen in Figure 1 below, the farm was involved in a range of daily activities which required labour for their performance.

**Figure 1: A pictorial representation of Farm X before it was converted to game farming**



(Source: Andrew's artistic impression, 2012)<sup>61</sup>

Under normal circumstances, when the volume of work on this farm was such that the existing workers could not cope, the farmer usually picked up a lorryload of unemployed urban township dwellers in the town to help on the farm. One of the farmers who had been

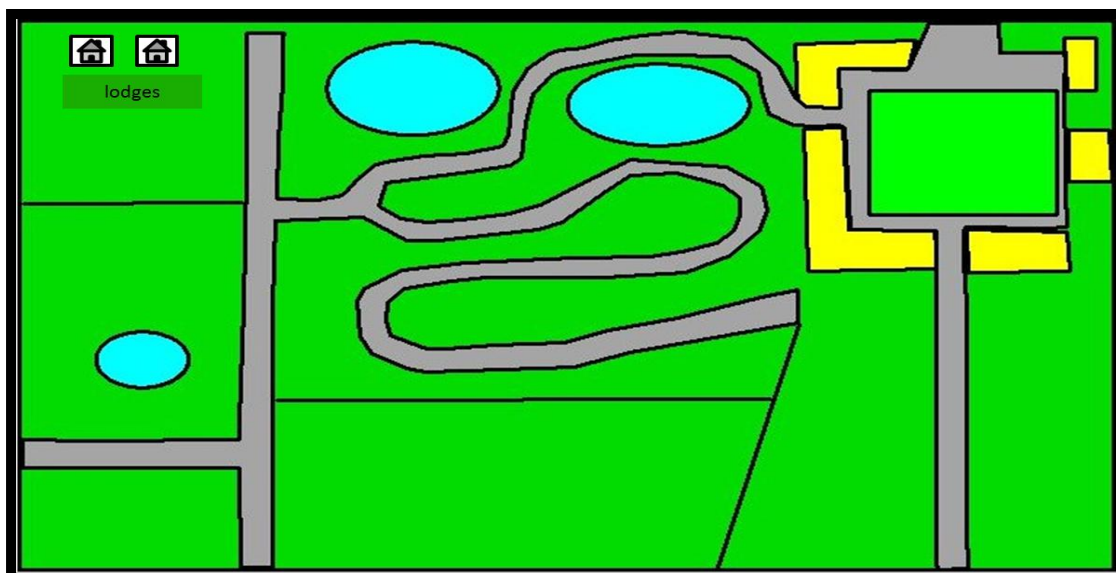
<sup>61</sup> The picture is drawn by Andrew to provide his artistic representation of a livestock or sheep commercial farm. This spatial representation of a commercial farm displays a range of on-farm activities, indicating several employment opportunities that a farm is likely to create.

doing this for years said that he would pick up about 30 to 50 workers from the Cradock town centre every day during the harvesting season, and these people were also employed for shearing or weeding. The question of what happened to them when the farm was converted to game farming was well articulated by Andrew when he said:

However, with the conversion of the farm to game farming, the owner had to remove all these activities and erect tall electrified fences for wild animals (see Figure 2 below). The farm has since then grown to accommodate the “Big Five” and luxurious tourist accommodation. The workers who used to work on the farm, doing sheep caring and shearing as well as other farm activities were no longer needed because the game farm is inherently a different farming operation. If you can ask Mr Respondent X1 or his brothers as they are ones who are managing the game farms, they will tell you that game farming is not labour intensive. All these people who used to work for this farmer are now walking around the town looking for any short-term employment. The game farm is now with only three to four individuals: one cleaning the lodges and chalets, one feeding wild animals, while the third one is preparing the grass or vegetation for the wild animals. For that reason, I think the game farm does not have significant effect on the economy of this town, as you can see outside; none of these people could be employable in the game farming sector.

Once again, Andrew drew a picture showing landscape patterns of a game farm with fewer farm based activities indicating that game farming does not generate employment (see Figure 2 below).

**Figure 2: A pictorial representation of Farm X after it was converted to game farming**



*(Source: Andrew’s artistic impression, 2012)*

Given this description of the situation, it is not surprising that the growth of the private game farming industry in Cradock may have contributed immensely to the growing

unemployment rate, with significance socio-economic implications for the unemployed and their families. The multiplicity of activities associated with the traditional commercial farm provided a significant number of employment opportunities for unskilled labourers, i.e. local people from the Cradock townships. However, when the farm was converted to accommodate game animals for trophy hunting tourism (see Figure 2 above), all these unskilled workers became redundant.

The escalation of unemployment in the town, following the conversion of the farms to the game industry, has also affected the informal trade sector, which depends entirely on the buying power of the farm workers. Though the game farming industry is inherently not labour intensive, there are a number of job opportunities on the trophy-hunting farms which are not greatly dissimilar to jobs on other types of farms. The jobs associated with trophy hunting include hunting, skinning, camping, tracking, and tourist hospitality services. The work usually done on agrarian farms, on the other hand, includes infrastructure maintenance (driving tractors to create roads, digging holes, managing water supplies, constructing sheds and building bomas/kraals), domestic work (cooking and cleaning) and animal care. Of course, wild animals need to be handled and approached differently, especially those which may present potential risk to the farm workers. Some workers have in the past decided to resign from working on a game farm because of the risk they were exposed to while working with wild carnivorous animals (refer to the case of Themba above). While some things have not changed as a result of the conversions to wildlife production, other things have certainly changed. For instance, those workers who remained on the farms after conversion acquired hunting-related skills. One worker on such a farm said:

I am, by background, a farm worker from a typically commercial farm; but when they are hunting during the hunting season, I can also be a skinner, it doesn't matter. We can also skin, but the farmer said I am the quickest skinner, but I don't have a certificate or qualification yet (male game-farm worker, February 2011).

While this may appear plausible with regard to the contribution of game farms to the lives of these farm workers, the division of labour on the game farms is still by and large distributed unequally on racial lines. For instance, the professional hunters (PHs) are certified workers supporting trophy hunting on the game farm. These PHs are mainly white men, who are often the self-employed sons of commercial farmers, and they earn a significantly higher wage than farm workers (who are mostly black Africans). The work of

the HP is to guide and communicate with the client, to drive the pick-up truck, to take pictures and celebrate a successful hunt with the client. Farm workers' tasks are to locate the animals (this is done by a tracker), to take care of the trophy once it is shot, and to prepare it for taxidermy work. A question was asked as to why these farm workers are often relegated to menial tasks involving little pay and little general incentive. The answer given by a farmer on a trophy-hunting farm was that:

No, they must take the client out and clients want to talk with somebody at night and drink. That, they can't do. They do not understand the culture of the clients who come here and aren't able even to appreciate the clients after the successful shot. This industry is more complex than the typical sheep or cattle farming where there isn't a lot at stake.

This seems to suggest that though the farm workers are part of the industry, they are to all intents and purposes rendered 'invisible' even to the very employers (the farmers) who worked with them for many years in the past when the farm was engaged in sheep or cattle farming. The farmers' underlying assumption is that their clients, American or European hunters, do not want to engage with these farm workers during and after their hunt, and the labour force in the trophy-hunting industry is therefore organised along racial lines. This illustrates how difficult it is for white South African farmers to imagine professional interactions between white hunters and black South Africans. It also serves as an example of how the historically segregated relations between white farmers and black African farm workers continues to shape the contemporary relations and developments on trophy-hunting game farms in a way that impedes the upward social mobility of black African farm workers in the post-apartheid agrarian economy.

### **6.5 Scrutinising the benefits of game farming and the attendant employment conditions**

In the face of the continued conversion of land from agriculture to private game farming in Cradock, a crucial question to ask is: What are the benefits of working on a game farm for the local township people, and who are these workers? At a basic level, farm workers working on a game farm receive a minimum monthly wage of R1 538 (at the time of the research in 2012) rising to R1 800, excluding deductions. This amount is above the wages they used to earn when they were working on traditional commercial farms. Farmers legally deduct not more than 10 per cent of a worker's wage for the provision of electricity, housing and game meat. Farmers also 'save' the tips received from their clients and distribute them in December, at their

discretion, in terms of who deserves what. In most cases the ‘tips’ given to farm workers are often mentioned by game farmers as one of the main benefits of the game farming industry for the local people. While this informal bonus system does increase workers’ income, the arbitrary nature of the distribution causes distrust between a farmer and his farm workers. In most cases the farm workers do not have access to the information as to how much money in tips was given to the farmer by the client, and consequently conflict often erupts among the workers, who do not receive equal amounts. As one game-farm worker complained:

Yes, we (black farm workers) work under uncertainty conditions in this farm. We are supposed to get paid more than we used to receive when we were working in a tradition commercial farm, but very often our wages are not equal. We also get the bonus intermittently after the hunting seasons, but this bonus is not even reflected on our pay-slips. It is just paid to us through an envelope and in most cases the amount is not equal across all workers. We don’t know why.<sup>62</sup>

Of course, this shows that the benefits of working and living on the game farm vary among the farm workers. In fact, the entire game-farm system perpetuates the farm workers’ dependence on the farmer’s way of managing and controlling farm labour. In terms of gender, the division of work between men and women on a game farm appears to be similar to that on the local livestock or sheep farms. For instance, men often work outside in the field and women are often employed as part-time domestic workers in the farmhouses and/or lodges for visitors. Invariably, domestic workers are needed on a game farm in order to provide services to the hunters and their accompanying parties. This creates a relatively higher demand for female workers than on a sheep or cattle farm.

However, the employment of women on these farms appears to be related to the employment of the male partner, as the women are often already present on the farm as the partners of the male workers. On traditional cattle or sheep farms male workers had to visit the township from time to time, often with material resources, because they would have left their families and significant others in the township. The conversion of agricultural farms to game farming has disrupted this pattern, as the workers on the farm are now entirely detached from the daily social life of the township. According to the township people, game farm workers do not exist, as they no longer interact with the township people in the same way as they did previously. Unlike the situation in the Graaff-Reinet area, where the game farms are adjacent to the town,

---

<sup>62</sup> Please note that some of the primary data was collected by Femke Brandt and that she shared her insight by providing her transcript with the narration of those employed in the private game farms of Cradock.

the private game farms around Cradock are situated far out of town. The implication is that permanent game farm workers live on the farm, often with their spouses, who are possibly employed as well. Because the farm workers live out on the farms in isolated places, transport costs to the urban area in town are a major concern for those who regularly want to travel to the township to maintain their relations with their families and relatives. While farm workers engaged in sheep or cattle farming often travel to town with their employers to buy food and other items, this is not the case with game farming, as the farm owner no longer perceives the need to travel to town. Farm workers who stay about 25 kilometres from the town, for example, reported that they are charged R150 by taxi drivers for a one-way trip. The cost of this single journey is well above 10 per cent of the minimum monthly wage for farm workers. Consequently, they often do not manage to leave the farm during their weekends off. This has created further strains and frustrations for those who invest (or wish to do so) in housing in the rural townships and whose social lives are increasingly focused on the town, funerals, weddings, church services, family ceremonies, children's schooling and township neighbourhood experience. The effect of game farm employment on the socio-economic conditions of the township is therefore immense. It is the topic of the following statement by Stanley January from the Michausdal Township:

You see, working on the game farm is sometimes not good because one is totally excluded from the life outside the farm. I used to run my small shop here in this house, selling bread, sugar, milk and other household items. But ever since I started working for this farm, I was not able to continue with it as I hardly visit my home. This is because it is very expensive to travel from the farm to town. The farm owner does not even buy food and other stuff to the town; instead he prefers to go to PE or East London not Cradock yet our farm is not that far from the town. So, my whole life in the township has changed and I have even lost some friends because I no longer catch up well with the township life. I am running out of cash. No one in the town can lend me money because they do not know when I will be coming back from the farm.

This clearly shows that the social relations between the game-farm workers and their homes in the townships have changed due to the nature of wildlife production prevailing in Cradock. This has affected not only their lives but also those of the informal traders that used to rely on them for the success of their businesses. The shops in the town that survive by selling various items to the farmers and farm workers are said to be negatively affected by the conversions of the farms to game farming. A former member of Cradock Chamber of Business also pointed out that game farming has significantly reduced the buying power of farm workers in the town, with severe consequences for the small businesses in the township.

The advent of private game farming has reduced the demand for farm labour while casualisation of farm labour is escalating over time. This means that farm workers no longer have the stable income they were used to in the commercial agricultural sector. It is for this reason that the income of the farm workers, under these conditions, is said to be uncertain. For instance, one type of labour that seems to have been ‘casualised’ on the trophy-hunting game farms (and game farming in general) is fencing (not the maintenance of fences). For most game farms, especially those established recently in Cradock, their fencing is largely organised through contract labour. In this scenario, the game farmer contracts one person to organise the local labourers and these workers will temporarily work on a fencing assignment for a fixed price (e.g., per metre). The fencing team stays on the farm, occupying empty workers’ houses, during the week, and returns home for weekends. The number of people that the contractor employs naturally depends on the specific nature of the assignment. Fencing for game farms is the most tedious and difficult task to perform, as most of these farms are located in mountainous areas. The equipment and materials sometimes must be carried up a mountain by men on foot to places that are inaccessible to vehicles. The fact that the work that used to be done by permanent farm workers is now temporary and casual contributes to greater insecurity for workers in the agricultural sector. The perceived insecurity is almost visible on the street corners of the town, where the number of unemployed people (mostly men) who used to work on sheep or cattle farms is growing over time.

Another reason why game farming in Cradock is far distanced, socially and economically, from the township is the growing number of foreigners employed on these farms. There is increasing concern that most farmers prefer to employ African foreign nationals, notably from Zimbabwe and Mozambique, as permanent farm workers at the expense of the local people from the nearby townships. The same trend has been observed on most game farms in the district. The most striking feature of this trend is that the farmers are increasingly employing Zimbabwean male workers to cook and clean, thereby replacing local female labour from the township. The language barriers between these groups and the perceived threats by South Africans against the foreign workers have increased social tensions and sparked violence among farm workers on the farms. When asked about this, the farmers argued that foreign labour is less expensive or demanding and more ‘productive’ than local labour. Those workers from the townships who are employed consist of young people who have a reasonable educational background and find jobs as drivers, shopkeepers or maids on the farms. However, most of them ‘regard farm work as temporary until something better comes up’ (Respondent X2, Farmer, 2012). This explains

why most of them view themselves first and foremost as townspeople. This view was, however, not expressed by those who have no educational background or technical skills, as they regard farm employment as their only way of escaping complete poverty.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has argued that while the former commercial agriculture provided visible, both direct and indirect socio-economic benefits to the local people, the recent conversion to game farming does not generate visible direct benefits (in the form of off-farm activities) for the people in town. In fact, there is virtually not a vestige of any form of socio-economic interaction between the people of the town and the recently established private game farms in Cradock.

The question of who benefits from game farming or commercial agriculture (in small towns such as Cradock) with specific reference to the role of off-farm activities as a source of livelihoods for the township people has not received adequate attention. Owing to the inherent nature of the method of wildlife production adopted by the game farmers in Cradock, those who worked in the industry as farm labourers (black Africans) are no longer attached to day-to-day life in the town, let alone more specifically to the townships. Given the fading pattern of interaction between the surrounding farmlands and Cradock town, the chapter must conclude that only the negative socio-economic effects of the conversions to game farming have traversed beyond the boundaries of these farms to reach the people who used to rely for their livings on off-farm economic activities related to the former commercial agriculture.

Another observation reflected in this chapter is with regard to the benefits derived from employment in the commercial agricultural sector which are based on significant exchanges between farm and town, and town and farm. People from the townships find employment on the farms, while farm-based workers spend their salaries in town, and that is only the beginning of the interchange. Farmers find suitable employees in town and urban small businesses take advantage of farm employees to suit their needs, and there emerges not merely a survival strategy but also an interlinked production strategy for the local people often found in strategic market spots (see Map 5), and for traders, hawkers, industrialists and workers in town. It is via this complex production pattern of commercial agriculture that the people of Cradock still survive, even in an era when commercial agriculture appears to be down-scaling. The chapter thus concludes that these social relations of survival, largely interwoven with sheep or cattle

farming, have been significantly disrupted by the conversion of these farms to private game farms in Cradock.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### INVISIBLE CAPITAL ACCUMULATION: 'TOURISM VENTURE INSIDE THE FENCE'

#### 7.1 Introduction

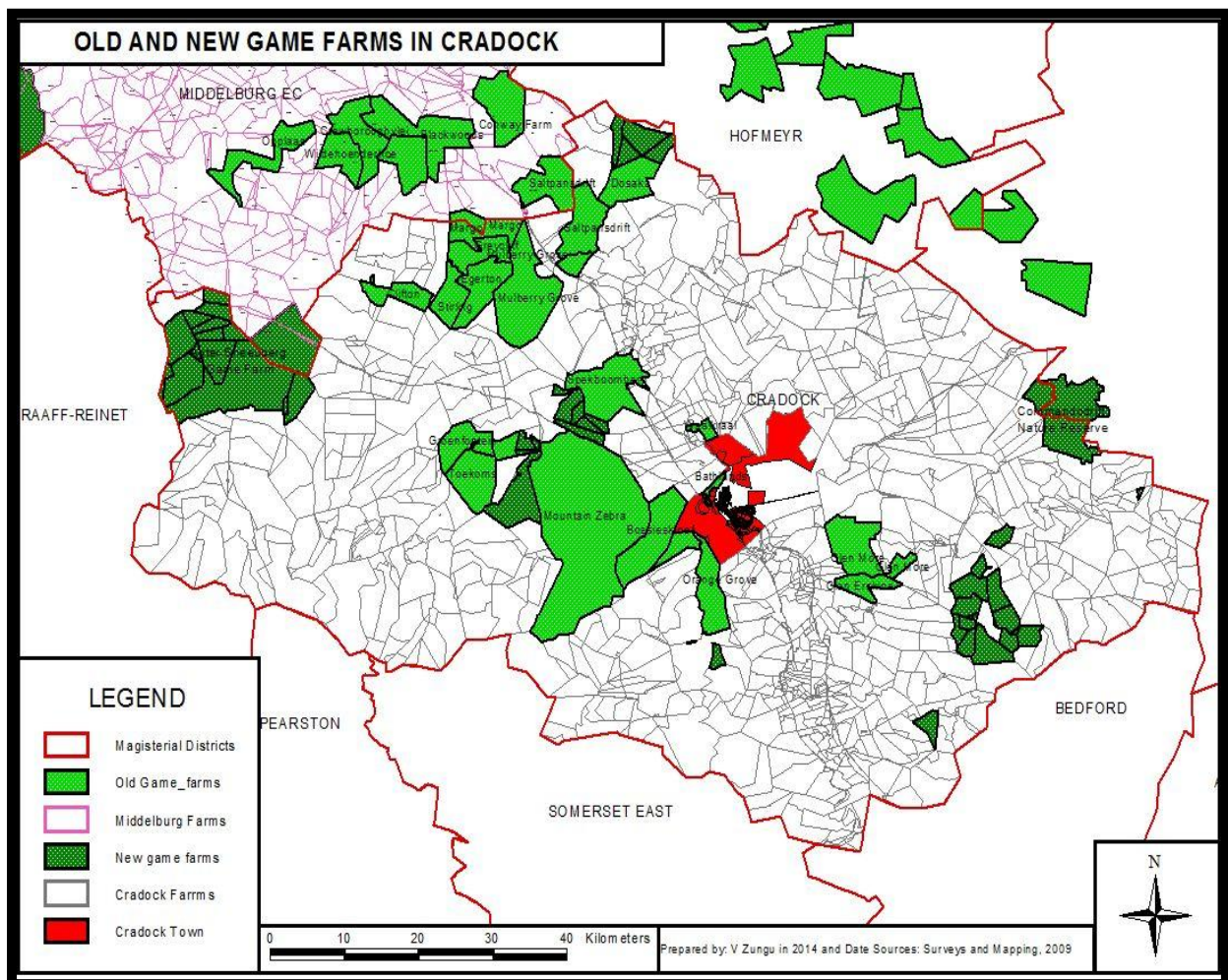
This chapter goes further to challenge the argument of Lindsey (2007) and other pro-game farming groups that the private game farming industry in South Africa benefits local people, in particular black African and coloured people in the Karoo. According to Lindsey (2007:3) trophy hunting from private game farming contributed more than 100 million US dollars to the South African revenue with a positive economic effect on local people in terms of job creation. The author further argued that private game farming leads to economic diversification with multiple employment opportunities for the local people. While the conversion of land from commercial agriculture to private game farming is said to result in financial gains for the revenue, the data collected in Cradock suggest that the benefits of the game farming industry to the local people in the townships have not materialized. The purpose of the chapter is to probe more deeply, reflecting on the state of the wildlife/game farming industry as an elite tourist venture, to account for why the people of Cradock and the township people in particular do not benefit as suggested by Lindsey. The game farming industry in Cradock is generally viewed as 'invisible capital accumulation inside a fence' without any connection with the town's economy and its populace as used to be the case with the former commercial agriculture. As stated in Chapter Three, the private game farming industry has historically always been elitist and thus detached from the socio-economic aspirations of the local people in the nearby small towns.

The chapter thus argues that the game farming industry (despite its financial benefits to the municipality through property rates) does not directly benefit the township people in Cradock. The chapter further argues that the benefits of the introduction of private game farming in the former agrarian areas are not trickling down to affect the socio-economic conditions of those staying the townships of the town. The chapter will first depict how game farming has grown in Cradock. The second part of the chapter will focus on a discussion regarding the contribution of game farming to Cradock and whether any benefits reach the township people.

## 7.2 The state of the game farming industry in Cradock

Over the last 30 years Cradock's land for commercial agriculture has increasingly undergone conversion to the private game farming. This has taken place in two ways: 1) there has been a consolidation of land, where a wealthy farmer has bought lands adjacent to his or her farms and consolidated them into one big game farm, or 2) a farmer has decided to transform his existing sheep or livestock farm into game farming for trophy hunting. Currently, the conversion of land to private game farming in Cradock has reached more than 250 000 hectares of the land that was formerly in use for commercial agriculture (see Map 6 below).

**Map 6: Map showing old and recently established game farms paying rates in Cradock**



*(Source: Geo-data from SA Surveyors General, 2016)*

It is critical to note that the game farms depicted in the above map are privately owned, except for the Mountain Zebra National Park and the Commando Drift Nature Reserve, both owned by the South African National Parks Board and, therefore, by the state. The major question is who benefits from these game farms? And if anyone does, in what form does he or she benefit?

While there is evidence that the municipality receives money paid by private game farms in the form of rates, it is not clear whether this money is indeed used to improve the socio-economic conditions of the people in the town, especially the township people (IYM, 2013/14:159). There is a sentiment, largely expressed by the people in the township, that ‘private game farming in Cradock is nothing other than invisible capital accumulation inside the fence’. However, this does not in itself mean that the private game farming industry in the Cradock district does not provide any benefits to the town. In fact, private game farming has generated a number of indirect benefits in the form of rate payments to the Cradock District Municipality and tax revenue paid annually to the South African Receiver of Revenue (SARS) as well as employment, albeit in smaller quantities (IYT, 2013/14:159).

In terms of the rate payment records of 2013/14, the game farming industry in Cradock contributes 40 percent higher than what the traditional commercial agriculture pays to the municipality, also in the form of rates. For instance, the recent rate payment records, reflecting the amount (in ZAR) paid to the municipality indicates that the municipality receives a relatively higher percentage of rates from private game farms located in the iNxubaYethemba Municipality (Cradock) (iNxuba Yethemba Municipality-IDP, 2012). In the financial year of 2013/14 (see Table 9 below on p.159), the recently established game farms owned by private individuals in Cradock contributed R567 905.63 to the municipal coffers. According to the mayor of iNxuba Yethemba Municipality, this amount is an additional payment, as the old game farms, at the time of the fieldwork, were still expected to be reflected on their database. The amount received by the municipality was merely collected from those game farms that were already in the rate payment system. However, those that were to be added in the latest property evaluation indicated that the amount of game farm property revenue may increase up to R3.5 million per annum. This is the first time that the municipality is receiving rates’ payments of this magnitude from private property owners within the municipality.

**Table 9: The records of rate payment by private game farms in Cradock**

Property Identification Code	Type	Size (hectare)	Property Value	Rate Paid(Annually)
Tam Farming Trust	Agri game	58648917	R 5 695 245	R 85 428.68
Robfair Inv No 112 C C	Agri game	11888964	R 951 100	R 14 266.50
Salmon Foster Securities C C	Agri game	3794929	R 303 500	R 4 552.50
Karoo Safaris C C	Agri game	3794922	R 303 500	R 4 552.50
Salmon Foster Securities C C	Agri game	31636323	R 2 530 000	R 37 950.00
Rust & Vrede Trust	Agri game	37117842	R 2 968 500	R 44 527.50
Dyk Josef Van	Agri game	532677	R 42 600	R 639.00
Prostart Inv 40 (Pty) Ltd	Agri Game	78426642	R 7 771 430	R 116 571.45
Anker Trust	Agri game	5833354	R 714 000	R 10 710.00
Ltd.	Agri game	63189586	R 6 796 500	R 101 947.50
Gutzeit Desmond George	Agri game	55549857	R 5 642 500	R 84 637.50
Cawood Christopher Charles Edward	Agri game	3401932	R 1 155 000	R 17 325.00
Gutzeit Desmond George	Agri game	30648085	R 2 986 500.00	R 44 797.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Agri game</b>	<b>384464030</b>	<b>R 37 860 375</b>	<b>R 567 905.63</b>

(Source: Inxuba Yethemba Municipality, 2013/14)

In addition to the above figure, the financial officer of IYTM estimated that in 2013 the municipality collected the amount of about R1.2 million from private game farms in Cradock. This amount included the money paid by private game farms which are physically located in the Middelburg District but account to the IYTM, and most of these farms (including those in Cradock) were converted from the land that was previously used for commercial agriculture focusing mainly on sheep, goats and cattle farming (see the Map 6 above).

### 7.2.1 Implications for private game farming: game farming as an ‘invisible capital’

The township people (including those in the town centre) of Cradock had expressed a view that game farming’s benefits are not visible compared to the benefits derived from commercial agriculture.<sup>63</sup> Owing to the fact that a number of off-farm activities in the town are derived directly or indirectly from the prevalence of commercial agriculture in the district, the question has been asked as to which of these activities have emerged or disappeared as a result of the conversions in Cradock. This question indeed is deeply answered by Michael, the owner of one of the biggest and longest established hotels in the town. He answered as follow:

As a tourist operator, having operated this hotel for many years, I am not afraid to say that the game farming industry in Cradock is a form of invisible tourism inside the fence. They merely generate money, I mean bigger money than ours, because it is accumulated inside these farms by game farm owners at the expense of commercial farming and indeed the economy of this town. We only hear that tourist from abroad enjoy themselves in these areas and leave millions of dollars and in all

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Mrs Sokhulu, 12 June 2012, Cradock.

these they will never come to visit the town, let alone our hotels. There are no industries in this town that have emerged as a result of the game farming industry, yet the sector is said to generate huge incomes for these game farm owners.<sup>64</sup>

The above opinion, expressed by Michael, suggests that the benefits of the game farming industry are non-existent, and do not resonate with the day-to-day economic lives of the poor people in the town, let alone in the township. This is despite the fact that the industry itself continues to accumulate significant amounts of capital inside the 'fence' In this context, the 'fence' is understood not just as a mere physical boundary but as a social boundary that seeks to constrain access to resources and economic opportunities to the local people from the town. The same sentiment is expressed generally by most township people, especially women and the elders, in particular those who experienced the benefits of living in a commercial agricultural district for many decades' past. When asked about the benefits of game farming, they respond that game farming delivers no tangible socio-economic benefits to them. Most of these women had been living in Cradock for more than 50 years, having experienced forced removal to the township from the town in the 1950s. These are the people who had at one time seen 10 butcheries operating in the township selling meat and other farm products at the cheapest price. For them, commercial agriculture has for many years offered tangible benefits, as against the game farming industry.

The private game farms are said to generate much more wealth than the former commercial farms, so it is surprising that some of this wealth does not trickle down to the township people. The invisibility of the game farms to the people in Cradock is commented on further by Kenneth Mzobe. He worked on one of the game farms located along the R61 towards Graaff-Reinet, about 55 km south-east of Cradock town. When asked the name of the farm he refused to identify it for fear of compromising his relationship with his former employer. Apparently, the game farm is one of the more successful of such ventures, specialising in trophy hunting, and with more than 40 000 hectares of land occupied by the 'big five'. Apart from that, the owner of this farm is said to be one of the successful business figures in the town, owning and renting many properties in Cradock. When Kenneth was asked to explain why he decided to leave the game farm to look for work in town he said:

I used to work for a commercial farm next to the game farm from 1996 till 2004. When I was there, though the salary was below the money earned under the farmer

---

<sup>64</sup> Interview with Michael Anthrobus, 20 April 2012, Cradock, the owner of the Victoria Hotel in Market Street.

(i.e., the previous employer) he supported me and my family by giving us food parcels. The farm was sold and incorporated to the game farm. We were ten in that farm and I was one of the five who continued to work for the newly established game farm earning a regular R 1500 per month. Though the money was good, the employer did not give us food and other stuff to supplement our salary. Meat in the game farm is not given to workers, like it used to happen when we worked for the cattle or livestock farmer. Game farming is a very closed and strict industry. We only get tips during hunting seasons from the tourists who visited the farm to hunt. You cannot move around the farm because wild animals should not be disturbed. Apart from that, I left the farm because financially it did not meet my needs for my expanding family. I was just earning R200 more than I used to earn on the commercial farm, without any gifts or supplementary material supplies such as meats and milk every month. After the hunting seasons, the employer failed to pay our normal salary we agreed upon.<sup>65</sup>

The above insert shows clearly that for commercial farm workers the material supplies from the farm helped to sustain their livelihoods. While the conversion to game farming has increased their income, as stipulated by the SD of the Labour Act, the income itself could hardly sustain them without any additional material supplies from the farms. Thus, the negative socio-economic implications of the conversions, which have remained largely unnoticed by those who are not directly concerned, bear little relation to the income generated by the game farming operation. This situation is more acute in the areas where commercial agriculture and the associated off-farm activities had created unique social and economic relations with the neighbouring communities. At a broader level, Langholz and Lassoie (2001:1083) say that:

A major socio-economic pitfall of private game reserves is that they are prone to become islands of the elite, places where wealthy landowners host affluent tourists. This problem lies with private parks contributing to the concentration of land ownership by the wealthy. The consolidation of large amount of acreage into relatively few hands, and the concomitant lack of access to the land by the rural poor or local people, persist as intractable social problems across much of the developing world.

As noted in the above insert, the township people (including Themba, cited in Chapter six), view game farming as an elitist use of the land where there is limited access to the resources inside the wildlife areas. It is within this context that Langholz and Lassoie (2001:1080/1) argue that the proliferation of private game reserves in the developing world (especially in Southern Africa) has further compounded the problem of poverty and inequality in terms of access to material resources and land. A similar scenario is playing out in Zimbabwe and other countries, where large private holdings and conservation ventures exist. In such cases, private reserves

---

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Kenneth, 12 April 2012, Cradock next to the Department of Labour.

have become flashpoints where the broadly supported goals of social justice and biodiversity are at odds.

While the off-farm activities associated with commercial agriculture, both informal and formal, are easily identified as the main sources of livelihoods for the township people, it is also important to mention that with respect to the recently established game farming industry it appears that there are no visible and directly accessible off-farm activities which, as a form of benefit, trickle down from the private game farms to the local people in Cradock. To elaborate this postulation further, it will be useful to briefly draw a comparison between Cradock and Graaff-Reinet. There is a sharp contrast between Graaff-Reinet and Cradock in terms of the impacts of game farming through the generation of spin-off activities for the benefit of lower class population in the towns. For instance, Graaff-Reinet has a number of off-farm activities associated with the game farming industry in the town centre. These include the Venison Meat Processing factory, which is located two km away from the town, and the skin tanning company (Dexitermy) located inside the town. According to the recent survey conducted in Graaff-Reinet (iNxuba Municipality-IDP, 2012:1-2), these game farm spin-off activities have generated a number of job opportunities for the local people. However, with reference to the residents in the Cradock townships, the game farming industry appears to have not generated many spin-off activities in the town. One of the members of such a household lamented that fact:

We have heard that most white farmers are changing their farms to game farming. We have also seen their big cars passing along the street in our towns but I can assure you that whatever they do here has nothing to do to benefit the poor majority. I mean the people in this township. They made promises that a number of jobs will be created if we protect the Cradock Four site as a tourist destination, but till now the place is dilapidated and these game farmers could not divert their tourists to come to the township.<sup>66</sup>

This is despite the fact that the game farming industry is reported to make a large contribution to the tourism industry in the Eastern Cape, especially in the ecotourism sector (Pretorius, 1996 in Van Der Merwe & Saayman, 2002:31). While game farming-oriented eco-tourism is said to be responsible for 20 per cent of the world's total tourism expenditure —according Saayman et al. (2011:1-2) — there is compelling evidence that the industry has not produced the same results in the former agricultural districts such as Cradock. Owing to the nature of the private

---

<sup>66</sup> Interview with Ms Genet Mjoli, 12 April 2012, Lingelihle Township, Cradock.

game farming industry, there is a sense that the changing of land-use from agriculture to game farming has led to the disappearance of some off-farm activities which emerged as a result of the prevalence of commercial agriculture. This view emerged prominently during the focus group discussion when the participants stated that over the last 30 or 40 years there had been a decreasing number of 'house-to-house' informal meat traders in the township. Apparently, these informal traders used to buy meat from the surrounding farms to sell to the townships residents, especially during the festive seasons. In the 1960s, one of the respondents recalled:

Apart from those who used to sell meat on the streets in the 1960s, there were more than 10 butcheries in the township, while the town centre had only 5 viable butcheries selling meat and other farm products in Cradock town. Now the town has only two existing butcheries with only one (i.e., Andrew's butchery) often used by the township people.

Even though there has been a significant decrease in the number of Cradock butcheries over the last 30 years, the current situation is that there is still a connection between the surrounding commercial agriculture and the off-farm activities in town. Currently the town has only three butcheries, and two of these are owned by farmers who have been involved in sheep farming for more than 20 years. According to Andrew, the owner of one of these butcheries, 'meat supplied by the butchery is sourced directly from his farm, which is not more than 400 hectares'. The fact that most of his meat is cheap has consequently allowed braai meat traders (*shisa-nyama*), or so-called 'dust meat traders' to source their meat in Andrew's butchery and sell this to the township people for survival. However, when asked about whether there is any activity in town or townships that is linked to game farming in a similar fashion, most of the respondents in the townships stated that the game farming industry is somewhat of a 'closed industry'. The owner of one of the small shops in Michausdal township stated that most of the game farms are self-contained, as they provide all services to their guests on the farm.

This is how he said it:

It looks like things are happening inside the fence. We see people flowing into the surrounding game farms, during hunting seasons. We are told that food, drinks and even traditional dance are offered to the tourists, who do not even visit our shops. As I am talking to you right now. Do you know that three or four years back, the government renovated Goniwe's tombstones, but if I can tell you now, these sites are "white elephants?" Instead the criminals around the town are destroying these grave stones. Tourists who visits these game farms do not even visit the Cradock Four's graveyard so that they can learn what Cradock is all about.

Given the above, it is clear that the game farming industry in Cradock is viewed as a form of tourism which is elitist and which excludes the poor people in the township. In this context, it appears that exclusion is an integral characteristic of the private game farming industry. A similar view was also expressed by Ricky,<sup>67</sup> the owner of one of the growing B&B's in town, who said:

The game farming industry in Cradock is a very complex and sophisticated sector which is invariably self-reliant and often well-developed inside. These tourists travel all the way from America, Russia, and Germany, etc... and only stop in PE to spend a couple of nights and money there, and from there they travel straight to their destinations (the game farms). They do not stop in any of these small towns (i.e. Cradock and others in the Karoo) to buy or view life there because they know that the game farm owner provides them with accommodation, food, drinks and all sorts of entertainments as part of their trophy hunting experience. So, then where on earth could one expect the town to benefit from the game farming industry?

The above insert clearly shows that the game farming industry in Cradock is a type of tourism venture which continues to make money for the few, with few spin-offs or benefits for the town. As Ricky continued, she noted that according to her observation there is a clear link between the resurgence of game farming and the rise of unemployment in the town. For instance, Cradock district has experienced conversions to game farming over the last thirty years and during the same period the town has witnessed a rise in unemployment, especially among the people in the townships. In this context attention is drawn with to some of the activities take place on the game farms. These include traditional dances which are often performed to entertain those tourists who have been successful in shooting animals. On these occasions, a luxurious dinner is prepared, to be enjoyed only by the tourists (the trophy hunters) who have demonstrated their hunting skills in the wild. These activities, which are often hosted inside the game farms, create the impression that the game farm itself represents a world in itself, and that the paying guests in this world do not have to look outside to see other, 'lesser worlds'.

It is thus for this reason that the game farming industry, particularly in Cradock, is rendered invisible to the eyes of the local people. These game farms are not familiar in the eyes of the people in Cradock. This also includes the employees working inside the game farm as they are

---

<sup>67</sup> Interview, Mrs Ricky on 20 April 2012, owner of Albert B&B and a former chairperson of the Cradock Business Chamber.

often confined inside the game farm, only allowed to visit home (the townships) once or twice a month.

As elsewhere in South Africa, the landowners involved in game farming in Cradock are a diverse group. There are those who mix game farming with sheep farming, claiming that they do not engage in game farming as a business. However, the local people argue that these people too often go hunting game animals at night, while during the day they present themselves as sheep or livestock farmers. There is still considerably confusion as to what conversion to private game farming really mean in practice. This confusion is due largely to a lack of coherent policy guidelines in South Africa. Ideally, the Game Act or policy should spell out clearly what land may be used for game farming, in the tourist sector, and what in the commercial agriculture sector. For instance, in the current Eastern Cape Nature Conservation and Management Act of 2001 there is no actual requirement that a change of land use must be registered if a farmer switches from cattle to game farming, as both are classified as an agricultural use by the Department of Agriculture (NDA). This means that there are no legal requirements for a land owner to notify any of the authorities should there be the intention to switch from cattle to game. The most common animals introduced are antelope species (buck), which are most sought-after for hunting. Introducing the larger (so-called charismatic) species is much more expensive and requires specialised fencing and other infrastructure, which does require registration with the Eastern Cape Conservation Board. Farms for game breeding are more popular, as they do not require rigorous planning approval, are cheaper to purchase and set up, and their locations are not as important. The main issue relates to habitat and the appropriate selection of vegetation. There are other costs, as cattle farmers who have allowed bush encroachment and erosion to take place can face costs of up to R1 000.00 per hectare to restore the land (*Farmer's Weekly*, 2002).

For these reasons, it is not clear whether game farming on the former commercial farm land constitutes an agricultural land use activity or a tourism land use activity, and this confusion has bearing on the manner in which the local people experience the socio-economic effects (e.g., evictions or retrenchments) related to the conversions to game farming. The story of Siboniso Molta attests to the invisible or indirect effects of the conversions playing out in Cradock. He says:

I am now selling crafts in this street, but before I was once working for one of the farms in Cradock, about 5 km or 4 km from the town. In 1993 the farmer closed the farm and all livestock was transferred to another farm in Middleburg. Five of us in that farm did not get any tangible retirements fund; hence the farmer said he was no longer be able to run the farm because of lack of money and profits to continue paying us. Since then life has not been good at all.<sup>68</sup>

This statement does not clearly indicate any direct link between Siboniso's retrenchment and conversion because, as he says, the farmer did not say anything at the time of the retrenchment about the land's being converted to game farming. However, after tracing the history of the farmland where he was employed, it has emerged that the farm is portion 10 parcel number 213 (3000 hectares' extent), which was later consolidated with Spekboomberg Game Farm or Tams Safari (see Map 6 above: p. 160). Tams Safari Game Farm, located 10 km away from the town along the R61 road, is one of the biggest and fastest growing game farms in Cradock. It now comprises 40 000 hectares of land.

It is, indeed, not surprising that the process of land consolidation, as another form of conversion to game farming, remains unnoticed or invisible to the farm workers, yet its effect on their socio-economic lives is overwhelming. The tale of Siboniso Mlotha reflects the general experience of many ex-farm workers, who now remain destitute as a result of the conversion of commercial farmlands to game farming. Currently Siboniso is an informal trader selling handmade art and craft works along the N10 road, next to Lingelihle Township and Atlantic low-cost settlement (see Photo 6 below).

---

<sup>68</sup> Interview with Siboniso Molta\*, 18 April 2012, Lingelihle township, Cradock.

**Photo 6: Arts and crafts informal traders in Lingelihle Township, Cradock**



*(Source: Vincent Zungu, 2012)*<sup>69</sup>

Informal trading as a form of response to the growing unemployment in the township is becoming notably more prevalent. There is also an increasing trend for street vendors to sell home-made special craft objects that portray various things related to agriculture such as windmills or sheep. Like many farm material supplies mentioned in Chapter Five, these art products are cheaper by 60 per cent than those sold in the big cities. For instance, a model of a windmill made of soft metals will cost R300 in Cradock, but the same thing will cost R800 or more in Port Elizabeth, especially in peak season. While the question was asked of Siboniso and others on the street if the models they were selling were related to the growth of the game farming industry in the area and their eviction from the farms, most of them could see the relationship. This is because, as said earlier in this work, Cradock is not just a country town with agrarian features, but is also a ‘gateway town’ or a ‘drop-and-go town’ with buses, taxis and trucks constantly passing through almost 24 hours a day.

While they have heard about tourists visiting game farms in Cradock, they do not have access to these tourists as they hardly ever stop to buy their art products during hunting seasons. In fact, they sell their craft products either to tourists who come from the nearby tourist accommodation in town or to those who normally travel along the N10 from Cape Town or

---

<sup>69</sup> The establishment of the craft market is a response to the growing tourism in the town, but it is significant to the argument of this dissertation in that most of the craft products still portray agricultural items, indicating that the people in the town, including the informal traders, still regard agriculture as the main source of their livelihoods, in the face of the growing game farming industry.

Johannesburg, the road that leads to Port Elizabeth. There are at least six vendors between Lingelihle and Michausdal Townships, and these vendors said that they make more than R1 500 a day during peak seasons while during normal seasons they make R500, and sometimes R800, depending on the day, or if the weather is not good (extremely cold or rainy) perhaps even nothing. All of them had once worked on a farm before, while one of them, Godfrey, said that even though he was no longer working on the farm he still maintained emotional and spiritual connections with commercial farming through practicing his craft. His current occupation is a form of survival that closely resonates with his experience as a farm worker, as he had spent most of his life working on the farm. Unlike Siboniso, Godfrey left his farm in 2003 when he realised that the farm was no longer hiring him regularly. His day-to-day survival is entirely dependent on selling craft and art products on the streets. As they say: none of these informal off-farm activities are directly related to game farming, and for them the game farming presence in the township does not exist (Per. Com., June 2012). Ideally, game farming in Cradock is supposed to give rise to a number of off-farm activities, formal and informal, to sustain the socio-economic livelihoods of the local people in the township. This is crucial, as more land in Cradock, traditionally zoned for commercial agriculture, is increasingly being converted to game farming (refer to Map 6.). However, owing to the nature of private wildlife production (game farming), it appears that there are no direct benefits and trickle-down effects from game farming to the poor people in Cradock, in particular those who have survived on commercial agriculture (e.g., sheep and livestock farming) for many decades in the past.

Unlike commercial agriculture, as one of the respondents explained, the private game farming industry is inherently detached from the day-to-day socio-economic life experiences of the people in the town. For instance, the game meat normally harvested after a hunt or a cull is not distributed to the local communities, as is the case with many state-run game reserves. Instead it is sent to commercial companies far from the town (mostly located in Port Elizabeth and Cape Town) to produce biltong and other venison meat products to be sold in various retail stores around the country. This includes the hides of the game animals hunted on the farms, as the townsfolk reported that there is no processing company in the town that specialises in preparing hides as trophies or makes other such products that could be channelled to the mainstream market. Instead, according to one of the local people, the game farmers have their own special companies that do the skinning, and these companies are not located in the town. One of the ex-farm workers who has experience in both traditional commercial farming and private game farming also commented:

When I was working in the sheep, goats and livestock farm I used to get cow or goats skins as left over. In most cases, we wash the skin and then prepare it to produce various products. The most popular products we used to make were the traditional drums and hides made up of the Nguni cow or Angora Goats. But these things no longer exist because of the changes that took place on the farm. When the farm was converted to farm game animals, we were not allowed to access these skins. These tourists (hunters) take everything, including the meat to other places<sup>70</sup>.

It is noteworthy that the respondent says that such products used to be sold in the townships and used by various people. Others described traditional healers as their niche markets, as the healers would use skin drums to accompany the performance of their ritual dances whenever they conducted traditional ceremonies dedicated to the ancestors (see Photo 7 below). These skin products have been in existence since pre-colonial times as an integral part of traditional black African life. Thus, there is also the widespread use of cowhide as a special traditional form of dress, especially among the Zulus in KZN.

**Photo 7: Traditional skin products that used to be made and sold by the township people**



(Sources: African Direct, 2014)

An effect of the conversions to game farming has been the curtailment of these products by the local people, products which black Africans in the townships were accustomed to. As one of the township locals stated, 'with reference to Cradock these skin products were specifically made from the angora goats which have declined in numbers over the last 30 years'. Unlike sheep, Angora goats have thick and strong skin as they are normally farmed in mountainous areas. However, these areas have recently been given over to game farming. This is yet another way in which the changing land use in Cradock is threatening the livelihoods of the local

---

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Godfrey, 20 June 2012, Michausdal. He used to work on sheep and goat farms.

people. Unlike the situation in other small towns such as Graaff-Reinet, the game farms in Cradock are located far from the town, and there is virtually no spin-off from them in the form of off-farm activities to boost the town's economy and benefit the township people. Most people in the township, whether elderly men and women or the young, have experienced no benefits from the private game farming, yet the industry has been expanding for the last 20 or 30 years. Instead of their benefiting, there is a sense that the socio-economic conditions of the local people in the town have deteriorated during this period.

### **7.3 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided empirical evidence that indicates that, in spite of the growth of the private game farming sector in Cradock, the socio-economic benefits in terms of off-farm activities, employment and the supply of material resources are not apparent to the people living in the townships. This means that they have not realised tangible benefits from the game farming industry. The chapter shows that while most of the farms in Cradock are spatially isolated from the town, they are, by and large, socially and economically connected to the town. The chapter has also provided a relatively detailed analysis of why the township people do not benefit from game farming although there has been an increase in the number and size of game farms over the last 20 years. This argument is supported by the expressed opinion that most game farm operators in Cradock scarcely think of themselves as part of the town or in any way integral to the people living in Cradock. The tourists who normally visit these game farms, either for trophy hunting or game viewing, do not normally go to the town to spend their money on any tourism-related activity. They would not even visit the Cradock Four monument. Instead, they fly via Port Elizabeth to be driven straight to their destinations, the game farms. The owners of the game farms, too, maintain a social distance between themselves and the townsfolk.

The chapter confirms the argument in Chapter Three that private game farming benefits those who own the land to the exclusion of those who do not. As a result, the recent establishment of game farms on land that was formerly agricultural has had severe socio-economic implications, particularly on those who previously directly or indirectly depended on commercial agriculture. To illustrate this point, the chapter drew attention to the experience of Themba, who used to work on the sheep farms and enjoy access to a range of material supplies. In the process, Themba would share these resources with his family members and friends in the township (Lingelihle). But when the land was converted to a private game farm hosting the 'Big Five',

these material resources were no longer available. Despite the fact that Themba's wages increased by 50 per cent in accordance with the sectorial determination set by the Department of Labour, Themba feels that he has been the loser. While the game farm owners enjoyed financial gains or benefits from the game farm operation, employees such as Themba preferred their lives on sheep farms rather than game farms despite the incentive of the increased wage. The same feeling is shared by those living in the townships, who say that they have heard that there are game farms in the Cradock district but have not seen them. Of course, what they mean is that the game farms and the townships are totally isolated from one another, or that the game farms have not generated any tangible benefits for them. In contradiction to the claims of the de-agrarianisation thesis, their off-farm activities, material resources and off-farm employment are related to the agrarian production. The disappearance of these farms because of conversion, therefore results in the disappearance of their off-farm activities, material resources and employment. Thus, this is tantamount to the disappearance of the chief source of their livelihoods.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This study has investigated the socio-economic consequences of conversions from commercial agriculture to private game farming with specific reference to Cradock, a small Karoo town located in iNxuba Yethemba Municipality, Eastern Cape, Central Karoo. The study drew primarily on research conducted in the town, the history of which is rooted in the development and expansion of commercial agriculture which took place in the early 1800s. It was concerned specifically with the effects of the conversion of agricultural land to game farming on the socio-economic conditions of black Africans and coloured township people, who have directly or indirectly depended on commercial agricultural production for many decades' past.

In analysing the implications of conversion, the study paid particular attention to three kinds of impacts, namely impacts on *employment*, both informal and formal, on *off-farm activities* and on a range of *material resources* or *farm supplies* which served for many years as the main source of the livelihoods of the people living in the townships (see Chapter Five). Historically, it was through benefitting from these three socio-economic categories that people living in townships in semi-arid small towns in the Karoo were able to sustain their livelihoods (Tetelman, 1997; Mkhize, 2012:79; also see Chapter Two, Chapter Four and Chapter Five). This thesis's main focus was on the consequences of such farm conversions on the township people in a semi-arid Karoo town in the context of the historical role of commercial agriculture as a sector that contributed to the socio-economic well-being of such towns. While the study does not underestimate the exploitative nature of white capitalist agriculture in relation to the African people of the region, it argues that the recent introduction of private game farming in the formerly agrarian areas has further established an elitist economy that is virtually inaccessible to the people of the area, in particular to poor and previously marginalised people. It is for this reason that the study concludes that commercial agriculture, which involved particular employment relationships in its production methods, as of greater benefit to the township people than the private game farming<sup>71</sup> industry is today.

---

<sup>71</sup> The intensive production of game in small and large fenced camps or ranches on private or communal grounds, usually for the production of market products such as meat, skins, etc. (see Bothma, 1993:3).

The study entered into the debate related to the socio-economic dimension of large-scale conversions to game farming on poor township residents by reviewing various scholars who have contributed to this academic enquiry. Luck (2005) sheds light on the nature and implications of the conversion of farms to private game farming (2005:86–87).<sup>72</sup> According to her analysis, conversion is motivated largely by ecotourism and the move towards environmental sustainability as a global agenda, coupled with the phenomenon of deregulation and the liberalisation of agriculture since the 1980s. In this article (2005:1) she identifies and assesses a range of the effects of such conversions on farm dwellers, with specific reference to land tenure security. She argues that these conversions have had significant negative effects in terms of land access and security by farm workers and farm dwellers (Luck, 2005:4). While this study concurs with Mkhize (2012) on the point that such conversions have had significant negative effects on farm workers, this thesis moves beyond that rather trite point to argue that the conversions have also had significant, albeit largely unnoticed, negative effects on the socio-economic lives of the generality of the poor people living in small Karoo towns.

However, this view has been challenged by those who support the conversions. For instance, some pro-game farm scholars paint a picture of a decline in the number of livestock particularly on private land from at least 1.8 million in the 1970s to 0.91 million in 2001 (ABSA, 2003:2). Van der Merwe, Saayman and Rossouw (2014:379-380) argue that the numbers of huntable or commercialised wildlife areas have sharply increased since the early 1990s, and in 2014 there were estimated to be more than 9000 game farms in former agricultural areas. Private wildlife enterprises are proliferating in most parts of Southern Africa, and countries such as Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe are said to have hunting operations on private land that have sizable foreign investment in wildlife (Barnes & Jones, 2009). In view of these trends, Barnes and Jones concludes that

game farming on private land serves as a supplementary enterprise alongside livestock, and as such it is the source of income for re-investment in wildlife, which then makes it possible to expand the wildlife industry and then to invest in viable non-consumptive tourism on private land.

While Barnes and Jones's analysis presents empirical evidence in terms of the increase in the number and size of the game farms against the traditional livestock-oriented farming, there is no mention of the impacts of these land-use trends on those living in the townships of small towns.

However, Mkhize (2012), Luck (2005), Brandt (2013) and Brooks et al. (2011) challenge this pro-game farming view by asserting that the conversion of land to game farming has not taken place without serious repercussions for farm workers and farm dwellers. Both Brandt (2013) and Mkhize (2012), in their studies of the situation in Cradock, agree that the conversions have largely failed to address the issue of access to land, let alone afforded livelihoods in the industry to local people, with or without the prospect of some form of upward mobility.

The point to emphasise with regard to Luck (2005), Mkhize (2012) and Brandt (2013) is that their main focus is on the effects of conversion on the lives of farm workers and farm dwellers and that they pay little attention to the effects of conversion on other people who have depended (either directly or indirectly) on commercial agriculture, in particular those who reside in the townships of small Karoo towns. As discussed in Chapter Two, the agricultural growth or expansion of the early 1800s created networks of consumption and production which generated significant income and numerous employment opportunities for residents in the small towns (Nel & Hill, 2008; Ross, 1999). Likewise, Kamete (1998:1), referring to Banket, a small town located in the north-western part of Zimbabwe, cautions that agricultural production and off-farm activities in towns must not be treated as separate matters, as the possession of an income accruing from commercial agriculture stimulates the growth of non-farm activities in the towns that service the farms, which activities in turn generate employment income for the non-farming rural households.

Given the perception that the socio-economic conditions of the populations of these townships relate dynamically to commercial agricultural production, the study has explored the nature of that relationship and the nature and extent of the recent changes in that relationship, while situating the argument within a broader debate on the effects of the conversion of local farms from commercial agriculture to game farming.

On a broader conceptual level, the study posits that it is crucial to view conversions as part of these broader debates along with an emerging claim that agricultural land is no longer

important for the sustenance of small Karoo towns and the lives of the people who have relied on commercial agriculture in them. This view has, over the last 20 years been reinforced by the theory of de-agrarianisation, which argues that rural people, particularly in Southern African are shifting away from agrarian-based lifestyle. Owing to the history of agriculture and its contribution to the economy of the town, the study thus argues that a deeper analysis of the socio-economic effects of conversion should pay particular attention to local peculiarities which influence the extent of the socio-economic benefits of conversion for small towns.

It is from this angle that the study traced the history of commercial agriculture, particularly its role in defining and shaping the socio-economic lives of the people in the townships as an approach to understanding the contemporary socio-economic effects of game farming. The study thus agrees with Rosset (1999:11) in the view that the commercial agriculture in the semi-arid small towns created new patterns of social and economic relations. For instance, rural households earned incomes from the production of agricultural goods for non-local markets and an increased demand for consumer goods. This led to the creation of off-farm jobs and employment diversification, especially in small towns adjacent to agrarian areas which, in turn, absorbed surplus rural labour, raised demand for agricultural produce and again boosted agricultural production and rural income (Tacoli, 2004:17).

To develop a deeper understanding of the socio-economic effects of the conversions (of farmlands to game farming in Cradock) on the people who live in the townships, the study drew on at least three areas of socio-economic life, namely *employment* (both formal and informal), *off-farm activities* (formal and informal), and the range of *material supplies* (which serve as source of livelihoods) that may emerge as a result of the conversions. Ultimately, the study finds that these three socio-economic aspects are disappearing as a result of the conversion, hence the township people view the private game farming industry as nothing but an ‘invisible capital accumulating inside the fence’. Unlike the former commercial agriculture, the private game farming industry had not yielded any visible or tangible material resources and off-farm activities to sustain their socio-economic livelihoods (see Chapter Seven). A brief overview and concluding remarks on each chapter of the thesis are presented below.

## 8.1 Key findings

The study presents three key findings that emerge from this investigation:

- i. First, unlike the postulation of the de-agrarianisation espoused by Bryceson and Jamal (1997), the study finds that commercial agriculture (in particular sheep and livestock farming) has always sustained socio-economic conditions of the black African people in the Karoo small towns. As stated in Chapter Two, Cradock and the small towns in the Karoo emerged as a result of the introduction of commercial merino agriculture in the early 1800s. The expansion of commercial agriculture in the district led to a number of off-farm activities (e.g., butcheries, blacksmith, agricultural implements, supermarkets, etc.) in the towns. Furthermore, the material resources supply from farming areas to the township people supplemented cash income as a source of livelihoods.

The supplies of material resources from the farms played a central role in sustaining the socio-economic lives of the township people. Such material resources supply as meat, milk, livestock and other material gifts given by the farm owners to their employees contributed significantly to supplementing the meagre wages that farm workers used to earn. The life of Mr Foreman, in particular the manner in which he used meat obtained from the farm to supplement his livelihood, is a case illustrative of the role of commercial agriculture in the township (see Chapter Five). This explains why many farm workers remained working on the farms, albeit under poor working conditions. The study argues that the fact that off-farm activities were directly or indirectly associated with commercial agriculture presents a huge conceptual challenge for the de-agrarianisation thesis espoused by Bryceson and Jamal (1997:1). In essence, the de-agrarianisation theory argues that the participation of local or rural people to the off-farm or non-agrarian activities indicate a shift away from land-based lifestyle. The study thus finds that such this postulation does not finds resonance in the Karoo small towns whereby off-farm activities in towns were and are an indicator of the expansion of commercial merino or livestock farming.

- ii. Secondly, informed by the above findings, the study argues that the conversion of commercial farms to private game farming in the Karoo signifies the advent of de-agrarianisation. This is because the study finds that the conversions of commercial

farms to game farms have had significant negative socio-economic effects on the lives of the people living in the townships of Cradock. It also finds that the conversions in the semi-arid districts have led to a reduction in the supply of material resources, a reduction in off-farm activities in the towns, a reduction in farm employment and in off-farm employment in the town. The off-farm employment in the town includes both the formal and the informal employment that existed due to the prevalence of commercial agriculture. As indicated in Chapter Six, Cradock has experienced about a 40 per cent decline in farm employment following the change in the nature of farming in the area. While those employed in the game farming sector are said to receive 50 per cent more wages than they used to earn in the former commercial agricultural sector, the conditions on the game farms often force them to leave these farms. This phenomenon is described by Themba (see Chapter Five and Chapter Six), who states that he decided to leave the game farm because his job on the game farm was too risky. Having to feed the lions with meat without being given the proper protection and associated benefits prompted him to resign. Apart from that, the game farm operation did not allow him to interact with the township communities, something he was accustomed to while working on a sheep and cattle farm. Further, the drying up of the flow of material resources (meat and milk) from the farm meant that he was no longer able to sustain his family in the township.

The study also recognised the linkage between the decline in farm employment and the effect those people who have survived on a range of off-farm activities (see Chapter Six). These off-farm activities existed specifically to provide services to the farm workers who used to visit the town on a daily basis. The off-farm activities had chiefly been informal ones, and those engaged in them had been people such as vegetable and fruit street vendors, meat and milk sellers, and even informal cash loan operators (*stokvels*). Moreover, the recent shutdown of the butchery that had existed for more than 30 years and had been operated by Andrew, who was also a farmer, left eight people from the townships unemployed. Furthermore, the case of Themba who was forced to leave the farm after conversion provide a compelling evidence that the private game farming industry is not compatible with the socio-economic conditions of Cradock. On the basis of this empirical data obtained in the Cradock area, the study posits that these changes are both directly and indirectly related to the proliferation of game farms in the former agrarian areas.

- iii. The establishment of game farms in the Cradock area has resulted in the decline of off-farm activities, in particular those that are associated with commercial agriculture. Unlike the former commercial agriculture, game farming in Cradock is driven by trophy hunting, a type of tourism which is utterly isolated from the town and generates no off-farm activities in the town. The off-farm activities which have ceased to exist include butcheries, windmill repair workshops and farm equipment shops. A tractor supplier has gone out of business as a result of the decline in commercial agriculture concomitant with the rise of privately-owned game farms (see Chapter Six). The condition of the railway station that was established in the mid-1800s has deteriorated over the last 30 years following the transfiguration of farmlands to the private game farming industry.
  
- iv. The study revealed that game farming industry in Cradock has significantly affected the supply of material resources previously enjoyed by the township people from commercial agriculture. With the introduction of game farming in the area there has, however, been a noticeable decline in the flow of these resources, with severe negative consequences to the socio-economic lives of the people in the townships. Gifts of livestock by farm owners to their workers, for instance, were in turn invested in the rural hinterlands to keep the township people engaged in agriculture. But this set of relationships involved in agrarian production in the townships of Cradock, complex as it was, has been deleteriously affected by the reconfiguration of the agricultural farms as game farms.

While the conversions have had negative socio-economic effects on the lives of the people in the townships, it is necessary to mention that the town is said to collect more or less R1.5 million in revenue (annually) from the game farms in the form of payments of property rates. Game farm properties with their elevated electric fences tend to be required to pay three times more than the traditional farm properties. However, there seems to be little evidence of 'trickle-down' of this form of benefit to the people in the town, particularly those residing in the townships.

The contribution of the study is twofold in that it contributes to knowledge in this area at both the conceptual and the empirical levels. It seeks to address the current debate about the

implications of the agrarian change emerging in the semi-arid area of the Eastern Cape in particular, and more broadly in South Africa. At a conceptual level, the findings of the study challenge the position of de-agrarianisation theory regarding the nature and role of off-farm activities in the Karoo region. Thus, the Karoo region provides a specific unique case which sets to challenge the de-agrarianisation thesis as a universalising discourse of agrarian change. At an empirical level, the study seeks to challenge the proponents of private game farming who argue that game farming in formerly agrarian areas generates national revenue.

An understanding of the economic history of the agrarian economy in the Karoo and how it related to the black African people is necessary to being able to establish the effects of the conversion on township people, but the history has not been extensively explored. Instead, the studies that have been conducted have focused on the effects of the conversions to private game farming on farm workers and farm dwellers. The people who reside in the locations of small towns adjacent to the farming areas have been ignored. Thus, questions such as what happened to the township people after the conversions had taken place, and how are they surviving in Karoo towns beset by a dwindling sheep farming economy are considered to be pertinent in this research study. Unlike other studies conducted thus far on the socio-economic dimension of the game farming industry, this research locates Cradock's local economy within its regional setting, precisely because the town itself 'emerged within a settler agrarian economy whose expansion and existence was premised on the opportunities and constraints presented by the inherent ecological conditions of the semi-arid areas' (Nel & Hill, 2008:1, and refer to Chapter Two). The study has critically examined the dynamics of the contribution of private game farming to the economy of this area, which was historically known as an agricultural stronghold and, through a critical examination of the nature of the changes that have occurred in the socio-economy of the area adjacent to the town, has attempted to establish whether or not benefits from private game farming do in fact trickle down to ameliorate the socio-economic conditions of the people residing in the Cradock townships.

Part of the context in which the discussion in this study takes place is the role that the development of agricultural land plays in improving the socio-economic status or livelihoods of marginalised rural people (i.e., people who still need to be incorporated into the mainstream economic development promised as part of the 'developmental agenda' of the 'new South Africa') (Nel & Hill, 2008:2264–2265). Has the private game farming industry in fact contributed to the economic development of small country towns for the benefit of the black

African and coloured poor residing in townships —groups that were invariably marginalised during the apartheid era? Brooks et al. (2011) state that it is in the nature of private wildlife production, as a form of agrarian change in the contemporary South African countryside, to develop strategies to exclude the farm workers or farm dwellers who previously worked on the land. They argue (2011:2) that ‘the creation of such wilderness landscapes requires not only physical changes to the land-use on farms, but also their discursive recreation as wilderness spaces’. These areas, they argue, are essentially manufactured or reshaped for luxurious consumption (2012:2). Their critique of private game farming focuses on farm workers and farm dwellers in the countryside, which is why their discussion of the negative effects of game farming on small Karoo towns and their populations could be described as being somewhat inadequate. Similarly, Mkhize (2012) and Brandt (2013) focus on the exclusion of farm workers and farm dwellers in relation to land tenure security and their social well-being without reference to what is happening to the local townfolk. While cognisant of the history of these towns and their reliance on an agrarian economy, this study argues that people in the townships of small Karoo towns such as Cradock are negatively affected by the conversion to private game farming.

The fieldwork performed in this study shows that even if such people are employed on these private game farms at wages higher than those they were formerly paid, their livelihoods are severely negatively affected by the conversion, as they now have restrained access to the material resource they used to enjoy when the land was used for commercial agriculture (livestock, sheep farming and lucerne).

The spatial confinement of farms conversions in the semi-arid areas (such as Cradock) is mainly in mountainous areas, far away from the public roads. Consequently, unlike the former commercial agriculture, game farms are not accessible to the public. Local people, who used to access medicinal plants such as the *Aloe ferox*, are no longer permitted to harvest these plants as most of the land is occupied by game farms. Similarly, the Cradock area has also experienced a decline of in the population of angora goats following the conversions, as these livestock animals survived well in mountainous areas. Access to Angora goats played a crucial role in sustaining the ritual cultural practice of ancestry slaughtering, particularly by the black Africans in the townships (see Chapter Six). Thus, the game farming industry (as opposed to commercial agriculture) is increasingly rendered as invisible capital accumulation inside a

fence with virtually no socio-economic benefits to the small Karoo small (including Cradock) and their populace.

It is within this context that the phenomenon of conversions from agricultural farms to game farms, specifically in the semi-arid Karoo towns, is viewed as conversion of a people-friendly industry to an elitist industry which does not directly benefit the lives of the people living in the townships. The findings of this study challenge the notion that people in towns are already detached from the land-based livelihood lifestyle, which view would suggest that they (particularly residents of the townships) are no longer interested in accessing land for agriculture as a source of livelihood. As explained in Chapter Five and Chapter Six, the dependence of these people on off-farm activities associated with agrarian production also helped them to sustain their livelihoods. This is, however, contrary to the notion postulated by Bryceson and Jamal (1997:1–2) in the name of de-agrarianisation that the proliferation of non-agrarian or off-farm activities reflects the decline of agriculture as a source of livelihoods. A number of these off-farm activities that people use to sustain their livelihoods are informal in nature and involve the existence of complex social networks. While this is the case, however, the study has argued that the change of land use towards game farming has severely affected these social relations of agrarian production. It is with this in mind that the study concludes that the socio-economic effects of the conversion of agricultural land to game farming has had deleterious consequences on the lives of the local people living in the townships.

The idea that changes to private game farming is not compatible with agrarian reform for the benefits of the previously excluded communities (in the townships) are thus resurfacing (Mkhize, 2014; Ngubane & Brooks, 2013). For instance, respondents such as Themba and Mr Foreman, who left the farms after the conversions had taken place despite being better paid than previously, ultimately appear to have provided the most accurate view of the situations. As Themba said, ‘working on the sheep farm was more than just earning a salary’ as he was allowed access material resources (sheep, meat, milk, etc.). This benefit he no longer enjoyed after the farm was converted to game farming. His experience was echoed by Ms Mjoli, whose brother would receive livestock from the farmer which he could further invest to sustain their rural lifestyle in the countryside. Ms Mjoli said that her brother would negotiate a better price for the township people to access livestock (sheep, cows or goats) to be slaughtered during cultural ceremonies. Indeed, in the context of the agrarian decline of the 1980s coupled with the rise of neo-liberal agrarian reform, the prospects of farm workers such as Mr Mjoli and

Themba were dim in any case. As more farm workers left farms due to the conversions, the life of the township people was also negatively affected, as they were no longer accessing material resources from the farms. Since then, workers who have left the farms have given a series of reports of their difficulties. The precarious conditions experienced by farm workers with regard to their poor working conditions and their unpleasant lifestyle on the game farms is attributed essentially to the game farming business model. As explained in Chapter Three, the model adopted in Cradock for the purpose of capital speculation is based on the so-called fortress conservation model, and has a strict focus on reconfiguring these wilderness areas as pristine environments. While the former commercial agriculture was also driven by the desire for capital accumulation, farm workers were able to negotiate (by means of accepting the paternalistic attitude of the owners) access to certain benefits to supplement their paltry wages. However, the introduction of game farms in Cradock has significantly disrupted these arrangements. In fact, it has further alienated the township people from accessing the land-based agrarian resources they enjoyed in the past. It is thus on these grounds that the thesis concludes that the game farming industry is not economically viable as it does not benefit those residing in the townships of Cradock.

On a broader conceptual level, the thesis situates itself within the debates on the nature and implications of contemporary agrarian change playing out in the countryside of the post-apartheid South Africa. The question raised by Bryceson and Jamal (1997) about the participation of agrarian communities in the so-called off-farm activities or non-farm employment signifies that de-agrarianisation (or the move away from agrarian modes of production) does not benefit the Karoo towns. Against this backdrop, the thesis further argues that the off-farm activities performed in the small Karoo towns were, to a larger extent, closely related to agrarian production, and recognises that these towns were established as a result of the advent of commercial agriculture in the 1800s. It is thus safe to argue that off-farm activities and material resources from these farms were, in fact, paramount in sustaining the socio-economic livelihoods of these people (i.e., the people in the townships). As in the case of other towns in the Karoo, Cradock was the epicentre of agrarian production which allowed the local people to sustain their livelihoods through agriculture. As Luck (2005) notes, the conversions of these farms have, however, reconfigured the socio-economic livelihoods of the local people with their ways of operating being so different from those of conventional farms. This is particularly so in the case of the conversions to game farms in Cradock, in contradiction of the viewpoint of de-agrarianisation, this thesis has argued that the conversion of conventional

farms to private game farms has willy-nilly begun the process of changing the basis of Karoo livelihoods away from the land.

## **8.2 Overview of chapters**

### **Chapter One**

This introduces the study and located it within the broader debates on the socio-economic implications of game farms by focusing on the lives of the people residing in the townships of Cradock. The three sources of their livelihoods (e.g., off-farm activities, material resources and employment) derived from the former commercial agriculture were explained and described to demonstrate the manner in which the conversions to private game farming has affected or continues to affect the socio-economic livelihoods of the township people in Cradock. The chapter provides a thick description of the study area and the reason for its selection for the study. The chapter is able to frame the study and the research area (Cradock) within the socio-historical and geographical setting of the Eastern Cape semi-arid areas (known as ‘the Karoo’). Emphasis was given to the role of agriculture in shaping the socio-economic conditions of Karoo small towns, Cradock in particular. Of particular importance is that the chapter provides an overarching argument which states that an understanding of the socio-economic implications of the conversions on the township people, especially in the semi-arid towns must take into account the historical context within which these towns were formed. The question around the socio-economic livelihoods of these people and their connection with the agrarian economy provides the analytical approach for the main argument presented in this thesis. It is for this reason that this approach seeks to focus mainly on the peculiarities of township people in semi-arid small towns and their experiences, to understand the effects of the change to private game farming on their lives.

### **Chapter Two**

Chapter Two first and foremost argues that in order to understand the current socio-economic implications of the conversions one needs to revisit the economic history of Karoo agriculture and the role it played in shaping the economies of the semi-arid small towns. It is within this context that the chapter provided the historical context of the semi-arid towns in relation to the agrarian economy that emerged during the colonial epoch in the early 1800s. In as far as the idea behind the introduction of the capitalist agrarian production was to create wage labour from black African people (Xhosa, Khoi and San), the chapter argues that early colonial capital speculation did not succeed. Instead, a handful of black African people continued to sustain

their subsistence agriculture as their primary source of livelihoods. In the case of the Cape Colony, it was in the semi-arid small towns as the epicentres of the colonial agrarian economy that black African people took advantage of the spin-off from commercial agriculture to invest in their subsistence agrarian economy, perhaps until the 1913 Land Act.

The historical narratives of the emergence of the settler agrarian economy that culminated in the establishment of these small towns is later used to challenge the scholars who argue that the rise of commercial agriculture and the establishment of small towns signalled the total detachment of black African people from their pre-colonial agrarian lifestyle. It thus is shown that the semi-arid small towns like Cradock, Albany, and Graaff-Reinet emerged and survived from the surrounding commercial agriculture since the early 1800s to the present. The key questions addressed in this chapter are twofold: first, how local people in these towns (particularly black and coloured people in the townships) negotiated their access to benefits from agriculture? Secondly, how did the agrarian economy develop in these small towns over a period of approximately past 200 years? The contribution of commercial agriculture, particularly the farming of sheep and Angora goats, is discussed to highlight the manner in which black African people survived in relation to commercial agriculture in these towns. The chapter finally engages with the de-agrarianisation thesis by arguing that this perspective does not deal with the complex nature in which local communities negotiated their benefits from the settlers' agrarian economy.

In the light of the current situation the chapter concludes that the de-agrarianisation theory introduced by Bryceson in the late 1990s contains serious contradictions with regard to the agrarian change playing out in the semi-arid region. Fundamentally, de-agrarianisation provides a particular view of agrarian change which suggests that there is a shift in the land use practices of rural people (or agrarian societies) away from agrarian livelihoods to non-agricultural activities (see Bryceson, 1999; Mwamfupe, 1998). In simple terms, the de-agrarianisation view is basically an extension of the concept of proletarianisation which emerged during the colonial epoch (Ncapayi, 2013:10). While these two concepts differ historically, de-agrarianisation is very much associated with the period of neo-liberalism dating from the 1980s onwards (Bryceson & Jamal, 1997:6). However, the de-agrarianisation view of agrarian change espoused by Bryceson and Jamal appears not to recognize the fact that the non-agricultural activities, particularly in agriculture-based towns were either directly or indirectly linked to the agriculture.

### **Chapter Three**

This is built on the previous chapter, but focuses on the origin of game farming or conservation practices in the Cape Colony, particularly in semi-arid areas such as Cradock. It argues that game protection for hunting on privately owned land in the Cape Colony and elsewhere in Africa was something that was reserved for the elite (the white gentry) to the exclusion of the black African people. Given the growing number of conversions to game farming in the Karoo, the question of why the local people in the townships do not share in the benefits from these game farms has had to be addressed. A comparison is drawn between traditional commercial agriculture and private game farming, and it is found that the game farming industry has further facilitated the system of land enclosure. Following on this, it is thus argued that the conversion of land towards private game farming, as a form of agrarian change, is inherently rooted in the exclusion of local people, particularly Africans.

### **Chapter Four**

This introduced the Cradock case study as a lens through which to illustrate the linkage between the agrarian economy and small towns. This entails providing a picture of how commercial agriculture contributed to socio-economic lives of the people residing in the township. The chapter located Cradock within the broader historical context of agrarian economy, tracing it from the early 1800s to the 1940s. As mentioned earlier, this chapter constitutes the first chapter of the case study discussion aimed at highlighting the role played by commercial farmlands in shaping the socio-economic conditions of the people living in Cradock. Commercial agriculture in Cradock further allowed Africans to be actively involved in extensive land-based livelihoods on commonage lands within the town. Those who were working made the means to accumulate capital (in the form of livestock) to sustain their subsistence agriculture. The chapter thus argues that black Africans' involvement in the commercial farms as wage labourers was not entirely motivated by money, but instead by the desire to access and accumulate material resources from the farms, which capital was later invested in their subsistence agriculture. In the 1929, commercial agriculture experienced serious economic downswing which affected the town and its populace. However, the farmers' responded by increasing cheap labour (mostly amongst black Africans) and the use of payment-in-kind (material resources) as a form of payment. Although access to material resource supplies from commercial agriculture was as old as the early 1800s, in 1929 onwards the use of the practice accelerated, as farmers solely relied on this form of payment. It is for this reason why

commercial agriculture continued to play a crucial role in sustaining the socio-economic livelihoods of the township people until the advent of private game farming industry.

## **Chapter Five**

This provides a picture of how the people of Cradock, particularly township people, survived during the pre-conversion era. While the previous chapters were more historical in nature, drawing from a range of historical materials, this one draws directly from the people to gain more insight on how their off-farm activities, employment on and material resources from commercial farms sustained their socio-economic conditions in the pre-conversion period. The chapter posits that these material resources (i.e., livestock, sheep, goats, milk, etc.) and off-farm activities (supermarkets, street vendors, tractor supplies, etc.) from the surrounding commercial farms were central in supplementing the socio-economic livelihoods of the lower income population from the townships. The chapter provides deep insight into the lived experiences of the township people and the manner in which they negotiated their access to the material resources made available by commercial farmers. It is for this reason that the township people, in particular, continued to value their land-based livelihoods in the form of agriculture as rather than the game farming. The tale of Mr Themba Mqoqi and Ms Mjoli from Lingelihle township shows that working on a farm was not just about ‘work to earn the wages’, but also to access material benefits that would, from time to time, be given by the farmer to his or her employees. The fact that the system on the former commercial farms allowed farm owners to provide material resources to supplement the meagre wages on these farms means that farm workers could continue to work for these farmers, despite the low wages. These material resources, the chapter argued, would be sold on in the township to generate extra income particularly for the cash-strapped farm workers or farm dwellers. It is of significance to note that access to material resources from the farms came about as a result of the old tradition of paternalism and in the context of the close social bonds that epitomised many of the farms in the past. Similarly, the off-farm activities that took in various forms are directly and indirectly linked to commercial agriculture. Of particular importance, the chapter used the main case study area to contextualise the socio-economic influences with reference to the off-farm activities and then positioned it within the broader socio-economic context shaping the lives of the township people. The chapter shows how such activities as the local hair salon, meat street sellers and butcheries in Cradock are intertwined with commercial agriculture.

## **Chapter Six**

It specifically concentrates on the socio-economic implications of private game farming in Cradock and its populace during the post-conversion era. While Chapter Five concluded that commercial agriculture played a crucial role in the lives of the township people during the pre-conversion era, this chapter concludes that the advent of the private game farming industry in Cradock had severe effects on the lives of people.

Although commercial agriculture provided both direct and indirect benefits to the local people in Cradock (more in particular, the township people), private game farming does not have direct benefits that are visible to the township people, as did the former commercial agriculture. The invisibility of these direct effects to the putative beneficiaries means that the game farming industry does not directly affect (in a positive manner) the socio-economic conditions of these people. The question answered in the chapter is: are there any emerging off-farm activities from game farming land use and, if at all, do the township people benefit from them? It was found that the conversions in Cradock have produced very few off-farm activities which directly benefit the local people in the township. It is argued that the game farming sector's claim that it is a progressive socio-economic force is false, as is evidenced in the scrutiny of the poverty and alienation of the people who attempt to create livelihoods for themselves in the Cradock townships.

## **Chapter Seven**

Argued that the game farming industry in Cradock is an invisible capital accumulation fenced off from the town (inside the 'fence'). The chapter bridged chapter five and chapter six by providing a deeper analysis of the state of the wildlife industry in Cradock, to account for why the people of Cradock and the township people in particular do not believe that they are receiving any benefits from the game farming industry. As stated in the chapter, this question was critical, given the fact that there has been an increase in the number and size of the game farms in the Cradock area over the last 20 years. There is an emerging view that game farm owners in Cradock hardly view themselves as part of the town or the people living in Cradock, particularly the township people.

By drawing on the historical account presented in Chapter Three regarding the resurgence of private game farming in the Cape Colony, the chapter provided an analytical explanation of why the game farming industry is rendered invisible to (i.e., does not benefit) the people living

in the township of Cradock. The chapter thus argued that one way to understand why the game farming industry is viewed as 'elitist' in nature is by focusing on its emergence in the early 1800s, when the colonial state — in order to satisfy the needs of the elite group of wealthy white trophy or sports hunters — codified laws to support the creation of private places for game, in order to satisfy the needs of the elite group of wealthy white trophy or sports hunters. Based on the data gleaned from the literature reviewed in Chapter Three, this chapter concluded that the elitist nature of game farming can be traced back to the time of game protectionism during the colonial era. It further argued that the contemporary conversions to game farming in Cradock reflect the early conservation aspirations which emerged out of 'fortress conservation' with the intention to ensure that Africans were systematically separated from wildlife, including any socio-economic benefits to be derived from the wildlife protection agenda.

### **8.3 The Contribution and limitation(s) of the study and areas for further research**

The study contributes immensely into the debate related to the implications of agrarian change the post-apartheid South Africa. Central to this debate is a popular notion that commercial agriculture is no longer crucial in sustaining the socio-economic conditions of small towns and their populations. Instead, private game farming is increasingly gaining more appeal as alternative land use that could save the ailing local economies of these towns. However, at an empirical level, the study has brought forward information which challenges the proponents of private game farming, who argue that game farming in formerly agrarian areas generates national revenue and provides multiple socio-economic benefits to poor and marginalised people. While the introduction of private game farming is said to have generated greater financial gains for game farm owners than they received when involved in commercial agriculture, the study finds that the game farming industry is having severely negative effects on small Karoo towns such as Cradock. The study used the history of the agrarian economy of Cradock as an illustrative case to show how such towns and their populace are affected by the conversions. While the study dealt with the implications of private game farming on material resources from farms to the people, there is a more need for in-depth research on the effect of conversion on food security. This is crucial as the current minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries has already made pronouncements to introduce a new bill aimed

improve food security by halting the escalation of conversion towards game farming land use and other non-agrarian activities.<sup>73</sup>

#### **8.4 Challenges**

Finally, the study encountered a number of challenges. The study is concerned with the socio-economic livelihoods of the local people living in the township in relation to the conversion of commercial farmlands to private game farming in the Cradock district. Given the focus of the study, the issue of tracing the lives of township people working in game farms was a major challenge. This is because the game farms in Cradock are situated in remote areas and are hardly accessible. In addition, the study was thus not able to provide an in-depth view of the economics of the private wildlife industry in Cradock. Of the ten game farmers in Cradock, the researcher was able to meet only two, including the former CEO of the Eastern Cape Game Management Association (ECGMA).

---

<sup>73</sup> See Sowetan Press by Loyiso Sidimba, Monday 14 November 2016: page 5, Title: 'Game Farms to make way for arable land'.

## REFERENCES

- ABSA, 2003. *Game ranch profitability in Southern Africa*. Pretoria: Amalgamated Banks of South Africa, ABSA-Economic Research
- Adams, W. & Infield, M. Park outreach and gorilla conservation: a study of Mgahinga Gorilla National Park, Uganda. In *African wildlife and livelihoods: the promise and performance of community conservation*. D. Hume & M. Murphee. Eds. London: Heinemann. 131-147.
- Adams, W. M. & Mortimore, M. 1997. Agricultural intensification and flexibility in the Nigerian Sahel. *Geographical Journal*. 163(2): 150-160.
- African Direct, 2014. Traditional skins from livestock animals, South Africa, *African Direct*.
- Agrawal, A. & Gibson, C. C. 1999. Enchantment and disenchantment: the role of community in natural resource conservation. *World Development*. 27:629-649.
- Anderson, D. & Grove, R. H. 1989. *Conservation in Africa: peoples, policies and practice*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Andrew, N., Brandt, F., Spierenburg, M., Snijders, D. & Mkhize, N., 2013. Land consolidation and the expansion of game farming in South Africa: impacts on farm dwellers' livelihoods and rights to land in the Eastern Cape. In *Africa for sale? Positioning the state, land and society in foreign large-scale land acquisitions in Africa*. Sandra J.T.M. Evers, Caroline Seagle, Froukje Krijtenburg. Eds. Leiden; Boston: Brill. 97-130.
- Antrobus, G. G. 1984. *South African farm wages and working conditions: with special reference to the Albany District, 1957 to 1977*. Ph.D. Rhodes University
- Archer, S. 1990. Poverty and production in a rural microcosm: Hanover, Cape. South Africa, *Journal of International African Institute*. 60 (4): 471-496.
- Archer, S. 2000. Technology and ecology in the Karoo: a century of windmills, wire and changing farming practice. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 26(4):675-696.
- Atkinson, D. 2007a. *Going for broke: the fate of farm workers in arid South Africa*, Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Atkinson, D. 2007b. People-centred environmental management and municipal commonage in the Nama Karoo. *Development Southern Africa*, 24(5):707-724.
- Atkinson, D. 2008. *Towards "soft boundaries": pro-poor tourism and cross-border collaboration in the arid areas of Southern Africa*. [S.l.: s.n.]
- Atkinson, D. 2009. Economic decline and gentrification in a small town: the business sector in Aberdeen, Eastern Cape. *Development Southern Africa*. 26: 271-288.

- Atkinson, D. 2011. Getting the chemistry right: the impact of the FIFA 2010 World Cup on Karoo towns. In *Small town geographies in Africa: experiences from South Africa and elsewhere*. Ronnie Donaldson & Lochner Marais. Eds. New York: Nova Science Publishers.
- Atkinson, D., Pienaar, D., Van Schalkwyk, C., Du Plessis, R. & Wellman, G. 2003. Life on the farm: shifting social and moral foundations of the farming community. Human Sciences Research Council. (Unpublished.)
- Barnes, J. & Jones, B. 2009. Game ranching in Namibia. In *Evolution and innovation in wildlife conservation: From parks and game ranches to transfrontier conservation areas*. Helen Suich & Brian Child with Anna Spenceley. Eds. London: Earthscan, 113-126.
- Beinart, W. 1989. Introduction: the politics of colonial conservation. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 15:143-162.
- Beinart, W. 2003. *The rise of conservation in South Africa: settlers, livestock, and the environment 1770-1950*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Beinart, W. & McGregor, J. Eds. 2003. *Social history and African environments*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press; Oxford: James Curry; Cape Town: David Philip.
- Beinart, W. & Murray, C. 1996. Agrarian change, population movements and land reform in the Free State. Johannesburg: Land and Agriculture Policy Centre.
- Bekker, J. L. 2007. Game (wildlife) meat safety: understanding the game meat supply chain and the roles of role-players in a multifaceted control environment. *8th International Wildlife Ranching Symposium*. 7–12 September 2014. Fort Collins, CO: Colorado State University.
- Bernstein, H. 1996. The political economy of the maize filière. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*. 23: 120-145.
- Bernstein, H. 2003a. Farewells to the peasantry. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*. 52: 1-19.
- Bernstein, H. 2003b. Land reform in Southern Africa in world-historical perspective. *Review of African Political Economy*. 30: 203-226.
- Berry, S. 1993. *No condition is permanent: The social dynamics of agrarian change in sub-Saharan Africa*. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Bond, I., Hulme, D. & Murphree, M. 2001. Campfire & the incentives for institutional change. *African wildlife and livelihoods: the promise and performance of community conservation*. In *African wildlife and livelihoods: the promise and performance of community conservation*. David Hulme & Marshall Murphree. Eds. Cape Town: David Philip; Oxford: James Currey. 227-243.

- Borras S. M. Jr, Franco, J. C., Gómez, S., Kay, C. & Spoor, M. 2012. Land grabbing in Latin America and the Caribbean. *Journal of Peasant Studies*. 39: 845-872.
- Bothma, J. du P. Ed. 1990. *Game range management: a practical guide on all aspects of purchasing, planning, development, management, and utilisation of a modern game ranch in southern Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Bothma, J. du P. Ed. 2002. *Game ranch management*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Brandt, F. 2013. Tracking an invisible Great Trek: an ethnography on the re-configuration of power and belonging on trophy-hunting farms in the Karoo. Ph.D. Thesis. Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam.
- Brandt, F. 2016. Power battles on South African trophy-hunting farms: farm workers, resistance and mobility in the Karoo. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*. 34: 165-181.
- Brandt, F. & Spierenburg, M. 2014. Game fences in the Karoo: reconfiguring spatial and social relations. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*. 32: 220-237.
- Brockington, D., Duffy, R. & Igoe, J. 2008. *Nature unbound: conservation, capitalism and the future of protected areas*. London: Earthscan.
- Brooks, S. 2002. Changing nature: A critical historical geography of the Umfolozi and Hluhluwe game reserves, Zululand, 1887 to 1947. Ph.D. thesis. Queen's University. Canada
- Brooks, S. 2005. Images of 'Wild Africa': nature tourism and the (re) creation of Hluhluwe game reserve, 1930–1945. *Journal of historical geography*, 31:220-240.
- Brooks, S. 2006. Human discourses, animal geographies: imagining Umfolozi's white rhinos. *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa*. 18:6-27.
- Brooks, S., Spierenburg, M., Van Brakel, L., Kolk, A. & Lukhozi, K. B. 2011. Creating a commodified wilderness: tourism, private game farming, and 'third nature' landscapes in Kwazulu-Natal. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*. 102: 260-274.
- Brooks, S., Spierenburg, M. & Wels, H. 2012. The organization of hypocrisy? Juxtaposing tourists & farm dwellers in game farming in South Africa. In *African hosts & their guests: Cultural dynamics of tourism*. Van Bleek, Walter & Schmidt, Annette. Eds. Woodbridge, Suffolk, U.K.: James Currey. 201-224.
- Brooks, S., Sutherland, C., Scott, D. & Guy, H. 2010. Integrating qualitative methodologies into risk assessment: insights from South Durban. *South African Journal of Science*. 106: 1-10.
- Brown, G. & Raymond, C. M. 2014. Methods for identifying land use conflict potential using participatory mapping. *Landscape and Urban Planning*. 122.196-208.

- Brown, K. 2002. Cultural constructions of the wild: the rhetoric and practice of wildlife conservation in the Cape Colony at the turn of the twentieth century. *South African Historical Journal*. 47:75-95.
- Bryceson, D. F. 1999. African rural labour, income diversification & livelihood approaches: a long-term development perspective. *Review of African Political Economy*. 26: 171-189.
- Bryceson, D. F. & Jamal, V. 1997. *Farewell to farms: de-agrarianisation and employment in Africa*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.
- Bundy, C. 1972. The emergence and decline of a South African peasantry. *African Affairs*.71: 369-388.
- Bundy, C. 1979. *The rise and fall of the South African peasantry*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press.
- Butler, J. 1981. *Uncovering the history of Cradock: sources and issues in the Eastern Cape*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town, Centre for African Studies.
- Butler, J. 1985. Housing in a Karoo dorp: a survey of sources and an examination of developing segregation before the Group Areas Act, 1950. *South African Historical Journal*. 17: 93-119.
- Carruthers, J. 1997. Lessons from South Africa: war and wildlife protection in the southern Sudan, 1917-1921. *Environment and History*, 3, 299-322.
- Carruthers, J. 2003. Past and future landscape ideology: the Kalahari Gemsbok Park. In *Social History and African Environments* Oxford: James Currey; Athens, OH: Ohio University Press; Cape Town: David Philip
- Carruthers, J. 2008a. Conservation and wildlife management in South African national parks: 1930s–1960s. *Journal of the History of Biology*. 41: 203-236.
- Carruthers, J. 2008b. Wilding the farm or farming the wild? The evolution of scientific game ranching in South Africa from the 1960s to the present. *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa*. 63: 160-181.
- Castree, N. 2003. Commodifying what nature? *Progress in Human Geography*.27: 273-297.
- Castree, N. 2008a. Neoliberalising nature: processes, effects, and evaluations. *Environment and Planning A*. 40. 153-173.
- Castree, N. 2008b. Neoliberalising nature: the logics of deregulation and reregulation. *Environment and Planning A*. 40; 131-152.
- Castree, N. 2010a. Crisis, continuity and change: neoliberalism, the left and the future of capitalism. *Antipode*, 41, 185-213.

- Castree, N. 2010b. Neoliberalism and the biophysical environment 1: What ‘neoliberalism’ is, and what difference nature makes to it. *Geography Compass*, 4, 1725-1733.
- Castree, N. & Braun, B. 2001. *Social nature: theory, practice, and politics*. Oxford; Malden, MA.: Blackwell.
- Chaminuka, P. 2013. Wildlife or livestock? New directions for developing communal rangelands in South Africa. *African Journal of Range & Forage Science*. 30: 51-55.
- Chomba, C., Obias, C. & Nyirenda, V. 2014. Game ranching: a sustainable land use option and economic incentive for biodiversity conservation in Zambia. *Open Journal of Ecology*. 4. 571-581.
- Christopher, A.J. 1984, *South Africa: the impact of past geographies* Juta, Cape Town.
- Chukwuezi, B. 1999. *De-agrarianisation and rural employment in Igboland, south-eastern Nigeria*. Leiden: African Studies Centre.
- Cloete, P. C., Van Der Merwe, P. & Saayman, M. 2015. *Game ranch profitability in South Africa*. Cape Town: ABSA.
- Cocks, M. L., Dold, T. & Vetter, S. 2012. 'God is my forest': Xhosa cultural values provide untapped opportunities for conservation. *South African Journal of Science*. 108.52-59.
- Colchester, M. 2004. Conservation policy and indigenous peoples. *Environmental Science & Policy*. 7. 145-153.
- Collet, J.L. A time to plant: biography of James Lydford Collet, settler. In Beinart W. 2003. *The rise of conservation in South Africa: settlers, livestock, and the environment 1770-1950*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cooper, S. M. & Van der Merwe, M. 2014. Game ranching for meat production in marginal African agricultural lands. *J. Arid Land Stud*. 24. 249-252.
- Cousins, B. 2007a. Agrarian reform and the ‘two economies’: transforming South Africa’s countryside. In *The land question in South Africa: the challenge of transformation and redistribution*. Lungisile Ntsebeza & Ruth Hall. Eds. Cape Town: HSRC Press: 220-245
- Cousins, B. 2007b. More than socially embedded: the distinctive character of ‘communal tenure’ regimes in South Africa and its implications for land policy. *Journal of Agrarian Change*. 7:281-315.
- Cousins, B. & Scoones, I. 2010. Contested paradigms of ‘viability’ in redistributive land reform: perspectives from southern Africa. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*. 37. 31-66.
- Cousins, J. A., Sadler, J. P. & Evans, J. 2008. Exploring the role of private wildlife ranching as a conservation tool in South Africa: stakeholder perspectives. *Ecology and Society*. 13 (2) art. 43.

- Cousins, J. A., Sadler, J. P. & Evans, J. 2010a. The challenge of regulating private wildlife ranches for conservation in South Africa. *Ecology and Society*. 15 (2) art. 28.
- Crais, C. C. 1991. The vacant land: the mythology of British expansion in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. *Journal of Social History*. 25 (2): 255-275.
- Crais, C. C. 1992. *The making of the colonial order: white supremacy and black resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.
- Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark, V. L., Gutmann, M. L. & Hanson, W. E. 2003. Advanced mixed methods research designs. In *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*. Abbas Tashakkori & Charles Teddlie. Eds. Thousand Oaks, Calif.; London: SAGE Publication. 209-240.
- Cullinan, P. *Robert Jacob Gordon, 1743-1795: the man and his travels at the Cape*. Cape Town: Struik Winchester, 1992
- Dean, W. R. J. & Milton, S. 1999. *The Karoo: ecological patterns and processes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dlamini, T. S., Fraser, G. C. & Grové, B. 2012. Economics of meat production from springbuck in the Eastern Cape Karoo. *Agrekon*. 51:1-20.
- Dlamini, Z. S. 2005. Creating stakeholders in community-based natural resource management through traditional hunting: a comparative study of Inhluzani Farm and Mpembeni Community Game Reserve in KwaZulu-Natal. Master's thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.
- Dold, T. & Cocks, M. 2012. *Voices from the forest: celebrating nature and culture in Xhosaland*. Sunnyside, South Africa: Jacana Media.
- Dooling, W. 1999. The decline of the Cape gentry, 1838–c.1900. *The Journal of African History*. 40. 215-242.
- Dubow, S. 1982. *Land, labour and merchant capital in the pre-industrial rural economy of the Cape: the experience of the Graaff-Reinet District (1852-72)*. Cape Town: Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town.
- Duffy, R. 1997. The environmental challenge to the nation-state: superparks and national parks policy in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 23. 441-451.
- Duffy, R. 2000. *Killing for conservation: wildlife policy in Zimbabwe*. [London]: The International African Institute in association with James Currey, Oxford; Indiana University Press, Bloomington & Indianapolis; Weaver, Harare. Ltd.
- Duffy, R. 2006. The potential and pitfalls of global environmental governance: the politics of transfrontier conservation areas in Southern Africa. *Political Geography*. 25. 89-112.
- Duly, L. C. 1968. *British land policy at the Cape, 1795-1844*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University.

- Du Plessis, S. & Du Plessis, S. 2012. Happy in the service of the Company: the purchasing power of VOC salaries at the Cape in the 18th century. *Economic History of Developing Regions*.27. 125-149.
- Du Toit, A. & Ewert, J. 2002. Myths of globalisation: Private regulation and farm worker livelihoods on Western Cape farms. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*. 50. 77-104.
- Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council (Ecsecc). 2000. *Socio-economic status of the Eastern Cape midlands Karoo*. East London: The Council.
- Els, H. 1996. Game ranching and rural development. In *Game ranch management: a practical guide on all aspects of purchasing, planning, development, management, and utilisation of a modern game ranch in southern Africa*. J. du P. Bothma. Ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Farmer's Weekly*. 2002. Census figures show worrying trends. September. 50-52
- Flick, U. 2008. Designing qualitative research. London: SAGE Publications.
- Flick, U., Kvale, S. & Angrosino, M. V. 2007. *The Sage qualitative research kit*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Game time: the changing face of South African farming. 2013. *Financial Mail*. 3: 27-54.
- Gess, D. W. 2014. Hunting and power: class, race and privilege in the Eastern Cape and the Transvaal Lowveld, c. 1880-1905. M.A. thesis. Stellenbosch University.
- Gess, D. W. & Swart, S. 2013. Hunting status? Power and buffalo shooting in the Albany and Bathurst districts of the Cape Colony c. 1892-1916. *New Contree*. 67 (Special Edition): 1-33.
- Grant, L. & Scott, D. 1996. Waterfront developments as tools for urban reconstruction and regeneration in South Africa. *Urban Forum*.7 (2):125-138.
- Grove, R. 1989. Scottish missionaries, evangelical discourses and the origins of conservation thinking in Southern Africa 1820-1900. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 15, 163-187.
- Hall, R. 2009. Land reform for what? In *Another countryside: policy option for land and agrarian reform in South Africa*. Ruth Hall. Ed. Bellville: PLAAS, School of Government, University of the Western Cape. 23-63.
- Hartwig, R. & Marais, L. 2005. Farm-worker housing in South Africa: an evaluation of an off-farm housing project. *Housing Studies*.20: 931-948.

- Helliker, K. 2013. Reproducing white commercial agriculture in South Africa. Seminar paper presented at Critical Studies Seminar Series, Grahamstown: Rhodes University. (Unpublished.)
- Hirson, B., Marcus, T. & Keegan, T. 1990-1991). Modernising super-exploitation: restructuring South African agriculture. *Third World Quarterly*. 12 ¾: 179-181.
- Hofmeyr, W. A. 1985. Agricultural crisis and rural organisation in the Cape: 1929-1933. M.A. (Economic History). University of Cape Town.
- Homewood, K., Kristjanson, P. & Trench, P. C. 2009. Changing land use, livelihoods and wildlife conservation in Maasailand. In *Staying Maasai?* Katherine Homewood, Patti Kristianson and Pippa Chenevix Trench. Eds. 1-42. New York: Springer.
- Hulme, D. & Murphree, M. 2001. *African wildlife and livelihoods: the promise and performance of community conservation*. Oxford: James Currey.
- Inggs, J. 1991. Early Port Elizabeth harbour development schemes 1820–1855. *South African Journal of Economic History*. 6(2). 38-71.
- Inxuba Yethemba Municipality, 2012. *Integrated Development Plan*. Chris Hani District Municipality, Eastern Cape.
- Jeffery, B. 1997. Who made the Karoo? A materialist text-map of the Eastern Cape. *English Studies in Africa*. 40: 57-75.
- Jivanji, Y. 2013. Game ranching and land reform: claims for the land exclaim tension: a case study of the Mapungubwe region. M. Phil. (Environmental and Geographical Science). University of Cape Town.
- Jones, B., Hulme, D. & Murphree, M. 2001a. The evolution of a community-based approach to wildlife management at Kunene, Namibia. In *African wildlife and livelihoods: the promise and performance of community conservation*. In *African wildlife and livelihoods: the promise and performance of community conservation*. David Hulme & Marshall Murphree. Eds. Cape Town: David Philip; Oxford: James Currey. 160-176.
- Jones, B., Murphree, M. & Hulme, D. 2001b. The evolution of policy on community conservation in Namibia & Zimbabwe. *African wildlife and livelihoods: the promise and performance of community conservation*. In *African wildlife and livelihoods: the promise and performance of community conservation*. David Hulme & Marshall Murphree. Eds. Cape Town: David Philip; Oxford: James Currey. 38-58.
- Judge, T. A., Thoresen, C. J., Bono, J. E. & Patton, G. K. 2001. The job satisfaction–job performance relationship: a qualitative and quantitative review. *Psychological Bulletin* 127 (3): 376-407.
- Kamete, A. Y. 1998. Interlocking livelihoods: farm and small town in Zimbabwe. *Environment and Urbanization*. 10. 23-34.

- Kamuti, T. 2014. The fractured state in the governance of private game farming: the case of KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*.32; 190-206.
- Kamuti, T. 2016. Private wildlife governance in a context of radical uncertainty: dynamics of game farming policy and practice in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Ph.D. thesis. University of the Free State.
- Kyle Business Projects (KBP).2009. *Cradock, Eastern Cape South Africa – our history so far*. Cradock-Middelburg; iNxuba Yethemba Municipality.
- Langholz, J. A. & Kerley, G. I. 2006. Combining conservation and development on private lands: an assessment of ecotourism-based private game reserves in the Eastern Cape. *Centre for African Conservation Ecology Report*, 56. Port Elizabeth: NMMU.
- Langholz, J. A. & Lassoie, J. P. 2001. Perils and promise of privately owned protected areas. *BioScience*. 51: 1079-1085.
- Lester, Matthew, 2014. Agric land switched to game farming coming back to bite South Africa. *BizNews*. 28 July. Available: <http://www.biznews.com/matthew-lester/2014/07/28/agriculture-debate/> [2014/07/28].
- Loveridge, A. J., Reynolds, J. C. & Milner-Gulland, E. 2007. Does sport-hunting benefit conservation? In *Key topics in conservation biology*. David Macdonald & Katrina Service. Eds. Oxford: Blackwell. 222-238.
- Luck, K. 2005. Farm workers and land tenure reform: the case of game farming in Hope Fountain in the Eastern Cape. *Social Dynamics*.31 (1): 84-103.
- Lunenburg, F. C. & Irby, B. J. 2008. *Writing a successful thesis or dissertation: tips and strategies for students in the social and behavioural sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- MacKenzie, J. M. 1995. Empires of nature and the nature of empires: imperialism. *Scotland and the Environment: the Callander Lectures, delivered in the University of Aberdeen*, 2-7. Empires of Nature and the Nature of Empires: Imperialism, Scotland and the Environment: the Callander Lectures, delivered in the University of Aberdeen. [Aberdeen]: Tuckwell Press.
- Mafeje, A. 1981. On the articulation of modes of production: review article. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 8: 123-138.
- Manona, C. 1999. De-agrarianisation and urbanisation of a rural economy: agrarian patterns in Melanie in the Eastern Cape. *Afrika-Studie Centrum. Working paper 32*. Leiden: Afrika-Studie Centrum.
- Marcus, T. 1989. Modernising super-exploitation: restructuring South African agriculture. London: Zed Books.

- Marsden, S. L. 1986. Clergymen vs Communists: aspects of a history of Cradock 1928-1938. B.A. thesis. University of Cape Town.
- Mather, C. & Greenberg, S. 2003. Market liberalisation in post-apartheid South Africa: the restructuring of citrus exports after 'deregulation'. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 29(2): 393-412.
- Minnaar, A. 1990. The effects of the Great Depression (1929–1934) on South African white agriculture. *South African Journal of Economic History*. 5:83-108.
- Mkhize, N. 2014. Game farm conversions and the land question: unpacking present contradictions and historical continuities in farm dwellers' tenure insecurity in Cradock. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*. 32; 207-219.
- Mkhize, N. N. 2012. Private game farms and the tenure security of workers and dwellers in Cradock-implications for tenure reform in South Africa. Ph.D., (Sociology) University of Cape Town.
- Mouton, J. 1996. *Understanding social research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Muller, A. 2000. The economic history of the Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage region. *South African Journal of Economic History*. 15: 20-47.
- Murray, M. J. 1989. The origins of agrarian capitalism in South Africa: a critique of the 'social history' perspective. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 15: 645-665.
- Musengezi, J., Child, B. & Racevskis, L. 2010. Profitability and policy of commercial wildlife use: game ranching in South Africa. (Unpublished research paper.) Department of Geography, Food and Resource Economic Development Unit, University of Florida.
- Mwamfupe, D., 1998. *Changing village land, labour and livelihoods: Rungwe and Kyela Districts, Tanzania*. Leiden: Africa Studies Centre.
- Mwakiwa, E. 2011 Wildlife as a natural resource: cooperation or Competition? Dilemma for resources managers in wildlife sustainable utilisation, Ph.D. Wageningen University.
- Ncapayi, F., 2013. Land and changing social relations in South Africa's former reserves: the case of Lumphaphasi in Sakhisizwe Local Municipality, Eastern Cape Ph.D. thesis. University of Cape Town.
- Nel, E. & Hill, T. 2008. Marginalisation and demographic change in the semi-arid Karoo, South Africa. *Journal of Arid Environments*. 72: 2264-2274.
- Nel E., Hill T. & Taylor B. 2007. *South Africa's Karoo: a study of economic marginalisation and demographic change*. Rhodes University, Eastern Cape, South Africa.

- Nel, E. Hill, T., Taylor, B. & Atkinson, D. 2011. Demographic and economic changes in small towns in South Africa's Karoo: looking from the inside out. *Urban Forum*. 22: 395-410.
- Nell, D. 2000. "For the public benefit": livestock statistics and expertise in the late nineteenth-century Cape Colony, 1850–1900. In *Science and Society, in Southern Africa*. Saul Dubow. Ed. Manchester: Manchester University Press 100-115.
- Neuman, W. L. 2006. *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Boston, Mass.: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon. 457-489.
- Neumann, R. P. 2003. The production of nature: colonial recasting of the African landscape in Serengeti National Park. Political ecology: an integrative approach to geography and environment-development studies. Karl S. Zimmer & Thomas J. Bassett. Eds. London; New York, N.Y.: The Guilford Press. 240-255.
- Neumann, R. P. 2004. Nation–state–territory: toward a critical theorization of conservation enclosures. In *Liberation ecologies: environment, development and social movements*. Richard Peet & Michael Watts. Eds. London: Routledge. 179-196.
- Neumann, R. P. 2009. Political ecology II: theorizing region. *Progress in Human Geography*. 33 (4).
- Ngubane, M. & Brooks, S. 2013. Land beneficiaries as game farmers: conservation, land reform and the invention of the 'community game farm' in KwaZulu-Natal. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*. 31:399-420.
- Ntsebeza, L. 2016. What can we learn from Archie Mafeje about the road to democracy in South Africa? *Development and Change*. 47: 918-936.
- Nyama, C. 2008. Investigating aspects of corporate citizenship on private game farms: the case of Mtshelazi Game Reserve in Makana Municipality, Eastern Cape Province. MBA. Thesis. Rhodes University.
- Patton, M. 2002. *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Peires, J. 1981. Chiefs and commoners in precolonial Xhosa Society. In *Before and after Shaka: papers in Nguni history*. Grahamstown: Rhodes University. Institute of Social and Economic Research. 125-144.
- Peires, J. B. 1985. The late great plot: the official delusion concerning the Xhosa cattle killing 1856-1857. *History in Africa*. 12: 253-279.
- Peires, J. B. 1986. 'Soft' believers and 'hard' unbelievers in the Xhosa cattle-killing. *The Journal of African History*. 27:443-461.
- Pio, E. 2008. As assessment of the experience of small town local economic development in the Eastern Cape midlands. M.A. thesis. Rhodes University.

- Powell, R. A. Single, H. M. & Lloyd, K. R. 1996. Focus groups in mental health research: enhancing the validity of user and provider questionnaires. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*. 42: 193-206.
- Roche, C. 2003. 'Fighting their battles o'er again': the springbok hunt in Graaff-Reinet, 1860-1908. *Kronos*: 86-108.
- Roche, C. 2005. 'The springbok... drink the rain's blood': indigenous knowledge and its use in environmental history — the case of the/Xam and an understanding of springbok treks. *South African Historical Journal*. 53: 1-22.
- Roche, C. 2008. The fertile brain and the inventive power of man': anthropogenic factors in the cessation of springbok treks and the disruption of the Karroo ecosystem, 1865–1908. *Africa*, 78 (2): 157-188.
- Rondinelli, D. A. 1991. Asian urban development policies in the 1990s: from growth control to urban diffusion. *World Development*. 19, 791-803.
- Rondinelli, D. A. & Kasarda, J. D. 1993. Privatization of urban services and infrastructure in developing countries: an assessment of experience. In *Third World cities: problems, policies, and prospects*. John D. Kasarda & Allan M. Parnell. Ed. Newbury Park, California: Sage 1. 134-60.
- Ross, R. 1986. The origins of capitalist agriculture in the Cape Colony: *In Putting a plough to the ground: accumulation and dispossession in rural South Africa, 1850-1930*. William Beinart, Peter Delius & Stanley Trapido. Eds. Johannesburg: Ravan Press. 56-100.
- Ross, R. 1999. *Status and respectability in the Cape Colony, 1750–1870: a tragedy of manners*. Cape Town: Cambridge University Press.
- Rosset, P. 1999. The multiple functions and benefits of small farm agriculture. *Food First: The Institute for Food and Development Policy. Policy Brief*. (4) September. Available: [https://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/PB4-The-Multiple-Functions-and-Benefits-of-Small-Farm-Agriculture\\_Rosset.pdf](https://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/PB4-The-Multiple-Functions-and-Benefits-of-Small-Farm-Agriculture_Rosset.pdf) [2013/12/5].
- Rossouw, R. & Cloete, P. C. 2014. Game ranching inter-sectoral linkages: a structural path analysis for South Africa. *Development Southern Africa*. 31: 373-396.
- Saayman, M., Van Der Merwe, P. & Rossouw, R. 2011. The impact of hunting for biltong purposes on the SA economy. *Acta Commercii*. 11(1):1-12.
- Sarantakos, S. 1998. *Social Research*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Macmillan Education UK.
- Schirmer, S. 1995. African strategies and ideologies in a white farming district: Lydenburg, 1930–1970. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 21(3):509-527.
- Schirmer, S. 2004. Motives for mechanisation in South African agriculture, c1940–1980. *African Studies*. 63: 3-28.

- Schoeman, C. 2013. *The Historical Karoo: traces of the past in South Africa's arid interior*. Cape Town: Random House Struik.
- Scott, J. 2012. *Social network analysis*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Sage.,
- Seidman, I. 2013. *Interviewing as qualitative research: a guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. London; New York: Teachers College Press.
- Sidimba, Loyiso. 2016. Game farms to make way for arable land. *Sowetan Press* 14 November: 5,
- Sims-Castley, R., Kerley, G. I., Geach, B. & Langholz, J. 2005. Socio-economic significance of ecotourism-based private game reserves in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province. *Parks*. 15:6-18.
- Skead, C. J., Boshoff, A., Kerley, G. I. H. & Lloyd, P. 2007. *Historical incidence of the larger land mammals in the broader Eastern Cape*. Port Elizabeth: Centre for African Conservation Ecology, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.
- Smith, D. 1964. *Cradock 1814–1864: 150th anniversary brochure*. Cradock: White & Boughton.
- Smith, K. W. 1974. *From frontier to midlands: a history of the Graaff-Reinet district, 1786-1910*. Grahamstown: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Rhodes University.
- Smuts, N.T. 2012. An archaeological perspective on the nineteenth century development of land, landscape and sheep farming in the Karoo. M.Sc. Thesis. University of Cape Town.
- Snowball, J. & Antrobus, G. 2008. *Ecotourism and socio-economic development: the impact of the conservation, economic and social activities of private game reserves in the Eastern Cape*. Grahamstown: Rhodes University.
- South Africa. Department of Planning. 1970–1975. *Survey of the Cape midlands and Karroo regions: a report*. Pretoria: Department of Planning.
- Southall, R. 1983. *South Africa's Transkei: the political economy of an "independent" Bantustan*. London: Monthly Review Press.
- Spierenburg, M. & Brooks, S. 2014. Private game farming and its social consequences in post-apartheid South Africa: contestations over wildlife, property and agrarian futures. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*. 32. 151-172.
- StatsSA. 2002. *Census of agriculture, 2002: Provincial statistics, Eastern Cape: report no. 11-02-03*, Pretoria: CSS.
- Tacoli, C. 1998a. Beyond the rural-urban divide. *Environment and Urbanization*. 10: 3-4.

- Tacoli, C. 1998b. *Bridging the divide: rural-urban interactions and livelihood strategies*. London: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). Sustainable agriculture and rural livelihoods programme.
- Tacoli, C. 1998c. Rural-urban interactions; a guide to the literature. *Environment and Urbanization*. 10: 147-166.
- Tacoli, C. 1998d. Rural–urban linkages and sustainable rural livelihoods. In *Sustainable rural livelihoods: what contribution can we make*. Diana Carney. Ed. London: Dept. for International Development. 67-80.
- Tacoli, C. 2004. Rural-urban linkages and pro-poor agricultural growth: an overview. Prepared for OECD DAC POVNET *Agriculture and Pro-Poor Growth Task Team Helsinki Workshop*. 17-18.
- Tacoli, C. 2007. Poverty, inequality and the underestimation of rural–urban linkages. *Development*. 50 (2): 90-95.
- TELKOM, 2006. Port Elizabeth and Eastern Cape: Yellow Pages and Phone Book. Pretoria: Telkom,
- Tetelman, M. S. 1995. From removal to riot: Cradock, 1960-1977. Rondebosch, South Africa: Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town.
- Tetelman, M. 1997. The history of black politics in Cradock. Ph.D. thesis. Northwestern University.
- Tetelman, M.S. 2012. *We can! Black politics in Cradock, South Africa 1948-1985*. Grahamstown, South Africa: Institute for Social and Economic Research & Cory Library, Rhodes University, 2012
- Thomson, R. 1992. *The wildlife game*. Nyala Wildlife Publications Trust.
- Toerien, D. 2012. Enterprise proportionalities in the tourism sector of South African towns. In *Business, management and economics: visions for global tourism industry: creating and sustaining competitive strategies*. Murat Kasimoglu. Ed. INTECH Open Access.
- Toerien, D. F. & Seaman, M. T. 2010. The enterprise ecology of towns in the Karoo, South Africa. *South African Journal of Science*. 106: 25-34.
- Tuchman, G. 1994. Historical social science: methodologies, methods, and meanings. *Handbook of qualitative research*. Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln. Eds. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage. 306-323.
- Van Merwe, P. & Saayman, M., 2002. *Managing game farms from a tourism perspective*. Potchefstroom, South Africa. Leisure Consultants & Publications.
- Van der Merwe, P., Saayman, M. & Krugell, W. 2004. Factors that determine the price of game. *Koedoe*. 47: 105-113.

- Van der Merwe, P., Saayman, M. & Rossouw, R. 2014. The economic impact of hunting: a regional approach. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*. 17. 379-395.
- Van Sittert, L. 2002. Holding the line: the rural enclosure movement in the Cape Colony, c. 1865–1910. *The Journal of African History*, 43: 95-118.
- Van Sittert, L. 2005. Bringing in the wild: the commodification of wild animals in the cape colony/province c. 1850–1950. *The Journal of African History*. 46: 269-291.
- Wegerif, M. 2005. *A critical appraisal of South Africa's market based land reform policy: the case of the LRAD programme in Limpopo*. Bellville: PLAAS, University of the Western Cape.
- West, P., Igoe, J. & Brockington, D. 2006. Parks and peoples: the social impact of protected areas. *Annual. Rev. Anthropol.* 35:251-277.
- Wilken, 1934. Location superintended report. In Marsden, 1986. *Clergymen Vs Communists: Aspects of a History of Cradock 1928-1938*, publisher not identified.
- Willig, C. 2001. *Introducing qualitative research in psychology*. Buckingham. Open University Press.
- Wisker, G., Exley, K., Antoniou, M. & Ridley, P. 2008. Working one-to-one with students. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Wisker, G. & Savin-Baden, M. 2009. Priceless conceptual thresholds: beyond the 'stuck place' in writing. *London Review of Education*.7. 235-247.
- Wolpe, H. 1972. Capitalism and cheap labour-power in South Africa: from segregation to apartheid 1. *Economy and society*. 1. 425-456.
- Woolcock, M., & Narayan, D. (2000). Social capital: Implications for development theory, research, and policy. *World Bank Research Observer*. 152. 225-249
- Xuza, P. H. L. 2006. *Renewal of small town economies: the case of Alice, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa*. Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand.
- Zerner, C. 2000. *People, plants, and justice: the politics of nature conservation*. New York, N.Y: Columbia University Press.
- Zulu, N. 2016. An analysis of the post 1980s transition from pastoral to game farming in South Africa: a case study of the Marico district. Ph.D. thesis. University of the Witwatersrand.
- Zungu, V. 2003. From fortress conservation to community conservation: an assessment of environmental partnership at the Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Park. Master's thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

## ARCHIVAL SOURCES

1. Cradock Magistrate to Secretary of Native Affairs, 13 February 1938, SAB, NTS, 309/208, v. 2201.
2. Intermediate Archives Depot, Port Elizabeth, 3/CDK/25/NA/1. 'Proposed Bantu Administration Board Areas: statistical information'. Questionnaire of 9 Aug. 1971.
3. Cape Archives Depot (CAD). 1264/1/83. Census of 17 Aug. 1935; CAD 125 4/1/83, census of 6 Aug. 1938; and CAD 3/CDK/34 4/1/27. 'Report of the Cradock Joint Council as evidence for the Native Economic Commission, 1930 (hereafter referred to in the text as Report).
4. CAD 3/CDK/39 4/1/28. Meeting minutes of 23 March 1931 of the Cradock Town Council.
5. Minutes of the Cradock Joint Council quarterly meeting. 21 May 1935. Cradock Joint Council Records, Cullen Library.
6. J.A. Calata to A.B. Xuma, 20 March 1944. Cullen Library, A.B. Xuma Papers: Box I #440320c; A.B. Xuma to J.A. Calata, 26 March 1946, Xuma Papers: Box K #46032c; J.A. Calata to D.B. Buchanan, presumed late 1947, James A. Calata Papers, University of Cape Town (UCT), #41/19.
7. J.A. Calata to D. Bopape, 19 Sept. 1949, J.A. Calata Papers (UCT), File 2: DA21 #41/27; J.A. Calata to A.B. Xuma, 14 June 1949, J.A. Calata Papers (UCT), Reel 18A File 2: XX2 #41/82.
8. See J.A. Calata. 'False rumour about Anglican mission'. *Midland News*. 18/12/52 and J.A. Calata to Z.K. Matthews, 29 April 1955, in the J.A. Calata Papers (UCT) File 2: XC3 #41/94.
9. "'Tambo and Calata banned.' *Advance*, 23/9/54; J.A. Calata, draft of letter to the editor of *Bantu World*, 17/9/54, The J.A. Calata Papers (UCT), File 2: XC3: #41/80.
10. See D.B. Molteno to Bishop of Grahamstown, 7 July 1945. The Calata Papers. Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (Wits), File D2.
11. J.A. Calata. 'Anglican bishops on apartheid': draft letter to the editor of the *Eastern Province Herald* 28/10/53. Calata Papers (Wits), File XC3 #99/2.
12. 'Petitions to the Administration Board' of 8 March 1979: minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> ordinary meeting of the CCC, April 1979, v.1;' Cradock municipal budget for 1980. *Midland News*. 30/10/79.

13. See testimony of Alfred Steti Skweyiya, *Die Staat teen Patrick Mabuya Baleka en 21 ander* (hereafter *State vs Baleka*): 23, 938-23, 939. Available: [http://www.historicalpapers.wits.ac.za/inventories/inv\\_pdf/AK2117/AK2117-I02-01-58-01-jpeg.pdf](http://www.historicalpapers.wits.ac.za/inventories/inv_pdf/AK2117/AK2117-I02-01-58-01-jpeg.pdf) [yyymmdd].
14. Correspondent Cradock Magistrate to Secretary Native Affairs, September 1933, SAB, NTS, 58/336. v. 7853
15. Report of the Native Affairs Commission on an inspection of conditions at Graaff-Reinet and Cradock SAB, NTS, 175/313, v..3
16. D Smith, Cradock 1814 – 1864. Collections of archives documents for Cradock from 1814 to 1864. 73-83.

## APPENDIX

### Appendix A: The respondents for the focus group interview and face to face interviews

Name	Function	Place
Chriszanne Janse van Vuuren	SCLC Graaff-Reinet	Cradock
Phumi Booysen	SCLC all over	
Michael Anthrobus	Owner of Cradock Victoria Hotel	Cradock Market Street
Sandra Anthrobus	Owner of Cradock Victoria Hotel	Cradock, Market Street
Mr Foreman	Former farm worker	Cradock, Atlantis Low-Cost Residential area
Ms Genet Mjoli	Township Occupant	Cradock, Lingelihle Township
Kenneth Myeni	Township Occupant	Cradock, Lingelihle Township
Ricky	Albert B & B owner	Cradock, town centre
Marius Koopman	IY Municipality, Senior clerk property rates	Cradock
Siya	LED Cradock, commonage	Cradock
Charles Garth	IY Municipality, Chief accountant	Cradock
Masizame (Focus Group – men and women)	Community Centre, Lingelihle	Cradock
Patrick	Fish River Farm Committee	Stays on farm
Neil	Fish River Farm Committee	Stays on farm
Japie	Fish River Farm Committee	Stays on farm
Dr Etienne du Toit	Cradock, chairperson Central Committee	Central committee is all farmers' associations
Ryno Ferreira	Graaff-Reinet	game farming
Dr Frans Erasmus	Cradock, veterinary surgeon	Cradock
Doris Mjelo	Township resident	Cradock-Lingelihle
Stanley January	Township resident	Michausdal-Lingelihle
Themba Mqoqi	Township resident and ex-farm worker	Cradock-Lingelihle
Chris Schoeman	Cradock	Cradock (Interview)
Andrew	Farmer and town butcher	Cradock
20 Household Interviews	Household —individuals	Cradock, Lingelihle
20 Household Interviews	Household —individuals	Cradock, Michausdal

**Appendix B:** Matthew Lester: ‘Agric land switched to game farming coming back to bite SA’.

BizNews. 28 July. Available: <http://www.biznews.com/matthew-lester/2014/07/28/agriculture-debate/> [yyyymmdd].

There is not much fun to be had when attending farmers’ days anymore. For years these functions used to be all about the droughts, floods or pests, lousy market prices and increasing fuel prices. We could generally drink out a solution.

But now the land claims have opened up again and there are proposals to force farmers having to give 50% away to BEE. Very soon farmers may not be able to offload their farms on foreigners either. South Africans should doff their hats to any farmer who continues to toil in the soil. The farming yield is not only about buying new 4X4’s and paying private school fees. South Africa’s farms directly support a significant portion of the population thus reducing the dependency on all spheres of government and the taxpayer.

Driving from Kenton-on-Sea to the Rhodes Business School in Grahamstown there is not much sign of farming. Many farmers have given up, sold out to game farmers and become professional hunters or game guides. Instead of livestock on pastures the veld has grown back and the drive is now down a corridor between miles of game fences. It’s pretty bearable if you like waving to the giraffe.

Game farming used to be largely confined to the Lowveld and northern parts of RSA. Then we got to the new South Africa and we came up with the wonderful idea that game farms bring tourists, foreign currency, jobs and a whole lot more to the new RSA. And, yes, some operators have made a huge contribution.

But let’s be honest, many game farms are paying lip service to the true meaning of sustainable development. Any old dunny with foreign currency can swan into RSA and buy up what was a farming concern, sell off the livestock, pay off the workers and turn the land into a personal private zoo. Then find a nice African name and call it a ‘conservatory.’

‘Cheque book farming’ used to be about wealthy executives shielding taxable income from bonuses and share options by investing in farms. But, importantly, the farming continued and improved. Today, cheque book farming seems to be more about who can pay the record price

for a buffalo bull. It has little to do with the value of the produce and has chased land prices to a level where farming has become unsustainable.

Tourism income generated by some game farms is not much more than airport departure tax paid when their mates visit from overseas. The farms are stocked with whatever takes the owners fancy regardless of the effect on the environment.

The effect in areas of RSA is dramatic. For example, the annual mohair clip of the Eastern Cape has declined to below 2 million kilograms per annum, down from 12 million kilograms 20 years ago. And many of those employed in the industry and living in rural areas are now unemployed in the townships waiting for a state provided home. The increase in poverty in rural towns is tangible.

Those over 18 years old displaced by game farming have to wait for an old age grant. No wonder there is pressure on government to implement a basic income grant, at the expense of the taxpayer.

The municipal property rates act, 2004, was supposed to distinguish between farming and game farming\tourism. Property rates are not collected by SARS but rather by the local authorities so the distinction between the two seems has been largely missed. Many game farms still slip through under the rating concessions granted to farming.

There can be little doubt that within RSA farming we still live up to the words of Richard Bird, where the distribution of wealth in a country is “largely the result of historical accident, as condoned by the state and frozen in law. ...Many of those successful in life stand on not on their own feet but on the shoulders of their fathers.”

On the other hand Government’s attempts at agricultural reform over the last 20 years have generally yielded disappointing outcomes. The press is littered with reports of failure. The Thandi Modise farm neglect is a national embarrassment that has now escalated to the NSPCA pressing charges.

On the Davis Tax Committee, we are currently examining the mining tax package. The mines used to be the big tax contributors in RSA. The minister of finance only had to look at the outlook on the gold price in formulating the annual national budget. But today mines only

account for about 10% of total tax collections. Following the long-term strike actions tax collections will come under further pressure.

Thank goodness the financial sector has taken over as the major tax generator of RSA, accounting for about 35% of total tax collections. But that does not mean we can just walk away from the mining sector.

Mining still accounts for 50% of RSA exports. So what will happen to RSA's balance of payments current account when the mines are all worked out and RSA has 53 million people to feed on imported food?

If a penny saved is a penny earned, then logically every Rand in food produced locally is just as valuable as a Rand of any other export.

So when the government puts the brakes on foreign ownership of land in RSA I say 'hear! It's high time to confront this issue. The people of South Africa cannot eat scenery.'

Part of the problem is that the various government initiatives are disjointed and simply create an overall impression that farmers are being targeted for extinction. Perhaps the solution could be an agricultural CODESA where all stakeholders in agriculture could thrash out a sustainable overall settlement.